

## Defense installations tighten mask requirement

**According to the recent memo from the Department of Defense, masks should be worn at all times on military installations except when:**



- An individual is alone in an office with floor-to-ceiling walls with a closed door.



- For brief periods of time when eating and drinking while maintaining distancing in accordance with CDC guidelines and instructions from commanders and supervisors



- The mask is required to be lowered briefly for identification or security purposes

- And when necessary to reasonably accommodate an individual with a disability.



By **JONATHAN STINSON**

Assistant editor

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A long-awaited masking order was sent out by the Department of the Defense of last week.

It said individuals must wear a mask at all times while on military installations except when:

- An individual is alone in an office with floor-to-ceiling walls with a closed door;

- For brief periods of time when eating and drinking while maintaining distancing in accordance with Centers for Disease Control guidelines and instructions from commanders and supervisors;

- The mask is required to be lowered briefly for identification or security purposes;

- And when necessary to reasonably accommodate an individual with a disability.

“While not every condition we may encounter is spelled out clearly, it is incumbent on the employee to meet the intent of the message,” Garrison Director of

Operations Ron Thomas said in an email to the workforce. “Common sense must prevail and be used in those cases/conditions that are not directly covered in the attached memo, pending any future guidance from higher headquarters. If you have questions, please contact your supervisory chain for further clarification.”

The memo said, masks were required in “any common areas or shared workspaces (including open floorplan office spaces, cubicle embankments, and conference rooms) and in outdoor shared spaces.”

Thomas went on to clarify that outdoor activities like running, cycling and working may be done without a mask as long as the individual can maintain 6 feet of separation from others in accordance with the CDC’s social distancing guidance.

The memo also mentioned specific guidelines for the types of masks that should be worn.

“Masks recommended by the CDC include non-medical disposable masks, masks made with breathable fabric (such as cotton), masks made with tightly woven fabric (i.e., fabrics that do not let

light pass through when held up to a light source), masks with two or three layers, and masks with inner filter pockets,” the memo read.

“Novelty or non-protective masks, masks with ventilation valves, or face shields are not authorized as a substitute for masks. Masks must fit properly (i.e., snugly around the nose and chin with no large gaps around the sides of the face).”

The order from Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin is in line with Executive Order 13991, “Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing,” which was signed on Jan. 20 and it rescinds Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Department of Defense Guidance on Cloth Face Coverings,” from April 5, 2020.

“COVID-19 is one of the deadliest threats our nation has ever faced,” Austin said in the memo. “As we have done throughout our history, the military will rise to this challenge. It is imperative that we do all we can to ensure the health and safety of our force, our families, and our communities so we can prevail in this fight.”



### MILITARY

Chief of chaplains brings spiritual readiness message.

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Redstone 12U Rockets cap year with victory.

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# RocketViews

## Phone starts ringing when helicopters fly over

*Editor's note: Redstone Arsenal doesn't have an operator or centralized directory for people to call. But like the man on TV said "if you have a problem, if no one else can help," and apparently if you just "call Redstone Arsenal" then you'll probably end up connecting to the Garrison's PAO office. Ok, maybe he didn't say that last part, but that's what happens. It leads to some interesting challenges. And just for the record, people don't work for Redstone Arsenal, they work on Redstone Arsenal, and if you call looking for a specific person and all you have is a last name, there's nothing anyone can do.*

The game's afoot.

The Garrison PAO office gets a lot of phone calls that have absolutely nothing to do with public affairs other than the person on the other end of the line is a member of the public.

A typical call goes like this:

PAO: Hi, Garrison PAO office, how

may I help you?

Random member of the public: "Hi, we heard a loud noise. It was probably one of our kids doing a flying elbow drop off his bunk bed, but we wanted to call and make sure it wasn't the Arsenal first before we explored other explanations."

PAO: We haven't received any noise alerts today, so I don't think it was the Arsenal. Where do you live?

RMP: Oh, we live in Tennessee. Anyway, that's weird; it sounded like it came from the Arsenal. (In the background you can hear a kid screaming because his arm is broken.)

That's a mild exaggeration and there are certainly a lot of loud noises that come from Redstone, but if you live 20 miles away from post, it's probably not the Arsenal. There are a lot of other things that go boom.

This one's not an exaggeration.

PAO: Hi, blah blah, blah.

RMP: Yes, someone keeps flying

### Snippets

By Jonathan Stinson

Assistant editor

Army helicopters over my farm, and it's scaring my fainting goats and making them faint.

If you ever want a headache go find an FAA official, air traffic controller or someone who flies and ask them just how much metal moves through the air at any given time.

I'll save you the trouble though. The answer is it's a lot. Contrary to popular belief each helicopter in the sky does not in fact originate from Redstone, nor do they terminate their flights at Redstone.

I know this because I watched the folks in the PAO office try to track down the origins of these helicopters that were terrorizing these poor fainting goats.

To be fair, there are some legitimate instances when a helicopter from Redstone has randomly landed on a local farm. They've all been emergency situations and they are few and far between.

In this instance it was quickly determined that the helicopters were not coming from Redstone. That was actually pretty easy to figure out. As to the actual origins, that's going to take a multi-organizational task force to figure out.

I don't think that's really necessary though, because I think it has a simple answer.

I don't know how many fainting goats the caller has, but I have watched my fair share of fainting goat videos. And if I had a helicopter and I knew where there were a handful of fainting goats, I can't say the temptation would not be there for me to go make them faint with my helicopter.

## Quote of the week

"If you're walking down the right path and you're willing to keep walking, eventually you'll make progress."

— Barack Obama

## Send your letters to editor

The Redstone Rocket invites your signed letters to the editor and your commentaries. Unsigned letters will not be published. Send your letters and commentaries to [skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com](mailto:skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com).

## On this date in history: Feb. 17

**In 2015:** Eighteen people were killed and 78 injured in a stampede at a Mardi Gras parade in Haiti.

**In 2006:** A massive mudslide occurred in Southern Leyte, Philippines; the official death toll was set at 1,126.

**In 1974:** Robert K. Preston, a disgruntled Army private, buzzed the White House in a stolen helicopter.

**In 1968:** In Springfield, Massachusetts, the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame opened.

**In 1965:** The Ranger 8 probe launched on its mission to photograph the Mare Tranquillitatis region of the Moon in preparation for the manned Apollo missions. Mare Tranquillitatis or the "Sea of Tranquility" would become the site chosen for the Apollo 11 lunar landing.

**In 1621:** Myles Standish was appointed as first military commander of the English Plymouth Colony in North America.

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# First responder spotlight

By **SKIP VAUGHN**  
 Rocket editor  
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## How do you relax?

“I like to read,” Eric Poole, a security guard at the gates, said. “I read a lot of history and historical fiction. I’m heavily interested in that kind of stuff. There’s always something more to learn. You can’t know it all. I mean there’s always different perspectives.”

Poole, 36, from Hazel Green, has worked at the gates 13 years, first as a contractor and since 2010 as a government employee. He served in the Army from 2005–18 and left as a sergeant. Poole was in Iraq in 2007, 2009 and 2010 and in Afghanistan in 2012. The Monrovia resident and his wife of three and a half years, Lauren, have a combined three children – sons, Ryder, 9, and Bentley, 6, and daughter, Macey Mae, 5.

He enjoys relic hunting with his metal detector. He collects University of Alabama football memorabilia. He has autographs from legendary coach Bear Bryant and quarterbacks Joe Namath and Kenny Stabler. Poole also enjoys “spending time with family – that’s the main thing.” He roots for the Alabama Crimson Tide.



**Eric Poole**

# Getting to know you

By **TIM HANSON**  
 Security Assistance Command  
 Public Affairs

er quit. And her philosophy is: If they give you a second, third try then why are you worried.

**Name:** Sgt. 1st Class Crystal Wilson

**Position:** Senior human resources NCO, Security Assistance Command

**What did you want to be when you grew up?**

Growing up, I wanted to be a fashion designer. I went to HS of Fashion Industries and College for Design.

**What do you hope to accomplish in 2021?**

I hope to finish up my master’s in public health.

**Who is your hero, and why?**

My mother. She has raised me to nev-



**If you could choose to do anything for a day, what would it be?**

It would be to go to the fashion district in NYC. You see great designers and things constantly happening.

**What is the best piece of advice someone has given you?**

A former sergeant major told me “Hard work and determination is the key to success.”

**What do you like to do for fun, to pass the time, during this time of social distancing?**

Sewing, cross stitching and crocheting. Also, built a home gym, so work out before my day starts.

## Crimes, accidents & other occurrences

The Directorate of Emergency Services, Law Enforcement Division, provided the following list of reported incidents Jan. 31 through Feb. 6:

**Feb. 4:** A vehicle collided with a deer on eastbound Martin Road near Mills Road. The vehicle had minor damages; and Redstone police could not find the deer.

**Feb. 5:** On Buxton Road a vehicle collided with a deer, causing minor damage to the passenger side of the vehicle. The deer could not be found; and the Redstone game warden was notified.

**Feb. 5:** Redstone police responded to the Gate 9 Visitor Center for an individual with a possible warrant who was seeking a visitor badge to enter the installation for work. A background check found an arrest warrant with Decatur Police Department for domestic violence third degree assault. The individual was apprehended, transported to an agreed location and released to a Decatur police officer.

Citations included one for failure to obey traffic control device, two for no driver’s license/unlicensed, one for expired driver’s license, one for no proof of insurance, seven for expired registration and 15 for speeding.

# Tell us about ...

By **SKIP VAUGHN**  
 Rocket editor  
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## Your military career.

“It was back in ’82 to ’86,” Dave Baker, an engineering technician employed by CCI Inc. in support of the Garrison’s Directorate of Public Works, said. “President Reagan had fired all the air traffic controllers. They’d gone on strike and he decided that was a dangerous thing to do. I went in the Army to controller school up at Rucker because I knew there’d be a lot of job openings. I served as an air traffic controller up at Fulda, West Germany, from December ’82 till April of ’86 – on the Wall basically. It was kind of the height of the end of the Cold War. Personally I loved it. I was there. I met my wife at ATC school. We got married and got stationed there (at Fulda Army Airfield). I left as a specialist four. I really enjoyed the challenge but the stress was a lot more than I anticipated. So I decided to go back into engineering – my first love. Nice and safe.”

Baker, 58, was born in Ironton, Ohio, and he grew up in an Army family. He graduated from Butler High School in Huntsville in 1980. Baker received his certification in drafting technology from Drake State Community and Technical College in 1990. He has worked at Redstone more than three years. The Huntsville resident and his wife of 19 years, Melody, have two sons, Daniel of Vero Beach, Florida, and Austin of Huntsville, and two grandchildren. Baker enjoys playing the drums, working in the yard and grilling out. He roots for the Alabama Crimson Tide.



**Dave Baker**

# Know your laws: Legislative response to pandemic

By AMY WASYLUKA

Huntsville attorney

In terms of the coronavirus pandemic, Alabama is one of the states that has been hit the hardest. Reports not only suggest that Alabama's workforce is among most highly impacted by the pandemic, but also that Alabama has some of the highest rates of positive testing and transmission. These reports raise legitimate questions about how to ensure the health of the people and the workforce of Alabama.

Despite these concerns, Fox10 News reports that Alabama remains near the bottom or last in the nation in terms of measures like social distancing and vaccine distribution which could lessen the spread of the virus and save lives.

It is against this backdrop that Senate Bill 97 was approved by a 7-4 vote of

Alabama's Senate Judiciary Committee on Feb. 3. If enacted, elected politicians would give themselves oversight over emergency health decisions that are currently the province of Alabama's state health officer, a subject matter expert and medical professional.

Additionally, SB97 requires the state health officer to get approval from the governor for any emergency health orders issued during a pandemic. It also limits the duration of any declared states of emergency and requires they terminate after only 14 days unless otherwise approved either by the legislature or, if the legislature is not in session, by Joint Resolution of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The effect of this legislation would be to put oversight of any emergency orders

relating to this pandemic or the next into the hands of politicians, unnecessarily injecting politics and political strategy into what should be the bipartisan apolitical matters of health and safety.

For those concerned about SB 97, you can contact your local state senator to let them know your thoughts on SB 97. Contact information for your state senators is available online at [www.legislature.state.al.us/aliswww/ISD/Senate/ALSenators.aspx](http://www.legislature.state.al.us/aliswww/ISD/Senate/ALSenators.aspx). Additionally, for those interested in keeping up with SB 97, you can check the status of the bill online by going to <http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/alison/default.aspx> and clicking on "Bills" then "Find Status of a Bill" and inputting SB97.

*Editor's note: The opinions in this column do not constitute legal advice nor do they establish an attorney-client relation-*



*ship. If you have questions concerning the issues discussed, contact an attorney of your choice. No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.*

## Soldier/civilian/family readiness briefs

By Army News Service and Defense Department websites

### Army shapes up civilian fitness

WASHINGTON – An updated Army program plans to enhance the health, fitness, and quality of life of Army civilians, as the force continues to refine the way it acquires and retains talent in support of the Army People Strategy.

The Army Civilian Fitness and Health Promotion Program will authorize civilians up to three hours of administrative leave per week, with no more than one hour per day, to participate in physical fitness and preventative health activities, said Todd Fore, the deputy assistant secretary of the Army for civilian personnel.

The program is outlined under Army Directive 2021-03, which was released in January, and will supersede current Army Regulation 600-63 for health promotion. The change will eliminate the one-time use, six-month duration requirement outlined in the old policy, granting civilians more flexibility to achieve their health and fitness goals.

"We received a lot of (program) feed-

back," Fore said. "When it comes to acquiring new personnel, we have people ask about our wellness program. So we rolled out the Army Civilian Fitness and Health Promotion Program to stay competitive."

Retaining personnel is also a top priority, as the program will continue to enhance an individual's work and life balance as well as increase morale, Fore added.

The Army is the third-largest federal employer with close to 300,000 civilians operating throughout the entire force, officials said.

### Contract award announcements

Covalus LLC, Dallas, Texas; Holitna Construction LLC, Anchorage, Alaska; Martek Global Solutions LLC, Bethesda, Maryland; and Workplace Solutions Inc., Jacksonville, Florida, will compete for each order of the \$495,000,000 firm-fixed-price contract to support military healthcare construction/renewal projects. Bids were solicited via the Internet with 19 received. Work locations and funding will be determined with each order, with an estimated completion date

of Feb. 3, 2026. Corps of Engineers, Huntsville, is the contracting activity.

Vectrus Systems Corp., Colorado Springs, Colorado, was awarded an \$18,337,000 modification to contract W52P1J-18-C-0025 to provide all personnel, equipment, supplies, transportation, tools, materials, supervision and other items and non-personal services necessary for food services at the Area Support Group-Kuwait dining facility. Work will be performed in Kuwait City, Kuwait, with an estimated completion date of Feb. 10, 2022. Fiscal 2021 operation and maintenance (Army) funds in the amount of \$18,337,000 were obligated at the time of the award. Army Contracting Command, Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois, is the contracting activity.

General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems, Garland, Texas, was awarded a \$12,722,355 modification to contract W52P1J-18-C-0052 for MK82-1, MK82-6, MK82-8, MK83-4, MK84-6 and BDU-56/B bomb bodies. Work will be performed in Garland, Texas, with an estimated completion date of Sept. 30, 2022. Fiscal 2019 and 2020 aircraft procurement (Army) funds in the amount

of \$12,722,355 were obligated at the time of the award. Army Contracting Command, Rock Island Arsenal, is the contracting activity.

### Defense support to vaccination centers

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has announced that 1,110 active duty service members will support five Federal Emergency Management Agency vaccination centers. Each team will include service members from across the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines, according to Pentagon officials.

The teams will include medical and support personnel. Each team will be composed of: 15 service members for command and control; 80 for administering vaccinations; 15 registered nurses; 57 clinical staff; and 55 general purpose personnel.

FEMA will determine which site each team supports, Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby said.

Kirby noted that masks and social distancing will be enforced on all Defense Department installations to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

# Military

## Chief of chaplains brings spiritual readiness message

By KARI HAWKINS

Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

In support of the Army's focus on people as its number one priority, the chief of chaplains and his regimental sergeant major are on a mission to implement spiritual initiatives that build on the need to approach Soldier development holistically.

That mission has taken Maj. Gen. Thomas Solhjem, the Army's 25th chief of chaplains, and Sgt. Maj. Ralph Martinez on a journey to meet with senior Army leaders and chaplains throughout the enterprise, including during a visit to Redstone Arsenal.

"The mission of Redstone Arsenal is strategic and makes the installation very important to the Army mission," Solhjem said. "It's important to show our support to the mission teams at Redstone and to gain insights from your leadership.

"As at all installations we visit, we take a holistic look at what is impacting the people, both Soldiers and civilians, who live and work there. Redstone Arsenal is a healthy place with a workforce that has had continuity and predictability over many years. It is an established community, and is known as a great place to live and work."

Solhjem met with Army Materiel Command senior leaders – Commander Gen. Ed Daly and Deputy Commander Lt. Gen. Donnie Walker – as well as with Aviation and Missile Command's Deputy Commander Don Nitti, Security Assistance Command's Deputy Commander Myra Gray, and Space and Missile Defense Command's Commander Lt. Gen. Daniel Karbler – to discuss quality of life issues and programs impacting Army communities, including suicide, substance abuse, sexual harassment/assault and extremism prevention programs. In addition, Martinez met with Redstone's chaplains and religious affairs specialists.

"Their visit was bigger than Redstone," AMC Chaplain (Col.) Michael Klein said. "As AMC's subordinate command, the Installation Management Command oversees one-third of the Army Chaplain Corps' end strength.

"The chief of chaplains wants to forge relationships with commanders who have a significant impact on Soldiers. His meetings here were critical to that intent and will have a ripple effect as his message and new initiatives are carried to chaplains and religious affairs specialists serving alongside Soldiers on the front lines."

The mission of the Army Chaplains Corps – to build Army spiritual readiness to deploy, fight and win the nation's wars, by providing reliable and relevant world-class religious support – is nested in the elements of the comprehensive Soldier fitness model.

"Senior Army leaders of major commands need to recognize the spiritual fitness pillar of Soldier development. This is all about getting after the spiritual fitness domain," Solhjem said.

"There is a science of spirituality that shows we are born spiritual – even though we may not be religious – and spiritual wellness is as important as physical, mental and emotional wellness in building resilience, combating negative outcomes, and living healthier and more complete lives."

Solhjem heard from senior leaders that the Redstone chaplain team is effective in connecting with employees, and establishing relationships of trust with both senior leaders and the workforce.

Developing meaningful relationships is an element of Field Manual 7-22, the foundation of unit readiness that uses the Holistic Health and Fitness System to build the physical lethality and mental toughness that Soldiers need to win quickly and return home healthy.

"The spiritual fitness component is very well defined and established," Solhjem said. "Personal faith is the highest form of protection against negative outcomes. There are models to assess a person's spiritual core and then develop it."

The Army is introducing Soldiers to the spiritual aspect of healthy living through presentations by Dr. Lisa Miller of Columbia University. She spoke at the Army Professional Forum in December and to Soldiers at the Training and Doctrine Command in January. Pilot programs designed to develop spiritual readiness are being launched at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Hood, Texas; and Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

"We are bringing to the awareness of Army leaders the effect the science of spiri-



Photo by Doug Brewster

**Gen. Ed Daly, commander of the Army Materiel Command, welcomes Maj. Gen. Thomas Solhjem, the Army's 25th chief of chaplains, on his visit to Redstone Arsenal. Solhjem met with Daly and other Redstone senior leaders to discuss the link between Soldier readiness and spiritual strength while the chaplain's Regimental Sgt. Maj. Ralph Martinez met with Redstone's chaplains and religious affairs specialists.**

tuality has on our Soldiers," Solhjem said. "Spiritual readiness also brings in behavioral health. It's ground breaking and will help in changing the Army's culture."

While the goal is building personal spirituality, the impact of achieving that goal affects the readiness and resiliency of every Army unit, he said.

"Our ministry is to encourage and bolster Soldier morale, and let each Soldier know they are a valued member of the team," Solhjem said. "We are ministering and caring for people with a strategic mission. Historically, the Army spends a lot of time talking about the physical and mental fitness of Soldiers. But now we are integrating spiritual fitness into the equation."

Although spirituality now has a higher profile in overall Soldier well-being, Solhjem said it has always been part of the Army's resiliency program.

"The Army hasn't changed. But society has moved out from underneath many of the core values of the Army's foundation," he said. "For many of today's 18 to 25 year olds, their spiritual life is not well formed. Hence, when they have trauma or difficulty in making decisions, they make poor choices.

"In Soldier training, we are incorporating spiritual development in a more intentional and repetitive way so that it is recognized as a way of life. We are taking a new approach of working with young Soldiers with identifying goals and their purpose, and helping them through the transformation from citizen to Soldier."

In a nation where COVID-19, economic issues, isolation and extremism are testing the resilience of Soldiers and their families, chaplains have the ability to make connections and instill values that can be impactful for Soldiers and the Army, Solhjem and Martinez agreed. While the core competencies of the Army Chaplain Corps – nurture the living, care for the wounded, honor the fallen – still direct the purpose of chaplains and religious affairs specialists, how they are embodied can expand well beyond formal ceremonies and traditional avenues, they said.

"The chaplaincy is going through a lot of transformation. We are looking at how we develop chaplains from a life cycle perspective and how we bring capabilities to a command," Solhjem said. "This is a time of great change for us in terms of how impactful we can be in the development of strong and resilient Soldiers."



Photo by Carrie David Campbell, SMDC

## ROTC guest speaker

**Command Sgt. Maj. Finis Dodson, command sergeant major for the Space and Missile Defense Command, speaks to ROTC students from Alabama A&M University, Athens State University and the University of Alabama in Huntsville at Alabama A&M's Frank Lewis Gym, Feb. 11.**

# Persian Gulf War remembered 30 years later

From combined reports

On Feb. 24, 1991, after weeks of intensive bombing against Iraq and its army, the massive ground war in Kuwait, lasting only 100 hours, began. On Feb. 28, President George Bush declared a ceasefire, ending the Persian Gulf War.

The Persian Gulf War, also called Gulf War (1990-91), was triggered by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990. Iraq's leader, Saddam Hussein, ordered the invasion and occupation of Kuwait with the apparent aim of acquiring that nation's large oil reserves, canceling a large debt Iraq owed Kuwait, and expanding Iraqi power in the region.

On Aug. 3 the United Nations Security Council called for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, and on Aug. 6 the council imposed a worldwide ban on trade with Iraq. (The Iraqi government responded by formally annexing Kuwait on Aug. 8.) Iraq's invasion and the potential threat it then posed to Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer and exporter, prompted the United States and its western European NATO allies to rush troops to Saudi Arabia to deter a possible attack. Egypt and several other Arab nations joined the anti-Iraq coalition and contributed forces to the military buildup, known as Operation Desert Shield. Iraq meanwhile built up its

occupying army in Kuwait to about 300,000 troops.

The Gulf War was waged by coalition forces from 35 nations led by the United States against Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait arising from oil pricing and production disputes. It was codenamed Operation Desert Shield for operations leading to the buildup of troops and defense of Saudi Arabia and Operation Desert Storm in its combat phase.

The war marked the introduction of live news broadcasts from the front lines of the battle, principally by the U.S. network CNN. The war has also earned the nickname Video Game War after the daily broadcast of images from cameras on board U.S. bombers during Operation Desert Storm.

The initial conflict to expel Iraqi troops from Kuwait began with an aerial and naval bombardment on Jan. 17, 1991, continuing for five weeks. This was followed by a ground assault on Feb. 24. This was a decisive victory for the coalition forces, who liberated Kuwait and advanced into Iraqi territory. The coalition ceased its advance and declared a ceasefire 100 hours after the ground campaign started. Aerial and ground combat was confined to Iraq, Kuwait, and areas on Saudi Arabia's border. Iraq launched Scud missiles against Israel and coalition targets in Saudi Arabia.



Army photo by Matt Decker

**The Desert Storm Memorial Stone is located at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., in Fort Leonard Wood's Memorial Grove near the intersection of Nebraska Avenue and Pine Street. As with memorials dedicated to other conflicts, visitors often place coins and other mementos on the stone in memory of those who served.**

## Calling all Operation Desert Storm Veterans

As we get ready to mark the 30th anniversary of Desert Storm, we are looking for Veterans to share their story. If you are interested contact The Rocket's assistant editor, Jonathan Stinson, at [jonathan.stinson@theredstonerocket.com](mailto:jonathan.stinson@theredstonerocket.com)

# Materiel enterprise recognizes employees of quarter

By KARI HAWKINS

Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

A strong work ethic combined with determination, reliability and productivity have led to recognition for 13 Army Materiel Command employees in the organization's Employee of the Quarter awards program.

The employees share qualities that award recipients Richard Coates of AMC's headquarters and Tim Hanson of AMC's Security Assistance Command said are common among all employees who excel at their jobs.

"A strong work ethic is very important and so is your determination to meet your job objectives," Coates said. "Being reliable, productive and dedicated to doing the very best work you can are all good qualities for successful employees. For me, I never like leaving something undone so that someone else has to pick up the slack for me. When I'm at work, I'm there to do a job and to do the best job I can."

Employees who continually seek to improve their capabilities make themselves successful, said Hanson, who works for USA-SAC's Public Affairs Office.

"I'm big on self-assessment and self-improvement," he said. "Regardless of the product or task I complete, I always try and go back and be critical of what I did right and what I can do better the next time. I'm also a really big believer in feedback. Allowing my work to be seen and critiqued from others' viewpoints gives me perspectives I may not have considered before."

AMC's Employee of the Quarter program recognizes employees for their outstanding and innovative contributions that have a direct positive impact on AMC's mission. In addition to recognizing outstanding work performance, the award also recognizes employee abilities to promote a culture of achievement and productivity, contribute to a positive work environment, increase retention and improve employee engagement to impact overall morale.

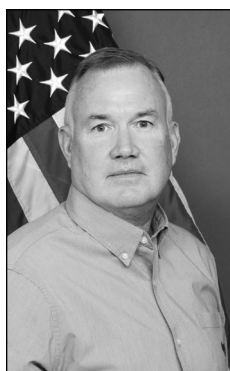
Coates and Hanson are among employees selected from across the AMC enterprise

for their accomplishments during the third quarter of fiscal year 2020. During that time, Coates served as the executive officer for AMC headquarter's Strategic Initiative Group, where he oversaw special projects for the commanding general, produced the SIG's historical report, managed the SIG Sharepoint site and a variety of office operations, and mentored developmental employees, among other tasks. Since then, Coates has moved on to a position with AMC's Congressional Affairs Office.

"I'm very appreciative that my supervisor Mike Mullins thought enough of me to put me in for an award," Coates said. "Awards like this show that leadership is looking out for their people and know how important it is to see them get recognized."

Hanson is recognized for the videos he produced, distributed and publicized when the USASAC-hosted Holocaust Remembrance Observance had to go virtual in April 2020 due to COVID-19.

"When the observance program went virtual, it allowed me to take the lead as the primary videographer. Sharing the stories of four individuals directly or indirectly impacted by the Holocaust along with other stories from that time in history has been the biggest highlight of my broadcasting career," Hanson said.



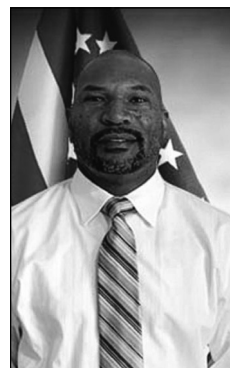
**Richard Coates**



**Tim Hanson**



**George Holland**



**Kevin Threats**

Wanting to increase video viewing throughout the Army and local community, Hanson developed seven videos to be aired throughout April and a campaign strategy to ensure maximum exposure. He also shared the videos with U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and local television stations. As a result, the videos receive 150,000 views from across all of our platforms.

"I'm thankful my supervisor Kim Capehart had faith in me to give me a leadership role within the program, and the support I received from USA-SAC and my public affairs teammates is really why the observance was a success," Hanson said.

"Receiving recognition is big for morale anytime, whether you receive that from fellow employees, your supervisor or from the organizational level. It validates you're doing something right and moving in the right direction professionally, and reinforces the value you bring to your organization."

Employees of the quarter are displayed on the lobby monitors at AMC headquarters and recognized within their organizations.

Employees of the Quarter for third quarter, fiscal year 2020 are:

Richard Coates, executive officer, AMC headquarters, for consistently outstanding performance of duty in all administrative, logistics and automation fields, enhancing

the ability of the commanding general to execute the AMC mission.

George Holland, chief, Contract Administration Division, Army Contracting Command, for negotiating savings totaling \$1.9 billion, directly contributing to the initiative of returning funds for AMC and Army priorities by providing management expertise to effectively allocate unbalanced resources to the most needed areas of operation.

Max Song, division chief, System Support Operations, Financial Management Command, for leading his team to successfully deploy GFEBS-SA to the Army Intelligence and Security Command community, ensuring technological capabilities maturation and evolution were aligned with the Army's and FMCOM's goals and objectives.

Kevin Threats, packaging specialist, Aviation and Missile Command, for leading the formulation of a packaging design proposal that would create a cost reduction alternative for the future RQ-11C Raven, Mid-Range Reconnaissance and Short-Range Reconnaissance systems, providing a cost avoidance prospect of \$2.34 million.

Un Hyang Chon, management analyst, Medical Logistics Command, for superior attention to detail that was key to her ability to communicate and synchronize across echelons to transform organizational structure and optimize medical materiel commodity management across the Korean Peninsula.

Ralph Dunton, logistics management specialist, Army Sustainment Command, for establishing procedures for the Cargo Movement and Operations System that eliminated funds verification delay and reduced wait time from 72 hours to eight hours; for reviewing, reconciling and processing monthly statements totaling over \$185,000; and for increasing the readiness posture of Logistics Readiness Center, Detroit Arsenal.

Sai Liu, computer engineer, Communications-Electronics Command, for serving as a subject matter expert and development lead for the Command, Control and

**See Employees on page 11**

# Employees

Continued from page **10**

Communications Tactical Mission Command Division, Command Post Applications Branch as the division's employees worked to provide solutions to software development during COVID-19.

Joshua Trujillo, information technology specialist, Chemical Materials Activity, for ensuring 100% network user system compliance for Pueblo Chemical Depot personnel, upgrading 495 computers and rectifying 23 Controlled Systems issues, while

serving as the information security systems manager, information systems owner and rapids site security manager.

William Ingram, division chief, Installation Management Command, for generating a cost saving of \$300,000 by resizing transformers and improved traffic signal maintenance, resulting in a cost avoidance of \$60,000 per year.

George Pennington, storage specialist, Joint Munitions Command, for providing solutions that directly enabled steady depot workload for eight years; generated an additional \$3.7 million in revenue from Air Force MK82 work; and resulted in re-

location of Joint Direct Attach Munitions refurbishment, storage and distribution to Blue Grass Army Depot.

Juan Carrillo, supervisory traffic management specialist, Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, for executing his daily duties with great attention to detail and professionalism, setting the bar of professional excellence and increasing the command's efficiency of vessel operations.

Mark Konwinski, lead logistics management specialist, Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, for serving as the lead maintenance point-of-contact for the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Ve-

hicle, coordinating with various stakeholders across the Army to create the first Non-Combat Operation Maintenance Plans message and Quality Assurance/Quality Control checklist for the HMMWV released by the Army.

Tim Hanson, public affairs specialist, Security Assistance Command, for serving as the team lead for the USASAC-hosted Team Redstone all-virtual 2020 Holocaust Days of Remembrance Observation, which was abruptly restructured due to COVID-19 safety measures, with his produced videos becoming the centerpiece of USASAC's electronic observance.



Photo by Tim Hanson

## **New master sergeant**

**Master Sgt. Alicia Codie is pinned with her new rank by her son, Amari, and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Gene Canada. Codie currently works in the Human Resources directorate of the Security Assistance Command, however, she is set to move to her new assignment in the Bahamas in the coming weeks.**

# Recruiter finds right direction by joining Army

By JO ANITA MILEY  
Garrison Public Affairs

A career in the armed forces can provide you a wide range of benefits – like a steady income, access to healthcare, job training, educational assistance and opportunities for travel.

Staff Sgt. Matthew Thompson, a recruiter with the Huntsville Army Recruiting Company, was eager to obtain all of these benefits when he made his decision to join the Army over 14 years ago.

“I was only 17 years old and didn’t know what I wanted to do with my life,” he said. “I decided to join the Army because I was headed in the wrong direction during my last years of high school. I was skipping school and not making good grades. I wasn’t mature enough to go to college at the time and I wanted something better for myself. Someone told me to go down and talk with an Army recruiter and I did. The recruiter told me about the benefits of military service. I had family members who had served so I knew that he was being honest with me. I also wanted to travel and see the world. The Army did that for me.”

Thompson joined the Army from his hometown of Orange Park, Florida. His parents had to sign a waiver for him to join because of his age. He was a part of the Split-Op Program, which allowed future Soldiers to split their basic training and job training. He attended basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia, the summer between his junior and senior year of high school. Once basic was completed and his contract was signed, he was officially in the Army Reserve. After graduating high school, his active duty career began with six weeks of job training as a 42A human resources specialist at Fort. Jackson, South Carolina.

Thompson said he chose his military occupational specialty based on the career he thought would easily translate into a civilian career. The human resources training he received helps him gain the skillset needed to prepare him to become a successful human resources professional once he leaves the military. He is working on getting his human resources certification.

“I come from a family that values military service,” he said. “I have two brothers who served on active duty in the Army, one brother served in the Army Reserves and another who served on active duty in the U.S. Marines. My father retired after serving 20 years in the U.S. Navy. Military service was always a hot topic with my family. It was the choice we made because we all wanted to be independent and start something for ourselves. We thought the career opportunities in the military were limitless. My brothers had some great jobs in the military – an airborne infantryman, X-ray technician an all-wheel mechanic.”

Thompson said the Army has given him unique opportunities for success. He has received some great leadership and training opportunities throughout his military career. He has been selected for some great assignments, too. For instance, he wasn’t expecting a job change in 2019 when he was selected for a three-year assignment to work as a 79R, Army recruiter. He received training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, for seven weeks and he is serving as a local recruiter.

“At the time, I was very proficient in my job and ran my own S-1 shop within my battalion. I wasn’t looking for a different career path,” he said. “I really enjoy working as a HR specialist. I like the interaction you have with others and how I get to help individuals with personnel issues such as pay, promotions, rewards and maintaining their military records. I was excited about becoming a recruiter. I knew that in order to get promoted I needed to take on a broadening assignment, and knew this was a good opportunity for me to do so.

“I was a little concerned because it was outside of my comfort zone. I had to learn an entire new job and MOS. I hadn’t done that in 14 years. I embraced it and received good mentorship from fellow Army recruiters. I like that I get to interact with people and point them in paths that can lead them to great careers in the military.”

Thompson said he was amazed by all the benefits of military service. His recruiting background is beneficial because he can take some of the programs that he has learned as a recruiter back to his HR job to use as he talks with people who are exiting the military.

Thompson said the thing he loves most about serving in the Army is the family he has gained and the special people he has met. He attributes the Army for his meeting his wife, Staff Sgt. Vanessa Thompson, a religious affairs specialist at Bicentennial Chapel.

The two met while both were assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McCord and they have one son together, Nikolai Rosado. Thompson said their being a dual couple creates a special bond in their marriage because they understand each other and are very sup-



Courtesy photo

**Army recruiter Staff Sgt. Matthew Thompson and his wife, Staff Sgt. Vanessa Thompson, bought their first home together in 2020. Thompson said military service helped make this milestone possible.**

portive of each other. He said the thing he likes least about military service is being away from family. He was deployed on tours to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Although Thompson said his years of military service have passed by swiftly, he’s still enjoying all the benefits. The Army gave him a solid foundation that allows him to help take care of his family. The couple bought their first home together in 2020.

“My greatest accomplishment in the military has been providing for my family and being the best husband and father I can be,” he said. “We’re able to attend college, buy a house together and travel around the world – all through serving in the military. It’s huge for me that I am able to help take care of my family.”

Thompson said while working as a recruiter allows him to pay forward his indebtedness to the Army, finding the next generation of Soldiers isn’t always easy.

“Being able to relate to teenagers, adapting and overcoming the changing world is quite the challenge for me,” he said. “When I was younger, you knew what kids would be doing, things like a pickup basketball game or hanging out at a community center. Nowadays you don’t. They are on their cellphones, playing videogames and working. They are smart – defiantly smarter than I was coming out of high school, and they have to deal with so much more. I also have to deal with my own ego and hearing the word ‘no’ over and over if someone isn’t interested in military service.”

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Thompson said his recruiting station got a lot of foot traffic. The recruiting team would also go out into the community to talk with students about serving in the Army. He said they aren’t allowed into most schools right now and there aren’t many students coming to their recruiting station inside Parkway Place Mall because of safety concerns due to the pandemic. Recruiters are finding new ways to connect with people and are on social media more now.

Thompson said the highlight of his day is when he gets to talk with an individual about military service. He loves the opportunity to show someone the benefits of military service and often uses himself as an example to tell his Army story.

“Not every job in the military allows you an opportunity to impact people on such a personal level,” he said. “I love the way we honestly change people’s lives. It’s kind of my way of paying it forward. Without the opportunities the Army has given me, I wouldn’t be at the place that I’m at. Now I’m going to pass it on to other individuals to propel them into their future Army careers. The best advice I can give an individual who is thinking about military service is to take care of your health and stay out of trouble. Come talk to a recruiter and find out the facts. I’m glad I did.”

For more information about joining the Army, call the Huntsville Army Recruiting Station at 518-3972.

## **Redstone Arsenal Environmental Program Request for Interest from the Community in Formation of a Redstone Arsenal Restoration Advisory Board**

Redstone Arsenal (RSA), located in Madison County, Alabama, and occupying approximately 38,300 acres, is the site of ongoing environmental restoration activities. Environmental restoration on U.S. Department of Defense installations requires local community input and exchange of information. To ensure that all community members and leaders have an opportunity to participate in the cleanup process, the U.S. Army Garrison-Redstone is again interested in determining if there is sufficient interest from the community to form a Restoration Advisory Board (RAB).

The RAB would be a group consisting of representatives from the Army, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), local and tribal governments, and the affected community. The RAB's function would be to discuss, identify, and advise decision makers of the most efficient and productive means concerning environmental cleanup at RSA.

The RAB would:

- Consist of interested community members and leaders who would volunteer their time to review and comment on the Army's proposed actions at environmental sites.
- Meet on a regular basis with representatives from RSA, EPA, and ADEM to exchange information, concerns, and recommendations regarding environmental cleanup.

Technical assistance may be available to the RAB, whereby members would have access to independent technical consultants for help in understanding technical issues.

The Garrison Commander will establish a RAB at RSA if there is sufficient and sustained community interest and

- At least 50 citizens have expressed interest in formation of a RAB, or
- Federal, state, or local government representatives request formation of a RAB.

The U.S. Army Garrison-Redstone solicits interest in establishing an RAB every two years. To date, there has not been sufficient community interest to establish a RAB at RSA. There are, however, other opportunities for involvement in the remedial actions at RSA. A fact sheet explaining the various opportunities for becoming involved in making decisions about remediation or cleanup at RSA is available.

**For a copy of the public involvement fact sheet, or to express interest in the formation of a RAB, please contact the below POC by 3 March 2021:**

Ms. Amelia Hice, Public Affairs Specialist  
U.S. Army Garrison Redstone  
4488 Martin Road, 2nd Fl. Rm. A-213  
Redstone Arsenal, Alabama 35898-5000  
Telephone: (256) 876-0807  
E-mail : amelia.r.hice.civ@mail.mil





Photo by Jason Cutshaw

## Meritorious service cited

**Col. David Baxter, chief of staff, Space and Missile Defense Command, presents the Meritorious Civilian Service Medal to Mellisa Cooper, executive assistant for the SMDC chief of staff and deputy chief of staff, during a ceremony Feb. 11. Cooper started in her position in July 2018 and will soon begin a new chapter in her career at Fort Rucker.**

# Soldier proud of his Vietnam veteran uncle

By KARI HAWKINS

Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

Col. John Motszko was an infant when his uncle James Schueler returned from his tour of duty in Vietnam.

Even so, Uncle Jim's wartime service has inspired Motszko throughout this military career.

"His service has always been a point of pride for me," Motszko said. "During deployments and training, I always knew no matter how difficult things would get for me, he had survived far worse."

Motszko's 28 years of Army service includes multiple deployments to Iraq and other locations in the Middle East, and to Bosnia. He has also served as the commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company 16th Special Troops Battalion in Baumholder, Germany. Motszko is the military deputy for Army Materiel Command's Human Resources (G-1). His uncle is among several family members of AMC headquarters employees who are being recognized through AMC's Vietnam Veteran Commemoration Program.

Schueler, 71, lives in Winona, Minnesota. He was drafted into the Army in early 1969, deployed to Vietnam as a specialist four with D Company, 864th Combat Engineer Battalion, and released from service in May 1970 upon his return from theater.

"Two of the places I spent most of my time was around Pha Thiet and Whiskey Mountain, about 100 miles north of Saigon," Schueler recalled. "There were about

**See Uncle on page 21**



Courtesy photo

**Today, James Schueler, 71, the uncle of Army Materiel Command's Col. John Motszko, is a Vietnam veteran being recognized for his service through AMC's Vietnam War Commemoration Program.**

**Service honored**  
*An ongoing series*

# Uncle

Continued from page 20

10 Soldiers per tent with 60 Soldiers in my unit.”

As a newly trained Soldier arriving in Vietnam, Schueler still remembers the gut-wrenching feeling of fear mixed with the overwhelming need to survive not only war but also the sweltering weather.

“As the door of the plane opened, I felt the unbearable heat and humidity, and it took my breath away. I had to face the fact I was stuck here for a year unless I went home in a body bag,” he said. “During the monsoon season, it would rain every day and then, when the sun would come out, it would be even muggier. And I will never forget the bugs.”

But Schueler did manage to survive and make significant contributions to protect the lives of his fellow Soldiers.

“I had my own welding shop in a tent, which I built from the ground up,” he said. “This is where I spent most of my time in a support unit building National Highway 1 (the main north-south road of Vietnam). Not only did I weld, I fixed and updated equipment. My duties also included guarding camp, and going out to retrieve broken and battle-damaged equipment.”

Needless to say, there were many close calls during a war without a definitive front line.

“You had to be very cautious never knowing who was friend or foe, or when a mortar might come in,” Schueler said. “I was very thankful that one did not land on any of us. One landed in front of my welding tent and also in our tent. Thank God I wasn’t there at that time. One thing I did learn was to take the good with the bad.”

Schueler’s welding skill was called on to modify transport vehicles to create heavily armed/armored gun trucks in response to Viet Cong ambushes of convoys.

“I recall him saying that the frequency



Courtesy photo

**James Schueler was barely out of high school when he was drafted to go to Vietnam. During his tour, he worked as a welder, helping to build National Highway 1, and to repair and upgrade vehicles and equipment damaged by the Viet Cong.**

of ambushes dropped off dramatically as the gun trucks were embedded in the convoys,” Motszko said.

Schueler also created mortar pads for

employment of indirect fire support to provide support as Soldiers fired mortar rounds. It’s a task that Motszko can appreciate due to his own experience as a mortarman firing 4.2-inch mortars.

“I cannot imagine the nightmare of trying to return fire when your 198-pound base plate is being driven deeper into wet mud with the recoil of every round you drop,” Motszko said.

When he returned home, Schueler was confronted by another enemy – public

opinion of the war.

“I came back to the states in the middle of the night and had to be dressed in civilian clothes because of the Vietnam protest that was going on,” he said.

Schueler’s wartime duty left him with a perspective on war and the well-being of Soldiers that he continues to express to his nephew and others who have chosen a Soldier’s career.

“What I would like John to take from my service is never go to war unless totally necessary, and that war should not be political,” he said. “Also, and this is very important: Never send any Soldier straight out of combat to civilian life. They need time to get rid of all the stuff they went through. Programs that recognize wartime service – like AMC’s Vietnam recognition program – help with the healing.”

When comparing living conditions of a Vietnam Soldier with modern-day warfighters, Motszko has a significant appreciation for how the Army treats Soldiers today.

“One interesting experience proves just how good quality of life has improved for Soldiers in the field,” Motszko said. “Some of the rations my uncle ate in Vietnam were actually packaged during WWII and Korea, and they would often heat up these rations by burning C4 explosive.”

Although AMC can’t change the public’s perceptions from 50 years ago or the wartime conditions Vietnam veterans endured, Motszko said he is grateful for the recognition AMC and other military groups are giving to Vietnam veterans today.

“My family has always been proud of those who served. I think most of my family felt Vietnam veterans sacrificed a great deal and were not treated with the respect they deserved when they returned from combat,” he said. “Recognition programs like AMC’s shows the nation’s pride in these veterans.”

*Editor’s Note: Service honored is an ongoing Army Materiel Command series highlighting AMC employees or their family members who served during the Vietnam War. AMC is a partner of the Vietnam War Commemoration Program. To learn more about AMC’s Vietnam veteran recognition program, contact Lt. Col. Travis Nauman at [travis.j.nauman.mil@mail.mil](mailto:travis.j.nauman.mil@mail.mil) or 450-6101.*

## SERVICE HONORED



Graphic by Eben Boothby, AMC

# Community

## School system leaders share update during pandemic

By **KATIE DAVIS SKELLEY**

Staff writer/Social media

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In a year like no other, the ninth annual State of the Schools also looked different than before.

Sponsored by the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber, Chamber Foundation and The Schools Foundation, what was normally a breakfast for local business and community leaders, Redstone leadership and educators, changed to an online platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the first time, the superintendents were joined by Principal Matt Massey from the Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering magnet school. Massey, a former Madison County Schools superintendent, updated on the progress of the school, which has 70 students. Massey said the school is accepting applications through February and has 80-90 slots open for qualifying rising freshmen and sophomores.

After Massey, the superintendents each spoke of the unprecedented challenges their school systems faced in 2020 and their plans for 2021. Each applauded their educator workforce.

“COVID is not a stumbling block, it is a stepping stone,” Madison County Schools Superintendent Allen Perkins said.

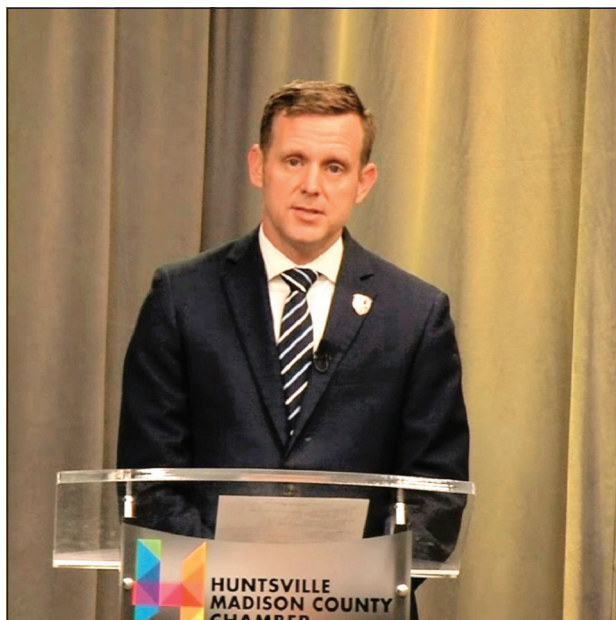
Both Huntsville City Schools Superintendent Christie Finley and Madison City Schools Superintendent Ed Nichols shared about navigating the past year as an educator and parent, with each having a child in high school. Finley spoke of watching her child’s spark return once he returned to on-campus school. Nichols shared that he had encouraged his daughter to stay positive as she embarked on her senior year.

All three discussed how they had consulted each other during the pandemic. And while “sometimes sitting in the seat of the superintendent can be lonely,” according to Finley, they banded together as they made decisions for their systems.

One big change that all of the superintendents pointed to was the hiring of added counselors to help students cope with the pandemic.

“Our focus is a ‘whole child’ focus,” Perkins said. Nichols said his main goal when taking over as superintendent in 2020 amid the pandemic was to find the students who might be slipping through the cracks and help them find success. He pointed to a \$150,000 grant from Mazda that will create a college and career readiness program for underserved students in the Madison school system.

“All of our kids are gifted – our challenge as edu-



Screenshot by Katie Davis Skelley

**Matt Massey, Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering principal**



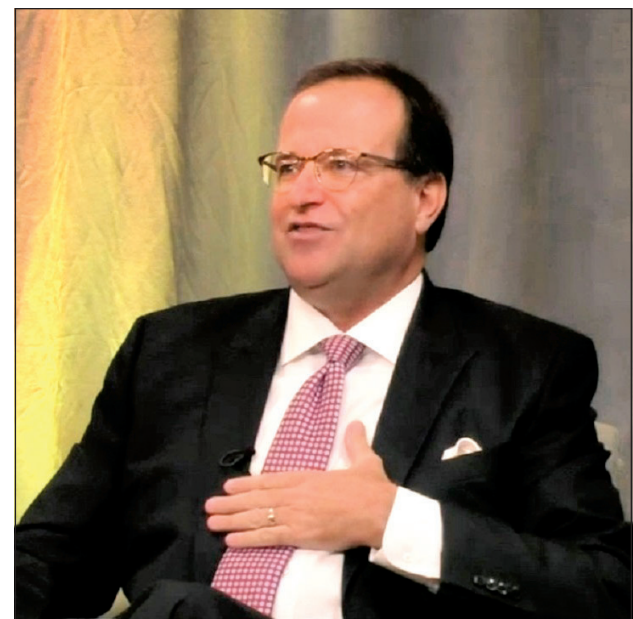
Screenshot by Katie Davis Skelley

**Allen Perkins, Madison County Schools superintendent**



Screenshot by Katie Davis Skelley

**Christie Finley, Huntsville City Schools superintendent**



Screenshot by Katie Davis Skelley

**Ed Nichols, Madison City Schools superintendent**

cators is to find the gift of a child that drives them to do their very best,” Nichols said.

Nichols thanked Assistant Superintendent Eric Terrell for stepping up as interim superintendent during the school closures in spring 2020. He said that he understood when decisions were made that

parents did not agree with, and that he recognized where communication could be better. But on those bad days, he said he would step out of his office and visit a school.

“It puts a smile on your face – even behind a mask,” Nichols said.

# New center serves needs of Madison County residents

By EMILY STRICKLAND

Staff writer

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Madison County Commission Chairman Dale Strong last week gave local media a tour of the new Madison County Service Center at 1918 North Memorial Parkway.

The new service center, set to open on March 1, is a 60,100-square-foot facility where Madison County residents will be able to renew driver's licenses, apply for passports, register to vote and more.

Six county departments will be housed in the building: the board of registrars, driver's license office, probate judge, sales tax division, tax assessor's office and county tax collector. Strong emphasized the location's potential to offer "one-stop service" for Madison County residents.

The project is set to be completed "under budget and ahead of schedule," according to Strong. The initial budget for the project was set at nearly \$14 million, while the final cost totaled just under \$11.6 million.

Strong said the project truly began in 2012 when he was elected chairman of the Madison County Commission. The property was purchased in 2019 for \$3.3 million and the county contracted Chapman Sisson Architects to design the building and Lee Builders Inc. to complete the construction.

In addition to creating a more streamlined and accessible process for Madison County residents, the new facility will free up space in the Courthouse that was previously used by the six departments. The tax assessor, sales tax and board of registrars have already

moved to their new location, and the moving schedule for the other three departments is as follows: tax collector, Feb. 16-18; license department, Feb. 19-24; and probate judge, Feb. 22-25. The Madison, Parkway Place Mall and Bailey Cove license satellite offices will still be open.

Strong said that moving the six departments out of the courthouse will allow that space to truly function as a judicial branch, with larger courtrooms to support grand juries and generally guarantee a more expeditious process, continuing to protect residents' Sixth Amendment right to a fair and speedy trial.

"Right now, practically every square inch of that courtroom is being utilized," Strong said. "We will move over approximately 175 employees, freeing up spaces from these departments. ... We will move the entire district attorney staff back into the Courthouse."

The new facility boasts 350 parking spaces, a bus stop and several bike racks so that it is as accessible as possible.

Upon entering the building, individuals will step through a metal detector and all bags will be checked. Then, there are four touch-screen kiosks where residents may select the service they need. Individuals will be given a list of required documentation to complete the service and a number stating their place in line. When it is their turn to be serviced, the number is announced over a loudspeaker and also appears on the four televisions around the waiting area.

The kiosk system was designed to step in when employees cannot, communicating clearly with residents so they are prepared



Photo by Emily Strickland

**Madison County Commission Chairman Dale Strong and Chief Information Officer Bryon Campbell demonstrate the new kiosk system.**

with all of the information they need when it is time to complete their task.

The facility will also have a sophisticated IT department, breakrooms, conference rooms and office spaces designed with the unique needs of each department in mind. Strong feels confident that the facility will have the functionality to address the needs of an ever-growing Madison County.

"This right here will create a convenient and centralized location in Madison County for residents," Strong said.

He also thanked Madison County commissioners since 2012 that worked to save money for the new facility. "It doesn't work without good commissioners that have a vision and understand the objective that we're seeking for the people of Madison County," Strong said.



Photo by Emily Strickland

**This is the view from the second floor of the Madison County Service Center.**



Photo by Emily Strickland

**The Madison County Service Center, at 1918 North Memorial Parkway, will open March 1.**

# Vietnam veteran's oldest daughter joined Army in 1975

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Jane Hoelscher remembers her fifth-grade teacher in Michigan calling her dad a “baby killer” for being a Soldier in Vietnam in 1965-66. She remembers the protesters at the airport spitting in her dad’s face when he returned home.

She remembers two Soldiers mistakenly coming to her house to tell them that her dad was killed in Vietnam even though he was at work at his steel mill job in 1968.

But none of that stopped Hoelscher from joining the Army in 1975.

“I was the oldest (of three children). I wanted to be independent,” she said.

Hoelscher, an elementary school teacher in Clayton County, Georgia, near Atlanta, served in the Army from 1975-81 and she left as a sergeant.

“I believe that the military gave me integrity, dignity, respect – respect for myself and respect for others – and a firm work ethic,” she said.

Besides wanting the independence, she also joined because she liked traveling and she wanted training for a job. She was used to traveling from growing up in an Army family with her parents and younger sister and brother.

Her father, Robert Harrison, first served from 1952-54, then married her mother and he joined again in 1956 and served until 1966. He left active duty as a staff sergeant when he returned home in 1966 and he retired from the Reserve in 1981 as a first sergeant. Harrison, a heavy smoker, died in 1983 from a massive heart attack. He was 53.

“Being that I was the oldest, I was very influenced by the military when I was a child,” Hoelscher said.

She graduated from high school in Riverview, Michigan, in 1973. Her father had always told her she needed a college degree if she was going to succeed. Hoelscher went to Monroe Community College in Monroe, Michigan, from 1973-75 and earned an associate degree in journalism.

Mature for her age, at college she connected with older students who were Vietnam veterans. She knew what rank they had when they wore their old uniform shirts in the cafeteria. They were using the GI Bill which was about to change after 1975. Hoelscher got accepted to Central Michigan University but she didn’t have the money she needed. She ended up with two part-time jobs at the local mall.

She discussed her options with her father, who was then in the Reserve, and decided the Army was her best option. She wanted to join before Christmas 1975 would bring a change in the GI Bill so she entered that October. Her mother, Helen Harrison, remembering the Army’s mistaken identity death report in 1968, got upset about her decision. Her mother died last May.

Hoelscher did basic training at Fort Jackson, South



Courtesy photos

**At left, Robert Harrison stands in front of his mother’s house in Michigan before leaving for Vietnam in 1965. In the other picture, his daughter Jane Hoelscher, the oldest of three children, finishes basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., in 1975.**

Carolina. She had advanced individual training at Fort Gordon, Georgia, as a radio teletype Morse code operator. Coincidentally her dad had been a radio teletype operator and infantryman. She went to Fort Riley, Kansas, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and finally Darmstadt, Germany, from 1979-81 where she finished her career.

“I was one of the last groups of WACs (Women’s Army Corps),” Hoelscher said.

She earned a bachelor’s in elementary education from Drury University in 1987, a master’s in early childhood education from West Georgia in 1998 and a specialist degree from Lincoln Memorial University in 2012.

She did her student teaching in Missouri and she served as a teacher for the Department of Defense in Germany from 1990-92. She saw the Berlin Wall come down while working in Bamberg after seeing the wall go up as a child while her dad was stationed in Germany. She arrived in Georgia in the summer of 1992 and she has taught in Clayton County the past 28 years. She plans to retire June 1 after more than 30 years of teaching.

Her former husband, William, a veteran of the Persian Gulf War, died from cancer in 2014. Her daughter, Julie, who was born in Frankfurt, Germany, resides in Atlanta.

Hoelscher, 65, who resides in Henry County, Georgia, plans to resume traveling after the pandemic. She also enjoys reading historical fiction.

She shared her thoughts on this nation’s commemoration of 50 years since the Vietnam War.

“We have to learn from our mistakes,” she said. “And we have to face the challenges of the next century. We have to use technology to make our lives better but

technology doesn’t need to rule our lives.”

*Editor’s note: This is the 307th in a series of articles about Vietnam veterans as the United States commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.*



Courtesy photo

**Jane Hoelscher, who served in the Army from 1975-81, is an elementary school teacher in Clayton County, Ga.**

**Vietnam revisited**  
*Part 307 in series*

# Federal

## Moon Trees stand as testaments to first lunar voyages



NASA photos

A Half-Moon Tree is planted outside building 4708 at Marshall in 1996 by center leaders of the time, from left, Director Wayne Littles, Deputy Center Director Carolyn Griner, and Associate Director for Science Rick Chappell. Chappell was also an alternate payload specialist for the STS-45 mission in 1992. The leaders visited the tree during a Marshall Earth Day celebration in 2009. The tree continued to show good health in 2019 – third image from the left – and remains strong in the 2021 winter.

By WILL BRYAN

NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

The craters, mountains and plains of the Moon stretched beneath the Apollo 14 Command and Service Module Kitty Hawk in February 1971. While Commander Alan Shepard and Lunar Module Pilot Edgar Mitchell explored the Fra Mauro region of Earth's celestial neighbor, Com-

mand Module Pilot Stuart Roosa conducted observations, experiments and scientific investigations in lunar orbit.

Flying passively in Roosa's personal travel kit on Kitty Hawk 50 years ago was a canister of approximately 400-500 loblolly pine, sweet gum, redwood, Douglas fir, and sycamore tree seeds. Upon return, the

**See Trees on page 33**



NASA graphic



NASA photo by Will Bryan

A sycamore Moon Tree planted at Mississippi State University in 1975 is the parent tree to many second-generation trees called Half-Moon Trees, including the one at Marshall.

NASA photo

# Booster segments

Teams stacked the second to last set of solid rocket booster segments for NASA's Space Launch System rocket onto the mobile launcher inside the Vehicle Assembly Building at NASA's Kennedy Space Center. The boosters will help power Artemis I, the first mission of NASA's Artemis program. A crane was used to lower the righthand forward center booster segment onto the center booster segment Feb. 4. Teams are stacking the twin five-segment solid rocket boosters on the mobile launcher over a number of weeks. To stack the boosters, engineers with NASA's Exploration Ground Systems and Jacobs transport the segments from Kennedy's Rotation, Processing and Surge Facility, where they have been since June. Once fully stacked, the SLS boosters will be 17 stories high. The boosters will provide more than 75% of the total thrust at launch.



# DeCesaris joins NASA from Missile Defense Agency

By NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

Paula DeCesaris has been appointed to the Senior Executive Service position of deputy director of the Spacecraft and Vehicle Systems Department in the Engineering Directorate at Marshall Space Flight Center, effective Feb. 14.

The Senior Executive Service is the personnel system covering most of the top managerial positions in federal agencies.

DeCesaris comes to Marshall from the Missile Defense Agency, where she was technical director for test since 2015. DeCesaris was responsible for all technical aspects of planning, designing, and execution of the Ballistic Missile Defense System tests. She was also the agency's cybersecurity testing lead, overseeing a diverse team to meet an increased testing pace, resulting in the successful execution of more than 340 exoatmospheric flight, ground and cybersecurity tests. She also developed a long-term investment strategy for a responsive, risk-managed future test program.

DeCesaris began her federal service career in 1997 as an aerospace engineer at the Naval Surface Warfare Center

in Dahlgren, Virginia. In 2001, she accepted a rotational assignment to the Test and Evaluation Directorate of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization as the deputy program manager for the organization's flight test airborne sensors assets. As the organization began limited defensive operations in 2005, DeCesaris became the Models and Simulations Accreditation agent and Independent Verification and Validation agent for the Ground Based Missile Defense program, and was later the Models and Simulations lead for the Missile Defense Agency Targets and Countermeasures program.

In 2007, DeCesaris officially joined the Missile Defense Agency as the Models and Simulations lead and division chief for the Ground Based Missile Defense Program. After later serving as a supervisor in the agency's Ballistic Missile Defense System Models and Simulations Directorate, she became the director for System Assessment for the Missile Defense Agency Director of Engineering, where she was responsible for technical assessments of the Ballistic Missile Defense System as well as ground tests, cybersecurity, and digital Models and Simulations requirements and planning. As



Paula DeCesaris

director of System Assessment from 2011 to 2015, she was responsible for planning, funding, and executing all Ballistic Missile Defense system-level assessments, including judging the system impact from the addition of every new Ballistic Missile Defense System Element software and hardware build and upgrade to the Operational Ca-

capacity Baseline as well as all Missile Defense Agency Technical Capability Declarations.

DeCesaris is an active participant in several professional forums, including the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, where she has authored and presented numerous papers. She has published various technical articles, papers, and reports in many additional national and international defense forums and has received multiple awards, including the Award for Excellence from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award.

A Department of Defense Acquisition Corps member, DeCesaris is Level III certified in Engineering, Program Management, and Test and Evaluation and holds a bachelor's in physics from Furman University. She also has a master's in aerospace engineering from Auburn University and is a senior executive fellow with Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School for Government.

A native of Greer, South Carolina, DeCesaris lives in Huntsville with her husband, Chet, and her young daughter, Dori.

## Trees

Continued from page 31

seeds were germinated and grew into "Moon Trees" found around the U.S. and world.

"The historic voyages of the Apollo program were about bold exploration and incredible scientific discovery," acting NASA Chief Historian Brian Odom said. "Apollo 14 included the widest range of scientific experiments to that point in the program, but in the case of Roosa's 'Moon Trees,' it was what the astronauts took with them on their lunar journey that has left such an indelible mark on the landscape back on Earth."

A joint effort between NASA and the U.S. Forest Service, the seeds were flown as an experiment to determine the effects of deep space on seeds and also to help raise awareness about the Forest Service and the wildland forest firefighters called smokejumpers. Roosa served as a smokejumper in the 1950s – jumping out of airplanes to combat the blazes – before becoming a military aviator and astronaut.

Ed Cliff, chief of the Forest Service, came up with the Moon Tree concept. Cliff knew of Roosa from Roosa's time as a smokejumper, and he contacted the astronaut to propose the idea. Stan Krugman, a geneticist at the Forest Service, was placed in charge of the project and selected the seeds that flew into lunar orbit on Apollo 14.

Following the mission, the canister ruptured during decontamination processes, and the seeds were mixed together. The experiment's environment was compromised, and the seeds were feared to be dead. Nonetheless, they were sent to Forest Service offices in Gulfport, Mississippi, and Placerville, California, to see if any could be germinated and grown into saplings. Some 450 saplings were grown.

Moon Tree saplings were gifted to schools, universities, parks, and government offices, many as part of the U.S. bicentennial celebrations in 1976. Locations were chosen, in part, to ensure proper climate conditions for the respective tree species.

In a telegram to U.S. Bicentennial Moon Tree planting ceremonies, then-President Gerald Ford said, "This tree, which was carried by Astronauts Stuart Roosa, Alan Shepard, and Edgar Mitchell on their mission to the Moon, is a living symbol of our spectacular human and scientific achievements. It is a fitting tribute to our national space program which has brought out the best of American patriotism, dedication and determination to succeed."

Some trees were planted beside their Earth-grown counterparts. After decades of growth, no discernable differences can be found between the trees that grew from seeds that traveled to the Moon and those that never left Earth.

Second-generation trees, grown from Moon Tree seeds, are sometimes known as Half-Moon Trees and are also growing around the world. One such Half-Moon Tree calls Marshall Space Flight Center its home, as it stands on the north side of building 4708 – a building that played a key

role in development of the Saturn V rocket that launched the Apollo 14 mission. The tree was planted in 1996 by three Marshall leaders of the time – Director Wayne Littles, Deputy Director Carolyn Griner, and Associate Director for Science Rick Chappell – and has grown into a vibrant part of the landscape.

As NASA and its international, industrial, and academic partners prepare to return humans to the Moon as part of the Artemis program, understanding the effects of deep space on plant growth is critical – a foundation the Apollo 14 mission helped lay. Astronauts on the Moon and Mars will be too far from Earth for regular resupply missions carrying fresh food, so they must be able to grow their own.

Experiments on the International Space Station are studying the growth of various plants and crops, which could be used as food for spacefaring astronauts. In November 2020, NASA astronaut Kate Rubins, a member of the Expedition 64 crew, harvested a crop of radishes. Other crops grown on the space station include red romaine lettuce, Mizuna mustard greens, and zinnia flowers.

All crops grown in space have Apollo 14 in their roots. Five decades after the mission that took seeds to the Moon, the trees that grew from the seeds stand as living, leafy testaments to humanity's first voyages to the Moon, while the crops grown in space since enable the continuation of humanity's exploration of the cosmos.

*Editor's note: Will Bryan, a Manufacturing Technical Solutions employee, supports Marshall's Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications.*

## Sports

# 12U Redstone Rockets find open shots in season finale



Photo by Skip Vaughn

**Rashad Jones takes a jump shot for Redstone in the visiting Rockets win over Liberty. He finished with 11 points.**

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com

After Redstone's 12-and-under Rockets committed a turnover early in the second half, coach Johnnie Irby implored his team not to get comfortable with their double-digit lead.

The Rockets didn't let up.

They pulled away to beat Liberty 39-17 on Feb. 9 at the Sandra Moon Complex in southeast Huntsville. The Rockets finished their season at 9-2.

"We moved the ball really well tonight," Irby said. "We were able to get uncontested shots which led to a lot of easy baskets. Over the last three games, the team chemistry and morale has boosted. So pretty much towards the end of the season, they finally got the concept of defense, energy and teamwork."

Demario Nobles had 14 points, nine rebounds and three steals for the Rockets. The 12-year-old wing has played basketball since he was 5.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

**Redstone's Demario Nobles drives against Liberty's Russ Russell in the first half. Redstone won 39-17 on Feb. 9 at the Sandra Moon Complex in southeast Huntsville.**

"It was great," Nobles said. "We had to pass the ball around to our teammates to get open.

"I feel like I played good. My teammates set me up on good looks to score."

Rashad Jones added 11 points and three steals. Elijah Naylon had six steals and five rebounds. Caleb Jones and Joshua Naylon made two assists apiece.

Redstone led 5-4 after one quarter, 17-5 at halftime and 25-14 after three quarters.

Hudson Broadway had 11 points, five rebounds and three steals for Liberty (2-8). Russ Russell grabbed eight rebounds.

"I think that we played hard and that we didn't quit," Liberty coach Tanya Broadway said.

An all-star team representing Redstone will compete in the 12U Alabama Recreation and Parks Association District II tournament, Feb. 25-27 at Madison County High School. The team will have six players apiece from Redstone's two 12U teams. Irby will assist coach Michael Crum. The district tournament will have teams from Madison County, Huntsville and surrounding areas.

The ARPA state tournament will be March 12-14 at Albertville/Boaz.

# Retired colonel serves as Hula Bowl's military ambassador

From combined reports

Redstone Arsenal was well-represented at this year's nationally televised Hula Bowl despite no fans in the stands at Aloha Stadium in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Three Redstone employees had connections to the postseason college football all-star game played Jan. 31 and telecast on CBS. The game was played without fans in attendance because of the pandemic.

Retired Col. Jeff Finley, who works

at the Army Materiel Command, wore his Army uniform as the game's military ambassador. Rod Matthews, aviation contracts director for Army Contracting Command-Redstone, saw his son asked to be a receivers coach for the game's NFL prospects. His son is 49ers receiver Jordan Matthews.

Patrick O'Farrell, programs officer for the Program Executive Office for Aviation, served on the Hula Bowl's leadership team. He was inducted into this year's Hula Bowl Hall of Fame along

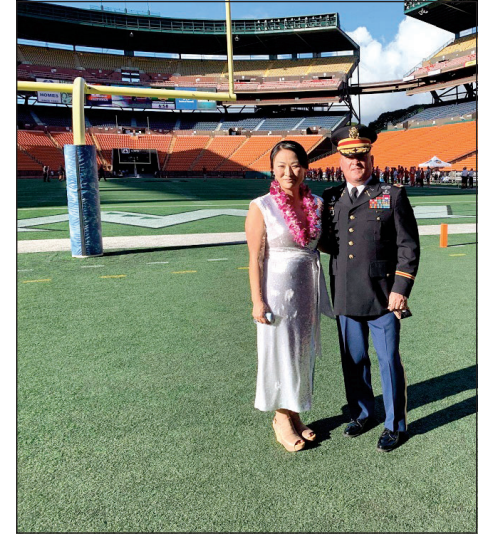
with Drew Brees, Tim Brown, Steve Spurrier and Jesse Sapulo.

O'Farrell was inducted for ensuring all 94 of the players on the rosters were protected during the pandemic by installing Synexis bio-defense devices in the Aloha Stadium locker rooms. The devices were also installed in the hotel where the players stayed and in the Hula Bowl headquarters.

Team Kai, coached by Rex Ryan, won 15-13 over Team Aina, coached by Mike Singletary. An offensive and defensive MVP were named for each team. For Team Kai, the most valuable players were running back CJ Marable (Coastal Carolina) and cornerback Nick McCloud (Notre Dame). For Team Aina, the MVPs were running back Mekhi Sargent (Iowa) and defensive end Carlo Kemp (Michigan).

The 94 college seniors showcased their talents in front of 32 NFL scouts from each National Football League team, one Canadian Football League scout, and one WWE wrestling entertainment scout.

"Last year over 60 players signed with the NFL," O'Farrell said. "And this year



Courtesy photo

**Retired Col. Jeff Finley is accompanied by his wife, Mimi, at Aloha Stadium in Honolulu where he served as military ambassador for the Hula Bowl, Jan. 31. He works at the Army Materiel Command.**

it looks like the number will be in the 70s."

# Little voice should always have last say

That little voice inside my head worked for me again. This time I was looking for a youth basketball game to cover last week. I knew it was the last week of the regular season in the Huntsville recreational league.

My Redstone schedule showed two games set for the night of Feb. 8. So I showed up early in the parking lot at the Youth Center. No other cars were there. I knocked on the front door of the locked darkened facility. A lady who was cleaning up answered the door and told me there were no games that night. So I left.

I figured my last hope for finding a game the rest of the week would be maybe catching a 17-and-under game at the Susan Moon Complex. That was the former Grissom High School about a mile or two away from my house in southeast Huntsville.

On the afternoon of Feb. 9, the little voice inside my head told me to go jogging in the old Grissom parking lot. The little voice told me to take an extra shirt just in case I'd have something to wear if I needed to cover a game inside the building.

I did my usual slow trot around the parking lot. I asked two people walking their dog if they knew what time the games were. They said no.

I finished my first lap and saw a few cars parked in the lot in front of the gym. I asked a guy walking toward the building if he knew the games schedule. He told me there was a 12U game at 5:30 p.m. and another game at 7. Then I heard someone call my name and I

turned around.

Johnnie Irby, coach of Redstone's 12U Rockets, was sitting in his car. He had just pulled up. I asked him when his team might be playing. He replied that they had the 5:30 game.

I was pleasantly surprised. I told Irby I'd do one more lap and then get my notebook, scorebook and camera from my car so I could cover his game.

The Rockets beat Liberty 39-17 in their final game of the season. I had my story. What were the odds of the team I was looking for to happen to be playing at my neighborhood gym on the afternoon I happened to be jogging around the building?

That little voice was right again. I've already recounted in previous writings here how the voice had saved my life in the past. It told me to speed up at the finish line of a marathon seconds before 1,000 pounds of metal blew down from the clock scaffolding. It told me to turn toward home instead of going to a jewelry store before the store's roof collapsed from a tornado that evening.

Always listen to the little voice. It works in sports reporting, too.

## From the sidelines

By **Skip Vaughn**  
Rocket editor

# Your glory days in sports

By **SKIP VAUGHN**

Rocket editor

[skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com](mailto:skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com)

## *How do you stay in shape?*

"Try to work out four days a week. Lifting weights," Nathan Russell, a design team leader in the engineering division in Garrison's Directorate of Public Works, said. "Hopefully keeps my energy levels up. I've been doing this about a year and a half now. I tell you my son was born 10 years ago. I've lost 40 pounds. That was 10 years ago. I basically try to keep it off since then."

Russell, 36, from Birmingham, resides in Athens. He and his wife of 14 years, Erin, have four children: sons Tucker, 11, and Jeremiah, 2, and daughters Darcy, 8, and Zykia, 3. Besides work, he spends his time taking care of the kids and going to the gym. Russell roots for the Auburn Tigers.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

**Nathan Russell works out in the Garrison Fitness Center in building 4488.**

# By the numbers: *My favorite singer-songwriters*

By **SKIP VAUGHN**

Rocket editor

[skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com](mailto:skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com)

- 
1. Bruce Springsteen
  2. Billy Joel
  3. Stevie Wonder
  4. Stevie Nicks
  5. Michael Jackson
  6. John Fogerty
  7. James Taylor
  8. Alanis Morissette
  9. Prince
  10. Neil Diamond
  11. David Bowie
  12. Marvin Gaye
  13. Carole King
  14. Elton John and Bernie Taupin
  15. Smokey Robinson
  16. Tom Petty
  17. Mick Jagger and Keith Richards
  18. John Lennon
  19. Paul McCartney
  20. Bob Dylan
  21. Paul Simon
  22. James Brown
  23. Kris Kristofferson
  24. Sam Cooke
  25. Taylor Swift
  26. Neil Young
  27. Jim Croce
  28. Joni Mitchell
  29. Randy Newman
  30. Jimi Hendrix
  31. John Mellencamp
  32. Cat Stevens

## Sports & Recreation

### Senior softball leagues

Huntsville Senior Softball is recruiting players for the spring. The three leagues include: Rockets, 55-and-up; Recreation, 63-and-up; and Triads, 71-and-up. The season will begin in late April; and they play two nights a week through Labor Day. Players are needed. For the Rockets, email league director Chris Maggio at cmaggio51@aol.com. For more information about Huntsville Senior Softball, email Huntsville-srsoftball-info@googlegroups.com or call Becky Rollston of the Huntsville/Madison County Senior Center at 880-7081.

### Pineapple Open golf scramble

The Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club's 2021 Pineapple Open Golf Scramble is April 30 at the Links. It will be held on the Warrior course. This is the club's biggest fundraising event so far this year and only prepaid teams are guaranteed a spot. Make your early bird reservation by March 15 for a \$20 per player discount. Registration closes April 15. For more information, call Cherie Cain 254-368-5363 or email rsamccfundraising@gmail.com.

## Conferences & Meetings

### Sergeants major association

The Sergeants Major Association is still meeting every third Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m. They are not meeting at a physical location because of the pan-

# Rocket Announcements

demically but they are meeting virtually through Zoom. Attendees must download the Zoom app on either their home computer, laptop or mobile device to participate. Once you get into the Zoom app, you will see Meeting ID number. Type in 710 211-4188. Then you will see the "Join meeting" button. If you have problems getting into Zoom, call retired Sgt. Maj. Willene Orr 410-533-2685.

### West Point chapter

Do you know there is a West Point chapter in the Huntsville area? They do several chapter activities throughout the year to include cheering on Army to victory during sporting events and their annual Founder's Day celebration. For more information about the chapter activities and to learn how you can be a part of this organization, vis-

**See Announcements on page 42**

# Rocket Announcements

Visit the chapter website at <https://sallyport.westpointaog.org/topics/11179/memberships>. For more information or assistance, email Dale McDonough at [dmac550@gmail.com](mailto:dmac550@gmail.com).

## Lance/MLRS veterans reunion

The 13th Lance missile and Multiple Launch Rocket System veterans reunion is Sept. 2-4 at the Marriott Hotel SeaWorld in San Antonio, Texas. Twelve additional seats will be reserved by June depending on the status of the pandemic. If interested call retired Sgt. 1st Class John Williams 210-209-2000.

## Marine Corps league

The Brandon-Wilbourn Marine Corps League Detachment 820 conducts a monthly meeting every second Saturday of the month at noon at the American Legion Post 237, 2900 Drake Ave. The detachment is open to all active, retired and former Marines. The league is a veterans/military service organization formed to promote the interest of the Marine Corps, to provide camaraderie and assistance to Marines and preserve the traditions of the Marine Corps. For information call Commandant Earl Hokanson 881-2852, Senior Vice Commandant Albert Mallory 379-2904 or Adjutant Stephen Cecil 829-1839.

## Purple Heart chapter

Military Order of the Purple Heart, George A. Rauh Chapter 2201, meets the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at the American Legion Post 237 at 2900 Drake Ave. All combat-wounded veterans are invited. For more information, call Leonard Robinson 337-8313.

## Miscellaneous Items

## Men's ministry

Men's Ministry addresses the needs of men and plants seeds for spiritual growth in

Christ. Call Harry Hobbs at 783-1793 for more information.

## Young citizen of month

Do you know a young citizen in grades 7-12 who has done something special and deserves recognition? Rocket City Broadcasting/Community Awareness for Youth conduct the Young Citizen of the Month award program. Each month's recipient will meet the Huntsville mayor and City Council members, receive a Huntsville Human Relations Commission certificate and other prize packages. Sponsors include Rocket City Broadcasting, Huntsville Utilities, Huntsville Optimist Club, Huntsville Police Department, CAFY and the Florida Institute of Technology Huntsville Site. To nominate a young citizen, visit [mystar991.com](http://mystar991.com) or call Kenny Anderson 883-3993.

## Family advocacy advice

Jeannie Johnston, Army Community Service division chief, recommends the following website for good information about coping during this difficult time: [www.militaryonesource.mil/sp-l-news](http://www.militaryonesource.mil/sp-l-news).

## AMC Inspector General

The Army Materiel Command Inspector General provides specialized support to AMC and Redstone Arsenal to assist military personnel, Army civilians, family members and contractors to obtain the help needed to resolve an issue. The AMC IG serves as the eyes, ears, voice and conscience of the AMC commander. The AMC IG Team is a fair and impartial fact finder that will accept confidential and anonymous issues and complaints for assistance and resolution. Occasionally, requests for assistance will contain allegations that may require an informal inquiry or formal investigation; inquiry and investigation conclusions will be based on the preponderance of credible evidence. Inspections and investigations conducted by an IG or IG team are considered an IG record and cannot be used as a basis for adverse action against an individual without the written approval of the Inspector General of the Army. The IG is prepared to assist and operates under strict guidelines of confidentiality. To learn more about the IG, contact: DSN 320-7910/commercial 450-7910 or email [usarmy.redstone.usamc.mbx.ig@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.redstone.usamc.mbx.ig@mail.mil).

See Announcements on page 45



Jim BoRoach  
10 Feb 2021

**Marshall children's center**

The Marshall Child Development Center, serving both the Marshall Space Flight Center and Redstone families, has openings. MCDC offers care for infants through pre-kindergarten children and has current availability in most classes. Visit the website at <https://mcdc.msfc.nasa.gov/>. For more information, email [Kelli.L.Wright@nasa.gov](mailto:Kelli.L.Wright@nasa.gov).

**Commissary scholarships**

The Scholarships for Military Children Program is now open and accepting applications for the 2021 school year. The scholarship program of Fisher House Foundation is administered by the Defense Commissary Agency. All applications will be submitted online only. Apply at [www.militaryscholar.org](http://www.militaryscholar.org).

**Community assistance grants**

The Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club 2020-21 community assistance grant applications are now open at [rsamcc.org](http://rsamcc.org). Deadline to submit applications is Feb. 28. RSAMCC is a volunteer organization that salutes those who have served this country and promotes education, community and social welfare. The club recognizes it has an obligation to use its funds wisely and to ensure that it donates to organizations that reflect the club's values, practice good stewardship and meet the needs of the local military community. All information and eligibility requirements are on the club website, [rsamcc.org](http://rsamcc.org). For questions contact the community grant chair at [rsamccgrants@gmail.com](mailto:rsamccgrants@gmail.com).

**Merit award scholarships**

Students who are affiliated with Redstone Arsenal are eligible for educational merit awards from the Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club. Applications for this year's scholarships are now open at [rsamcc.org](http://rsamcc.org). The deadline to apply is Feb. 28.

**Masquerade gala**

The Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club presents "Masquerade Gala in the Garden," Oct. 22 from 6-10 p.m. at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens, benefiting the RSAMCC community assistance grants and merit scholarship awards. For information visit [rsamcc.org](http://rsamcc.org).

**Free financial benefits classes**

The Employee Assistance Program and Army Community Service's Financial Readiness Program present Free Financial Benefits Classes via Microsoft Teams. Classes include: March 3, Veterans Benefits; March 10, Long Term Care and Medicaid; and March 17, Tax Updates. All classes are from noon to 1:30 p.m. The instructor is Melanie Bradford Holliman, of Bradford and Holliman LLC, estate planning, elder law and special needs. Join the event via MS Teams at <https://teams.microsoft.com/j/meetup>. For more information about the classes, email [usarmy.redstone.id-readiness.mbx.redstone-eap@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.redstone.id-readiness.mbx.redstone-eap@mail.mil).

**Virtual learning expo**

Rocket City Mom is taking their annual Huntsville Learning Expo virtual this year due to COVID-19. Typically held at Earlyworks Children's Museum, the Learning Expo is a favorite community event among local families. The 2021 Virtual Learning Expo started Jan. 30 and will run through February. Rocket City Mom will feature educational businesses, preschools, private schools, homeschooling programs, summer camps, and various other educational resources in the Huntsville area. To participate, watch Rocket City Mom's social streams on Facebook and Instagram and visit the Virtual Learning Expo website through February to learn more about educational resources North Alabama has to offer kids of all ages. For an exhibitors list, visit [RocketCityMom.com/LearningExpo](http://RocketCityMom.com/LearningExpo).

**Exchange news**

Whether you're looking to achieve fitness resolutions or focused on maintaining a Be Fit lifestyle, the Redstone Exchange has everything you need to succeed. Find essential Be Fit gear including athletic apparel and footwear, digital fitness accessories, watches and wearable technology with fitness tracking capability and hydration accessories in the Exchange and online at [ShopMyExchange.com](http://ShopMyExchange.com). Visit the community hub for healthy recipes and workout tips, <https://publicaffairs-sme.com/Community/befit>.

**Craft show**

The spring North East Alabama Crafters Association craft show is March 26-28 at the Von Braun Center South Hall. The free show is 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 26-27 and noon to 5 p.m. March 28. There will be 12-foot aisles to assist with social distancing. More than 100 vendors are expected.

# Rocket Announcements

**Text 9-1-1 service**

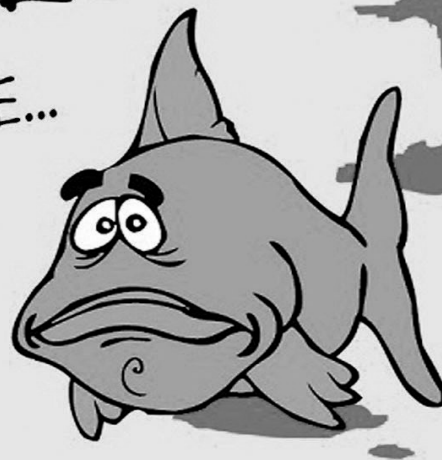
The Huntsville-Madison County 9-1-1 Center, which has served Huntsville, Madison, and Madison County since 1992, has launched a new text-to-9-1-1 service, providing a step forward in accessibility to those who are unable to dial 9-1-1. This service, offered in conjunction with the Alabama 9-1-1 Board and its network provider, INdigital, is available to those who have cellular service with Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, SouthernLINC, or Sprint. Text-to-9-1-1 should be considered a secondary option only to dialing 9-1-1 from a cellular or landline phone and should be limited to the following circumstances: When calling 9-1-1 is not possible, such as if the caller is deaf, hearing or speech impaired; if a caller is otherwise unable to speak, because of a medical condition (such as a stroke), or if speaking would be unsafe, as in the case of abduction, domestic violence, or home invasion. This service also allows HMC 9-1-1 to respond to text messages to not only confirm if an emergency response is needed but to also confirm whether or not an accidental call to 9-1-1 was made. For more information about the Huntsville-Madison County 9-1-1 Center, visit <https://madco911.com/>.

**Health department ratings**

The Madison County Health Department has released its weekly food/lodging establishment ratings for Feb. 1-5. The highest scores included Sam's Club 8107 (Bakery), 2235 National Boulevard SW, 100; S&V Down Home Cooking & Catering, 1407 North Memorial Parkway, 99; Circle K Store 9065, 8947 Highway 431 South, Owens Cross Roads, 99; Charlie Foster's, 3414 Governors Drive SW, 99; and Kroger Store 605 (Coffee Shop), 4579 Wall Triana Highway, Madison, 99. The lowest scores included New Orleans Lunch Box, A Division, 4000 Holmes Ave., 90; Jack Food Mart, 7525 Bailey Cove Road, 90; Casa Blanca, 1001 Heathland Drive, 90; Casa Blanca, 7900 Bailey Cove Road, 90; Andy's 5238, 8817 Madison Boulevard, Madison, 90; and Café on Wheels Neon Lilly LLC ABA, 325 Bridge St., Unit 101, 90.

# POLLUTION

MAKES ME...  
...SEA  
SICK!



Keep storm drains clean  
for those downstream!

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