

Redstone Rocket

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From the operations center to the battlefield, AMC supplies Soldiers



Photo by Eben Boothby

Gen. Ed Daly, Army Materiel Command commander, and AMC leaders synchronize, integrate and deliver sustainment support to the force. From the AMC operations center, leaders make decisions with worldwide impacts.

By SAMANTHA TYLER

Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

From the outside, the headquarters looks like just an office building, but behind the curtains, Army Materiel Command is working nonstop to get Soldiers what they need, when they need it.

From bullets and bandages to Bradleys and Black Hawks, AMC delivers supplies and equipment around the clock to Soldiers across the globe. The hub of this logistical network directing these actions is at the headquarters building on Redstone Arsenal. AMC is the only four-star headquarters in the state.

“AMC delivers logistics support, sustainment and materiel readiness from fort, depot and arsenal to the tactical edge, worldwide,” Gen. Ed Daly, the Army’s senior sustainer and commander of AMC, said.

With a workforce of about 175,000 Soldiers, civilians and contractors, if AMC was a company, it would be about

number 62 of the Fortune 500 list based on its revenue and budget. AMC has the manufacturing, maintenance, distribution and engineering might of the country’s top shipping, motor and defense companies. The work done by the AMC team enables Army readiness and supports Soldiers’ ability to complete their missions.

“Army sustainers are like the offensive and defensive lines in football, so to speak: the unsung heroes who are essential to fighting and winning on Army battlefields, now and in the future,” Daly said.

The work these sustainers complete is assigned, monitored and assessed by AMC leaders from the AMC Operations Center in the headquarters. This 24/7 center is the nucleus of the command, with different orders passing through from the basement to major subordinate commands, installations and stations across the globe.

Generals and other top leaders from

around the world call into the center, ready to give updates on supplies, equipment, quality-of-life issues and more. Daly and other AMC leaders are able to view near-real time data supporting the updates and give direction. These leaders synchronize, integrate and deliver sustainment support to the force.

“This is about mission command,” Daly said. “We give our major subordinate command leaders the direction, and they take the initiative to get the mission done.”

The fruits of this labor can be seen in different areas. Artisans at depots, ammunition plants and arsenals across the country maintain and repair equipment. Commanders all over the world work with partners to enhance quality of life, improving housing, providing access to affordable and available child care, supporting the hiring of Army spouses and improving the permanent change of station moving process.

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Redstone team takes 12U district crown.

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Persian Gulf War veterans deserve our thanks

I've spent the last couple of weeks capturing stories from veterans who served during Operation Desert Storm. It's been a project that I've really enjoyed. You should go watch some of the videos on the Rocket's or Team Redstone's Facebook page.

ODS is the first conflict I can remember. I was in elementary school at the time. It was either first or second grade. I could do the math and tell you exactly how old I was, but I didn't get into journalism to do math.

Let's be honest, if I was going to do math then I wouldn't be doing this. I'd be doing something that made a lot more money and something that might actually make a difference.

So instead of doing math, I'm going to compare and contrast my thoughts

about war as an elementary school student with the thoughts and feelings of the people who were actually going to war. Because even as young as I was I did know enough to know war was a big deal.

I don't remember exactly how we found out about it, but I remember standing in the lunchroom at Weatherly Elementary and it was all we were talking about.

One guy, I'm going to call him a friend, but I don't think he was, he was just some random guy that I probably had never spoken to until that moment said "My dad is over there."

I remember being sympathetic. We all were, because at that age having a parent just jet off to the other side of the world to fight some guy named Saddam Hus-

sein is traumatic.

It's worth noting here that us know-

ing:

- The U.S. had sent its military to the Middle East to fight;

- The guy we were fighting was named Saddam Hussein.

That was the extent of our factual knowledge about Operation Desert Storm.

But what we didn't know we filled in with what we'd learned from Rambo: First Blood, Rambo: First Blood Part II, Rambo III and the Saturday morning GI

Joe cartoons.

And it was based on this knowledge that we had absolutely zero fear that our new buddy's dad would return safely and that this war definitely wouldn't last any longer than a two-hour Rambo movie.

Turns out we were close. The ground war only lasted 100 hours and our friend's dad made it back unharmed.

To me it was interesting to listen to all of the vets who sat down with us talk about their experiences, their fears, their shock, and contrast it with that unbridled confidence that you only have when you're a kid.

It's been 30 years since Operation Desert Storm. So if you know someone who served, be sure to thank them.

Snippets

By Jonathan Stinson

Assistant editor

Quote of the week

“Being the queen is not all about singing, and being a diva is not all about singing. It has much to do with your service to people. And your social contributions to your community and your civic contributions as well.”

— Aretha Franklin

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.

On this date in history: March 3

In 2005: Steve Fossett became the first person to fly an airplane nonstop around the world solo without refueling.

In 1974: Turkish Airlines Flight 981 crashed at Ermenonville near Paris, France, killing all 346 aboard.

In 1969: NASA launched Apollo 9 to test the lunar module.

In 1923: TIME magazine was published for the first time.

In 1913: Thousands of women marched in the Woman Suffrage Procession in Washington, D.C.

In 1845: Florida was admitted as the 27th U.S. state.

In 1776: The first amphibious landing of the United States Marine Corps began the Battle of Nassau in the Revolutionary War.

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First responder spotlight

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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What is your favorite pastime?

“Working on cars. I’m an automotive enthusiast,” Billy Wilson, a firefighter/driver at Fire Station 3 on Patton Road, said. “I have three trucks and a classic SUV and a jeep. I’m doing a restoration on the jeep. The SUV is a 1973 International Scout, pretty rare. I’m doing a restoration on the Scout and the jeep. The jeep is a present for my 21-year-old son who’s in the Air Force basic training. I also like to hunt and fish with the family. We do lots of outdoorsy stuff. I like to hike and kayak.”

Wilson, 50, from Mobile, entered the fire service in 1996 with the Mobile Fire Department. He became a Redstone firefighter in October 2006. Wilson joined the Army in 1989 and he retired in 2010 from the Army Reserve as a sergeant first class after 20 years. The Albertville resident and his wife of almost 23 years, Stacie, have a combined four children – three sons and one daughter – and three grandchildren. Wilson roots for the Alabama Crimson Tide.



Billy Wilson

Crimes, accidents & other occurrences

The Directorate of Emergency Services, Law Enforcement Division, provided the following list of reported incidents Feb. 14-20:

Feb. 17: A vehicle collided with a deer at the intersection of Patton Road and Contraves Road, causing functional damage to the vehicle’s front end. The deer was located near the intersection and removed by Minor Repair. Redstone game warden was notified.

Feb. 17: Redstone police responded to a report of an unattended vehicle in a ditch near the intersection of Mauler Road and School Road. The

vehicle was traveling north on Mauler when it left the east side and struck a utility pole, sustaining disabling damages. Cosmetic damage was noted to the pole but its operation seemed unaffected. The vehicle’s driver had left without contacting police. Due to the vehicle being a traffic hazard, it was towed from the scene. The investigation was transferred to Redstone’s Traffic Accident Investigations for follow-up.

Citations included one for fleeing the scene of a traffic accident and one for no driver’s license/unlicensed.

Getting to know you

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Name: Yolanda Negroni

Position: Document manager, Environmental Management Division, Garrison’s Directorate of Public Works

What did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to be a model. And then I was interested in becoming a biologist. And I ended up being a manager, went to school in Puerto Rico to become a manager.

What do you hope to accomplish in 2021?

Of course I want to beat this virus more than anything. Survive the pandemic. Keep working. I love my job. Keep learning. Be there for me and my son (Roberto Monteagudo, 27, of Madison). Of course I love to be independent.

Who is your hero, and why?

My son is my hero because he is the one that made me who I am today, who showed me how to be kind and loved.

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

Be happy. That’s what I like the most – be happy.

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

Love yourself first and respect your-



self and then you can love and respect anybody else. And I choose myself. That advice came from a friend of mine after a hard time that I went through a couple of years ago.

What do you like to do for fun, to pass the time, during this time of social distancing or just in general?

Dance, because I love dancing. And spend time with my son. That’s what I like the most.

Tell us about ...

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Why you joined the Army.

“I originally joined in 2003. And that was about a year after we’d gone into Iraq,” Maj. Jared Martin, brigade nurse for the 2nd Recruiting Brigade, said. “So we were riding a wave of patriotism after 9/11. And I wanted to do my part to serve our country. I was in the Army Reserves, with the 75th Combat Support Hospital out of Tuscaloosa, from 2003-05. I transferred to the National Guard and I was with the Alabama National Guard Medical Detachment from 2005-09. In 2009 I graduated from nursing school and I came onto active duty.”

Martin, 38, is from Jemison, which is in Chilton County. He and his wife of 11 years, Jenny, a teacher in Arab, reside in Huntsville with their son, Eli, 7. They are expecting a daughter in April. Martin enjoys mountain biking, hiking, “anything outdoors pretty much – backpacking, camping.” He roots for the Alabama Crimson Tide.



Maj. Jared Martin

Know your laws: Straight ticket voting in jeopardy

By AMY WASYLUKA
Huntsville attorney

On Feb. 10, Alabama legislators introduced House Bill 397 which, if enacted, would eliminate straight ticket voting. Straight ticket or straight party voting provides voters the option of voting for every candidate of a particular party on the ballot rather than individually selecting candidates. It also includes a provision that would prohibit descriptions of proposed constitutional amendments on election ballots that “intentionally misrepresent the content of the proposed amendment.”

Alabama is currently one of only eight states that allow straight ticket voting. The Alabama Political Reporter reports that since 2012, straight party voting has increased in Alabama and that as of the

November 2020 election, 67% of Alabama ballots were straight ticket. This was reported by John H. Glen in his article titled “Bill to eliminate straight-party voting introduced in the House,” Alabama Political Reporter, Feb. 17.

Supporters of straight ticket voting suggest it creates ease and efficiency that encourages greater voter participation while opponents argue it reduces the incentive for voters to be fully informed about all the candidates and increases the incentive for voters to choose candidates based on a “brand” rather than on the individual candidate’s strengths and weaknesses.

Additionally, straight ticket voting typically tends to be more popular with the party currently in power as they tend to see it as helpful to maintaining that power. Ultimately, many concerns remain about straight ticket voting and the

consensus is mixed regarding whether it actually provides any benefits to voters.

You can read the full text of HB 397 along with any amendments by checking 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 HB397. Additionally, for those who are interested in contacting their local state representative about HB 397 contact information for your state representatives is available online at www.legislature.state.al.us/aliswww/ISD/House/ALRepresentatives.aspx.

Editor’s note: The opinions in this column do not constitute legal advice nor do they establish an attorney-client relationship. 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

Building cohesive teams

WASHINGTON – Since the release of the Fort Hood Independent Review, the Army’s top enlisted leader has doubled his efforts to meet with Soldiers as he continues to stress the importance of cohesive teams, he said during a webinar Feb. 17.

Leaders at all levels need to take responsibility by educating themselves on the Army’s standards toward sexual assault/harassment and take action when necessary, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston said.

Grinston recalled his initial feelings of anger and disappointment as he read through the results of the review, which were released in December, and learned that installation leaders had created a culture of tolerance toward the acts of sexual assault/harassment.

“I was so angry that our Soldiers had to live in an environment like that,” he said during a monthly Army Resilience Directorate webinar.

Participants in the monthly discussions include Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program, or SHARP, experts as well as suicide prevention and substance abuse program managers, and ready and resilient integrators. The forum serves as an educational tool by exchanging the latest research, policies, tools and best practices.

“I was disappointed that our leaders, especially our noncommissioned officers, did not enforce the standard,” Grinston said.

Grinston was quick to blame himself for the report’s findings, he said. As the Army’s top enlisted leader, he is responsible for setting and enforcing the Army’s standard.

“I feel that I failed to communicate the importance of being a part of a cohesive team that is highly trained, disciplined and fit,” he explained. “I talk about ‘This is My Squad,’ (and) how to take ownership and treat people with dignity and respect. I failed to get (my message) down to the NCOs on Fort Hood.”

Contract award announcements

General Dynamics Land Systems Inc., Sterling Heights, Michigan, was awarded a \$16,582,968 modification to contract W56HZV-17-C-0067 for engineering efforts to develop a conversion approach for one M1A2S tank and one M1A2K tank provided by the government to be converted into two M1A2T tanks. Work will be performed in Sterling Heights with an estimated completion date of June 30, 2022. Fiscal 2020 foreign military sales funds in the amount of \$16,582,968 were obligated at the time of the award. Army Contracting Command, Detroit Arsenal, Michigan, is the contracting activity.

Simatech Inc., Huntsville, was award-

ed a \$9,299,848 time-and-materials contract for technical support for the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Project Office. Bids were solicited via the Internet with 11 received. Work will be performed in Huntsville with an estimated completion date of Feb. 21, 2022. Fiscal 2021 and 2022 aircraft procurement (Army) funds; and 2021 operation and maintenance (Army) funds in the amount of \$9,299,848 were obligated at the time of the award. Army Contracting Command, Redstone Arsenal, is the contracting activity.

Julius Kaaz Construction Co. Inc., Leavenworth, Kansas, was awarded an \$8,544,534 firm-fixed-price contract for various concrete repairs and modernization for Fort Leavenworth. Bids were solicited via the Internet with six received. Work locations and funding will be determined with each order, with an estimated completion date of March 28, 2024. Army Field Directorate Office, Fort Eustis, Virginia, is the contracting activity.

Sexual assault prevention

The commission to examine the problem of sexual assault in the military should begin work soon, and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin III looking forward to their recommendations, Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby said during a news conference Feb. 22.

The commission has 90 days to com-

pile its recommendations. Kirby said the secretary will not wait until the end of the commission to implement recommendations he feels would be helpful.

Kirby also said DOD officials will consult with congressional leaders as the commission comes together. Austin met with senior Pentagon leaders Feb. 22 to give them his feedback on their inputs for combating sexual assault.

“As you know, it was his first directive on his second day in office to ask the services to provide him input on what they felt they were doing right, what they needed to improve and the ideas they had going forward,” Kirby said. “He had the opportunity to review that work and talk to them about that today. It was a good productive discussion.”

Austin told the leaders, which included the service chiefs, that by the end of the week he will formally announce the formation, makeup and start of the 90-day commission. With more granularity and more detail.

Kirby was also asked about the dearth of information about extremism in the ranks. He said everyone would like better information on the extent of the problem of extremism in the department but it is not really something people readily admit to. “We get a sense that the problem is largely driven by conduct and behavior,” Kirby said.

Even then it is sometimes difficult to ascertain if the conduct is driven by ideology or some other factor, he said.

Military

Strategic team supports Glory Trip triumph

By JASON CUTSHAW

Space and Missile Defense Command Public Affairs

A Space and Missile Defense Command team played a behind-the-scenes role in supporting the Air Force's Glory Trip-237, Feb. 24.

An unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, during Air Force Global Strike Command's operational test and impacted in a pre-established target zone roughly 4,200 miles away near SMDC's Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site on Kwajalein Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. RTS is a range and test facility located 2,300 miles southwest of Hawaii.

The purpose of the ICBM test launch program was to validate and verify the effectiveness, readiness and accuracy of the weapon system and to ensure the United States' nuclear deterrent is safe, secure, reliable and effective to deter 21st century threats and reassure America's allies.

"I am extremely excited about the opportunity for the Reagan Test Site along with our talented personnel to play a part in the Air Force Global Strike Command's Glory Trip missions," Col. Eugene Poindexter, RTS director, said. "The RTS team is made up of the highest engineering professionals in the Department of Defense who possess uniquely knowledgeable skills unlike any organization in the world. The RTS team's involvement lends to the technical expertise and knowledge our personnel provide to this very important mission and I'm proud to be a part of such a great team of professionals.

"I'm extremely excited about the RTS team's involvement with this mission which contributes heavily to the implementation of the national defense strategy of our nation. The RTS team continues to stand ready to support our nation's warfighters to provide state-of-art technology and expertise daily."

Supporting the launch from Huntsville were members of USASMDC assigned to the RTS Operations Center-Huntsville, which controls sensors at the RTS. ROC-H is the command and control facility for missile defense testing and for space operations at RTS despite being more than 6,500 miles from Kwajalein.

RTS sensors, including high-fidelity metric and signature radars, as well as optical sensors and telemetry, play a role in the research, development, test and evaluation in support of America's defense and space programs. RTS provides range instrumentation, ground range safety, meteorological support and data analysis and uses a full spectrum of support, including multiple radar frequencies, telemetry, and multiple high-speed optical and camera systems to capture every measurable data opportunity and provide data and information critical to system performance evaluations.

RTS is one of the major range and test facility bases supporting Glory Trip missions. They collect radar, optical and telemetry data in the terminal phase of flight on behalf of the Air Force customer and track vehicles down range using radars, telemetry and optics instrumentation. For GT-237, RTS will provide scoring data from when the vehicle impacts into the Kwajalein Missile Impact Scoring System.

The test results verify the accuracy and reliability of the ICBM weapon system and provide valuable data. The ICBM test launch program demonstrates the operational capability of the Minuteman III and ensures the United States' ability to maintain a strong, credible nuclear deterrent as a key element of national security and the security of U.S. allies and partners.

Bryan Wheelock, RTS Mission Operations range control officer, said the most important task they do for the Air Force is collect data in the terminal phase of flight to help evaluate the performance of their system.

"RTS has a robust instrumentation suite of radar, optical, and telemetry sensors," Wheelock said. "RTS's skilled, professional teams of government civilian, military and contractor personnel have been supporting this mission successfully for more than 50 years.

"Scheduling for the Glory Trip missions starts as early as three years out with



Space Force photo by Brittany E. N. Murphy

An Air Force Global Strike Command unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile launches during an operation test at 11:49 p.m. PST, Feb. 23, 2021, at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. ICBM test launches demonstrate the U.S. nuclear enterprise is safe, secure, effective and ready to defend the United States and its allies. ICBMs provide the U.S. and its allies the necessary deterrent capability to maintain freedom to operate and navigate globally in accordance with international laws and norms.

planning for the missions beginning about a year out," Wheelock added. "We are routinely planning for multiple missions simultaneously. Mission night is the most exciting part of the Glory Trip missions. Working the control room watching everything come together after all the long preparation. Being part of the team executing the mission, while having a front row seat to all the action – there is no place I'd rather be."

A few weeks out and up to mission day, everyone supporting the Glory Trip mission participates in numerous practice fly-downs, where not only nominal fly-downs occur but surprise off-nominals occur. This helps ensure operators, and the entire mission execution team, plan for success and are prepared for any potential anomalies on mission day.

Donna Annette Simpson, mission planner and assistant range control officer at ROC-H for the mission, said they begin planning and working with the program a year out with funding estimates to support the GT missions for the upcoming year.

"The real work begins at six months out from mission date, which is when we have the first technical interchange meeting where detailed information is presented by the program on the specifics of the mission," Simpson said. "At about 90 days out from the mission, RTS supports a flight test planning meeting where each of the mission participants present their specific mission support plan to the program. The mission is supported and data deliverables can be delivered up to 45 days after the mission.

"I would say the most exciting part is watching the vehicle reenter the atmosphere near Kwaj and see the (reentry vehicle) glow seamlessly through the sky and disappear into its impact location," Simpson added. "I was able to see three (reentry vehicles) come in to the impact area while I worked on Kwaj. That was an amazing sight, and I am thankful I got to experience it."

Religious affairs specialist reups for three more years

By JONATHAN STINSON

Assistant editor

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Spc. Ezekiel Hunter was set to leave the Army. That was his plan. Then it wasn't.

Hunter reenlisted for another three years during a reenlistment ceremony Friday at Bicentennial Chapel.

"I recently returned from a deployment, and I got to see some unique things there," Hunter said. "I had my mind made up to not reenlist. I was about to ETS and leave the Army, but that kind of changed my mind a little bit."

Once he returned from his deployment he started doing his homework and figuring out how to make a life outside of the Army. He looked at the current job market, insurance rates, the situation with COVID-19 and all of the things that he would have to provide for himself and his fiancée that the Army provided now.

"It kind of scared me a little bit," Hunter said. "I want to make sure that my fiancée and our family is going to be financially stable and in today's world with coronavirus and all of these different things going on, there's not a lot of guar-

antees right now."

With his next three years locked in, Hunter has set some goals for his career.

He said he's hoping to make sergeant within the next two or three months and he's enrolled in school working on a bachelor's in accounting.

"And, after that, I'm going to push really hard to get promoted again in the next three years," he said. "So that's what I'm going to really throw myself into."

That would make him a staff sergeant by the end of his latest commitment.

Hunter is assigned to the Religious Affairs office at the Garrison.

"When I first saw a recruiter to join the Army, I guess I scored high enough on the entry test somehow to where this recruiter offered me any job in the Army," he said. "And he was showing me these jobs that had \$40,000 signing bonuses and all these guarantees, like ones where you go to Ranger school or airborne school, and I said 'no,' I want to be a religious affairs specialist.

"I love the job. I love being able to help my fellow Soldiers and not just Soldiers but civilians, contractors, family members; it's kind of been my lifelong goal to be able to help people like that."



Photo by Jonathan Stinson

Spc. Ezekiel Hunter, right, reenlists in the Army and takes his oath during a ceremony Friday at Bicentennial Chapel.

Virtual industry briefing slated this month

By Aviation and Missile Command Public Affairs

The Aviation and Missile Command has opened registration for Team Redstone's 2021 Center of Excellence-Advance Planning Briefings to Industry. This year's event will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams, March 9-11.

This year's theme, "Modernization sus-

tainment concepts to enable large-scale combat operations," drives home a major priority for the command and the Army.

To register for this year's event, visit the APBI event registration site at <https://conference.redstone.army.mil/>.

For more information, call 842-9967 or email the APBI team at usarmy.redstone.amcom.mbx.g3-apbi@mail.mil.



Center

Continued from page **1**

From the AMC Operations Center, leaders hear updates on a variety of topics, including ongoing combatant command exercises and missions. Recently, AMC had a role in the 2021 presidential inauguration. From the AMC headquarters building, leaders planned and coordinated with major subordinate commands to supply equipment and execute contracts to support Soldiers in the National Capital Region.

AMC is also supporting vaccination augmentation teams by providing personal protective equipment. AMC is working in conjunction with U.S. Army North, the

Army G3/5/7 and Department of Defense entities to support a Federal Emergency Management Agency-led effort to vaccinate 100 million Americans in 100 days. The AMC team sent thousands of supplies, including gloves, N95 respirators, safety glasses and cloth face masks. The decisions of how to best support, what supplies to send, how and where to send it were made from the AMC headquarters building.

From supporting the whole-of government response to the COVID-19 pandemic or sustaining Soldiers stationed around the world, AMC provides the equipment and supplies needed.

“AMC is making huge readiness impacts for the Army,” Daly said. “I am absolutely proud to lead our great materiel enterprise and serve shoulder-to-shoulder with our tremendous Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilians.”

Security assistance enterprise delivers to Lebanese troops

By RICHARD BUMGARDNER

Security Assistance Command Public Affairs

In the aftermath of the catastrophic explosion at the port of Beirut in August 2020, members of the security assistance enterprise team overcame significant pandemic-induced hurdles, along with quality control and transportation challenges, to deliver more than 30 military trucks to the Lebanese armed forces.

“These are the first deliveries of 100 2½- and 5-ton FMTV trucks delivered to Lebanon, just in time to meet the timeline for training, and in response to the Lebanese armed forces request following the port explosion,” Dave Dornblaser, director of the Security Assistance Command’s Washington Field office, said.

According to Dornblaser these “Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles” trucks were procured and delivered under Section 333: Authority to Build Capacity, in the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act.

As in any process with hundreds of touch points within the DOD, the defense industrial base, manufacturers, global logistics and transportation companies, country teams, port scheduling, and partner requirements, getting to a delivery can be a long and complicated process.

“This foreign military sales case was developed in August 2018, and awarded to the vehicle contractor in June 2019. By November 2020 the first 31 vehicles were built and loaded on ships,” Kristin Ruehlen, program officer at Tank-automotive and Armaments Command’s Security Assistance Management Directorate, said.

These trucks are part of the Army’s FMTV line of military vehicles designed with standardized parts between multiple bodies, helping to lower maintenance costs and simplify the training requirements. These trucks are also designed to support the installation of additional armor and glass, known as “B” kits, which are installed to protect the cabin and occupants.

Lebanon will be able to use the multi-faceted trucks for military logistic support, humanitarian relief, and with an up-armored cabin, for troop transport and military operations.

Unfortunately, when the FMTVs were being assembled, the truck manufacturer detected flaws in the transparent armor glass. Had it not been for the dedicated ASAE workforce, those flaws could have resulted in major production and shipping delays.

“For TACOM the most challenging aspect of this case was the need to quickly develop a corrective action plan for the armor B-kits that were received defective from the manufacturer and ensure that the corrective action could be completed in time for the vehicles to be delivered to support a SATMO training program,” Ruehlen said.

It was that extra effort by the Central Command team at USASAC Redstone, country case managers and transportation experts at USASAC New Cumberland, TACOM SAMD program managers, the Army Contracting Command, and the Program Executive Office Combat Support and Combat Services Support team, that allowed these trucks to even be delivered.

Gregory Loyd, USASAC’s country program manager for the last 10 months of this case, knew the impact a delay would have on Lebanon’s counterterrorism



Army photo

FMTV trucks stage at a Lebanese armed forces location in Beirut, Lebanon, after the Army security assistance enterprise overcame pandemic restrictions, quality control and logistical challenges, to deliver ahead of schedule, 31 FMTV trucks to Lebanese armed forces.

capabilities.

“These vehicles are in direct support of the Integrated Country Strategy, which states that the Lebanese security forces be more capable of disrupting terrorist networks and repelling terrorist attacks,” Loyd said.

Kelly Sowell, an assistant program manager at PEO CS&CSS, and his team, were the liaisons between USASAC, TACOM SAMD, and ACC on this FMS case, when the transparent armor glass defect was identified.

“The vehicles and armor B-kits were procured under two separate contracts from two different manufacturers,” Sowell said. “The initial armor kits arrived to Oshkosh with glass defects that would have been unacceptable to the customer. In order to meet the customer’s schedule, our Multi-Mission Protected Vehicles Systems office developed a plan to bring in replacement transparent armor glass from existing supplies. We were able to replace the defective glass while minimizing delays to the armor install process.”

This involved quick coordination between USASAC, PEO CS&CSS, TACOM SAMD and ACC, to modify contracts, and get the needed supplies to Oshkosh Defense, while simultaneously working with the glass manufacturer to correct the defect.

Overcoming these challenges, the trucks were delivered almost three months early, arriving between December and early January, to the port of Beirut.

While delivery is a critical case milestone, under USASAC’s Total Package Approach, the post-delivery training, and follow-on sustainment support, are equally important considerations to ensure the customer can operate and sustain their equipment.

They were immediately put to use as part of a training program administered by USASAC’s training ele-

ment, the Security Assistance Training Management Organization, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

“This is a good news story because it has been such a long process with some challenges along the way, and we are now finally at the delivery and training phase,” Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tim Riordan, the SATMO case manager for the Lebanon FMTV training team, said.

“The training by our team in country will conclude in fall 2021, after that the LAF will be fully trained up on how to maintain, operate and employ the vehicles in support of their needs,” Riordan said. “These vehicles will enhance the mobility of our partners.”

That mobility is essential to support LAF, and the Lebanese government, which share almost 250 miles of border with war-torn Syria.

“Support to the LAF’s land mobility and logistics are high priority efforts for the U.S. and for the Lebanese armed forces as the national force works to modernize itself in the face of multiple crises,” Col. Robert Meine, the defense attaché at U.S. Embassy in Lebanon, said. “These trucks, widely used by our own military forces, enhance the LAF’s ability to transport equipment and troops throughout all of Lebanon safely, and under the most demanding conditions.”

The timely delivery of these trucks also epitomize the mission of USASAC and the ASAE: to build partner capacity and promote interoperability between U.S. and partner forces.

“Any time we can help an ally field a needed and critical capability, in this case following a massive and tragic event, is a good day,” Loyd said. “The fact that they are up and running this soon after such a catastrophic event is phenomenal.”

Keep Army ready: Report crime, suspicious activity

By Criminal Investigation Command Public Affairs

QUANTICO, Va. – The Criminal Investigation Command, commonly referred to as CID, is asking the Army community and American public to help the Army maintain its readiness by reporting any and all criminal or suspicious activity.

“It is critical for people to say something when they see something and it literally can mean the difference between someone receiving the justice they deserve or victimizing another innocent person or our Army,” Christopher Grey, spokesman for CID, said.

CID is responsible for conducting felony criminal investigations in which the Army is, or may be, a party of interest. The digital crime tips submission system allows users the ability to easily and anonymously submit information online. Utilizing the P3 Crime Tips, a nationwide platform used by crime stopper programs, schools, law enforcement entities, and various federal agencies, CID can vet crime leads from incoming tips.

The program allows a person to submit crime solving assistance to CID without being directly involved in the

investigation process and eliminates fear of retaliation.

Whenever a person submits a tip online, the completed form is securely transferred directly to Army CID through a Secure Sockets Layer connection, which means that the tips are encrypted, entirely confidential and completely anonymous. Users can also attach images, videos and documents with their tips.

Additionally, persons providing anonymous tips will have the ability to communicate with CID special agents. After submitting a tip, a tip reference/ID number is created that allows the tipster to create a password to check the status of the submitted tip or check on the status of a reward – if applicable.

There is also the multi-language feature for global use that allows tips to be auto-converted into English on the backend regardless of what language they were submitted.

The public can access the system via any Internet-connected device by visiting www.cid.army.mil/.

In addition to the web interface, the app is available for free download from the Apple Store and Google Play at www.p3tips.com/app.aspx?ID=325.

Respect, reputation, relationships help build senior NCO

By **CHRISTINE MITCHELL**

Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

When Command Sgt. Maj. Alberto Delgado reflects on his first deployment 30 years ago for Operation Desert Storm, the impressions his leaders and fellow Soldiers made then still represent what he considers one of the Army's foundational benefits today – the importance of fostering relationships and taking care of people.

“Your legacy shouldn't be about what

you've accomplished or what you've done,” he said. “Your legacy should be about who you've brought up with you and who you've developed and invested in.”

Delgado, then Spc. Delgado, was only 19 in 1989 when he was sent overseas and away from his family in New York City for the first time in his life. He trained for combat in Grafenwoehr, Germany, where he was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment

See Delgado on page 14

Persian Gulf War *30 years later*

Photo by Andrew Grosman

Then Spc. Alberto Delgado, left, explores a destroyed French Mirage F-1 outside of Baghdad, Iraq, during Operation Desert Storm in 1991 as part of the 3rd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment assigned to the 210th Artillery Brigade.



Delgado

Continued from page 12

assigned to the 210th Artillery Brigade. That's where he first got to know his unit leaders, but didn't yet know how deployment and experiencing real artillery would ultimately build the relationships within his unit.

In 1991, his unit was deployed out of Ansbach, Germany, to Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield, then to Kuwait and Iraq for Desert Storm.

"One of the first things I remember is when we landed in Saudi Arabia and we went to 'tent city,' just a bunch of tents on a concrete slab, dust blowing all over the place, that's when reality hit," he said. "'Wow, we're in a different country and we're going to war.' It was a scary moment."

His superiors left an impression on Delgado and his young Soldier comrades. Even though many of them had never been in combat, Delgado said leaders took the

time to talk to younger Soldiers and get to know them.

"I think what stuck with me the most was the relationships we built," he said. "The friendships, trust, candor of the leaders. It really showed how much they cared about us."

But building relationships and making friends didn't come without the hardships of war.

"Late night guard duties were hard," Delgado recalls. "A lot of experiences out there with stray animals while you're on guard duty. Not just worrying about the enemy, but dogs barking all night, and I was a little scared of dogs growing up."

Having the chance at just a few minutes on the phone with friends or family members was sometimes the highlight of an entire month.

"We didn't have Facebook or cellphones, so a lot of good memories were waiting in line with a calling card to call your girlfriend and family members to tell them you're OK," Delgado said.

Despite being a young Soldier in the throes of war, Delgado still remembers his deployment as a time full of great memories and crucial learning experiences.

"It set the conditions for me to appreciate what being a Soldier is," he said. "There's no more diverse organization than the military. The Army offers you every opportunity – you accomplish what you want to accomplish."

Delgado still preaches the values his superiors showed him through their leadership during Desert Storm.

"Today's Soldier is an innovator," he said. "When Soldiers trust you, they will do whatever they need to accomplish the mission. The only way you're going to build trust is to spend the time to get to know your people. Not just the Soldiers, but their families and their spouses."

In the past year, Delgado has developed a new Senior Sustainment Leader Talent Management program to empower rising Soldiers by providing honest assessment and mentorship. In his current leadership role, he still maintains the values he learned during his first deployment 30 years ago – the relationships you build and retain through the Army are what will carry you through your military career and beyond.

"Whether you are the mentor or the mentee, it is important to keep in mind what I call the three Rs: respect, reputation, and – relationships," he said.

Durant fired first shots from armed Black Hawk in combat

By KERENSA CRUM

Aviation and Missile Command Public Affairs

Feb. 28 marked the 30-year anniversary of the end of the Gulf War – a nearly seven-month battle resulting in almost 300 American deaths.

Mike Durant had, as the saying goes, “a front-row seat to history.”

Long before he became a renowned master aviator, best-selling author, husband and father of six, Durant was a kid growing up with a younger sister in a working-class family in Berlin, northern New Hampshire.

One summer, he worked for an Army National Guard warrant officer who owned a small aviation business with some helicopters and airplanes in his home state. “I got to go flying with him over the White Mountains in New Hampshire. It was the most amazing thing I had experienced at that point in my life and, from that moment on, set my sights on becoming a warrant officer and flying helicopters in the Army.”

Military service was not a foreign con-



Courtesy photo

Retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mike Durant flew combat missions in Desert Storm and is now the president and chief executive officer at an engineering and services company in Huntsville.

cept to Durant – specifically, in the National Guard: among others, his father was a first sergeant and his uncle was a recruiter. He also had an uncle who served on active duty in the Marines and one in the Army.

Though the path that led him there had a couple stops, he eventually got where he wanted to be.

“I wanted to go to flight school right away, but was told I could not, so I settled

for 98G (Spanish voice intercept operator) in a military intelligence unit,” Durant said. “It seemed like a good opportunity to go to the Defense Language Institute (in Monterey, California) for almost a year and then be able to apply for flight school from active duty.”

His plan set in motion, the aspiring aviator applied for flight school while stationed in Panama. After being accepted, he attended Warrant Officer Basic Course and went on to flight training at Fort Rucker. Appointed to the grade of warrant officer one in November 1983, he completed the UH-60 Black Hawk Qualification Course and went on to the 377th Medical Evacuation Company in Seoul, South Korea.

After returning stateside, Durant was assigned to the 101st Aviation Battalion, part of the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. In August 1988, he moved over to what was then the 160th Special Operations Aviation Group (Airborne) and served as a flight lead and standardization instructor pilot.

It was with the 160th that he deployed to Operation Desert Storm and other hotspots around the world: Operation Prime Chance in the Persian Gulf, Operation Just Cause in Panama, and Operation Restore Hope in Somalia.

Triggered by Iraq’s Aug. 2, 1990, invasion of Kuwait, about half a million U.S. troops deployed to Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield to protect against a potential attack by Iraqi forces. Desert Shield became Desert Storm Jan. 17, 1991, with the U.S.-led air offensive.

Desert Storm saw the first use of the MIM-104C Patriot missile system in combat, where it was used to intercept Scud missiles.

Durant was one of approximately 697,000 American service members who played some part in the war.

“I was the pilot in command of one of our specially modified Black Hawks configured as an attack helicopter, referred to as Direct-Action Penetrators or DAPs,” he recounted. “The aircraft and mission were just coming to life in the unit and I was fortunate to be signed off along with (Chief Warrant Officer 3) Cliff Wolcott as the only two UH-60 DAP PICs.”

They provided escort and direct action attack operations for Delta Force on the ground deep in Iraq.

“The overarching mission was to find and destroy Scud missiles that the Iraqis were using to draw Israel into the war which would

Persian Gulf War
30 years later

See Durant on page 19

Durant

Continued from page 17

have created a problem with the alliance that had formed between the U.S. and other Arab countries,” Durant said. “Those missions were incredible – long-range, bad weather, enemy threat, far behind enemy lines. It was about as good as it gets for someone who wants to be at the point of the spear and that’s what I wanted to be doing at the time.”

“I fired the first shots from an armed U.S. Black Hawk in combat,” the retired chief warrant officer four recalled. He was leading the two-helicopter flight when they were diverted to a Scud location. “I fired mini-guns from pretty close range, but then had a rocket system malfunction that limited our ability to destroy the launcher. I had our (forward-looking infrared) recorder going and there is a great picture of the gun run where you can see the mini-gun rounds impacting in and around the Scud. There was some speculation that these were decoys and that may be the case but, in the moment, it was quite the experience.”

And then there are places – especially in combat – no one necessarily wants to be.

For Durant, his low in Desert Storm came when an aircraft crashed on the Saudi side of the border and everyone on board was killed. “We did a traditional accident investigation,” he remembered. “I was the aviator assigned to the investigation and knowing the crew really



Courtesy Army imagery

This February 1991 screenshot from a forward-looking infrared recorder shows a Scud launcher and minigun rounds hitting the desert floor around it during Operation Desert Storm.

made it a personal loss for me.”

According to Defense News, Desert Storm became known as the largest air campaign since the conflict in Southeast Asia. It was also the first time the Air Force used stealth and space systems support capabilities against a modern, integrated air defense.

After six weeks of air attacks, the ground war was only 100 hours before Kuwait was liberated.

Within days of the battle’s end, Durant and his team redeployed.

Two years later, Durant deployed to Somalia with the 160th from August to October

1993 as part of Operation Restore Hope. He was, again, on the front lines during the events that were later portrayed in “Black Hawk Down” – the book and movie.

Durant and Wolcott, the pilot he flew with in Desert Storm, were again in the same combat zone.

“I’d have to say the philosophy of ‘train as you fight’ is really what prepared me for Somalia,” Durant said. “I was on top of my game at that point in my career as was the crew and the operators on the ground that we were working with.”

Wolcott and fellow pilot Chief Warrant Officer 3 Donovan Briley were killed Oct. 3, 1993, when the Black Hawk they were flying was shot down. On that same mission, Durant’s helicopter was shot down and he was held captive for 11 days before being released. He credits the incredibly realistic survival training he received at the 160th with preparing him for that encounter.

“It’s hard to say for sure, but survival school may be the reason I’m still alive today,” he said. “What happened during those 11 days was the reason I decided to write my own book, which I’m quite proud of. Every detail that I can remember is in those pages.”

“In the Company of Heroes,” one of two books bearing Durant’s name, is the account of his experiences while deployed.

Being out front at those significant points in history was not Durant’s goal.

“It’s not what I set out to do, but (I’m) certainly proud of what we accomplished on all

of the operations I was involved in,” he said. “Having served with some of the best aviators, (noncommissioned officers) and aviation leaders during that time period is probably what I’m most thankful for; I learned a lot from them.”

Ten years after flying combat missions in Desert Shield, about eight years after being shot down during the Battle of Mogadishu, 22 years after entering the Army and with over 3,700 flight hours under his belt, Durant closed the chapter on his uniformed service. The medals on his chest give a preview of his journey; among them are the Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster, Bronze Star Medal with valor device, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, POW/MIA ribbon, and three Air Medals – one with valor device.

“Serving in general, and maybe more so in the special operations community, got me into a network of professionals that has made this all possible,” he said about his post-Army career.

Apart from his storied military career, Durant is the president and chief executive officer of an accomplished engineering and services company in Huntsville.

“Anyone who succeeds in our industry does so because of a commitment to values, domain expertise and having a solid network of professional contacts who can be called upon when needed,” he added. “I wouldn’t have any of those without the experience I gained in the Army and the 160th.”

Community

Army Emergency Relief accepts fundraising challenge

By EMILY STRICKLAND

Staff writer

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Army Emergency Relief officially kicked off the 2021 fundraising season Feb. 23.

Capt. Hunter Wilson, one of the 2021 campaign co-coordinators, said that the campaign will run from March 1 to May 31.

“The end goal from AER headquarters for the campaign is to ensure that 100% of Soldiers across the formation are informed of the benefits that AER can provide,” Wilson said.

He and 1st Sgt. Erika Vargas, the other co-coordinator, train key representatives in AER policies and procedures and serve as the points of contact for anyone seeking more information about how to participate in the program.

AER provides Soldiers with interest-free loans and grants during emergency situations.

“Since 1942 AER has been stabilizing and influencing the lives of Soldiers and their families when the need arises,” Garrison Commander Col. Glenn Mellor said. “AER funding is purposely aimed toward helping Army families. The success of each campaign directly correlates to morale and quality of life for Soldiers and their families on Redstone Arsenal and other Army installations.”

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has limited many traditional fundraising activities like bake sales and other in-person events, Wilson said AER has risen to the new challenge.

“COVID has really kind of substantially changed the way that we go about doing business and AER itself has kind of changed to reflect that as well,” Wilson said. “AER has really come through and helped many, many Soldiers that are facing hardship, particularly due to COVID and the unique challenges that COVID kind of brings.”

Mellor said that no specific dollar amount has been set for fundraising this year, but “our goal is to achieve as much as we possibly can.” Donations are accepted from anyone interested, including Soldiers, civilians, retirees, contractors or otherwise.

“Bottom line is, anybody can participate or donate,” Wilson said.

For more information or to make a donation, visit armyemergencyrelief.org/donate.



Photos by Eric Schultz

Garrison Commander Col. Glenn Mellor signs his donation pledge and speaks during the AER kickoff Feb. 23.

Challenger Bingo makes reopening call

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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This is a big day for the Redstone bingo community.

Challenger Bingo will reopen today after being closed since the pandemic. The facility will open to 40% capacity and be limited to 80 people, Garrison Commander Col. Glenn Mellor announced at Thursday's Garrison town hall.

"There is quite a following for the bingo," he said.

Masks are required and there is no smoking. Patrons must make a bingo reservation 24 hours in advance by calling 955-3729.

The facility is open Tuesday through Saturday. Hours are 3-10 p.m. Tuesday with electronic bingo starting at 3 p.m. and session bingo beginning at 6:45.

Saturday hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Electronic bingo starts at 11 a.m. and session bingo begins at 1:45 p.m.

"I'd like to welcome everyone back to

play bingo," Ben Howard, Challenger Bingo business manager, said. "We've been closed almost a year. We have to open under certain parameters due to coronavirus but we're excited to at least get open and offer bingo back to the Redstone community."

Photo by Skip Vaughn

Challenger Bingo, in building 1500 on Weeden Mountain Road, was closed since March 2020 as a precautionary safety measure due to the COVID-19 virus.



Vietnam-era veteran dedicates city bridge to hero

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Huntsville native Larry Gene Clark lived near Spring Branch in the southwest part of the city. As a boy he would hunt, fish and trap along that creek.

On Dec. 9, 1967, the Marine celebrated his 21st birthday. On Feb. 4, 1968, Lance Cpl. Larry Gene Clark, a fire team leader with Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Division, died in action in Vietnam. His mother, Loise, accepted the Bronze Star in his honor.

The bridge on Drake Avenue, just west of Memorial Parkway, will be dedicated in Clark's honor on March 8 at 2 p.m. The Drake Avenue bridge at Huntsville Spring Branch will be named the Lance Cpl. Larry G. Clark Memorial Bridge.

Vietnam-era veteran Jerry Cox of Huntsville is responsible for getting the city resolution for this dedication.

"It was just something I felt like I needed to do," he said.

Cox, 76, from Dryden, Virginia, graduated from Lincoln Memorial University in 1966 with a bachelor's in math and received a job offer from NASA. He arrived in December 1966 to work at Marshall Space Flight Center. After six months on the job, he received his draft notice from his native Lee County, Virginia.

"I was drafted in '67 and stayed to '69, and the Good Lord sent me to Germany instead of Vietnam," Cox, who left the Army as a specialist five, said. "I served from June '67 to June '69."

He went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, for basic training and then to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, for engineering individual training.

After Fort Leonard Wood, the Army sent many of his fellow trainees to Vietnam but Cox went to Hanau, Germany, instead. He spent 19 months with the U.S. Army Engineer District, U.S. Army Europe. He said he enjoyed his work, mostly with German citizens, and his time in Germany. He traveled Europe. He said his most memorable event was riding the Army train from Frankfurt through East Germany to Berlin and standing at Checkpoint Charlie at the Berlin Wall.

Cox returned to his position at Marshall Space Flight Center where he had a long career as an engineer and a project manager and he retired in 1995. In June 2019 Cox joined with two of his high school classmates in Dryden to seek the naming of a bridge, on a Virginia state road, in memory of another classmate who was killed in action in Binh Dinh Province in South Vietnam on May 30, 1966. That 23-year-old Soldier was Sgt. John Robert "Swanson" Riddle with the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. Cox and the other classmates were all Army veterans.

On July 16, 2019, Cox returned to Virginia to appear before the Lee County Board of Supervisors to urge the passing of a resolution and a request to name the bridge for his high school classmate. The three classmates had provided the information on Riddle for the resolution. In November 2019 the bridge was formally dedicated.

Cox returned home to Huntsville with thoughts of a similar effort in this city. He talked with a friend, a city employee, who gave him Clark's name in fall 2019. He did some research and got information from past editions of The Huntsville Times.

Cox attended a city council meeting that December and asked if an ordinance prohibited naming a bridge after an individual. In January 2020 he again appeared before the city council to follow up on his inquiry. City Administrator John Hamilton, a retired colonel, told Cox he would research that and get back to him. That February a city department head called Cox and asked him to provide the city with information to be included in a resolution to be presented to the city council for their approval of the bridge naming. The city council approved the resolution March 12, 2020, and Mayor Tommy Battle signed it.

"I'm just ecstatic about it because this Marine was a true hero," Cox said.

The Huntsville resident since December 1966 and his wife, Judith, will celebrate their 50th anniversary Friday. They have a daughter, Dionna Byrom of Huntsville, and a grandson, Billy Joe Mullins.

Editor's note: This is the 309th in a series of articles about Vietnam veterans as the United States commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

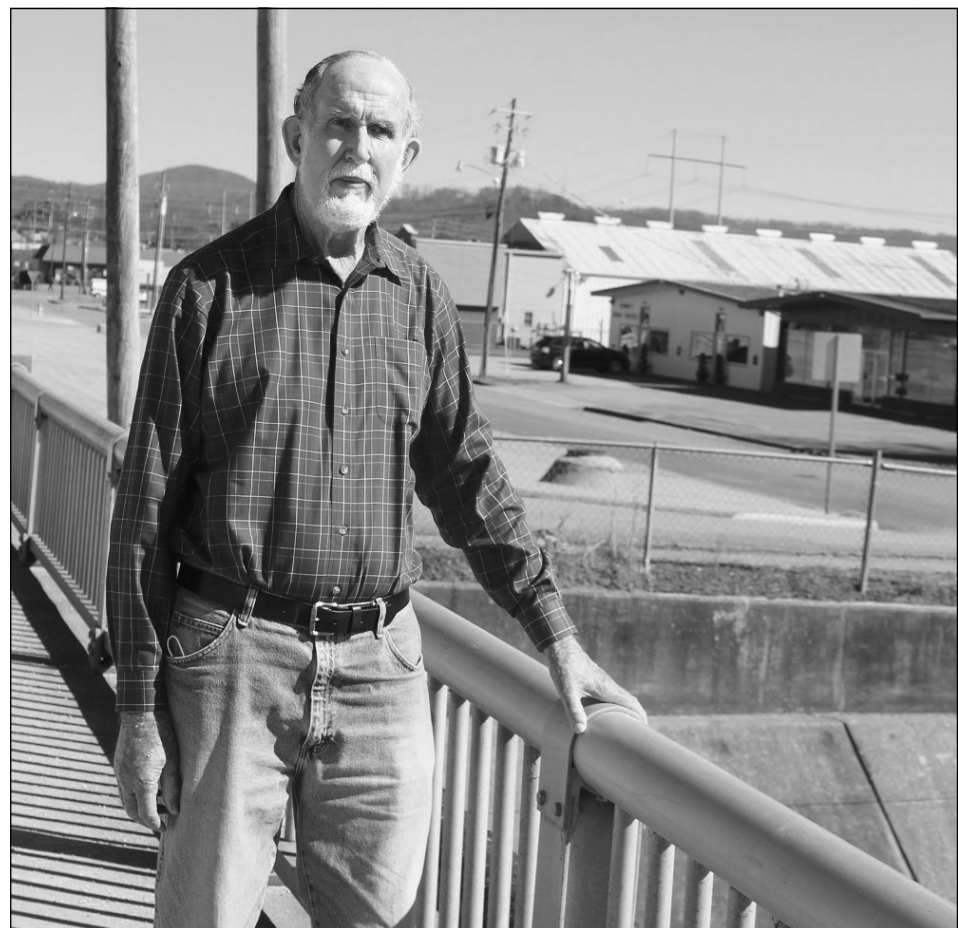


Photo by Skip Vaughn

Vietnam-era veteran Jerry Cox stands on the Drake Avenue bridge at Huntsville Spring Branch. He was successful in his effort to have the bridge named the Lance Cpl. Larry G. Clark Memorial Bridge in honor of a Marine from Huntsville who was killed in Vietnam in 1968. The bridge dedication ceremony is March 8 at 2 p.m.

Vietnam revisited
Part 309 in series

Mills Road children's center earns accreditation

By JONATHAN STINSON

Assistant editor

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The staff at the Mills Road Child Development Center is celebrating.

In February they learned the center achieved accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The NAEYC is a professional membership organization that “works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy and research,” according to its website, naeyc.org.

“It took 18 months of blood, sweat and tears,” Paula Majors, assistant director and trainer at Mills, said jokingly.

Mills is one of two centers in North Alabama to earn the accreditation. The other is the Goss Road CDC.

Majors was part of a team that spearheaded the project and included Linda Smith, the facility's director; Rodney Clark, the assistant director at Mills; Robin Boyd, training and curriculum specialist; and Sheba Coleman, supervisor program specialist at the Goss Road CDC and Mills, and Cynthia Moring-Jones, an

SPS at Mills.

The 18 months wasn't a joke. The process to receive accreditation from the NAEYC takes a lot and the COVID-19 pandemic didn't make life any easier.

The process evaluates the center in 10 areas: relationships, curriculum, teaching, assessment of child progress, health, staff competency, families, community relationships, physical environment, leadership and management.

The evaluation includes documentation that's compiled by the staff and in-person observations by the NAEYC.

To earn the accreditation, programs have to score at least an 80 in each of the categories. Mills CDC scored a 92, 100, 100, 100, 100, 99, 100, 100, 100 and 100 in those categories, respectively.

According to Smith, the biggest challenges Mills faced were COVID and problems with the center's HVAC system.

“That would be the most difficult part,” Smith said, “not being able to be in our facility to do what we need to do for the children to obtain our accreditation.”

The accreditation lasts for five years, and since the group has been through the process once, they have a better idea of what to expect in the future.



Photo by Jonathan Stinson

From left are Rodney Clark, the assistant director at Mills Road Child Development Center, Paula Majors, assistant director and trainer at Mills; Robin Boyd, training and curriculum specialist; Linda Smith, the facility's director; and Sheba Coleman, supervisor program specialist at the Goss Roads CDC and Mills. They spearheaded the effort to get the Mills Road CDC accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Federal

Mars Perseverance rover safely lands on red planet

By NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

On the afternoon of Feb. 18, people around the world held their breath in anticipation of NASA's Perseverance rover landing – the largest and most complex of its kind sent to the Red Planet.

A journey seven months in the making, and a steady rhythm of its “heartbeat” throughout the 127 million miles of space between Earth and Mars, some of the only updates. For mission control teammates at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, who helped monitor that journey, the wait would be rewarded seven minutes after the rover's descent through the Martian atmosphere. At that moment, jubilation erupted. The rover got its wheels safely in the famed red dirt.

Perseverance was on Mars. Confirmation of the successful touchdown was announced in mission control at 2:55 p.m.

Packed with groundbreaking technology, the Mars 2020 mission launched July 30, 2020, from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida and made the multimillion-mile journey. Perseverance marks an ambitious first step in the effort to collect Mars samples and return them to Earth.

“This landing is one of those pivotal moments for NASA, the United States, and space exploration globally – when we know we are on the cusp of discovery and sharpening our pencils, so to speak, to rewrite the textbooks,” acting NASA Administrator Steve Jurczyk said. “The Mars 2020 Perseverance mission embodies our nation's spirit of persevering even in the most challenging of situations, inspiring and advancing science and exploration. The mission itself personifies the human ideal of persevering toward the future and will help us prepare for human exploration of the Red Planet in the 2030s.”

Team members at Marshall Space Flight Center played an important role in the mission, including planetary scientist Caleb Fassett, who championed Jezero Crater, named for the municipality of Jezero in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the mission's landing site.

“What the JPL and NASA teams have done today is nothing short of extraordinary,” Marshall Director Jody Singer said. “Marshall Space Flight Center is proud to be a part of this trailblazing endeavor, as we are developing the Mars Ascent Vehicle. Eventually, we're going to rocket those samples from Perseverance into an orbit around Mars to bring them back to Earth.”

About the size of a small car such as a



NASA photo by Bill Ingalls

Members of NASA's Perseverance Mars rover team watch in mission control at Jet Propulsion Laboratory as the first images arrive moments after the spacecraft successfully touched down on Mars on Feb. 18.

Mini Cooper, the 2,263-pound robotic geologist and astrobiologist will undergo several weeks of testing before it begins a two-year science investigation of Jezero Crater. While the rover will investigate the rock and sediment of Jezero's ancient lakebed and river delta to characterize the region's geology and past climate, a fundamental part of its mission is astrobiology, including the search for signs of ancient microbial life. To that end, the Mars Sample Return campaign, being planned by NASA and the European Space Agency, will allow scientists on Earth to study samples collected by Perseverance to search for definitive signs of past life using instruments too large and complex to send to the Red Planet.

“Because of today's exciting events, the first pristine samples from carefully documented locations on another planet are another step closer to being returned

to Earth,” Thomas Zurbuchen, associate administrator for science at NASA, said. “Perseverance is the first step in bringing back rock and regolith from Mars. We don't know what these pristine samples from Mars will tell us. But what they could tell us is monumental – including that life might have once existed beyond Earth.”

Some 28 miles wide, Jezero Crater sits on the western edge of Isidis Planitia, a giant impact basin just north of the Martian equator. Scientists have determined that the crater had its own river delta and was filled with water 3.5 billion years ago.

The power system that provides electricity and heat for Perseverance through its exploration of Jezero Crater is a Multi-Mission Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator. The U.S. Department of Energy provided it to NASA through an ongoing partnership to develop power systems

for civil space applications.

Equipped with seven primary science instruments, the most cameras ever sent to Mars, and its exquisitely complex sample caching system – the first of its kind sent into space – Perseverance will scour the Jezero region for fossilized remains of ancient microscopic Martian life, taking samples along the way.

“Perseverance is the most sophisticated robotic geologist ever made, but verifying that microscopic life once existed carries an enormous burden of proof,” Lori Glaze, director of NASA's Planetary Science Division, said. “While we'll learn a lot with the great instruments we have aboard the rover, it may very well require the far more capable laboratories and instruments back here on Earth to tell us whether our samples carry evidence that Mars once harbored life.”

NASA photo

Schools outreach

Camille Williams, left, a Manufacturing Technical Solutions Inc. project coordinator at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, helps deliver NASA learning materials Feb. 9 to Melissa Veasy-Lindsey, principal of Williams Middle School in Huntsville. Williams and other Marshall team members delivered the materials as part of Black History Month outreach, and to foster a partnership with the school and Marshall's African American Advisory Working Group. The group leads outreach opportunities with local schools and implements events to promote inclusion for all members of the center's workforce.



Marshall interns, mentors adapt to virtual environment

By TAYLOR GOODWIN

NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

As the workforce at Marshall Space Flight Center approaches a year of working virtually in response to COVID-19, the center continues to welcome interns to contribute to the agency's missions of human spaceflight, space science and Earth research. While the overall experience may look different than traditional academic terms, NASA is dedicated to giving students the most valuable experience possible.

"The agency's main goal is to encourage students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics," Lynnette Madison, NASA internships manager, said. "Even in an unconventional setting, we have been adapting our program to offer interns and mentors a solid experience that supports NASA's missions."

NASA's Southeast Regional STEM Engagement Office – which manages engagement activities at Marshall and Stennis Space Center – has been working to adapt and create meaningful opportunities for both mentors and interns. Interns can submit applications until March 5 for summer intern opportunities.

While the process has been a change for both mentors and interns, many have accepted the challenge and even found benefits to the online program.

"One way to express our gratitude for the opportunities we have at NASA is to create opportunities for others," John Dankanich, Marshall's chief technologist, who has mentored many interns, said. "The NASA workforce excels at adapting to changing environments, and every challenge should be perceived as an opportunity for growth."

For Marshall intern Nathaniel Lazard, the online aspect of the opportunity was one of the main reasons he applied. "Being a senior in my last semester, having the opportunity to be on-site for this internship would have been exciting," he said, "but the flexibility the virtual environment offers allows my mentor and I to work with my class schedule."

Lazard is completing open-sourced research concerning the international use of manufacturing techniques developed for the Artemis program. Though he is in the early stages of his spring internship term, he said he is already learning a lot about NASA operations and where he could fit in as a professional. "Due to the nature and necessity of the virtual experience, there are times where I personally feel like I'm a little fish in a big pond, but my mentor does an amazing job of connecting the dots to help me understand the purpose of the work I am doing," he said.

Under typical circumstances, interns might be assigned hands-on learning opportunities, such as working in a lab or with hardware. While this on-site work is not viable at the time, mentors like Dankanich modified the intern experience by increasing the number of formal one-on-one meetings and making a greater effort to validate the intern's comfort level with assigned projects. His student is currently working to communicate the recent Marshall technology innovations and creating products for the program's website.

"There are always benefits to having interns supporting NASA projects," Dankanich said. "The obvious direct benefit is an extra set of hands to accomplish the work, but the secondary benefits are just as important. Interns are a new set of eyes that bring new approaches to the team or have the ability to identify improvement opportunities. Interns also have an incredible energizing impact on the team."

Dankanich and Lazard say they would encourage both students and mentors to reach outside of their comfort zone to pursue this rewarding experience.

"Working at NASA is a blessing," Dankanich said. "Continuing to engage interns requires adaptation, but also helps maintain the sense of normalcy. Even during the COVID-19 environment, NASA is obligated to inspire and train the future STEM pipeline."

For more information on mentor and internship opportunities at Marshall, contact a member of Marshall's Office of STEM Engagement staff.



Courtesy photo

Marshall intern Nathaniel Lazard contributes to NASA's mission virtually in the spring 2021 term.



NASA photo

NASA welds confidence

Technicians are manufacturing the first in a series of initial weld confidence articles for the Exploration Upper Stage for future flights of NASA's Space Launch System rocket at the agency's Michoud Assembly Facility. The Exploration Upper Stage will be used on the second configuration of the SLS rocket, known as Block 1B, and will provide in-space propulsion to send astronauts in NASA's Orion spacecraft and heavy cargo on a precise trajectory to the Moon. The Exploration Upper Stage weld confidence panels are first produced in the Vertical Weld Center at Michoud, then small sections of the panels are removed for mechanical testing and analysis in another area of the factory. Teams use weld confidence articles to verify welding procedures, interfaces between the tooling and hardware, and the structural integrity of the welds. Testing of the weld confidence articles will help engineers and technicians validate welding parameters to manufacture Exploration Upper Stage test and flight hardware.

Six team members receive Trailblazer Award



NASA photos

Marshall's Space Flight Awareness Trailblazer Award recipients, from left, include Cara Black, William Guin, Robbie Holcombe and Sriharsha Rayapati. Not shown are Eric Fox and Andrew Watson.

By TAYLOR GOODWIN

NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

Six team members from Marshall Space Flight Center were honored with the agency's Space Flight Awareness Trailblazer Award in a virtual ceremony Feb. 4.

The annual award is presented to NASA civil servants and contractors who demonstrate strong work ethic and creative, innovative thinking in support of human spaceflight in the first seven years of their career. The Marshall recipients included Cara Black, Eric Fox, William Guin, Robbie Holcombe, Sriharsha Rayapati and Andrew Watson.

"Our people serve a vital role in cultivating current and future leaders," Marshall Director Jody Singer told the center's awardees. "Specifically, your critical work is proof that the goals of this agency, and our center, are noteworthy and admirable pursuits."

Astronaut Chris Cassidy, recently the commander of International Space Station Expedition 63, addressed award recipients and recounted a story about a 2013 space-

walk he performed with Italian astronaut Luca Parmitano. Parmitano's helmet began filling with water and the pair had to return to the airlock. Cassidy said it became a full NASA effort to figure out the root cause of the issue and how to prevent it in the future.

"What's most relatable to today," Cassidy said, "is that this level of problem-solving to maintain mission safety is why you guys belong at NASA. Thank you for making spaceflight achievable, safe and manageable. Never give up on your dream and doing the work you're doing so well."

Their accomplishments included:

- Cara Black, recognized for leadership and technical contributions toward advanced hydrogen purification technology development – which enables the exploration life support oxygen recovery goal of at least 75% of the oxygen contained in carbon dioxide produced by the crew.

- Eric Fox, demonstrated outstanding leadership in the research and development of ionic liquids for life support and in-situ resource utilization applications.

- William Guin was recognized for his innovative solutions and diligence in the development of bonded joints in composite dry structures relating to the Payload Adapter Project.

- Robbie Holcombe, for her outstanding leadership in the development of an Independent Government Cost Estimate for the SLS Stages Production Evolution contract and her excellent cost estimating and analysis in support of the development of a nuclear thermal propulsion system for human exploration.

- Sriharsha Rayapati, received his award for consistently achieving high-quality results in requirements development and integration tasks relation to the Space Launch System ground-based and airborne imagery system.

- Andrew Watson, received his award for exceptional leadership, dedication, and commitment to the Air Emissions Compliance and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act programs in Marshall's Environmental Engineering & Occupational Health Office in support of NASA's space exploration and science missions.

Each awardee received a certificate signed by Kathy Lueders, associate administrator for NASA's Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate; a special commemorative spaceflight item; and the opportunity to shadow a NASA executive.

Editor's note: Taylor Goodwin, a Media Fusion employee, supports Marshall's Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications.

Sports

12U Redstone captures district championship

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Members of the Redstone team arrived early for the District 2 12-and-under basketball tournament at the Mary Kelly Johnston Gym in Meridianville.

They were ready to play.

After routing 11U Madison County in Thursday's opener, 12U Redstone faced 12U Madison County in Friday's final of the three-team tournament.

Redstone beat Madison County 30-18 for the district championship. Both teams advance to the 12U Alabama Recreation and Parks Association state tournament March 12-14 at Albertville/Boaz with Redstone as a district No. 1 seed and Madison County as a runner-up.

"In the fourth quarter, we matched their intensity," Redstone coach Michael Crum said. "We created turnovers and we capitalized. That's basically how we won. We capitalized on the turnovers and we made our open shots."

Jalen Venter had seven points, 11 rebounds and five steals for Redstone (2-0).

"We started to play hard at the beginning of second quarter because I feel like my team we saw the height difference, we shut down a little bit in the first quarter," Venter, 13, said. "But when we started scoring we started to be comfortable and we won the game."

The coach's older son, Michael Crum, had six points and two steals. Marques Crum, the coach's younger son, had six points and five rebounds. Elijah Naylon had four rebounds and two assists.

"We pulled it out with more effort," Marques Crum said. "We pulled ourselves back together in the second half."

Redstone led 4-2 after one quarter, 8-5 at halftime and 13-10 after three quarters. They scored the first 12 points of the fourth quarter for a 25-10 cushion.

Tyler Barrett had six points, seven rebounds, three assists and two steals for Madison County (0-1). Amare Hicks added six points and four rebounds.

"We're going to keep working," Madison County coach Doug Barrett said. "We didn't even put the press on them. We've got a new press. We're going to bring it into state."

12U Redstone 49, 11U Madison County 11: Jalen Venter had a double-double with 15 points and 10 rebounds for Redstone in Thursday's opener.

"It was a good night," the 5-foot-8 center/forward said. "We were trying to conserve power for the next game on Friday. So we were just kind of holding off on some of our plays so we'd be ready for next game."

Redstone led 7-2 after one quarter and 20-8 at halftime. They outscored Madison County 21-0 in the third quarter.

"We played incredible defense," Redstone coach Michael Crum said. "They played together as a team. Hustling, scrapping. We made shots."

Michael, his older son, had nine points and five steals. Marques, his younger son, added eight points. Braylon Lawson had seven points and two steals. Christian Irby made three steals and three assists. Josh Naylon had two assists.

Ty Hunter had five points and four rebounds for Madison County.

"We were just outmanned playing an older group of boys but we played hard," Madison County coach Chris Hunter said. "I'm proud of the boys, the way they played. Just proud of the boys for their effort."



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Members of the 12U Redstone team celebrate their District 2 title in Meridianville. Kneeling, from left, are Josh Naylon, Braylon Lawson, Christian Irby, Landon Shackelford and Demario Nobles. Standing are Samuel Johnson, assistant Marcus Tolbert, Jalen Venter, Elijah Naylon, assistant Andre Lewis, Marques Crum, coach Michael Crum, his older son Michael Crum and assistant Johnnie Irby.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Jalen Venter drives toward the Redstone basket against 12U Madison County in Friday's final.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Marques Crum makes a 3-pointer for 12U Redstone against 11U Madison County in the tournament opener.

Little league baseball stepping back up to plate

By **SKIP VAUGHN**

Rocket editor

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After a pandemic year hiatus, little league baseball is warming up for the season.

Registration for Redstone, which fields teams in the Huntsville league, continues through Friday. Signup is for ages 5-13, boys and girls.

“We didn’t get to play baseball last year. So obviously people who love baseball want to play this year,” Mike Gates, youth sports director, said.

“Little League International canceled last year because of the pandemic. It was postponed a couple of times and then finally they just shut it down.”

The age groups include 5-6, tee ball; 7-8, coach pitch; 9-10, baseball; and 11-13, baseball.

“I will be happy to have one team in each age group,” Gates said.

Register at Parent Central Services, building 3443 on Aerobee Road. Call 876-3704.

Huntsville little league plans to have a virtual opening day ceremony tentatively set for April 10 with games starting the following Monday, April 12. Teams typically play about seven weeks and try to



Photo by Skip Vaughn

The fields on Goss Road will be busy again when little league baseball returns.

get at least 12 games in by the end of May or first of June, according to Tony Hughes, neighborhood services coordinator for Huntsville Parks and Recreation.

Nothing like watching a good fight on television

I can't imagine what it's like to be a professional fighter.

If you're good in the ring, you can get paid handsomely. But I imagine much of your big purse from a fight has to go to your handler and trainer and other helpers.

It's hard to fathom that it's worth the physical toil and the risk and the pain.

There's also the stress. I'm sure there's some fear. There's the anguish of preparing so hard for your goal and then taking a painful loss.

But I love to watch boxing and mixed martial arts. I'd never do that stuff myself but it's intriguing to watch a good competitive fight.

My dad and I used to watch the Friday night fights on TV when I was growing up in Philadelphia. I remember the Gillette commercials and the cigarette commercials. There was no MMA on television back then, just boxing.

I remember when this kid named Cassius Clay, from Louisville, Ken-

tucky, upset the invincible Sonny Liston. Clay backed up what he boasted he would do. I remember my friends in the hood said Liston's face looked like he'd been in a meat grinder.

Of course Clay became the legendary Muhammad Ali. I followed his career all through my time at Auburn University and during my years at The Huntsville Times. I hated when he kept fighting long after his skills had diminished.

I still enjoy watching good fights. I

From the sidelines

By Skip Vaughn
Rocket editor

hate that boxing has lost its luster since back in the day. As long as men and women have the talent and guts to step into the ring or octagon or cage, I'll keep watching.

Redstone junior bowlers roll to state titles, scholarships

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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In its fourth year, the junior bowling program at Redstone Lanes has already struck gold with high school state champions and scholarship winners.

Thirty youngsters, including about 12 girls, meet Saturday afternoons for individual coaching. The skill-level groups include advanced, intermediate and beginners. They are ages 12-18.

Nine of the young bowlers are members of high school state champion teams this year. These include three from the Class 7A champion Sparkman boys and five from the Sparkman girls, and one from the 5A champion East Limestone boys.

Since 2018-19, nine former members of the program have received bowling scholarships to various universities.

"I believe the program itself first of all provides the youth a chance to not only learn how to bowl but to learn how to bowl competitively and compete on a national level for college scholarship money," James Moore, who created the program in September 2017 with his wife of 24 years, Yolanda Yates-Moore, said. He is a city planner with the city of Huntsville; and his wife is a software engineer at Lockheed Martin.

In the Junior Gold Roll-X Bowling Academy, they replicate the challenging lane conditions the bowlers would find at the annual national competition in July called the Junior Gold. College coaches go there looking for talent. This year's Junior Gold is in Indianapolis. The lanes get oiled in "sport shot condition" so these youngsters will be ready, Moore said.

Besides Moore several parents volunteer their time as coaches for this program. Redstone Lanes provides the facility. Pen 4 Pins, led by Gary Lewis, has brought in professionals to put on clinics for the young bowlers.

"As for the location being on a military base it's sort of unique in itself," Moore said. "And it's kind of my wife and my way of giving back to the community."

He praised Redstone Lanes business manager Bob Ujvari and the bowling center's staff for their support.

Ujvari, now in his sixth year at Redstone, initially talked with Moore about starting a junior bowling program here. "We thought this is the way to go so that's what he's been doing ever since," Ujvari said.

The high school state championships won in Birmingham in January and the scholarship recipients show the program is preparing bowlers for both high school and college.

"I think the program is excellent for the intermediate to higher level bowler who is looking to develop their skills for high school competition and collegiate level competition," Ujvari said.

Boys state champions include Dalton Tolgo, Cole Arsenault and Alphonso Carington III, all from Sparkman; and Ethan Keeton from East Limestone. Arsenault is a senior. Sparkman girls state champions include Daylin Tolgo, Dalton's sister and a senior; Ashley Ketchner, a senior; Emily Lindsey, Kaity Alexander and Natalie Alsop.

Arsenault, 17, said this is about his third year with the program.

"Bowling on sport shot is significantly harder so when we go to these high school tournaments that are on house shot it makes it significantly easier because we are used to bowling on harder shots," he said.

Daylin Tolgo, 18, has been with the program three years, ever since she started bowling for Sparkman. She said she has benefited from bowling on different oil patterns.

"This program's definitely helped me in the fact I've gotten to bowl on a lot of different things so I've been able to like hone my skills," Tolgo said.

Ketchner, 18, is in her second year with the program.

"This program has helped me improve my mechanics and game play on sport patterns," Ketchner said.

Scholarship recipients have included Nicole Gilbert, 2019-20 Sparkman, to Pikeville University in Kentucky; Jackson Stiles and Justin Byrd, teammates on the 2018-19 Class 6A state champion Buckhorn boys team, both scholarships to Martin Methodist; Brendan Ferris, 2018-19 East Limestone, to Pikeville University; Hallie Herring, 2018-19 Huntsville, to University of Alabama at Birmingham; Jim Roberts, 2018-19 James Clemens, to Martin Methodist; Colin Beddingfield, 2019-20 Scottsboro, to Spring Hill College; Brandon Crews, 2018-19 Bob Jones, to Bethel University; and Kimberly Mann, 2019-20 Lee, to Alabama A&M University.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

From left are Junior Gold Roll-X Bowling Academy program founder Yolanda Yates-Moore; Sparkman seniors Ashley Ketchner, Cole Arsenault and Daylin Tolgo; and program founder James Moore.

Your glory days in sports

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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What is the highlight of your athletic endeavors?



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Retired Sgt. Maj. Graham Van Oostrum is an avid golfer at the Links.

"Probably being the coach of a military softball team," retired Sgt. Maj. Graham Van Oostrum, of Meridianville, said. "That and we used to belong to the post softball team. I did it in Germany, too. I did it for 569th Ordnance Company for two years in Wurzburg, Germany, in 1998 and 1999. I retired in November 1999. We won the post championship for Redstone Arsenal in the 1980s with Charlie Company, 832nd Ordnance Company.

"I'm the director of three golf tournaments: the Marksville, Louisiana, spring and fall; and the Rocket City Retired Military Golf Classic in June at the Links. I have a hole-in-one at No. 3 on Warrior (course at the Links) in March 2019, 155 yards with a 9-iron."

Van Oostrum, 72, was born in The Hague, Netherlands. His mother was British and his father was Dutch. He became a naturalized citizen in Brooklyn, New York, in 1958 when he was 10. Van Oostrum retired from the Army in 1999 after 30 years. He and his wife of 29 years, Beverly, a golfer with four holes-in-one, reside in Meridianville. Their daughter, Michelle Kniss, resides in Hanau, Germany; and their son, Michael Hamlin, lives in New Market. They have two grandchildren. Van Oostrum's hobby is golf. "I love fishing but I haven't been able to do that much lately," he said. He roots for the Alabama Crimson Tide and the New England Patriots.

By the numbers: *Best things about spring*

By **SKIP VAUGHN**

Rocket editor

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1. **Warm sunny weather**
2. **Baseball season**
3. **Spring football games**
4. **Golf tournaments**
5. **Short sleeves and no coats**
6. **Spring break from school**
7. **Softball season**
8. **March madness in college basketball**
9. **Flowers and green grass**
10. **Being outdoors with family and friends**
11. **Tax refunds**
12. **Washing the car**

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

Military and civilians club

The Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club will hold its March "museum mad-

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ness" luncheon March 9 at The Summit. The program, with a focus on the fine arts, starts at 11:30 a.m. Carole Foret is the guest speaker. Cost is \$18; RSVP by noon Friday. Attendees are asked to bring their mask. For more information, visit rsamcc.org.

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 pandemic 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

See Announcements on page 45

MAJ Payne, I need help! I'm supposed to attend today's zoom meeting using my phone.



Nope! It's not happening!
No way!



Jim BoRoach
24 Feb 2021

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

Veterans of foreign wars

VFW Gentry-Isom 2702 meets the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. in its post home on the corner of Sparkman Drive and 2900 North Memorial Parkway. For more information, call Bobby Lee Jr. (931) 265-5685 or email bobbyleejr01@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 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.

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.us-amc.mbx.ig@mail.mil.

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.

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Visit the website at <https://mcdc.msfc.nasa.gov/>. For more information, email 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.

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.

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/l/meetup>. For more information about the classes, email usarmy.redstone.id-readiness.mbx.redstone-eap@mail.mil.

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.

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/>.

Charity car show

Vets with Vettes and Corvette Owners 16th annual Charity Car Show is June 5 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Cabela's parking lot, 7090 Cabela Drive. Events are open to all cars, bikes and trucks. There will be trophies and plaques along with games and prizes, silent auction, food and drinks and a 50/50 drawing. Proceeds will benefit veterans' charities. This is a rain-or-shine show with a prize package from Cabela's.

Women honoring women

The nomination window for a Women Honoring Women Honoree will be open until March 24, according to the Women's Economic Development Council Foundation. Each nominee must live or work in Madison County, has left or created a legacy in the Huntsville/Madison County community, and has not previously served on the WEDC Foundation Board or been involved in the Women Honoring Women Committee in the past five years. Nominations can be made online at www.wedcfoundation.org/ nominate with the event recognizing the 20th annual honorees happening at the Von Braun Center on Sept. 16. Selected honorees will be announced in June. To learn more about the WEDC Foundation, Women Honoring Women, or sponsorship information for the event, visit www.wedcfoundation.org.

Health department ratings

The Madison County Health Department released these weekly food/lodging establishment ratings for Feb. 15-19: Rock-N-Roll Sushi, 2500-B Clinton Ave., 93; and Taco Bell 032401, 14650 Highway 231/431, Hazel Green, 91.