

RedstoneRocket

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Military moving season sees impacts from pandemic

By JONATHAN STINSON

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Permanent change of station moves for Soldiers are in full swing. Many of the personnel responsible for assisting with these PCS moves call it the summer surge. It happens every year, but this year has brought a set of unique challenges thanks to the ramifications of COVID-19.

The Army will process some 60,000 PCS moves this summer. "For Redstone Arsenal, we're not seeing a bad PCS season right now," Garrison Commander Col. Glenn Mellor said. "Really it's just a matter of being patient and planning ahead."

Overall, the Army has taken steps to make the PCS move easier. It has started paying for 100% of personally procured moves and providing orders 120 days in advance.

The Army has streamlined the process to make it easier to make a claim, increased quality assurance checks, enhanced safety procedures, and launched the Army Permanent Change of Station Move App update. The app is available for Android and Apple devices.

Soldiers can also use the Digital Garrison app, the PCS My POV app and a 24/7 hotline, 833-MIL-MOVE, to get more information and assistance.

In addition to the apps, one of the most important things for Soldiers and civilians who are making a PCS move to Redstone to do is stop by Army Community Service, at the Pershing Welcome Center, and in process or out process, according to Jeannie Johnston, Army Community Service division chief.

"Sometimes that doesn't happen," Johnston said. "But it really behooves you to come by and see what we have to offer. We help you find what you need on base."

ACS can also help those moving find information about where they are going and they have the Lending Closet, which is designed to tide over those who have already had their household goods picked up, but are still living on post for a short time afterward.

"Sometimes we Google it and we think we know what all is there, but we have a lot more," Johnston said.

She added that it's vital for those with an exceptional family member to stop by and fill out a number of forms designed to ensure they family's EFM receives the services they need.

ACS can also assist with finding military spouses' employment. "If you're a commander please encourage your service members to come through ACS too and not sign off for themselves for in processing and out processing," Johnston said. "It's really important they get the information that they need."

One of the challenges faced by Soldiers is simply getting their household goods transported to their new place.

COVID-19 has presented several challenges, like labor shortages, which have increased the time it takes to schedule the transportation of household goods.

"We're seeing delays across all of CONUS," Mellor said. "For Redstone Arsenal it's roughly about three to four weeks for pickup or delivery, but that's about normal for us. So, really, we're not seeing a whole bunch of delays."

To combat this, the Army, and the Department of Defense, has taken steps to hold the transportation service providers accountable by emphasizing they should only accept shipments they can support



Photo by Eric Schultz

The Army will process around 60,000 permanent change of station moves this summer.

and sending out a total of 989 letters of suspension, to date, for companies who simply don't show up. The Army is also prioritizing the packaging and storage of household goods for Soldiers and families who have expiring leases or have sold their homes.

The Army inspects about 90% of shipments prior to movement and simplified the claims process to speed reimbursement for damaged goods.

Soldiers now have the option to procure their own moving services, which is a reimbursable expense.

According to the Army personally procured moves are not mandated, but they can be used as an option for Soldiers and families who want more control over the timeline of the moving process. The Army will reimburse Soldiers for 100% of authorized expenses, and to prevent out-of-pocket expenses, Soldiers are authorized to use their Government Travel Card to fund the personally procured moves.

Another important resource provided by the Garrison for those moving to and from Redstone is the Housing Service Office.

In addition to housing.army.mil, which provides information about Army posts, the HSO can assist with Army family housing, unaccompanied housing and off-post family housing.

According to Chuck Houston, from Garrison housing office, the HSO reaches out to all incoming personnel 90, 60 and 30 days out of their anticipated arrival to assist them with finding housing.

"We are part of the Garrison, not the privatized company that runs housing here on base," Houston said. "We encourage you, if you're inbound, to respond to us."

Installation housing managers provide up-to-date information to area property managers, rental companies and real estate agents in the surrounding communities about the military's housing and rental housing needs and can leverage established relationships with property management companies and individual landlords to advocate for Soldiers and families.

For more information visit www.militaryonesource.mil, www.housing.army.mil, www.homes.mil and www.redstonefamilyhousing.com.



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Defending champion red gets back to final round.
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Letter from the Senior Commander

Team Redstone,

This July, in addition to celebrating our nation's Independence Day, we also commemorate the 80th birthday of this great installation, the summer Olympic Games, and PCS season. We are also in the 16th month of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

There are moments the last 16 months that feel as though they have flown by, and others that we felt every second. COVID burnout is real, and it can manifest in different ways for each of us. Whether you are teleworking or coming to the office on a regular basis, I need you to know that I am proud of you. I am proud of your dedication to get the mission accomplished in tough situations, and your efforts to help us make Redstone Arsenal a safe place to return to work.

In March, we saw a sharp decline in the number active COVID-19 cases on Redstone and in our surrounding five counties, which prompted us to move to HPCON Bravo. In June, we saw two or less new cases per 100,000 people of COVID-19 in our area. That milestone, in conjunction with strong capacity to treat and test, meant we are now able to start preparing for HPCON Alpha. While we have seen a small spike in new cases following the Fourth of July holiday, we fully anticipate maintaining lower new case rate numbers and transitioning to HPCON Alpha later this summer.

Transitioning to HPCON Alpha means we will have met the conditions to support a greater percentage of the workforce physically returning, but most importantly, it will mean that Redstone is a safe environment for our workforce. By continuing to adhere to CDC health and safety guidelines and the current DOD mask mandate, we will remain a safe environment.

While we prepare for the workforce to return to Redstone, we must also be ready to welcome our newest Soldiers and military families to the installation. We are in the midst of our summer surge season, when a majority of our Soldiers execute their permanent change of station moves. We are expecting to welcome 50 new Soldiers.

In the competitive housing and labor markets of today, information is the primary tool to empower our Soldiers and Families to transition as safely, quickly, and inexpensively as possible. The Army PCS Move, Digital Garrison and My POV Apps are now available for free downloads on Android and Apple devices. The Army PCS Move App provides information for planning a move and has a live chat feature. The Digital Garrison App lets users explore up-to-date facility information and other "quality-of-life" services at almost 70 installations. The PCS My POV App lets users quickly locate their vehicle and contact the destination Vehicle Processing Center for information and appointments. In addition, the Army has implemented a 24/7 hotline for PCS questions during the Summer Surge (833-MIL-MOVE).

Lastly, the summer Olympic Games also kick off on July 23. Soldiers in the Army's World Class Athlete Program will compete in boxing, Greco-Roman wrestling, the Modern Pentathlon and shooting. You can also watch and cheer on one of Tennessee Valley's own as Zach Harting, the son of two Redstone Arsenal employees and a Bob Jones High School alum, competes in Tokyo as a swimmer for Team USA.

I encourage everyone on Redstone to extend a warm welcome to our newest team members as they arrive, and cheer on our World-Class Army athletes during the Olympics.

People First - Winning Matters - Army Strong!
- Lt. Gen. Flem B. "Donnie" Walker, Jr.



Lt. Gen.
Donnie Walker

On this date in history: July 21

In 2011: The Space Shuttle program ended with the landing of Space Shuttle Atlantis on mission STS-135 at NASA's Kennedy Space Center.

In 1976: Christopher Ewart-Biggs, the British ambassador to the Republic of Ireland, was assassinated by the Provisional IRA.

In 1969: Apollo astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on the Moon, followed 19 minutes later by Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin.

In 1961: In the Mercury-Redstone 4 Mission, Gus Grissom piloting Liberty Bell 7 became the second American to go into space (in a suborbital mission).

In 1925: Dayton, Tennessee, high school biology teacher John Scopes was found guilty of teaching human evolution in class and fined \$100.

In 1865: In the market square of Springfield, Missouri, Wild Bill Hickok shot and killed Davis Tutt in what is regarded as the first western showdown.

In 1861: The First Battle of Bull Run, at Manassas Junction, Virginia, the first major battle of the Civil War, resulted in a victory for the Confederate army.

Quote of the week

“That’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.”
– Neil Armstrong

RedstoneRocket

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First responder spotlight

By SKIP VAUGHN

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What is the best part of your job?

"I'm still figuring everything out. But I guess the opportunity to maybe brighten someone's day," Duane Cheyne, a security guard at the gates since early June, said. "I try to always be positive to people. Leave them feeling better about interactions with the guards."

Cheyne, 34, from Hopkins, Michigan, served in the Army from 2009-13 and left as a specialist. He was in Afghanistan from May 2010 to January 2011. Wounded in combat, he received the Purple Heart. The Owens Cross Roads resident and his wife of nearly nine years, Ashley, have two daughters, Nateleigh, 12, and Mayven, 3. Cheyne said his hobbies include playing videogames and being outdoors – hiking, camping and "I've got a kayak, haven't used it yet." He roots for the Huntsville Havoc hockey team.



Duane Cheyne

Crimes, accidents & other occurrences

The Directorate of Emergency Services, Law Enforcement Division, provided the following list of reported incidents July 4-10:

July 6: Redstone police stopped a vehicle for an expired Alabama tag. A check revealed the driver's license was suspended and the individual had a warrant for driving without insurance/driving while suspended with Huntsville Police Department. The driver was cited for driving with an expired tag and driving while suspended. Huntsville police arrived and the driver was turned over to HPD for the warrants.

July 7: At Gate 9, a driver had a non-driver ID. The National Crime Information Center confirmed the individual did not have a valid state driver's license. The individual was cited for driving without a license. The vehicle was inventoried by Redstone police and towed by a local wrecker service.

July 7: Redstone police stopped a vehicle at the intersection of Martin Road and Toftoy Thruway for window tint. The driver admitted to not having vehicle insurance, was cited for window tinting and no insurance and was released. The vehicle was towed by a local wrecker service.

July 8: A two-vehicle accident occurred at Vincent Drive and Lacrosse Drive. Vehicle 1 was traveling south on Vincent; and vehicle 2 was northbound on Vincent. Vehicle 1 was attempting to turn

left onto Lacrosse when it pulled into the path of and collided with vehicle 2. Vehicle 1 had damage to the front passenger side and front end. Vehicle 2 had damage to the front passenger side. The driver of vehicle 1 was cited for failure to yield. The driver of vehicle 2 was cited for failure to obtain liability insurance and expired registration. Vehicle 1 was removed by the driver. Vehicle 2 was removed by a local wrecker service and towed to their storage lot pending minimum state insurance requirements and current registration.

July 9: A two-vehicle accident occurred at Martin Road and Lindner Road. While traveling east on Martin, vehicle 1 entered the left turn lane and attempted to turn north onto Lindner but struck vehicle 2 which was traveling west on Martin. Vehicle 1 had minor damage to the front bumper. Vehicle 2 had disabling damage to its front left side. Vehicle 1 was released to a licensed driver. Vehicle 2 was towed by a local wrecker service to their storage lot.

Citations included one for driving while license is suspended or revoked, two for possession of a controlled substance, one for possession of drug paraphernalia, two for failure to yield the right of way, one for domestic disturbance, 11 for expired registration, three for no insurance, one for illegal tint and nine for speeding.

Getting to know you

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Name: Sue McCauley

Position: Human resources assistant for the military, Headquarters & Headquarters Company AMCOM

What did you want to be when you grew up?

Honestly I wanted to be a teacher. My mother was an educator. I just wanted to be a part in developing youth.

What do you hope to accomplish in 2021?

Working towards pursuing my dream of entrepreneurship. I want to start a catering business.

What is the best part about your job?

Soldiers. Helping Soldiers.

Who is your hero, and why?

I put my mom (Alfreda McCauley of Greensboro, North Carolina, who died in 2012). My mother was an example of dedication, commitment, and what it was to go after your dream. And not to stop till it comes to pass.

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



I love volunteering my services in any capacity to aid those who are less fortunate.

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

"If you can believe it, you can achieve it." That came from my mom.

What do you like to do to pass the time?

Serving others. I cook for people, do hospitality, working in ministry and I love serving the Lord.

Tell us about ...

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Why you joined the Army.

"I've wanted to join the military for as long as I can remember," Capt. Hunter Wilson, Headquarters & Headquarters AMCOM commander since October 2020, said. "My father (Greg Wilson of Huntsville) served in the Army in the first Gulf War. So I always grew up listening to stories of his service. As long as I can remember, I've had that drive to serve in the military to be a part of something bigger than myself."

Wilson, 27, was born at Fort Stewart, Georgia, and raised in Huntsville. He received his commission through ROTC in May 2015 when he graduated from Virginia Tech with a bachelor's in philosophy. The military intelligence officer arrived at Redstone in September 2020 from Fort Huachuca, Arizona, where he attended the captains career course. He and his wife of seven years, Kayla, reside in Huntsville with their two sons, Jude, 2 1/2, and Damian, 9 months. Wilson said he enjoys outdoors things – camping, fishing and hiking. He roots for the Virginia Tech Hokies.



Capt. Hunter Wilson

Know your laws: Pet ownership carries responsibility

By AMY WASYLUKA

Huntsville attorney

For many pets are part of our family. They bring us joy, they share our sorrow and they make us laugh. However, as any pet owner knows, pets come with lots of responsibilities, some of which can land you in legal trouble should you fail to meet them.

The Alabama Code requires every owner of a dog, cat or ferret to ensure that their pet is immunized for rabies on a regular schedule unless the animal receives an exemption from immunization from the State Board of Health on the basis that it would be injurious to their health. Failure to ensure your pet is immunized can result in a fine twice the state approved charge for immunization.

If a dog, cat or ferret which is required to be vaccinated against rabies bites or exposes a human, the Alabama Code requires that the bite or exposure be reported to a rabies officer or health officer and that the animal be quarantined under the supervision of a veterinarian. It is illegal for a person with knowledge that

such a bite or exposure has occurred to fail to disclose it and constitutes a Class C misdemeanor. However, vaccinated dogs, cats and ferrets may be allowed to quarantine in the home of their owner. Additionally, certain service dogs may be exempt from quarantine if they are vaccinated but must still be examined by a vet immediately 10 days after the exposure or bite.

In addition to rabies vaccination requirements, the Alabama Code seeks to prevent dogs from running at large by requiring dog owners in certain areas to confine their dogs to the limits of their premises. Dog owners who are required to abide by the code and fail to do so may be found guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine not to exceed \$50. These are just a few of the laws regarding pets and many municipalities may have additional regulations and requirements that pet owners should be aware of.

Finally, pet owners should be aware that if their pet, or a pet on their prem-



ises causes harm to another person, state and local laws may allow the injured party to seek damages for that injury in court. Those who believe they may face legal consequences as a result of their

pet should seek the advice of a qualified attorney. Both the Alabama State Bar and the Huntsville/Madison County Bar Association provide attorney referrals. You can look for an attorney using the Huntsville/Madison County Bar Association's Find a Lawyer Service at www.huntsvillebar.org/directory or by calling the Alabama State Bar's Lawyer Referral Line at 800-392-5660.

So next time you think about adding a pet to your family, in addition to picking out treats, toys and names, don't forget to make yourself aware of the legal responsibilities that come with pet ownership.

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.

To be or not to be in the office, that is the question

Garrison employees were given a heads-up last week that Health Protection Condition Alpha was likely on the horizon and for some that meant it was time to start thinking about what returning to the workplace looked like.

Currently over 80% of the Garrison's workforce is showing up in person every day, and that makes sense for a service-based organization, but if or when the installation moves to Alpha, there will be other conversations across the post and most of those conversations will center around telework.

People have been teleworking for over a year now and they like it. At the same time you have people who are anxious about returning to the workplace because they are afraid of getting COVID-19.

I've said it before, but I'll repeat myself because I'm getting old. COVID-19 forced us to adapt new technologies and fundamentally changed the way we thought about work.

I don't think a post-COVID workplace looks like the pre-COVID workplace.

I don't think it can, but at the same

Snippets

By Jonathan Stinson
Assistant editor

time it can't continue the way it has.

Post-COVID is the wrong term, because COVID is still there, but I don't know what you call the current state we're in.

There is a pandemic-inducing virus on the loose, but we do have the tools necessary to keep it below pandemic levels and keep the workforce safe if people would just use them. Namely an extremely effective vaccine.

But, just because it's safe to return to the workplace, does it mean we should?

I'm sure there are a number of professions that lend themselves to telework, especially those that don't require a lot of collaboration or rely on spur of the moment ideas.

I've heard of a number of employers telling their workforce that even after the world returns to normal they would not

return to the workplace.

My concern with those employers is even though they say they're 100% teleworking, I'm worried they're forgetting about two or three people who act as boots on the ground. The boots always end up carrying the brunt of the burden.

Here's the test.

If your office is as productive or even more productive as it was pre-COVID and there is no one going into the office at all, then you're the perfect candidate for telework.

But, if even one person is regularly in the office, then I'll almost guarantee it's that one person who ends up picking up the hidden slack that's inherent in all of our professions.

When that happens you quickly get into a situation of haves and have nots and that never ends well.

But, I don't think that means we should abandon telework all together.

I don't work in a profession that can function with 100% telework or maybe I can't function in it.

I need people around to bounce ideas off of, to be able to talk to face to face to

get a situation taken care of and to contribute to the melting pot of ideas that it takes to put out a paper every week.

My team has done some great work. They all teleworked during 2020 and part of 2021, but ever since I've put them on a hybrid schedule the work has gotten better. It has nothing to do with the building, but it has everything to do with the random conversations that happen during the workday.

Right now I don't really see a need to bring them into the office 40 hours a week. And, really if they're doing their jobs then they are out of the office covering things.

But, if one of them asked me right now if I was going to bring them back into the building for 40 hours a week, I'd have to say "I don't know."

What makes the answer to that question difficult is while the workload has certainly picked up since January, it's still not back to pre-COVID levels.

And, that's why everyone needs to be careful, because the decisions that are made today are going to be difficult to walk back later.

Military

AMC leaders synchronize, operationalize safety planning



Army photo by Mark Cleghorn

Using the Gas Tungsten Arc Welding process, Eddie Stewart repairs a crack in the M113 fluid section tank.

By SAMANTHA TYLER

Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

From depots, plants and arsenals to office spaces, safety and risk management is integrated into every mission the Army Materiel Command enterprise supports.

AMC leaders held a Command Safety and Occupational Health Advisory Council meeting Thursday, synchronizing on safety plans and risk mitigation efforts. Gen. Ed Daly, AMC commander, praised major subordinate command leaders for their progress.

“You are comprehensively moving the ball forward on safety,” Daly said. “We must continue to hold ourselves accountable, assessing and mitigating risk at all echelons.”

The headquarters AMC Safety and Occupational Health team provides direct support to major subordinate commands. The team conducts safety audits, reviewing major subordinate command programs every four years, ensuring they are conducting proper oversight and identifying gaps. The team provides an honest assessment while advising and mentoring leaders on how to improve.

“We want to make sure we’re not just looking at the headquarters and that the programs are effective at lower levels,” William Zaharis, AMC safety director, said.

Zaharis said the mishap rates are steadily declining and commands are doing well on inspections, which in turn keeps the workforce safe and maintains readiness.

The team is also working on the AMC Safety and Occupational Health Management System. In this system, it’s not just the safety team leading the effort. Every employee and leader has an active role in safety, taking existing programs to the next level. George LeFevre, an operations safety manager at AMC, said the effort is tak-

ing all the existing safety programs and packaging them together in a systematic way.

“Leaders are committed and employees are engaged, so we get everyone involved in safety where they are,” LeFevre said.

The system involves identifying safety issues, mitigating them and developing a process to further fix the issues and train the force. LeFevre said this process is present in depots, plants and arsenals, and AMC is expanding on its success.

“It is going to take a paradigm shift in the way we think about safety,” he said. “It does change the culture of an organization.”

Major subordinate commands are in the process of developing their plans to support this effort. The goal is to have the AMC Safety and Occupational Health Management System fully implemented by fiscal year 2025.

As a testament to the emphasis AMC is placing on safety, the command earned five 2020 Army Safety Awards. The award winners include the following:

- Exceptional Organization Safety Award – Army Service Component Commands/Direct Reporting Units 2-Star Commands: Tank-automotive and Armaments Command (Detroit Arsenal, Michigan)
- Exceptional Organization Safety Award – Brigade Level: Watervliet Arsenal (Watervliet, New York)
- Exceptional Organization Safety Award – Garrison: Army Garrison-Fort Drum (Fort Drum, New York)
- Industrial Operations Safety Award – Red River Army Depot (Texarkana, Texas)
- Individual Award for Excellence in Safety – Noncommissioned Officer: Sgt. Raul Vega, 1184th Deployment and Distribution Support Battalion, Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (Camp Arifjan, Kuwait)

Recruiting brigade leader sets sights on making impact

By EMILY STRICKLAND

Staff writer

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Col. James Welch is no stranger to the opportunities a career in the Army can afford for young people across the southeast.

That's why he is a perfect fit for his new role as the commander of the 2nd Recruiting Brigade on Redstone Arsenal.

"I grew up in rural Arkansas, and the Army allowed me to see the world and do things that I wouldn't otherwise do," Welch said. After a change of command ceremony on July 22, Welch will spearhead the recruiting efforts of the entire southeast region.

Military service was a family tradition for Welch's family, although he didn't necessarily plan on making a career in the Army. Now in his 22nd year of service, Welch has served in myriad assignments, including overseas duty in South Korea, Iraq and Afghanistan.

An intelligence officer, Welch is also quite familiar with recruiting: He was the company commander of the Peachtree City Recruiting Company, Atlanta Recruiting Battalion 2005-06, and was recently commander of the Montgomery Army Recruiting Battalion 2018-20. That prior experience within the 2nd Recruiting Brigade made him his new role a "dream job."

"It's such a strategically important mission for our Army and for our nation," Welch said. His experience in intelligence will allow him to "apply an analytical lens to what we do in our recruiting efforts," he said,

ensuring that the mission of Army recruiting is upheld and pursued diligently.

"Overall, if we don't do our job and fill the ranks of the Army, there's no Army."

His previous experience as a recruiter also gives him a unique insight into the heavy lifting the Soldiers and civilians under his command do every day.

"It allows me to have an appreciation for the hard work and the dedication that these recruiters have day in and day out," Welch said. "I understand the difficulties they may face day in and day out, and I think because of that, I can help ensure they have the resources and the things that they need to do their job and do it well."

He is also looking forward to the new responsibilities he will have as a brigade commander.

"All the duties and all the commands I've had before were really looking down and in," Welch said. "As a brigade commander, you get to be able to look out and up. You build those relationships outside of the organization to help our Soldiers and civilians achieve their mission. So, I think that's going to be the key difference. Certainly, I still have an inward focus to take care of my Soldiers, but I get to look bigger, strategically."

Welch and his family – wife Jenny and children Bryce, Katherine and William – arrived on Redstone Arsenal July 9 and are grateful for how welcoming the community has been thus far.

Welch looks forward to the positive impact he can make as brigade commander and has big goals for his tenure at Redstone Arsenal.

"We are going to be the number one recruiting bri-



Photo by Eric Schultz

Col. James Welch, commander of 2nd Recruiting Brigade, stands in front of the brigade headquarters.

gade in the U.S. Army, without a doubt," he said. "If I can do that and ensure that our Soldiers and civilians are able to achieve their personal and professional goals, I'll consider myself a success."

Soldier/civilian/family readiness briefs

By Army News Service and Defense Department websites

Army upgrades practices

WASHINGTON – The Army has rolled out the Army Business Management Plan, an initiative designed to systematically improve business practices and processes while changing approaches to talent management to optimize the capability and capacity of its workforce.

Army leaders collaborated with each Army command to build the ABMP, which will allow the service to provide better stewardship of its spending.

“The challenge facing the Army is that we have a fixed budget and how we apply that budget toward priorities is through critical decisions made by Army senior leaders,” Robin Swan, director of the Army’s Office of Business Transformation, said. “Every budget or programming cycle, every dollar that is freed through improvement in efficiency, is a dollar that they can apply to a higher readiness or modernization priority.”

Swan said the ABMP will use data and business analytics to make “resource-based” decisions that will eliminate unnecessary processes for a more efficient business model. He said the plan will aid some of the Army’s most critical modernization

efforts, including delivering new equipment to warfighters faster and upgrading talent management. The Army released the ABMP on April 1.

The new plan, which Swan said will evolve with annual revisions through 2025, establishes the Army Integrated Management System as the service’s vehicle to continuously identify new reform initiatives. The IMS helps integrate data, processes, and people into one aligned and synchronized system.

The overhaul of its management systems will improve the management of business operations so the Army can support readiness and modernization priorities, said Jennifer Mootz, chief of business planning and assessment for OBT.

“Aligning the Army under a common strategic direction for the management of business operations is how we will facilitate continuous reform,” Mootz said. “Every part of the headquarters of the Department of the Army and by extension, subordinate commands, has to be synchronized in the accomplishment of those goals and objectives.”

Among the goals, Swan said, better business practices outlined in the ABMP will allow brigade combat teams to make swifter decisions, impacting unit readiness.

Materiel enterprise Soldiers vie for best of the best

By SAMANTHA TYLER

Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

Putting their skills to the test, 12 Soldiers from across the globe will compete in this year's Army Materiel Command Best Warrior Competition at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, July 25-28.

Soldiers will test their physical and mental strength through a variety of challenges in hopes of representing AMC in the Army-level competition later this year. Army Materiel Command's Command Sgt. Maj. Alberto Delgado said these Soldiers are up for the challenge.

"These Soldiers are rising stars who embody the strength and values of our Army," he said. "The AMC Best Warrior Competition will test their resilience and expertise through challenging scenarios."

Last year, the COVID-19 pandemic restricted the competition to a virtual administration board competition with less competitors. Sgt. 1st Class Annette Hood, AMC G-3 operations noncommissioned officer, said COVID-19 safety measures will be in place this year, including temperature checks at events.

Even with the precautions, Hood said this year is shaping up to be similar to years past.

"We have more equipment and a new event that is being introduced for this competition," she said. "Competitors will execute the new Army Combat Fitness Test event that has been introduced to the Army recently."

Winners will be announced during a luncheon July 30 at The Summit.



Photo by Eben Boothby

Soldiers compete in a variety of events, including testing the operation and accurate firing of five weapon systems, during the 2019 Army Materiel Command Best Warrior Competition.

Materiel enterprise launches civilian development tool

By KARI HAWKINS

Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

A new civilian employee assessment tool that takes a closer look at the skills needed to build readiness among Army Materiel Command's 90,000 civilian employees is now being implemented by its 10 major subordinate commands.

The Ready Army Civilian program – which is designed to ensure a workforce of high caliber employees who are educated and trained to address vastly complex and strategic situations, and who possess the job skills and experiences to manage and lead in a multi-faceted, readiness-based atmosphere – has been used by AMC headquarters' 600 civilian employees for the past year. It launched with major subordinate commands in early July and will extend to other organizations within the materiel enterprise by the end of 2021.

"The RAC assessment tool is about giving our workforce the tools they need to perform optimally," Max Wyche, AMC's deputy chief of staff for G-1 (Human Resources), said. "The tool will show us how to implement leader development, how to build in training so that employees get the type of training they need to improve performance, and how to provide employees with the type of workplace where they can excel and be more productive so we can achieve the readiness levels the Army is looking for."

AMC headquarters G-1 staff have been working with representatives of each of its major subordinate commands to ensure a successful introduction of the RAC employee assessment tool, which is accessed through the internal SharePoint site that is supported by the AMC G-2/6 (Information Technology). An operations order was released in February, requiring the identification of RAC administrators at the major subordinate commands, and then detailing the timeline for training and implementation.

"To have a successful roll out of the program, we wanted to make sure our administrators and supervisors, as well as employees, were aware of the RAC tool and how to use it for employee development assessments," Human resources specialist Ricardo Rivera, AMC's RAC program manager, said. "Each major subordinate command needed time to identify and train their RAC administrators, and determine what intangible soft skills define readiness for their employees."

Intangible soft skills include character, attitude, time management, critical thinking, conflict resolution, loyalty, ability to work with teams, communication and listening skills, and work ethic.

Tangible skills – hard requirements that cannot be modified by the major subordinate commands – include degrees, certifications and other training, and the ability to travel, obtain a security clearance and pass a drug test, among other things. They also include self-development, job experience, and leadership and mentorship responsibilities.

Each major subordinate command defines their unique rating criteria and rating system, with RAC designed to support both the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program, and Individual Development Plans already in place for employees.

"AMC leadership wanted to allow every major subordinate command to modify the weights of each skill set because each has a different mission and may need to adjust priorities to reflect that mission," Rivera said. "The RAC tool is meant to better support the employee's goals and accomplishments."



As each major subordinate command prepared to launch RAC, the administrators worked with their leadership to determine preferred skill sets and abilities, and then built a RAC template with those preferences. They then had to input employees into their personnel data system, and train supervisors and employees on how to use the RAC.

"Most of the administrators are from the G-1 (Human Resources) or the G-3 (Operations). They are more likely to have training, workforce development and human capital management as part of their experience," Rivera said. "Having Human Resources knowledge is definitely a plus for this role, but training knowledge is also important."

At each major subordinate command, the RAC tool outlines what standards need to be met for employees to be considered Ready Army Civilians, and identifies training or requirement gaps for employees to work toward. While the RAC tool is required of all first-line supervisors, it is optional for employees. The tool is also not tied to promotions or future job opportunities but is rather a personalized way for supervisors and employees to take a closer look at what they can do to improve individual readiness.

"This is all new and it represents change," Rivera said. "But the hope is the RAC tool helps supervisors facilitate the conversations on professional development they have with subordinates. The tool gives them the opportunity to have a conversation about identified opportunities to maximize their potential."

The RAC tool has three phases – a supervisory assessment, an employee assessment and then a final reconciliation of the assessments. Employees may opt out from conducting a self-assessment and final resolution but coming to a reconciliation is an opportunity for supervisors and employees to discuss potential development opportunities, said Tim McLean, AMC's chief of Civilian Workforce and Talent Management Division, G-1. Once they come to a reconciliation, the information is entered anonymously in the RAC system data base so the data can be used to determine training and development opportunities for future employee growth.

This is the first assessment tool that allows Army senior leaders visibility of training gaps and development opportunities, McLean said. All AMC employees will have the opportunity to participate in the RAC assessment program before the end of 2021, providing leadership with enterprise-wide data that will allow them to plan strategically for the allocation of training funds, he said.

"By 1 Oct. 2022, everyone will be on the same schedule with RAC and we will be able to use the data gained to support training budget allocations," McLean said.

The RAC tool is also of benefit to career program managers who can view the CPM dashboard and identify development gaps they can address in the training opportunities they offer and resource, Rivera said.

"The overall end result is to make good employees better," McLean said. "It's about seeing yourself from the top down and the bottom up. It helps you see what you need to work on professionally and then gives you the resources to do that."

Rivera said more development is ongoing with the RAC tool as insight into professional development is gained from employees throughout the materiel enterprise.

"We hope to integrate the system so we can give the workforce a place to go to request training that satisfies the criteria of their RAC assessment," Rivera said.

Army Game Studio scores with recruitment, training

By KATIE DAVIS SKELLEY

DEVCOM Aviation & Missile Center Public Affairs

Army recruitment is not one-size-fits-all.

Army Game Studio, located at the Combat Capabilities Development Command Aviation & Missile Center's Software, Simulation, Systems Engineering and Integration Directorate, might be best known for "America's Army," the official videogame of the Army. More than simply a game, "America's Army" is a realistic digital facsimile of the Army experience that can be used as a recruitment tool.

However, "America's Army" is just one tool in AGS's toolbox. The team, which already partially functioned remotely before COVID-19, did not let the pandemic slow them down as they rolled out their newest technological recruitment tool – the Trauma Triage Table.

The table enables users to electronically diagnose and treat different injuries and ailments that a Soldier might encounter. The table will be rolled out for use at Army recruitment events.

In addition to recruitment, the studio uses commercial videogame technology to produce state-of-the-art training applications for Soldiers, including the Transportable, Reconfigurable, Integrated Crew Trainer; Javelin Enhanced Producibility Basic Skills Trainer; Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Virtual Crew and Dismount Trainers; and the Common Remotely Operated Weapons Station Trainers. They offer both rotary and



Photo by Robert Stein

Army Game Studio's Matthew Perry uses an immersive technology trainer that teaches flight skills.



Photo by Robert Stein

Army Game Studio Director Marsha Berry demonstrates the features of AGS's award-winning STARS: Elements app, an educational tool that assists students in learning chemistry.

See Studio on page 14

Studio

Continued from page 12

fixed-wing trainers that use immersive technology to teach flight skills.

“These are the desks of the future,” Trainers Division Chief Frank Blackwell said.

But AGS hasn’t limited its educational reach to training its Army personnel. Setting its sights in the classroom, AGS’s award-winning STARS: Elements app was developed for high school chemistry teachers to help their students learn and visualize the foundations of chemistry. STARS: Elements features visual learning tools that let students explore the periodic table, elements and atomic structure, through interactive models, games and challenges. The app is available for free on the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store.

“The Army Game Studio has capitalized on commercial videogame and interactive multimedia technology to develop government-owned training products that achieve the highest rate of return to the warfighter at the lowest investment cost, especially when compared with alternative development strategies,” Blackwell said.

The studio employs a full roster to make this variety of technology come to life, including an art team which creates the concept art; 3D modeling and animation, game/level design team; programming team and hardware team who has extensive product development capabilities for websites; mobile applications; and more. Its facilities include five laboratories, a motion capture studio and a sound studio.

With the pandemic limiting in-person tours of their facility, AGS took their technological expertise and applied it to creating a virtual tour which they launched in June.

“We run the whole spectrum,” AGS Director Marsha Berry said. “You have your creative folk and your engineers – it makes a good combination.”



Photo by Robert Stein

The Trauma Triage Table is the newest technological recruitment tool at the Combat Capabilities Development Command Aviation & Missile Center's Army Game Studio.

1st Space Brigade to share expertise with Marines

By Sgt. 1st Class AARON ROGNSTAD

Space and Missile Defense Command

FORT CARSON, Colo – In August, the Space and Missile Defense Command's 1st Space Brigade will begin training select Marines on how the Army uses space-based capabilities to assist warfighters.

Marines from the newly activated Marine Corps Forces Space Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Nebraska, will train at the Space and Missile Defense School in Colorado Springs, and then move on to embed with Army Space Support Teams. Training will include situational awareness of space capabilities, space assets, space products and the impact of space on operations.

"The Marines will fall in on SMDC's training," Maj. Steven Richards, an ARSST officer-in-charge with 2nd Space Company, 1st Space Battalion, 1st Space Brigade, said. "We will get them schooled up on certification tables to be fully prepared to bring their space expertise back to whomever is requesting it."

That expertise will be in the form of Marine Space Support Teams, similar to 1st Space Brigade's ARSSTs.

Marine Capt. Jacob Loya, a communications officer with a background in satellite communications, is a space operations planner working with 1st Space Brigade to begin the process of training the Marines.

"We are in our initial building stage of SOPs (standard operating procedures) and TTPs (tactics, techniques, and procedures) and force structure," Loya said. "Right now this is a capability that doesn't exist in the Marine Corps. It's always us reaching out to the joint force to provide it. With the renewed emphasis on space and the standing up of the Space Force and Space Command, the Marine Corps needs to have skin in the game. We want to be able to operate independently and that starts by learning all the TTPs built out by 1st Space Brigade. It's a knowledge base we just don't have."

Maj. Gen. David Furness, assistant deputy commandant for plans, policy and operations at the Marine Corps, recently visited 1st Space Brigade to get briefed on the overview of the training and overall SMDC operations.

"We will learn from Army Space on how to conduct our operations," Furness said. "We are looking to fill gaps in what you (SMDC) do for the entire joint force or multi-domain task force."

Col. Donald Brooks, commander of 1st Space Brigade, was attached to a Marine unit without deployed to Iraq in 2007-08 and has a deep appreciation of what they do.

"I have a huge affinity for the Marines and now to be able to bring them into our organization and train them on a mission set that not many people truly understand or know is special for me and this organization," Brooks said. "The relationship we have been building with the Marines is coming to fruition with the Marine Space



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Rognstad

Space and Missile Defense Command leadership briefs Marine Corps Maj. Gen. David Furness, assistant deputy commandant for plans, policy and operations, on SMDC's operations at 1st Space Brigade headquarters at Fort Carson, Colo., July 1. The 1st Space Brigade will soon begin a new initiative to train Marine teams in space-related fields to support joint force warfighters.

Support Teams introduction and integration into the command not only at the company level, but also integrating Marine space professionals into the brigade staff. As we execute operations for an exercise or a real-world deployment, having those Marines in the Army together in that connective tissue working hand-in-hand is critical as we fight this future joint fight."

As of now, there is no set time limit on how long Marines will remain integrated into 1st Space Brigade companies, but the intention is to establish their own autonomous Marine Space Support Teams.

1987 cold case solved, murder suspect convicted

By Criminal Investigation Command

QUANTICO, Va. – More than three decades after the body of a female Fort Carson Soldier was found, justice has finally been served.

On June 25, a Colorado Springs jury sentenced Michael Whyte to life in prison without parole for the 1987 murder of 20-year-old Spc. Darlene Krashoc. Solved in 2019, the conviction comes two years after investigators from the Criminal Investigation Command connected Whyte to the murder using DNA evidence.

"It feels satisfying to know that the hard work and collaboration among multiple agencies in the pursuit of justice finally led to a successful resolution," CID Forensic Science Officer Jessica Veltri said. "One that I hope brings some measure of peace to Darlene's family and friends."

On March 17, 1987, officers from the Colorado Springs Police Department found Krashoc's body behind the Korean Club Restaurant in Colorado Springs. She had been last seen out with fellow members of her unit at another club in the local area. At the time of her death, Krashoc was an active duty Soldier stationed at Fort Carson,

Colorado, assigned to the 73rd Maintenance Company and was five months shy of her 21st birthday.

An autopsy determined Krashoc's death was due to strangulation. Investigators concluded she was brutally murdered at a different location and later the killer moved her body postmortem to the Korean Club Restaurant.

Over the years, special agents from CID worked jointly with the Colorado Springs police to solve the case. Despite all the interviews and evidence collected during the crime scene examination, the case went cold. In October 2003, the investigation was reopened to examine more evidence. Colorado Springs released all the evidence to the Criminal Investigation Laboratory and examiners there processed the evidence using updated technology to search for clues.

"In this particular cold case, special agents from the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command used Phenotyping technology and put out a reward to generate new leads," Chris Grey, CID public affairs officer, said. "That led to the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command's Criminal Investigation Laboratory assisting our special agent with the genealogy process, conducting additional forensic comparisons."

Reserve company puts muscle into construction projects

By EMILY STRICKLAND

Staff writer

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A few properties on Redstone Arsenal are getting a facelift this week, thanks to the 663rd Engineer Company. The Army Reserve company, which hails out of Sheffield, is at Redstone Arsenal July 10-23 for yearly training. This year's training includes three projects: clearing trees where Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation intends to expand the RV Park; helping MWR with construction by one of the swimming pools; and assisting the Directorate of Public Works with demolition projects near the airfield.

The 663rd Engineer Company is a horizontal engineer company that specializes in heavy equipment and construction, Company Commander Capt. Jason Harmon said. That specialization was on full display Friday as Soldiers used hydraulic excavators, bulldozers and other heavy machinery to remove trees and clear the land.

Harmon said the training has been a great opportunity for his Soldiers to gain technical skills that they might have to draw on during a deployment.

"This is a lot of what we would do on deployment," Harmon said. "We typically do unimproved road construction for tanks and other military vehicles." The company has also recently added a vertical construction team, which allows them to take on other types of construction projects, like buildings.

Harmon and 2nd Platoon Leader 1st Lt. Kyle Bryant were both thankful for the opportunity to bring their Soldiers to Redstone Arsenal to refine their mechanical skills. "This is a great training opportunity," Bryant said. "When we first started this project, I had a lot of very new,



Photo by Eric Schultz

The 663rd Engineer Company works to improve and enlarge the RV Park on Friday.

very inexperienced operators, and now I can ask any one of them to go on any one of these pieces of machinery and they're comfortable doing it, so I'm really grateful to have this opportunity."

Harmon agreed. "This is stuff that we typically don't get a lot of experience running, so the fact that we're able to kind of seclude ourselves away from our normal operation and actually get to the job of our company has been



Photo by Eric Schultz

1st Lt. Kyle Bryant and Capt. Jason Harmon talk about the work the company is doing to improve the RV Park and several other sites on Redstone Arsenal during their two-week stay.

invaluable to us."

Both leaders also praised the hard work of their teams.

"I just want to stress how hard my platoon has been working and their dedication," Bryant said. "Without them this project could not happen."

Security enterprise Soldier up for warrior challenge

By ADRIANE ELLIOT

Security Assistance Command Public Affairs

Sgt. 1st Class Tyler Ray Price is always looking for his next big challenge.

He recently found it in the 2021 Army Materiel Command Best Warrior Competition, scheduled July 26-28 at Camp Atterbury, Indiana.

Representing the Security Assistance Command, Price will go head-to-head against AMC's top Soldiers and NCOs during a grueling three-day competition. The winner of the AMC competition and winners at subordinate organizations and MACOMs throughout the world will advance to the Army-level contest later this year to see who will receive the titles Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

Price is an instructor and senior combat engineer adviser at the Fort Bragg-based Security Assistance Training Management Organization, a subordinate organization of USASAC. He instructs senior enlisted troops and field grade of-



Sgt. 1st Class Tyler Ray Price

ficers in the State Department's required Foreign Affairs Counter Threat course.

When he's not teaching life-saving techniques in support of U.S. foreign policy, he deploys and executes security assistance missions in partner nations across the globe.

It is a unique and challenging assignment. And that's why he loves it.

"Sometimes it's hard for Soldiers to see the impact that their day-to-day jobs have on the Big Army mission and national security," he said. "But working with partner nations, I get to see the bigger picture, how what we do affects their ability to operate and how their ability is key to our strategic readiness."

Price was nominated to serve as a SATMO adviser-diplomat after a two-year tour as a drill sergeant with Echo Company, 701st MP Battalion at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. After assignments preparing new recruits for military service and helping build partner capacity for America's allies, the 29-year-old Cottonwood Heights, Utah, native has set his sights on his next challenge.

Price has 11 years in the Army and plans to submit an application for Warrent Officer School later this year, in hopes of becoming a marine deck officer. Commanding ships and Army watercraft is "nowhere near anything I've ever done before," Price said, "but I'm ready to challenge myself with something new."

Anyone who knows Price is not surprised by his self-determination.

"He is one of the best noncommissioned officers in SATMO, and possesses excellent mental agility and acuity," the unit's senior enlisted adviser Command Sgt. Maj. Tom Dow said. "He can eas-

ily operate at the strategic level when accomplishing his duties in other countries or at the tactical level when instructing at Fort Bragg."

He has also been described as one of the unit's best instructors, "if not the best," by SATMO's company commander Capt. Felix Derosin. "He is very knowledgeable on what he's teaching, but he's also good at mentoring the new instructors as they come in. He's physically and mentally in excellent shape, and he's got a good shot at winning the Best Warrior Competition, and anything else he pursues."

Price said he is proud to represent the command at the annual competition and feels confident about his odds.

"I'm very competitive, and always push myself to stay ahead of the pack," he said. "I've been physically and mentally preparing myself for this. It's my next big challenge, but it is far from my last."

Six students bag commissary scholarships

From combined reports

Redstone Arsenal has six winners of the 2021-22 Scholarships for Military Children.

Sponsored by the Fisher House Foundation, the program intends for a scholarship funded through contributions be awarded annually at each commissary operated by the Defense Commissary Agency worldwide.

A total of 500 scholarship grants, each for \$2,000, were awarded this year.

The Redstone Commissary's winners include Lusiana Levan, Chloe Puhlovic, Stuart Ramsey, Tiara Ransom, Caleb Worshek and Thomas Zeigler.

Community

New manager excited to reopen Thrift Shop

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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The newly reopened Redstone Thrift Shop has a new manager. Sophie Gentry of Huntsville became manager of the consignment store July 12. The shop closed in spring 2020 because of the pandemic.

"I'm very excited to work with the volunteers and to reopen the shop," Gentry, wife of Air Force Lt. Col. Jim Gentry of the Missile Defense Agency, said. "I think it's a big part of the community. The time that the volunteers put into the shop goes out tenfold into the community and the post."

She arrived in Huntsville in August 2020 from Moody Air Force Base, Valdosta, Georgia.

The Thrift Shop, 3209 Hercules Road, has reduced hours for its first two weeks. Thursday hours July 22 and July 29 are noon to 4 p.m. It's open Tuesday, July 27 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This is for shopping only, no consignments.

"Starting in August we hope to reopen our regular hours, including consignments," Gentry said.

Regular hours, which they hope to resume in August, include 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday and 9-5 Thursday. The staff members are unsure when they'll start taking consignments. They are now taking donations.

Gentry, 47, is originally from Antwerp, Belgium. She came to the United States in 1993 to go to college and she became a naturalized citizen in 2005.

She and her husband of 23 years have three children. Their daughter, Natalia Garcia, 26, resides in Los Angeles. Both sons attend the University of Georgia. Connor, 22, is a senior majoring in psychology while Patrick, 20, is a junior majoring in finance and economics.

For more information about the Thrift Shop, call the manager at 881-6992.

Sophie Gentry has led the Redstone Thrift Shop since July 12.

Photo by Skip Vaughn



Photo by Lira Frye, SMDC

Strategic outreach to students

Col. Chris Williams, deputy director, Technical Center, Space and Missile Defense Command, speaks to students about SMDC and careers in federal service at the inaugural Aerospace States Association-Alabama intern program Thursday at the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber. Olivia Miller and Makenzie Fogle, Technical Center Concepts Analysis Lab, shared their stories as SMDC interns.

Identification card customers receive update

From staff reports

The One Stop published the following information to help troubleshoot some potential issues members of the workforce are having after receiving their new Common Access Card.

When you access Outlook, you need to publish your new CAC certificates to Global:

- In Outlook select file then options;
- Then select Trust Center and go to Trust Center settings;
- Once done, select Email Security then settings;

- Under encrypted email select choose;
- Select your DOD CAC number certificates and press OK;
- Under Digital ID (Certificates) select choose;
- Select your DOD email and CAC number certificate and press OK;
- Select Publish to GAL.

A pop-up notification will appear when the certificates have been published.

Customers who are having issues with their new CAC certificate need to call IT or Customer Service at 1-866-738-3222 and they will need to update Active Client for Authentication Certificate.

Native Virginian walked point with an infantry platoon

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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In 1969, Tim Vail learned to appreciate a hot shower. He only had three showers during the first seven months of that year. The first was in January, the second in April and the third was in July at a hospital in Cam Rahn Bay, Vietnam, after he was medically evacuated from the battlefield.

The former infantryman recalls he spent “at least an hour (in the hospital shower) and it was like pure heaven.”

“To this day, nothing makes me happier than a hot shower,” he said.

The Norfolk, Virginia, native got drafted into the Army in 1968. He was a 21-year-old private first class when he went to Vietnam in January 1969. He was assigned to Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry Regiment, 198th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division. He and John Barnard, who resides in Huntsville, served in the same squad in the 2nd Platoon. Barnard arrived in Vietnam a week or so before Vail.

“We became friends pretty quick,” Vail, of Roanoke, Virginia, said. “John was very positive and he was trustworthy.”

Charlie Company was based at Landing Zone Baldy outside of Chu Lai. Vail, a rifleman, started walking point on patrols about a month into his tour.

In May 1969, a major battle erupted when Charlie Company was sent to evacuate Alpha Company, which had been ambushed the night before near a creek. The 2nd Platoon leader, 1st Lt. Walter Brownlee, serving as active commander of Charlie Company, communicated on the radio with Capt. Kern Dunnagan, commander of Alpha Company. Dunnagan, who was wounded, would receive the Medal of Honor for his actions during that battle.

As two platoons from Charlie neared the creek, they were ambushed. “It was terrible,” Vail said. “Six people killed, had a bunch wounded.”

He stays in touch with then Sgt. Bob Tullios, of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, who lost a foot that day. Tullios belonged to Echo Company which was attached to Alpha.

Vail later learned that the Americal Division declared a tactical emergency because of the 1st/46th’s losses from that battle. The 101st Airborne Division subsequently sent two battalions into that area for an operation called Lamar Plains.

The tragic events of mid-May 1969 are Vail’s most vivid memories from his seven months in Vietnam.

“Our unit was different than a lot of others. We went out in the bush and stayed out extended periods of time,” he said. “You’d go through periods of boredom. You’d go days or weeks of nothing. Then we’d ambush them or they’d ambush us or you’d hit a boobytrap and it gets very exciting.”

In July 1969 Vail got injured while walking point. He



Courtesy photo

Vietnam veteran Tim Vail, who retired from the telecommunications industry, resides in Roanoke, Va.

was climbing a mountain in the 90-plus degrees heat and chopping the high grass with a machete. But at a very steep part of the climb, he chopped with the machete and inadvertently hit his right knee, causing a serious cut.

“It was a wound but it was a million-dollar-worth wound,” he said of the injury that got him out of the field. “It was a pretty severe cut on my knee, right across the top of my knee.”

He arrived at the hospital at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, D.C., on July 21, 1969, the day that Apollo 11 astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on the Moon.

Vail received the Combat Infantry Badge for his Vietnam service.

After leaving the Army in July 1970 as a specialist four, he went to a six-month computer school. He worked in telecommunications for 22 and a half years with Universal Communication Systems in Roanoke, an interconnect phone company. He has lived in Roanoke since 1971. After his career, he made signs and name badges. He has been retired the past nine years.

Vail was born and raised in Norfolk, the oldest of two children of Thomas and Thelma “Pum” Vail. His father was a veteran of the submarine service in World War II, serving as chief of a boat, and retired as a Navy chief petty officer. His younger sister, Terry, married Jim Blout, a veteran of the 173rd Airborne in Vietnam, and they reside in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



Courtesy photo

In 1969 Pfc. Tim Vail served in Vietnam with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry Regiment, 198th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division. He was in the same squad as John Barnard of Huntsville.

After a year at Old Dominion, Vail traveled the world in 1967 as a junior survey technician aboard an ocean survey ship. The then Seattle resident received his draft notice in Australia. For two weeks the draft board had him rated as 1C until they decided to make him 1A. Vail rushed back to the states and became a Soldier at 21.

“It was almost a comedy but it wasn’t funny,” he said. He and his wife, Sue, have been married 48 years, since 1973. Their son, Matt, was born with cerebral palsy and died in 2017 at age 37.

Vail, 74, enjoys cooking and gardening. He is a life member of the Vietnam Veterans of America and the Americal Division Veterans Association which will have its annual reunion in September in Indianapolis, Indiana. He has a 10% disability rating from Veterans Affairs because of ischemic heart disease resulting from his exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam.

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

“I appreciate the idea and I appreciate very much the recognition that Vietnam vets get now,” Vail said. “I think Vietnam veterans, to my experience, we were ignored. Nobody gave a damn. Nobody said anything. I just do appreciate the recognition, the thanks, we get now.”

Editor’s note: This is the 329th in a series of articles about Vietnam veterans as the United States commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

Trip to Cuba leads to museum-worthy images

*Worker's photography
shown in local gallery*

By ROSIE BUMGARDNER

Special to the Redstone Rocket

Growing up along Lake Erie in the tiny town of Conneaut, Ohio, Security Assistance Command's Richard Bumgardner never imagined what life had in store for him in Northern Alabama.

Neither did he imagine that his favorite pastime would take him all over the globe and lead to a spotlight in the Huntsville Museum of Art.

A collection of iconic photographs by Bumgardner are on display at the 75,000 square foot museum, which houses 14 galleries over 20,000 square feet. The photographs were taken in Havana during a visit to Cuba in 2016, just as relations between the United States and the former communist nation began to thaw, and trade and travel restrictions eased.

"I was pretty fortunate to get into the country at all," Bumgardner, a USASAC public affairs specialist and award-winning photographer, said. "But my heart was set on capturing raw images of the people of Cuba before it was open to the rest of the world."

Bumgardner was granted entry into Cuba on a Cultural and Education exemption. He and a fellow artist taught fashion photography classes at a Havana Photographic Society and donated photography equipment to their school.

During his off hours he mingled with the locals, taking bold, raw images of the Cuban people.

"They were so open and welcoming, willing for me to capture their character, flaws and personalities," he said. "I think these are some of my finest portraits, just of random people I met on the streets."

"I had no intent and no idea that these images would end up in a museum. I was just doing what I love – capturing life on film."

Bumgardner said his younger self could have never imagined that his boyish hobby would garner him such recognition. But then again, there were few things he could have predicted.

Growing up in small-town America, he said his childhood memories revolve around slow pitch softball, roller skating rinks, root beer floats and his grandfather serving as the strict, but well-respected, local minister.

He said it was tough living up to such high standards both at church and at home, and it wasn't long before Midwestern boredom and a mischievous nature got the best of him. Bumgardner said he began pushing the limits, pulling pranks and getting into trouble.

And then he fell in love with photography.

Bumgardner took art class in high school and began experimenting with a Kodak 110 Instamatic camera his parents had given him. Nearby Lake Erie was an ideal location to experiment with landscape photography.

"In the long winters I would walk down to the lake and capture the reflections on the ice and the shadows created by the snow and ice formations," he said.

To make his photographs more interesting, he taped microscope slides with Vaseline on his camera lens, or he would paint the glass lens black then scratch off starburst shapes to create special effects. His creativity paid off. His vignette sunset was selected as the cover of his high school senior yearbook in 1978.

After graduating high school, Bumgardner was eager to bid farewell to tiny Conneaut and explore the world. "I wanted to travel, especially to Germany, where my mother was from," Bumgardner said.

He joined the Air Force, working the flight lines as an aircraft mechanic – a toolbox in one hand and a camera in the other. His first assignment was Ramstein Air Base in southwestern Germany.

Fast forward 12 years – working outdoors in inclement weather, amid deafening noise, chemicals and heavy aircraft parts – and he was ready for a change. In 1992, facing a mandatory cross-training deadline for mechanics, he applied for and was accepted as the only cross-trainee into Air Force Television Production and Documentation.



Courtesy photo

Rick Bumgardner, a public affairs specialist at the Security Assistance Command, visits a display of his photographs from Cuba at the Huntsville Museum of Art.

Fast forward another decade and Bumgardner had joined the 1361st Audiovisual Squadron in Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, working in Air Force television production and as a combat cameraman. There he shot and edited video and had the occasional opportunity to shoot still photography using, as he described, "this huge \$20,000 digital camera that shot 1MB resolution photos, but we could immediately see our photos. How cool."

His time as a combat cameraman reignited his photo passion, and it was during a deployment to Bosnia in 1998 that he turned to documentary photography.

When he retired from the military in 2001, he moved with his wife and daughter to Georgia, where he attended Savannah College of Art and Design. With the support of family and friends, Bumgardner graduated from SCAD with a bachelor's in photography in 2004.

"Many factors influence me and compel me to take photos," he said. "Sometimes it's the technical difficulty of capturing a scene, sometimes it is the beauty in a scene, or the interplay between light and shadows or colors, and sometimes it is seeing something so unique that I have to capture it."

Photography also allows Bumgardner to travel back in time. "I like capturing moments in time and freezing them ... the memories of an event with all the sights and sounds come back to me."

"It still amazes me how he manages to merge his technical skills with his love of travel and other cultures," Kim Capehart, director of USASAC's Public Affairs Office, said. "I've known for years how talented he is and how fortunate the command is to have him on the team, but it's awe-inspiring to see the images he captured of the Cuban people hanging in a museum."

Although he considers himself a generalist, he does enjoy photographing faces and considers himself heavily influenced by photography masters like Richard Avedon, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Paul Strand, Lauren Greenfield and National Geographic.

As he looks at his photos hanging in the Huntsville Museum of Art, he reflected, "I took up photography at 15 primarily to keep from getting into trouble. Who could have ever thought that one day my images would be in a museum gallery for the world to see? Not bad for a small-town boy from Ohio."

Editor's note: See Rick Bumgardner's images at the Huntsville Museum of Art Guild Gallery through Aug. 8. He will also have an image displayed at the Carnegie Visual Arts Center in Decatur, Aug. 10 through Sept. 18.



Photo by retired Sgt. Maj. Willene Orr

Award to JROTC cadet

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike McSwain, president of the Redstone Arsenal Sergeants Major Association, presents a \$500 scholarship to JROTC cadet Brandon Clark of Bob Jones High School in Madison. The check is presented at the start of the association's annual golf tournament June 25 at the Links. Looking on is Clark's mother, Crystal Clark.

Recreational vehicle park is home on the road

By REBECCA SALLEE

Staff writer

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A fenced-in dedicated area for dogs, a neighborhood pavilion, a couple of bath houses and laundry facilities may sound like amenities for an upscale apartment or condominium complex.

But these are just a few of the benefits people enjoy at the Redstone Arsenal RV Park off Goss Road.

Whether they are there to work or to play, dozens of families are spending part of their summer on post living out of their recreational vehicles.

Yolinda Ellington and her husband Sherman, a retired sergeant first class who now works in security for Northrup Grumman, arrived at the RV Park on May 31 after driving from Anchorage, Alaska, where he had been working through the National Guard with Homeland Security.

The RV and its trailer, towing their car behind, was a total of 56 feet long, which created challenges for the couple, who took turns driving.

“That will make or break any relationship,” she said.

The Ellingtons have long planned to return to the area and have bought land in Ardmore, where they are in the process of building a home and enjoy closer proximity to her mother in Brewton.

The RV Park is their “in between” spot, Ellington said, and home is currently their 2007 National Pacifica Straight Liner. The couple, who together have four grown children, share the RV with their two chihuahuas, Tee Tee and Rascal.

Melba King, a retired Air Force master sergeant who also worked as a security police officer in the Air Force Reserves, lives full-time in her RV and divides her time between Huntsville and San Angelo, Texas, where her two grown children live with their families.

But prior to that, King, a native of St. Joseph, Missouri, took numerous trips in her RV, impressing many with her ability to manage everything herself, in the company of her two cats, Tom Tom and River, and 14-year-old schnauzer, Angel.

She has taken three major trips: one in the central and southeast states; another from Indiana to Maine and into the Canadian maritime provinces of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (via ferry); and a third from Indiana to upper Michigan and Minnesota to Wyoming and Yellowstone National Park.

King owned a house for about 10 years in Millbrook after retiring from her last job at Maxwell Air Force Base.

“That’s when I finally got fed up with the house and the yard,” she said.

She now lives in a 40-foot Heartland Big Horn fifth wheel RV that she pulls with a Chevrolet Silverado 3500 dually.

When people realize she is RVing solo, they have a range of opinions, from “you must be crazy” to “you go, girl. It depends on who it is,” said King, adding that men often wish their wives had the same knowhow and will.

She plans to keep up the lifestyle “as long as I can. It’s wonderful,” she said. “You can do whatever you want to do, go wherever you want to go, stay as long as you want to stay.”

Cindi and Perry Ballard like to say they traded their four-bedroom house in Houston for a one-bedroom apartment with four television sets.

They live full-time now in a 45-foot 2017 Tiffin Allegro Bus fitted with a living room and two leather reclining chairs, a kitchen with a full-size refrigerator and two sliding “pantries,” one and a half bathrooms, a washer and dryer, and a bedroom with a king-size bed.

Perry Ballard, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, is currently on loan from Utah State University to NASA and working at the Space Dynamics Lab through the end of August. He works with DOD science experiments that are headed to the International Space Station.

The Ballards met in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and have been married almost 35 years.

They used to ride motorcycles cross country and first started RVing with a fifth wheel “toy hauler,” Perry Ballard said. “The back half is a garage.”

They now drive the bus on business and leisure trips that later land them back in Houston, where his job is based at Kennedy Space Center.

Everywhere they go, they meet interesting people, all of whom decide what level of socializing they want to do. At the Redstone RV park, campers enjoyed a cookout under the pavilion on the Fourth of July, Perry Ballard said.

During a recent tour of their RV bus, Cindi Ballard mentioned that she had a cake in the oven and a sewing machine in storage under the bed.

One of her favorite T-shirts declares she is a “glamping queen,” a phrase for a



Photo by Eric Schultz

Cindi and Perry Ballard stand in front of their RV at the RV Park.



Photo by Eric Schultz

Melba King, a native of St. Joseph, Mo., holds her dog Angel with cat Tom Tom looking on in her recreational vehicle at the RV Park.

woman who enjoys glamorous camping.

The park is located off Goss Road and has 70 65x24-foot paved pull-through service pads with full hook-ups for 50/30 amp service, water and sewage.

Tom Pyburn, Outdoor Recreation manager, said plans are underway for an additional 23 pads.

The facility is available to active duty, retirees and Department of Defense civilians. For reservations or for more information, call Outdoor Recreation at 876-4868 or visit redstone.armymwr.com.

Ticket sales booming at travel reservations office



Photo by Eric Schultz

Rachel and Joe Materna hold 6-month-old Oliver while they purchase tickets to Disney World from Larry Keel, recreational assistant.

By REBECCA SALLEE

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If Mickey and Minnie are calling your children, a Redstone Arsenal office dedicated to travel may be just the ticket to help with your family vacation plans.

The Information, Tickets and Reservations office at Pershing Welcome Center has discounted tickets for the Redstone community to Orlando's hottest attractions, including Disney World, Universal Studios and Sea World.

The office also sells discounted tickets to the Georgia Aquarium, Six Flags Over Georgia and Medieval Times ("Jousting, horsemanship and falconry with a four-course, utensil-free meal served in a castle-like space") in Atlanta; Dollywood, Splash Country (a water park), and the Titanic Museum Attraction in Pigeon Forge; and Graceland, home of Elvis Presley, in Memphis, among other attractions.

During a recent weekday lunch hour, recreation assistant Larry Keel stayed busy selling tickets, including some to a family bound for Disney World.

Maria Wahab of Madison, a retired sergeant who is currently working remotely as a registered nurse for Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii, was with her son Ryan, 6, a rising first-grade student at Rainbow Elementary who was donning a Mickey Mouse mask and excitedly anticipating a trip to Splash Country, the water park at Dollywood.

Wahab said she and her husband, retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 Don Wahab, who now works as an interoperability engineer for Gray Analytics, and their 4-year-old daughter, Alyvia, a preschooler at Rainbow, will make the trip.

Rachel and Joel Materna of Fort Payne bought tickets to Disney World and said they and other family members plan to drive so they can accommodate "baby stuff" for their 6-month-old son, Oliver. They will stay on-site at the All-Star Music Resort.

Rachel Materna, a purchasing manager for Heil Environmental, and her husband, a full-time remote MBA student at Purdue University and stay-home father, are both veterans, making each of them eligible to purchase four tickets.



Photo by Eric Schultz

Maria Wahab and Ryan, 6, share a moment with recreational assistant Larry Keel after purchasing tickets to Splash Country, a water park at Dollywood.

"We like Epcot," Joel Materna said, "'cause you can see the whole world."

Gaylene Wilson, recreation division chief for Morale, Welfare and Recreation, said business is going gangbusters at the ITR office.

With the lifting of COVID-19 travel restrictions and families ready to recover from cabin fever, dozens of patrons are taking advantage of the discount ticket program each day, she said.

"COVID really hit us hard. We weren't seeing people traveling," Wilson said. "In the last few months, our ticket sales have been booming. Of course, Disney is number one."

A travel agent on staff is currently booked over a month in advance just to help patrons make travel reservations, including cruises and other destination vacation packages, Wilson said. The services are available by appointment at a flat rate of \$25 per itinerary.

Prices for discount tickets are listed by state on the office website at redstone-armymwr.com and are subject to change. And while discounts vary from one attraction to another, all prices are lower than those available at the gate or to the general public, Wilson said.

Eligibility for ticket discounts varies, depending on the attraction, she said, adding that civilians are eligible for some, but not all of the discounts.

MWR keeps a small portion of ticket sales, money that is returned to the Redstone community, Wilson said.

Keel said he sold \$35,000 worth of tickets in a single day after the office reopened in late May.

The ITR office is located inside the Pershing Welcome Center at 3443 Aerobee Road. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The phone number is 876-4531.

Community celebrates leaders of reserve officer training

Photos by **ERIC SCHULTZ**

Staff photographer

The Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army held a JROTC/ROTC Cadre Leadership Breakfast, July 14 at the Jackson Center in Huntsville.

See Leaders on page 30

From left panelists Matt Massey, PeggyLee Wright, Mike Izzo, moderator Rhonda Sutton, Col. Samuel Glover, Allison Hickey and Jim Rogers answer questions during the program.





Attendees applaud honoree Mike Izzo, colonel and 142nd MP Battalion commander, Alabama National Guard and captain for the special operations division of Huntsville Police Department.

Leaders

Continued from page 29



Mike Izzo receives the Third Region AUSA Outstanding Achievement Award from Rhonda Sutton, president of the Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army.



Members of the community gather July 14 for the JROTC/ROTC Leadership Breakfast with AUSA at the Jackson Center.

Federal

Cargo craft delivers science projects from space

By NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

A SpaceX Cargo Dragon resupply ship splashed down at about 10:30 p.m. July 9 in the Gulf of Mexico near Tallahassee, Florida, completing a trip from the International Space Station that began July 8.

Splashing down off the coast of Florida enables quick transportation of the science aboard the capsule to the Space Station Processing Facility at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, delivering some science back into the hands of the researchers as soon as four to nine hours after splashdown. This shorter transportation timeframe allows researchers to collect data with minimal loss of microgravity effects.

Among the scientific investigations Dragon returned were:

Lyophilization-2 examines how gravity affects freeze-dried materials and could result in improved freeze-drying processes for pharmaceutical and other industries. Freeze-drying also has potential use for long-term storage of medications and other resources on future exploration missions.

Molecular Muscle Experiment-2 tests a series of drugs to see whether they can improve health in space, possibly leading to new therapeutic targets for examination on Earth.

Oral Biofilms in Space studies how gravity affects the structure, composition and activity of oral bacteria in the presence of common oral care agents. Findings could support development of novel treatments to fight oral diseases such as cavities, gingivitis and periodontitis.

The Payload Operations Integration Center at Marshall Space Flight Center oversees all experiments and science communications aboard the station.

Dragon launched June 3 on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Launch Complex 39A at Kennedy. The spacecraft delivered more than 7,300 pounds of research investigations, crew supplies and vehicle hardware to the orbiting outpost. Dragon's external cargo "trunk" carried six new ISS Roll-Out Solar Arrays, two of which Expedition 65 crew members Shane Kimbrough of NASA and Thomas Pesquet of the European Space Agency installed during three spacewalks June 16, 20 and 25.



NASA photo

NASA astronaut and Expedition 65 Flight Engineer Megan McArthur prepares frozen research samples July 8 aboard the International Space Station for transfer and stowage inside the SpaceX Cargo Dragon resupply ship.



NASA photo

Space agency hero

Eric Vanderslice is the latest team member from NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center to be named a HEO HErO. He provided notable material and process evaluations of the reflective foil used for radiant protection of the Space Launch System Core Stage Base Heat Shield following the Green Run hot fire. Each week, the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate recognizes HEO HErOes, team members from across the agency who have made vital contributions in their support of NASA's mission to land the first woman and first person of color on the Moon.

FBI breaks ground for innovative cyber center

By JONATHAN STINSON

Assistant editor

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On June 29, the FBI held a quiet groundbreaking ceremony to symbolically mark the beginning of the construction on the organization's new Innovation Center at Redstone Arsenal.

The building will serve as the FBI's technical hub where multiple technology focused divisions will be able to work and train together.

The Innovation Center will include a Kinetic Cyber Range, a Virtual Reality Classroom, multi-purpose classrooms with enhanced audiovisual capabilities, along with labs and workspaces.

"This will significantly enhance the FBI's technical capabilities as well as provide FBI partners with the opportunity to train and collaborate on new tools and techniques," an FBI spokesperson said in a press release. "The FBI hopes this tech-focused, high energy aesthetic building will also help attract and retain talent to grow the cyber workforce."

Long before the ceremonial turning of the dirt, workers from the Garrison played an important role in helping facilitate the



Courtesy photo

Ceremonial shovels are stuck in the ground at the site of the new FBI Innovation Center.

FBI's move to post.

The Garrison's involvement began around 2009 to 2010, when the FBI was conducting a number of site visits to see where they wanted to locate.

"Long story short, it seemed like there was some potential here," Jake Roth, division chief for the Directorate of Public

Works master planning, said.

Specifically, he listed a number of factors that are hallmarks of what makes Redstone attractive for many tenants, such as high salaries, low cost of living, reasonable home prices and good infrastructure, to make it easy for people to travel in and out of town.

Since the FBI is a non-Army tenant, it meant that the DPW team had to go through a lengthy permitting process, which involved carving out a parcel of land for the FBI to use, having the proper environmental surveys done and figuring out the infrastructure needed to support it.

When a federal tenant locates on Redstone, they don't lease the land like other tenants. Instead, they get a land permit, which allows the Army to keep possession of the land, but gives the federal tenant the ability to use it for free.

There's a fair amount of cooperation that goes between a tenant and the Master Planning Division at DPW.

"It's not something where DPW controls what the FBI does and it's not something where the FBI controls everything they do," Roth said. "There's a lot of communication for the day that they decide they even want to talk about coming to Redstone. It's a series of conversations and a huge group of

people working together."

Master planning is responsible for the overall vision, the master plan for Redstone. But each entity, like the FBI, will have their own master plan for what they want to do at their site.

The FBI will give its master plan to the DPW, which will review it to be sure it works with the overarching plan.

"And then once that happens, they are able to program and move out on their plan," Roth said.

From that point, DPW Master Planning stays in the loop and assists when needed, but the process is mostly driven by the tenant.

In the near future, DPW will oversee road projects at Martin Road and Dodd Road to provide lanes, the installation of a traffic light and the widening of Dodd Road from Martin Road due south of the FBI main entrance, followed by work to widen Fowler Road to allow for turn lane improvements at the intersection.

"Redstone is a Federal Center of Excellence, and we all throw that term out there, but it does mean something," Roth said. "It means something to us in master planning. It means something to the FBI. It's not something that happens in a vacuum."

Artemis I rocket grows closer to launch



NASA photo by Kim Shiflett

Teams with NASA's Exploration Ground Systems and contractor Jacobs integrate the Interim Cryogenic Propulsion Stage for NASA's SLS rocket with the launch vehicle stage adapter atop the massive SLS core stage in the Vehicle Assembly Building at NASA's Kennedy Space Center on July 5.

By NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

The Artemis I mission has reached another milestone inside the Vehicle Assembly Building at NASA's Kennedy Space Center. On July 5, teams with Exploration Ground Systems and contractor Jacobs stacked the Interim Cryogenic Propulsion Stage, or ICPS, atop the Space Launch System rocket.

The ICPS's RL 10 engine is housed inside the launch vehicle stage adapter, which will protect the engine during launch. The adapter connects the rocket's core stage with the ICPS, which was built by Boeing and United Launch Alliance.

The ICPS will fire its RL 10 engine to send the Orion spacecraft toward the Moon. Its European-built service module will provide the power to take the spacecraft on a journey tens of thousands of miles beyond the Moon.

Before attaching the Orion spacecraft to the rocket, teams will conduct a series of tests to assure all the rocket components are properly communicating with each other, the ground systems equipment, and the Launch Control Center.

The ICPS moved to the Vehicle Assembly Building on June 19, after technicians in the center's Multi-Payload Processing Facility completed servicing the flight hardware inside.

Launching in 2021, Artemis I will be an uncrewed flight test of the Orion spacecraft and SLS rocket as an integrated system ahead of missions with astronauts. Under Artemis, NASA aims to land the first woman and first person of color on the Moon and establish a long-lasting presence on and around the Moon while preparing for human missions to Mars.

Sports

Red rolls back to final behind Robertson

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Spring season was like a rollercoaster ride for the red team.

The defending champions had their ups and downs – big wins and disappointing losses. But they wound up in a familiar place.

In the championship game.

Red advanced to the final by beating gray, 22-16 in Thursday's second semifinal on field 2 at Brahan Spring Park. They were scheduled to play the royal blue team July 19 for the spring championship in the 55-and-over Rockets league in Huntsville Senior Softball.

Royal blue beat top-seeded navy blue, 17-16 in Thursday's first semifinal. The league's summer season is scheduled to start July 22.

"Back in the finals," red player/coach Phil Haas said. "We had timely hits by the entire lineup. Everybody got two hits or more. We got some of our injured players back and that helped a lot, especially in the outfield which played solid."

"And Steve Robertson pitched a gem. He was our most valuable player of the game."

Robertson pitched all seven innings for the win. At the plate, he went 3-for-4 with three runs batted in and scored a run.

Red (11-8) also got a big night from cleanup hitter Kirk Wickizer. The shortstop went 4-for-4 with a two-run homer, a double, four RBIs and two runs.

Yogi Guess and Pat Cross had three hits apiece. Kevin Barnhill, Mike Panko, David Hahnemann, Haas and Dale Guess added two hits apiece.

William Kelly slugged a pair of two-run homers for gray (11-7). Ron Baer went 5-for-5 with a double while leadoff hitter Sam Sepulveda had four hits. Kelly and David Key had three hits apiece. David Koch, Mike Hoy and player/coach Rick Anthis had two hits apiece. Ann Burgess pitched the first three innings and took the loss.

"They just got the better of us tonight," Anthis said. "There was no doubt about it."

Red (11-8)

	AB	R	H	RBI
Yogi Guess	4	1	3	2
Randy Bastin	4	3	1	0
Freddie Childs	4	1	0	1
Kirk Wickizer	4	2	4	4
Kevin Barnhill	3	3	2	1
Mike Panko	4	2	2	3
David Hahnemann	4	3	2	0
Phil Haas	2	2	2	1
Dale Guess	4	1	2	4
Pat Cross	4	2	3	0
Steve Robertson	4	1	3	3
Rena Campbell	3	1	1	0
Totals	44	22	25	19

Pitching

	IP	AB	H	R	ER
Steve Robertson (won)	7	43	24	16	14

Gray (11-7)

	AB	R	H	RBI
Sam Sepulveda	5	2	4	0
Ron Baer	5	2	5	1
David Koch	3	1	2	4
William Kelly	5	3	3	4
Mike Hoy	5	2	2	0
David Key	5	1	3	0



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Red's winning pitcher Steve Robertson gets three hits and drives in three runs in the 22-16 semifinal victory over gray.

Rick Anthis	5	2	2	2
Ann Burgess	5	2	1	0
Bennie Pokemire	3	1	1	1
Ragnar Opiniano	2	0	1	2
Totals	43	16	24	14

Pitching

	IP	AB	H	R	ER
Ann Burgess (loss)	3	19	11	10	7
Mike Hoy	4	25	14	12	10

		R	H	E
Red	2 5 3 1 5 3 3 –	22	25	3
Gray	3 1 2 5 1 4 0 –	16	24	8

Double-A South baseball standings

Here are Friday's standings for the Double-A South in minor league baseball. The Rocket City Trash Pandas are the Double-A affiliate of the Los Angeles Angels.

North Division	W	L	GB
Chattanooga Lookouts (CIN)	34	27	—
Birmingham Barons (CWS)	32	30	2.5
Rocket City Trash Pandas (LAA)	30	31	4.0
Tennessee Smokies (CHC)	25	35	8.5

South Division	W	L	GB
Mississippi Braves (ATL)	40	24	—
Pensacola Blue Wahoos (MIA)	36	28	4.0
Montgomery Biscuits (TB)	31	29	7.0
Biloxi Shuckers (MIL)	19	43	20.0

Royal blue rides defense past top-seeded navy blue

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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The royal blue team turned three double plays on defense against navy blue. They made every out count.

Royal blue edged navy, 17-16 on Thursday at field 2 in Brahan Spring Park. By winning this semifinal, they advanced to the spring season championship game scheduled July 19 for the 55-and-over Rockets league in Huntsville Senior Softball.

Their final opponent would be defending champion red, which beat gray 22-16 in Thursday's second semifinal. The summer season is scheduled to start July 22.

"I think our defense held up," royal blue player/coach Bob Thomson said. "And we finally got some offense going."

Mike Keyser went 5-for-5 with two doubles, two runs batted in and five runs

Royal blue (11-8)	AB	R	H	RBI
Jim Smelser	4	2	2	0
Mark Wilbourn	4	1	3	2
Jorge Marin	4	0	0	1
Mike Keyser	5	5	5	2
Jerry Bevel	5	2	4	3
Derrick Santiago	4	2	3	3
Pete Mitchell	5	2	3	1
Bob Thomson	5	1	3	2
Stan Sillivant	5	1	2	2
Brian Yarger	4	1	1	0
Totals	45	17	26	16

Pitching	IP	AB	H	R	ER
Pete Mitchell (won)	7	46	27	16	9

scored for royal blue (11-8). Jerry Bevel had four hits and three RBIs. Derrick Santiago had three hits with two doubles and three RBIs. Mark Wilbourn, Pete Mitchell and Thomson had three hits apiece. Jim Smelser and Stan Sillivant added two hits apiece. Mitchell pitched all seven innings for the win.

Royal blue turned double plays in the second, fourth and sixth innings. Navy blue had the bases loaded and two outs in the bottom of the seventh when the game ended on a 6-5 force play.

Booger Clark smashed a home run and two doubles for navy blue (12-6), which was the tournament's top seed. Darnell Ford went 4-for-4 with a double, four runs batted in and two runs scored. Vince Smith went 4-for-4 with two doubles, one RBI and three runs. Jerry Cowan, player/coach Larry Guthrie and Mike Panko had three hits apiece. Bill Hartsell, David Stumbaugh and Gary Wilkison added two hits apiece. Cowan took the loss in the circle.

"It was a good game, back and forth," Guthrie said. "They just made a good play at the end."



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Mike Keyser gets five hits and scores five runs in royal blue's 17-16 win over navy blue.

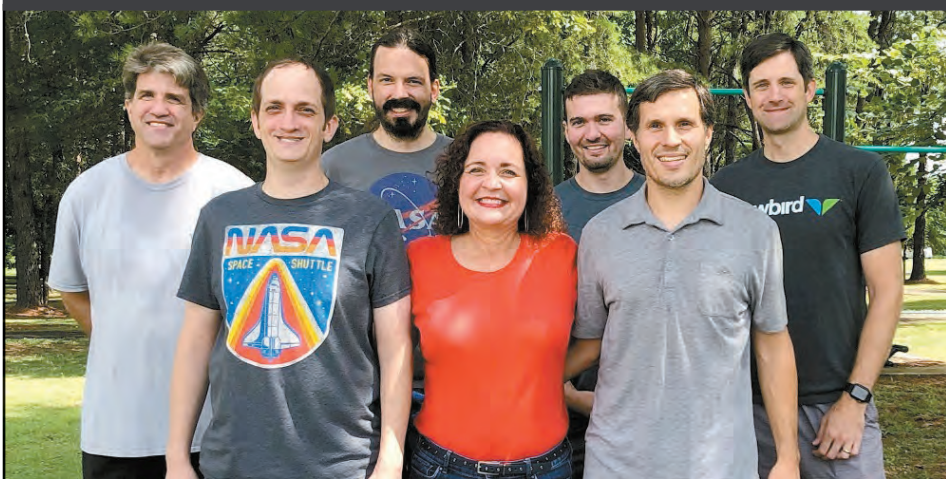


Photo by Lisa Griffin

Fitness challenge winners

The Fluid Motion team from NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center won the team award in the eighth annual NASA Moves! Challenge, a fitness competition structured so that all physical activity can be captured and converted into countable steps. Fluid Motion team members, all of whom work in the Engineering Directorate's Fluid Dynamics Branch, are, front, from left, Brian Richardson, Lisa Griffin and Matt Casiano; and back, from left, Jeff West, Kalen Braman, Alex Murdaugh and Brandon Williams. Thomas Shurtz is not shown. Fluid Motion finished first among 430 teams across the agency, after finishing in second place in 2019 and 2018. West, the team's captain, tied for first place among the 4,070 individual competitors. Another Marshall team – Let the Wookiee Win!, consisting of Joey Kirkpatrick and John Reese – placed fourth. Marshall had 189 individuals and 24 teams take part. NASA headquarters won the center competition.

Chicago Cubs collapse hard to chew

The first half of the major league baseball season was the best of times and the worst of times for the Chicago Cubs.

My beloved Cubs led the National League Central Division June 24, then proceeded to lose 11 straight games. Eleven straight games. Surely rolling the dice 11 times would produce one winner.

The Cubs surpassed my hometown Philadelphia Phillies' streak of futility in 1964. The fighting Phils led the NL by six and a half games with just 12 left to play. But they broke my 9-year-old heart by losing 10 straight games. The St. Louis Cardinals captured the pennant and went on to beat the New York Yankees in the World Series.

Now the Cubs have broken my 66-year-old heart. They've gone from contenders to sellers by the July 30 trade

From the sidelines

By Skip Vaughn
Rocket editor

deadline. The Cubs may part ways with Kris Bryant and other stars.

At the All-Star break, the NL Central standings had the Milwaukee Brewers (53-39) in first followed by the Cincinnati Reds (48-42), four games back. The Cardinals and Cubs were tied at 44-46 and trailing by eight games. The Pittsburgh Pirates (34-56) occupied the cellar, trailing by 18.

Maybe the Cubs can roll out a winner next year.

Your glory days in sports

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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What is the highlight of your athletic endeavors?

"I was on the Air Force track and field team for eight years (from 1989-96)," retired Air Force Tech. Sgt. Joan Morgan, a country program manager for Security Assistance Command, said. "I represented the Air Force at the Armed Forces Track and Field Championships. Five out of the eight years, I placed in the top three in my events. I did the shotput, discus, javelin and the last year I also ran on their 4x100 relay team. And I was also selected to represent the military services in '93. I was one of 17 selected to represent the U.S. armed forces at the Military World Track and Field Championships held in Tours, France, Aug. 27-30, 1993. I placed fifth in the shotput. I got Female Athlete of the Year for Hurlburt Field Air Force Base, Florida, for 1992.

"I've been playing softball since age 12. I made it to the women's over-35 world series in 2003 at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. We won national titles with the women's team out of Panama City, Florida. I played on many high-level softball teams. I played from age 12 up until 2014."

Morgan, 53, from Tylertown, Mississippi, retired from the Air Force Reserves in 2014 after 26 years of service, including 14 active duty and 12 in the Reserves. She moved to Huntsville in 2019 after almost two years in Fort Eustis, Virginia. Before that she worked with the U.S. Southern Command for 10 years in Miami, Florida. She works in the European Command division of USASAC. Morgan received a bachelor's in business from Excelsior College in Albany, New York, in 1993, and a master's in management from Troy University in 1995.

Her daughter, Kaila, 25, resides in St. Louis and works for the Army at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. Morgan enjoys lifting weights, going to the movies, traveling and shopping. She roots for the Miami Heat, Kansas City Royals and Miami Dolphins.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Joan Morgan, of the Security Assistance Command, lifts weights in the Col. Stephen K. Scott Fitness Center.

By the numbers: *Best Southern dishes*

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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1. Barbecue
2. Grits
3. Country ham
4. Brisket
5. Meatloaf
6. Chicken fried steak
7. Fried chicken
8. Pork and ham
9. Seafood
10. Vegetables
11. Rice
12. Baked sweet potatoes
13. Buttermilk biscuits
14. Beignets
15. Hushpuppies



Photo by Jeremy Bolton

Scholarships fundraiser

The Program Executive Office for Aviation's Apache helicopters project manager Col. Jay Maher, right, holds up a check representing more than \$14,000 raised for AAAA scholarships at the fourth annual Col. Joseph Hoecherl golf scramble July 13. This year event's took place at the Robert Trent Jones golf course in Hampton Cove with more than 140 participants. The event and scholarship are named after Hoecherl, a former Apache project manager who died in 2018. The Apache project office coordinates the tournament to support the AAAA scholarship fund set up in his memory; and the fund has raised over \$50,000. Joining Maher for the check presentation are Hoecherl's sons, Kevin and Joey, his grandchildren and his wife, Kelly. AAAA stands for Army Aviation Association of America.

Sports&Recreation

Senior softball umpires

Umpires are needed for the 55-and-over Rockets league in Huntsville Senior Softball. They could be semiretired ASA or USSSA softball umpires that want to make a little extra money on Mondays and Thursdays. Games are Monday and Thursday evenings on fields 2 and 1 at Brahan Spring Park. The league also seeks more players for its six teams. Email league director Chris Maggio at cmaggio51@aol.com.

Golf classic

The 2021 100BMO GHC John Riche Golf Classic will be held Aug. 21 at the Colonial Golf Course in Meridianville. Organizers anticipate three flights (two males and one female) with first, second and third place winners per flight. There will also be prizes for closest to the pin and longest drive per flight. Players will also have the opportunity to compete in the Dixon Golf Fiesta Bowl \$1 Million Dollar Hole In One Contest. Players that register by Aug. 14 can sign up for the discounted rate of \$90 per player; effective Aug. 15 the cost is \$100. Hole sponsors and general sponsorship opportunities are available. Grab bags, lunch and beverages will be provided for each registered player. To register or request sponsorship packages, visit 100BMOGH.com/golfclassic. Same day registration is 6-7:15 a.m. The Two Man Scramble shotgun start time is 7:30. For more information, or to register, call John Richardson (255) 631-5641, Sam King 694-1403 or the business office 277-3488.

Boating safety class

"Boat America," presented by the Coast Guard Auxiliary, is July 31 and again Aug. 28 from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Outdoor Recreation, building 5139 on Sportsman Road. Cost is \$20. If interested call Bill Stadtlander 361-5841, wstadtlander2@gmail.com, or Joe Kleri 351-0433, jfklkeri@msn.com.

High school football officials

The North Alabama Football Officials Association are a group of officials that serve North Alabama. They currently contract to high schools in Huntsville, Madison, Madison County, Limestone County and Jackson County. If you are interested in becoming a referee today, visit <https://nafoa.net>.

Motorcycle training

Redstone motorcycle training, for active duty Soldiers, is conducted at the Installation Motorcycle Safety Range. The classes are Basic Rider Course and Experienced Rider Course. Course dates include BRC, Aug. 24-25; and ERC, Aug. 26. To register visit https://imc.army.mil/airs/usg_disclaimer.aspx.

Conferences&Meetings

Sergeants major association

The Sergeants Major Association is meeting every third Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m. in the conference room of Garrison headquarters building 4488 on Martin Road. If you are not able to attend in person, you can still attend through Zoom. Attendees must download the Zoom app on either their home computer, laptop or mobile device to participate. Once you get into the Zoom app, you will see Meeting ID number. Type in 710 211-4188. Then you will see the "Join meeting" button. If you have problems getting into Zoom, call retired Sgt. Maj. Willene Orr (410) 533-2685.

Warrant officer association

The Redstone Arsenal Silver Chapter of the Warrant Officers Association continues to meet monthly at 11:30 a.m. on the second Wednesday via Zoom. They look forward to in-person meetings at the Redstone Lanes bowling center later this year. For a virtual meeting link, email retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 Mike Weist at mweist63@gmail.com.

Military and civilians club

The Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club will have its membership and activities signup event Aug. 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Summit. "Bloom where you are planted in Sweet Home Alabama" will include blooming tips, refreshments and shopping with RSAMCC vendors. For a club membership form, visit rsamcc.org.

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.

Business/government expo

The Business to Government Contracting Expo is Oct. 27-28 at the Von Braun Center in Huntsville. Free expo tickets are available for DOD/CAC holders. This event should interest primes, 8As, government agencies, military directorates and also buyers, sellers and small and large business. For information call Phil Kiver (509) 999-8645 or email pkiver@contractready.org.

Veterans of foreign wars

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

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5685 or email bobbyleejr01@gmail.com.

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, will resume its meetings soon; time and place to be determined. All combat-wounded veterans are invited. For more information, call Leonard Robinson 337-8313.

Vietnam veterans

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1067, meets the second Thursday of each month from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the American Legion Post 237 on Drake Avenue. For information visit www.vietvethsv.org.

MiscellaneousItems

Surplus furniture available

Need gently used furniture and cubicles? This will make upgrading your office space affordable. The Garrison's Directorate of Public Works has a Relocation Services Contract that organizations can use for personnel moves, furniture/cubicle reconfigurations and obtaining furniture. Customers will receive a funds request for the services. For more information, call Michelle Burgett 876-4364.

Thrift Shop cashier

The Redstone Thrift Shop is hiring a cashier. The position involves running the cash register and the credit/debit machine. The hours are Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Thursday from 8:45-5:15 and the first Saturday of the month from 9:45-2:15. He or she must have good interpersonal skills, be dependable and enthusiastic with a positive attitude. If interested, email the Thrift Shop at rsamanager@knology.net.

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.

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.

Exchange job openings

Redstone Exchange HR Recruitment Office will conduct weekly on-the-spot interviews at the Main Store food court every Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call the Exchange Recruitment Office 650-5928.

Community youth event

The 10th annual Community Awareness for Youth, back to school event, is Saturday from 9-11 a.m. at Calhoun Community College, 102 Wynn Drive in Huntsville. CAFY focuses on Four Pillars of Success: Careers, Education, Finances and Health. Its mission is to prepare the youth of Huntsville/Madison County for success as they venture into adulthood, enter the workforce or pursue higher education. Organizers have accepted the challenge of being innovative during the pandemic. This year's centerpiece is a drive-thru, giving away 10-day family food supplies (for approximately the first 450 cars) by Refuge Church, which has held food distribution events regularly for years. In addition, Team CAFY and numerous volunteers from the community will distribute free backpacks and school supplies. Huntsville city schools, students and local radio stations will provide entertainment. CAFY is a collaboration between the City of Huntsville's Office of Multicultural Affairs, Huntsville city schools, Huntsville Police Department, the City of Madison, and Madison County with support from individual donors, churches and businesses. For more information, call CAFY founder Harry Hobbs 783-1793, email harry.hobbs@hsvutil.org or visit the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/HuntsvilleCAFY/.