



Pentagram

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Photos by Sgt. Austin Boucher

A member of the Arlington Fire Department rests his hand on the back of Mark Skipper at a remembrance ceremony at the Pentagon Saturday. Saturday marked 20 years since the 9/11 attack.

Joint base 9/11 observance makes sure community never forgets

By **Catrina Francis**
Pentagram Editor

Saturday marked the 20th anniversary of Sept. 11, 2001, the deadliest terrorist attacks on American soil, which killed almost 3,000 people.

That day, an observance was held at the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Fire Station to pay homage to the first responders and others who paid the ultimate sacrifice that day.

Col. David Bowling, the commander of JBM-HH, said that the singular event of 9/11 impacted many lives. He asked people to take a moment to pause and think about how 9/11 affected their lives. He told those in attendance how the night before he watched a Netflix documentary with his wife and listened to the firsthand accounts of the individuals stories of

the men and women who were directly involved that day.

“Whether it was the flight crew and passengers (on United Flight 93) who were aware of what was going on and said, ‘hey, we have had enough and we are going to take some personal action here at great risk to ourselves,’ ... they paid the ultimate price,” said Bowling. “I couldn’t help but be struck by the sacrifices that we were willing to make to take care of our men and women that day.

Bowling added that it was one of the firefighters in the document who captured it best by saying, “I took an oath to help others even if I knew it was going to cost me my own life.”

“That’s a very powerful statement,” Bowling said, “when he said it that kind of resonated with me.”



Mark Skipper stands at the west side of the Pentagon where 20 years ago he witnessed American Airlines Flight 77 crash. Skipper and another firefighter ran for cover as the plane crashed merely yards away from them on this day in 2001.

JBM-HH Fire Chief Russell Miller said three Fort Myer fire-

fighters were at the Pentagon

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Army to create independent entity to oversee sexual assault cases

By Joseph Lacdan
Army News Service

To protect Soldiers from sexual harassment and assault, the Army will establish an office designed to make decisions to take action on such crimes, the service's top civilian leader said Sept. 7.

"We have a moral responsibility to take care of our Army Family like it's our own Family," said Secretary of the Army Christine E. Wormuth during a livestream of the National Discussion on Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention at America's Colleges, Universities and Service Academies.

Under direction from the Defense Department, each of the nation's military branches will create similar offices amid growing concerns of sexual harassment and sexual assault cases in the armed forces. Previously, commanders bore the responsibility of prosecuting sexual assault cases, but now the new offices will assume that role.

"For too long, far too many survivors have suffered in silence," said Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin, a former Army general. "One assault is too many ... the number of sexual assaults in the military is still too high. This is a top priority for me."

The Army announced earlier this year that it would overhaul its Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program following an independent review of command culture at Fort Hood, Texas.

While Wormuth did not disclose the full details of the office, the change will be among the sweeping reforms the DOD will take to combat incidents.

Wormuth said the branch would focus on three areas in an attempt to eradicate sexual assault and harassment from its ranks.

The first will be prevention, which she said begins with Army commanders and leaders at the squad level. The focus area aligns with the service's "This is My Squad" initiative, which promotes unit cohesion at the service's most basic levels.

"We must ensure that all our leaders are focused on building a culture of caring for each other," Wormuth said.

Next, the Army will focus on upgrading its response to incidents. The Fort Hood Independent Review Committee concluded that the service needed to improve its response to sexual assault and harassment cases at the installation.

Jill Londagin, Army SHARP director, said in March that the Army was working to develop a single, uniform regulation to guide



Courtesy screenshot image

Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth speaks during the National Discussion on Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention at America's Colleges, Universities and Service Academies. She said that the Army would prioritize prevention, response and accountability in regards to sexual assault and sexual harassment cases. The Army and other military branches will create a separate office to oversee incidents.

SHARP leaders and counselors. The service has also begun to restructure the Army Criminal Investigation Command.

Army leaders must respond swiftly not just in sexual assault incidents but also if a Soldier experiences harassment, discrimination, or physical or verbal attacks, their peers should take action and inform leaders, Wormuth said.

"It's critical that we respond effectively and sensitively when sexual harassment or assault does happen," Wormuth said. "It's our responsibility to make sure our leaders have the resources they need to take care of our Soldiers and their families when something happens."

Following reported disappearances and deaths of Soldiers at Fort Hood and the passing of Minnesota resident George Floyd, the Army instituted a measure called Project Inclusion, a holistic effort that encourages diversity and inclusion. The Army has also engaged in a speaking tour where Army senior leaders visited Army installations in an effort to connect leaders with Soldiers.

"We have to demonstrate the courage to take action," she said.

Finally, the Army will strive to improve its accountability during such incidents. That's where the new office will step in, along with further reforms, she said. She added that the Army would focus on having practical, evidence-based programs in place to help aid all three areas of focus.

Austin ordered a 90-day independent review commission to identify solutions to solve the military's sexual assault and harassment problem. Based on the IRC's recommendations this summer, the DOD developed evidence-based options to hold the Army and other military branches to greater accountability. The measures will help create a culture of inclusion while pledging to better care for survivors.

The DOD has asked Congress to add sexual assaults and harassment as an "offense" under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

"We are working closely together with Congress to remove decisions about whether to prosecute sexual assaults and related crimes, including domestic violence, from the military chain of command," Austin said.

The secretary said that commanders ultimately bear responsibility to combat such incidents. By protecting service members from unwanted harassment and assault that will strengthen readiness and help the military protect the country, he added.

"We're going to keep our country safer by keeping our people safer," Austin said. "We have to stop sexual violence before it happens. And that starts by building a culture and climate of inclusion, one where all service members can serve free from fear and with the dignity and respect that they deserve."



STAY VIGILANT

Report concerns to Base Defense Operations
Usarmy.jbmhh.id-sustainment.mbx.dptms-bdoc@mail.mil
(703)696-5113/5662 Together, keeping JBM-HH safe.
Dial 911 in emergencies. For non-emergency dispatch, call (703)588-2800/2801.



Pentagram



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Col. David Bowling
Commander
Command Sgt. Maj. Matthew Majeski
Command Sergeant Major
Public Affairs Officer
Greg Jones
Julia Simpkins
Command Information Officer

Catrina Francis
Editor
Emily Mihalik
Graphic Artist
Sgt. Austin Boucher
Staff Photographer

Community

9/11 from Page 1

when American Airlines Flight 77 flew into the building. He said the airplane hit to the right where the firetruck was parked.

“Some of the Fort Myer first responders who were some of the first to arrive on the scene are still working with us today,” he said.

C.T. Campbell, the former Fort Myer fire chief, said the great nation lost hundreds of heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice to save lives of others.

“The world changed that day,” Campbell said. “On the 20th anniversary of 9/11, we must come together ... highlight the great men and women in uniform who continue to risk life and limb. Today, we make sure Americans never forget our heroes who sacrificed.

“Frank Siller, who lost his brother Stephen in the South Tower on 9/11 said, ‘We can’t forget, we won’t forget.’”

Before the ceremony ended, the fire bell was tolled at 9:37 a.m. to observe when the plane hit the Pentagon.



Before the observance concluded, Miller

said, “While time and distance may help heal the wounds from that day and help make them easier to bare, we vow to be here every year to provide support and ensure we never forget.”

Pentagram editor Catrina Francis can be reached at catri-na.s.francis2.civ@mail.mil.

(Above photo) The wreath commemorating the 9/11 terrorists attacks 20 years ago on the Pentagon.

(Left photo) First responders salute the United States’ flag as it is unfurled at a remembrance ceremony at the Pentagon Saturday.



JBM-HH parking alert

Sept. 14 to 17

All are advised that the JBM-HH Summerall and Caisson lots will be closed beginning at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 14 in support of an event. The lots will reopen to the community no later than 6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 17.

Army says vaccines mandatory

By U.S. Army Public Affairs

The Army outlined its plan Tuesday to comply with the secretary of defense's order requiring all service members to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

The Army began implementing the secretary of defense's order Aug. 24, following Department of Defense and White House guidance. Before then, vaccines had been optional.

"This is quite literally a matter of life and death for our Soldiers, their Families and the communities in which we live," said Lt. Gen. R. Scott Dingle, the U.S. Army surgeon general. "Case counts and deaths continue to be concerning as the Delta variant spreads, which makes protecting the force through mandatory vaccination a health and readiness priority for the total Army."

While Soldiers who refuse the vaccine will first be counseled by their chain of command and medical providers, continued failure to comply could result in administrative or nonjudicial punishment — to include relief of duties or discharge. Soldiers have the ability to request an exemption from receiving the vaccine, if they have a legitimate medical, religious or administrative reason. Soldiers who are pending exemption requests will not be subject to adverse actions until the exemption is fully processed.

Commanders, command sergeants major, first sergeants and officers in command select list positions who refuse to be vaccinated — and are not pending an exemption request — face suspension and relief if they refuse to comply. Prior to any adverse action, each would be notified of the suspension and potential relief from their duties. They would then be counseled and provided the opportunity to be vaccinated before

they would become subject to removal from their positions by a general officer.

Officers and noncommissioned officers who have been selected and are waiting to assume CSL command, key billet or nominative sergeant major positions — some of the most coveted assignments in the Army — will likewise be subject to removal from the list for those assignments should they refuse to be vaccinated without a pending or approved exemption.

Commanders will request a general officer memorandum of reprimand be initiated for any Soldier who refuses to be vaccinated and does not have a pending or approved exemption request. Such reprimands can be career ending.

Active duty units are expected to be fully vaccinated by Dec. 15 and Reserve and National Guard units are expected to be fully vaccinated by June 30, 2022.

Soldiers may request administrative or medical exemptions as outlined in Army Regulation 600-20 and AR 40-562, as well as the new Army Directive 2021-33 that provides supplementary guidance on exemption requests.

Soldiers with previous COVID-19 infections are not automatically exempt from full



Photo by Sgt. Andrew Greenwood
Spc. Tyler Boyer, a medical specialist assigned to the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, administers the COVID-19 vaccine at Fort Carson, Colorado, Aug. 3.

vaccination and should consult their primary care managers. Soldiers pending exemption requests must continue to comply with all other applicable force health protection measures applicable to unvaccinated people.

Soldiers who have completed a Food and Drug Administration Emergency Use Authorization or World Health Organization-authorized series of vaccinations are fully vaccinated. Soldiers are only considered fully vaccinated two weeks post completion of a two--dose series vaccine or two weeks post completion of a single dose vaccine.

In addition to the COVID-19 vaccine mandate and following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and DOD guidance, Army commanders will continue

to update health protection protocols consistent with the local conditions of the communities in which they serve. The health protection of the force is a top priority, and DOD will continue to ensure that its personnel have the most up-to-date information on appropriate safety measures to prevent potential spread of the virus.

Soldiers with questions about the safety, effectiveness and possible side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine should discuss them with their health care provider.

For additional information, contact Lt. Col. Terence Kelley, U.S. Army Office of Public Affairs Office at (703) 695-0378 or email usarmy.pentagon.hqda-ocpa.mbx.mrd-press-desk@mail.mil.

BATTLE OF THE BASES
CHAMPIONSHIP GAME
@NATIONALS PARK
SEPT. 18, 7:45 PM
Free admission
Limited free tickets to Nats game through DFMWR

U.S. AIR FORCE
U.S. NAVY

JBM-HH VS JBAB
For more information, visit www.facebook.com/jbmhh

Family Morale Welfare and Recreation will distribute 1,150 free tickets on behalf of the Washington Nationals to those who wish to attend the Nationals' game, as well as the tournament. Those who only want to watch the tournament and don't want to attend the Nationals game do not need a ticket and should go to the Nationals Park 3rd Base Gate between 7:30 and 8 p.m. on game day.

The Delta variant is more contagious than previous strains—it may cause more than 2x as many infections

ORIGINAL COVID-19 STRAIN DELTA VARIANT

Vaccines protect you from hospitalization, severe infections, and death

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

CS 322041-AA 08/02/2021



Financial readiness training

First term Soldiers must attend a financial readiness training upon arrival at JBM-HH, which is mandated by AR 608-1, 4-38, c. This training reviews how to develop a budget, credit-building strategies, making sense of the Thrift Savings Plan and more. Soldiers may elect to attend a group session or a one-on-one appointment.

To schedule training or for more information, contact Cheyanne Pace at Cheyanne.n.pace.civ@mail.mil or call (703) 696-3510.

Find support with JBM-HH Army Community Service

At Army Community Service, people will find all kinds of programs and services that com-

bine fun with self-improvement. The joint base ACS office continues to serve in person and virtually. To learn about available opportunities, call (703) 696-3510. All JBM-HH ACS programs support Soldiers, civilian employees and Families in maintaining readiness by coordinating and delivering comprehensive, responsive services that promote self-reliance, resiliency and stability.

JBM-HH playgroup

The JBM-HH playgroup is Thursday, Sept. 23 and 30 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the Henderson Hall Chapel. During the playgroup, children will have sing along songs and story time. The playgroup is for infants to five year olds. For more information or to register, call (703) 693-1160 or (703) 614-7204.

Anger management

Anger management is being held Tuesday and Sept. 28 from 1 to 3 p.m. in Henderson Hall's Bldg. 12. This is an in-person course. This is a set of eight classes that review eight tools of anger management. The goal of this set of classes is to teach individuals how to accurately examine triggers and perceptions of situations and learn healthy and constructive ways in which to express frustrations. Individuals should register for the day and time that works best for their schedule. These courses should be taken over the span of eight weeks, one session per week. For more information or to register, call Candi Heinberger at (703) 693-9146 or by email at candi.heinberger@usmc-mccs.

Army tests new EFMP system

By Devon L. Suits
Army News Service

The Army is currently piloting a new Exceptional Family Member Program online enrollment process to improve the assignment research and selection process for EFMP participants, G-9 officials said Sept. 9.

Close to 300 Soldiers and Family members are participating in the initial test of the integrated Army Enterprise EFMP system from Aug. 27 through Sept. 30, said Paul Grossman, EFMP lead for Soldier and Family Readiness, Army G-9.

The new system should reduce the time Soldiers and Families dedicate toward investigating care and support options during the permanent change of station process, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston said recently during the 2021 Fires conference, hosted by Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Families often have to research a gaining installation and surrounding community to determine if they have the necessary services to meet their EFMP requirements, Grinston said. They then have to repeat the process if denied their initial assignment, resulting in undue stress.

“Why does a Family member have to research (an assignment) all on their own?” Grinston asked. “We are better than that in this day and age. I got that task and working on it extremely hard.”

In June, Grossman said that the Army awarded a contract to develop the E-EFMP to support the service’s EFMP Families by fiscal year 2022.

Under E-EFMP, Soldiers can access a range of medical and assignment information, along with an overview of installation and military treat-



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ment facility capabilities, he added. The program will also operate as the Army’s centralized EFMP case management system, allowing Soldiers to initiate a Department of Defense Form 2792, or Family Member Medical Summary, and manage their enrollment online.

Once the pilot is complete, G-9 officials plan to leverage user feedback to improve the program, Grossman said. The goal is to design a system that is both transparent and easy to use.

The E-EFMP will eventual-

ly link to the Active Duty Officer Assignment Interactive Module Version 2 or the enlisted assignment process to streamline future PCS efforts, Grinston said.

The Department of Defense’s Office of Special Needs and Military OneSource have also supported EFMP families with the launch of the online tool EFMP & Me, Grinston mentioned during an interview in February.

Through EFMP & Me, Soldiers have access to medical and educational resources, along with step-by-step assis-

tance during the EFMP enrollment process, PCS preparation, deployments and other military life events, according to the Military OneSource website.

On the EFMP & Me homepage, users answer a few questions to select the types of information they want to receive. The tool, available on computers or mobile devices, will also generate customizable checklists for users to follow. Lists include essential items to complete, along with tips and other resources.

Chaplain's Corner

Life can be like road construction

By Retired Chaplain (Brig. Gen.) Ray Bailey
Former Deputy Chief of Chaplains

We've all seen the sign. "Road Construction" next however many miles. We roll our eyes and shake our heads at the inconvenience of it all. Another sign usually follows soon after. "Fines double in construction zone." Then to make it worse, another sign says, "Single lane ahead." Oh, that's just great. Why on my road? Why, when I am in a hurry? Why can't they do the repair work in the middle of the night when I'm not driving?

If we're honest, most of us don't pay a whole lot of attention to these warnings. We'll slow down if we have to, but the stakes we are interested in are more about getting where we need to go. Right?

Currently, there is road construction being conducted on the highway that I drive. Same messages, different signs. But the other day I was on a different road under repair that had one sign that got my attention. Posted on the traditional orange diamond, and printed in a child's handwriting font, it read, "Slow down, my daddy works here."

Wow. All of a sudden, it's become personal. The workers along the side of the road are no longer just nameless faces or statistics. They are not there to make my journey a bit longer. They are people who are loved by someone, people who will be missed if tragedy were to happen and people who make a difference in someone's life. They are mothers and fathers



Photo by codot.gov

and sisters and brothers and yes, our friends.

With so much going on in our world, it is easy to begin to see people as things, numbers or statistics. We forget that the news we see

and hear involves people who are loved by someone. They were given life in this world. They are spiritual beings, like us.

It's different when it's personal.

JBM-HH Religious Services are on a weekly basis at Memorial Chapel.

To view service updates, please visit the Religious Support Office Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/jbmhhrso> or email the Religious Support Office at usarmy.jbmhh.usag.mbx.memorial-chapel@mail.mil. Services are subject to cancellation in the event of inclement weather.

Catholic Mass	Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday at 9 a.m.
Protestant Service	Sunday at 10:30 a.m.
Gospel Service	Sunday at noon
Samoan Service	Held the first Sunday of every month only at 2:30 p.m.

The RSO now livestreams the following Sunday services via the JBM-HH Religious Support Facebook page:

Protestant	10:30 a.m.
Gospel Service	noon

The Fort Belvoir Jewish Congregation host Saturday services and religion education opportunities for Families. For information about Saturday services and programs at Fort Belvoir, contact the Jewish coordinator, Sara Astrow by email at saralyn.astrow.ctr@mail.mil or phone at (703) 806-3393.



Hylton On The Hill Concerts

The U.S. Army Band Downrange

Join The U.S. Army Band Downrange for a free celebratory concert to kick off the 2021-2022 Hylton Center season. Free tickets required.

Sat / Sep 18 / 4 pm

DeCA highlighting foodborne illness prevention

By Kevin Robinson
Defense Commissary
Agency

Foodborne illnesses remain a constant threat to health and wellness, but awareness is key to prevention, said the Defense Commissary Agency's director of health and safety.

"These days it's an understatement to say we want our customers to remain vigilant in protecting themselves against the spread of COVID-19," said Lt. Col. Angela Schmillen, DeCA's director of health and safety. "Although there is no evidence to suggest that handling food or consuming food is associated with COVID-19, customers must continue to keep their guard up to prevent foodborne illnesses that can also be potentially harmful — even fatal."

During Food Safety Education Month in September, DeCA joins the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Food Safety Inspection Service, the Department of Health and Human Services and other organizations in reinforcing foodborne illness awareness and prevention.

Bacteria and viruses remain the leading causes of food poisoning, according to FoodSafety.gov. The CDC estimates 48 million Americans suffer some form of foodborne illness each year, resulting in 3,000 deaths and nearly 130,000 hospitalizations.

At commissaries, Army veterinarians and Army and Air Force food safety and public health specialists help protect against foodborne illnesses by inspecting food sources, deliveries and products on store shelves.

"We do our part, but our customers have an additional responsibility to help protect their Families and themselves from foodborne illnesses," Schmillen said.

"For our customers that job starts when they leave the commissary."

Customers can learn more about food safety through awareness campaigns from the CDC and USDA, such as "Be Food Safe." That message is the basis for the following safe handling techniques:

Clean

- Wash hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- Wash utensils, cutting boards, dishes and countertops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before continuing to prepare the next item.
- Do not wash produce with soap, bleach, sanitizer, alcohol, disinfectant or any other chemical.
- Gently rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under cold, running tap water.
- Scrub uncut firm produce — such as potatoes, cucumbers, melons — with a clean brush, even if there aren't any plans to eat the peel.
- Food contact surfaces can be



During Food Safety Education Month in September, DeCA joins the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Food Safety Inspection Service, the Department of Health and Human Services and other organizations in reinforcing foodborne illness awareness and prevention.

sanitized with a freshly made solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water.

Separate

- Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods in the grocery shopping cart and in the refrigerator.
- If possible, use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Never place cooked food or foods that are eaten raw, like salads, on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry or seafood.

Cook

- Cook meats to a safe minimum internal temperature as measured with a food thermometer — 145 degrees Fahrenheit for pork, 155 degrees Fahrenheit for beef and 165 degrees Fahrenheit for poultry products and all ground or cubed meats. Any leftovers should be reheated to 165 degrees Fahrenheit as well.

Chill

- Chill food promptly and properly. Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods

and leftovers within two hours or one hour if temperatures are above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

A few more tips for handling food safely can be found at www.homefoodsafety.org:

- Use hand sanitizer to wipe hands and the handle of the shopping cart.
- Clean hands before sampling food. Either bring moist towelettes or carry a bottle of hand sanitizer to use before you taste.
- If a reusable grocery bags is used, wash them often.
- Check food packages for holes, tears or openings. Frozen foods should be solid with no signs of thawing.
- Check for a loose lid on jars whose seals seem tampered with or damaged. Report a defective cap to the store manager.
- Avoid buying cans that are deeply dented, bulging, rusting or have a dent on either the top or the side seam.
- Use plastic bags to separate raw meat, poultry and seafood before placing them in the cart to avoid contaminating ready-to-eat foods like bread or pro-

duce.

- When shopping, select perishable foods last before checkout and group them together.
- Take groceries home immediately and store them right away. If on an extended trip, bring a cooler with chill packs for perishable foods. Perishable foods must be refrigerated within two hours and only one hour if it is over 90 degrees Fahrenheit outside.
- Keep perishable foods out of the hot trunk in summer and place in the air-conditioned car instead.
- Refrigerate or freeze a delivery as soon as possible.

The DeCA website is a good resource for food safety. To find the latest food safety alerts and product recalls affecting military commissaries, visit the newsroom on commissaries.com and select the box that says "Food Recall."

For more on food safety awareness, visit the CDC's website. Information on food handling techniques is also available at Eatright.org.

COVID survivor advocates for vaccine

By Elaine Sanchez
Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston

A nearly fatal bout with COVID-19 drove the Harris family to do something they had been on the fence about before — they got the vaccine.

With a wife and three sons, Tim Harris was not willing to take another gamble with his life.

“I’ve been in rocket attacks in Afghanistan, motorcycle and car accidents and gun shots at the club, but I never had that feeling of impending doom,” said Harris, a mobilization and planning specialist, U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence, and Army retiree. “There were many moments when I thought I was going to die from COVID.”

As with most people, the symptoms started gradually, he said. He woke the morning of June 15, 2020, with body chills, aches and a headache, and immediately went for a COVID test. He received word he was positive the next day. While he hoped for mild symptoms, he soon began to decline. He lost his appetite, had difficulty breathing and suffered from hallucinations as his fever spiked to 104 degrees.

“I felt so bad one night, I told my wife to call 911,” he said. “It was the scariest moment of my life.”

On June 25, the ambulance crew wheeled him away, leaving his wife, Dionne, to wait and pray. At that time, patients were unable to have any visitors with them in the hospital unless in the most dire of conditions.

“I felt so helpless,” Dionne said. “As a helpmate, that is a hard emotion to accept. I prayed, then grabbed the camera and began taking pictures because I wasn’t sure if that was the last time I would ever physically see him again.”

Harris was admitted to Brooke Army Medical Center on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and despite interventions, became increasingly worse. One night, exhausted and gasping for breath, Harris called his wife in desperation.

“Help me,” he pleaded with his wife. “I can’t breathe. Help me.”

“I got off the phone and told God, ‘I’m ready. I am so tired,’” he said, choking up. “It was so much on the body, I couldn’t take it anymore. The harder I tried to live, the more I was dying.”

Alarmed by her husband’s tone, Dionne did her best to stay calm.

“I knew I needed to keep it together and get him some help,” she said.

She immediately called the nurses’ station. “Within minutes, his physician called me,” Dionne said. “He informed me that Tim would need to be intubated that evening or he would not survive through the night.”

Shortly after, Harris’ care team inserted a breathing tube and placed him on a ventilator. He knew of several people who did not wake up after that type of intervention, and prepared himself for that same fate.

“Just before they put me under, I asked myself, ‘Is this the end?’ I asked God to forgive me for all my sins and begged him to take care of my family,” he said.

As the doctors explained to Harris, a mechanical ventilator partially or fully takes over the breathing process, helping to support patients as they battle severe respiratory symptoms. According to a study published in the *Journal of Medical Ethics* in July 2020, approximately 2.5% of patients require mechanical ventilation while their body fights COVID-19. While further data is needed, current literature indicates that patient mortality for those need-



Courtesy photo

Tim Harris, a mobilization and planning specialist, U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence, is sedated on a ventilator at Brooke Army Medical Center on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, July 27, 2020.

ing ventilation ranges between 35 and 40%.

“We continue to see many very sick patients with COVID-19 hospitalized, admitted to the ICU, intubated for ventilator support, and even needing extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (heart-lung support) in an attempt to save their lives,” said Air Force Col. Heather Yun, infectious disease physician and BAMC’s deputy commander for medical services. “No one thinks they will be the one to need a ventilator or have a bad outcome with COVID, but we see this every day.”

“Unlike 2020, in 2021, these events are almost entirely preventable with the vaccine. Mr. Harris is one of the fortunate ones to recover and be reunited with his family.”

Harris was on the ventilator for just over 24 hours. When he woke up, his first thought was one of gratitude.

“I thought of my family and I thanked God,” he said.

Aided by the period of rest, Harris slowly began to recover from the virus and was discharged from the hospital on July 4, 2020.

“I’ll never forget when I first saw my wife’s face when she came to pick me up,” he said. “I was so excited to see her.”

Harris said he would forever be grateful for BAMC’s lifesaving care.

“I received excellent care and appreciate the hard work and dedication to duty from the entire staff,” he said. “I know they don’t do it for the accolades or the glory. They do it because they love helping others and I will never forget that.”

Harris isolated himself to keep his family safe, but after his isolation period ended, he reunited with his then-2-year-old son.

“He was so amazing and loving,” he said.

“He is normally very energetic, but that day, he just sat next to me on the couch and watched TV with me.”

Harris was hospitalized again a few days later due to stomach pain. It was a short stay, but worthwhile, he said. “My roommate had COVID and I saw the same fear I felt in his eyes,” he said. “God put me in that room for a reason. I was able to encourage my roommate, pray with him, and let him know he was going to make it. And he did. We both made it.”

While he had been uncertain about the vaccine in the past, Harris did not hesitate when offered the shot in February 2021.

“I knew, even if I got COVID again, that the vaccine would lessen the symptoms,” he said. “I didn’t want to go through another hospitalization, and I wanted to do my part for my community.”

Since his illness, Harris has become a staunch advocate of the vaccine, especially after losing several of his closest friends to COVID.

“If you have something against the vaccine, before you decide not to take it, do your research first,” he said. “Don’t take someone else’s word for it. Look at the facts.”

While he’s come a long way, Harris still struggles with symptoms such as lung pain and short-term memory loss — a small price to pay for the gift of life, he said.

“I’ve often wondered, ‘why did I survive,’ when so many others didn’t,” he said. “I’m not sure of the answer. I’m just trying to live a better life and not take anything for granted. But I would give anything to have another moment with my friends.”



Courtesy photo

The rising and setting sun can result in highway havoc for motorists.

Rising, setting sun can cause problems while driving

By Mark Kelley
USACRC Editor

It wasn't a typical rush-hour traffic pattern. Instead of a steady flow, vehicles were clumping in groups and coming to a stop in unpredictable patterns. Eventually, the cause became apparent. Up ahead, dump trucks and road-building machinery, as well as groups of road construction crews, were working on the highway. The weather was perfect; however, the setting summer sun was wreaking havoc on westbound motorists, causing some to find creative ways to block the glare so they could see to drive.

The road crews were working on a 1-mile section of the eastbound and westbound lanes on a divided four-lane highway. This section of highway was further divided into subzones, with crews funneling traffic into one-lane corridors. Vehicles were ushered through the zones by warning signs and flaggers with traffic-control signs.

In addition to construction zones and subzones, the roadwork caused intersecting access points to become partially blocked by traffic. Unfortunately, the road crews didn't fully staff or control all intersecting ingress and egress points along the highway. As a result, some drivers were entering the highway from an access point with a limited sight distance. There were numerous close calls, and it was only by luck vehicles didn't collide. The road crews weren't immune to the danger either. Because they were facing westbound traffic, they were at the mercy of the sun-blinded drivers, frequently dodging passing cars and trucks.

As rush hour progressed, drivers were becoming increasingly aggressive in their

attempts to traverse the construction zones. To make matters worse, the sun angle became even more intrusive as the traffic volume peaked. Cars were darting in and out of traffic lanes, and following distances got progressively shorter to the point that westbound traffic was now bumper-to-bumper. Brake lights were almost impossible to see through the blinding glare of the sun.

I drove slowly through the westbound traffic. When I reached the last series of construction subzones, the flagman signaled traffic to resume to the posted speed limit. Motorists were more than happy to speed up — despite the continued reduced visibility due to sun glare. As I rounded a curve, another westbound vehicle started passing my car. I was traveling below the posted speed limit and rounding a curve when I saw a pickup truck start to pull out of a side road and into the lane ahead of me and stop. At the same time, the sun blinded my vision.

Unable to judge closing distance or change lanes to avoid collision, my car T-boned the pickup at almost 45 mph. My air bag deployed and the inertial-reel lap/shoulder belt engaged, stopping my forward motion into the dash. All my tools in the backseat flew through the busted windshield and landed on the road ahead. The pickup truck's fuel tank ruptured, spilling gas on the road and pooling in front of what was left of my car. Dazed but otherwise uninjured, I was able to get away from the wreckage safely.

Soon afterward, emergency medical service personnel and law enforcement arrived, securing the scene and transporting me to the hospital. The pickup driver was cited for causing the accident. He was un-

hurt, as most of the impact was in the truck's bed right behind the cab. After being looked over at the hospital, I was released.

Lesson learned

The blinding sun and aggressive drivers are a dangerous combination. This was the first accident I'd ever been involved in during my more than 40 years of driving in all types of conditions. It just goes to show that despite your experience and skill, you never know what the other guy is going to do. As motorists, we must always be alert and wear our seat belts. On this day, my seat belt saved my life.

FYI

The rising and setting sun can result in highway havoc for motorists. So what can they do to protect themselves? AAA offers the following tips:

- Invest in polarized sunglasses, which can help reduce glare.
- Use your sun visor. It can help to block out the sun.
- Leave more following room. When the sun is in your eyes it can be hard to see what the car ahead is doing. This is one more instance where it pays to leave extra room between you and the next vehicle.
- Drive with your headlights on to increase your visibility to other drivers
- Keep the windshield clean, inside and out.
- Check the windshield for pitting and cracks.
- Avoid storing papers or other items on the dashboard.
- If having a difficult time seeing the road, use lane markings to help guide you.



News Notes

JBM-HH giant voice testing

JBM-HH is getting a software upgrade to the Giant Voice public address system through Friday by TACOM. During this time, the team will be testing various sites with short messaging and tones throughout the installation from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. When beginning testing, there will be a live announcement of “ test, test ,test.”

Temporary radiology closure

As Andrew Rader U.S. Army Health Clinic continues to make improvements and enhance its systems to serve the community, radiology services will be unavailable all day Thursday. The clinic expects to have normal operations Friday from noon to 4 p.m. and will return to normal operational hours from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday. The clinic will provide updates on its Facebook page as well as the joint base Facebook page. All other services will remain open under normal operations.

Battle of the Bases

During last month’s Washington Nationals sponsored military intramural softball tournament, the Battle of the Bases, one of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall teams won to advance to the championship game. The joint base team will face off against the team from Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling at Nationals Park Saturday, following the Nats’ game against the Colorado Rockies.

The Nationals and Rockies game begins at 4:05 p.m. and the Battle of the Bases championship game has a tentative start time of 7:45 p.m.

Those who want to watch the softball tournament do not need a ticket and should go to the Nationals Park 3rd Base Gate between 7:30 and 8 p.m. on game day. Fans attending only the softball game will be permitted to enter through Third Base Gate 10 minutes after the last out of the Nationals vs. Rockies game.

Follow www.facebook.com/jbmhh for additional information on the event.

Death notice

Anyone with debts owed to or by the estate of Lt. Col. Donald E. Peters, HQDA Public Affairs Operations Group, Pentagon, Washington, D.C., must contact Maj. Adan Cazarez, the summary court officer for the Soldier. Peters recently passed away Sept. 9.

For more information, contact Cazarez at (703) 614-4982.

Army Ten-Miler race goes virtual

The Army has decided to conduct this year’s Army Ten-Miler race in a virtual setting. The Army weighed the risks based on rising COVID-19 case rates and the addition of the Delta variant, and determined that changing to a virtual

race best protects Ten-Miler participants, event support staff, medical and law enforcement personnel and spectators within the Washington, D.C., and Arlington communities. The decision to hold a virtual race provides the safeguards needed to eliminate the risk to participants given the nature of a competitive road race.

The 37th Annual Army Ten-Miler — Virtual Edition will now take place from Oct. 10 to Nov. 29. Virtual race registration remains open; however, the ATM Expo and Pasta Dinner will not take place this year. Registered in-person runners will be automatically transferred to the virtual race and will receive \$30 registration credit to the 2022 ATM race, which accommodates price differences between the virtual (\$59) and in-person (\$89) races. Additionally, runners who purchased the pasta dinner tickets will receive refunds or credit. Runner packets will be mailed free of charge to participants to the registration address. Runner packets include bibs, finisher coin, shirt, calendar and runner bag.

The safety and health of ATM participants remains the Army’s top priority. While the Army had hoped that COVID-19 conditions would allow runners to gather in person this year, the risks remain too great at this time. Please check <https://www.armytenmiler.com> for official updates. The Army looks forward to continued participation in Army Ten-Miler events. Runners and attendees should contact the Army Ten-Miler Race team office for all Army Ten-Miler Race concerns and questions at usarmy.mcnair.mdw.mbx.armytenmiler@mail.mil.

New education center hours

The JBM-HH Education Center Hub to include JBM-HH, Forts Belvoir, Meade and Detrick, will close weekly for training Thursday mornings from 8 to 10 a.m. The goal of the training is to provide better customer service to service members, veterans, retirees, dependents and civilians.

Cemetery construction

Several roads in Arlington National Cemetery are closed for necessary construction. Humphreys Drive will be closed through March 2022, affecting portions of Section 1. The construction project on McPherson Drive, Lawton Drive, McKinley Drive, Jackson Circle, Chapel Gate Road, Capron Drive, Hobson Drive, and Miles Drive, affecting Sections 3, 11, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23 and 44, will continue through late September 2022 as currently projected.

ANC is working hard to complete this project as soon as possible and to avoid prolonged inconveniences to visitors and Family pass holders. Safety is the main priority for ANC Family pass

holders and guests. If an individual is a Family pass holder with a loved one buried in the marked sections of the map, please call ANC operations at (703) 614-1111 to schedule an escort to the loved one’s gravesite.

National Hispanic Heritage Month

Every year the Department of Defense joins the nation in celebrating and honoring the cultures and contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans. This year’s theme is “Esperanza: A Celebration of Hispanic Heritage and Hope.”

Just as in generations past, the nation honors its Hispanic community — military and civilian — for their significant contributions to (or toward) protecting the United States and embodying the DOD values that unite all as one team.

LRC fiscal year fuel close out

The JBM-HH Logistics Readiness Center Armed Forces Fuel Facility, located at Bldg. 330, will be closing temporarily for an annual end of year inventory check at the end of September. All customers who use the fuel stations at Bldg. 330 are advised to ensure they fuel before the end of year close out. Customers with a GSA vehicle may use a credit card at the AAFES gas station. The station at TMP will only service Directorate of Emergency, Myer Fire and PMO vehicles, along with Army owned vehicles after Sept. 29. The fuel station end of the fiscal year schedule is: Sept. 28 to 29, open to all Army owned and all tactical vehicles and equipment wit VIL keys. Sept. 30 from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., open to DES Fire and PMO police vehicles. TMP fuel point closes to all Sept. 30 at 4 p.m. The TMP fuel point reopens for normal operations Oct. 1 at 6 a.m. Service providers with questions can call Wilfried Brumbaugh at (703) 696-7137 or Bernard Franklin at (703) 696-7136.

Virtual transition services

The JBM-HH Transition Assistance Program wishes to remind the joint base community that all services are currently virtual. The TAP facility, located in Bldg. 404, is currently under construction. The building is closed to public access at this time. Employees who wish to enter the building in the interim must report to the trailer south of Bldg. 404, near the loading dock, to receive the proper personal protective equipment.

Protect each other

The U.S. is fortunate to have the highly effective COVID-19 vaccines that are widely available for those 12 and older. People who are fully vaccinated are protected from severe disease and death, including from the Delta variant currently circulating. For more information, visit <https://health.mil/>

[News/Articles/2021/06/28/News-Covid19-Delta-Variant-What-You-Need-to-Know-to-Stay-Safe](https://www.army.mil/News/Articles/2021/06/28/News-Covid19-Delta-Variant-What-You-Need-to-Know-to-Stay-Safe).

JBM-HH face mask policy

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Washington, D.C., and Arlington County are now “substantial” transmission areas for COVID-19 and the Delta variant. Face coverings are now required in all indoor settings on Myer, McNair and Henderson Hall — regardless of vaccination status. The mask mandate remains in place for all non-vaccinated individuals — indoors and outdoors.

JBM-HH gyms, pool are open

All JBM-HH gyms are open to DOD ID cardholders. The Myer Fitness Center hours are weekdays from 5 to 7:30 a.m., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and 4 to 6 p.m. and the McNair Fitness Center is open 24/7 daily for those with registered access. Registration for McNair Fitness Center will be by appointment only. At this time, people will need to call and make an appointment to register for the 24/7 access by calling Lydia Mease at (571) 315-9125 Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Smith Gym at Henderson Hall operational hours are Monday to Friday from 5 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and weekends 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Zembiec pool facility is open Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. and is closed weekends and holidays. Adult lap and open swim is available all day. Youth lap and open swim hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The facility is open to active duty and Reserve uniformed service members, retirees, dependents and current DOD/USCG civilians with an ID card.

Live concerts are back

The U.S. Army Band “Pershing’s Own” live concerts are back. The band has released a comprehensive summer lineup through September. Check out the full calendar at <https://www.usarmyband.com/calendar>. As always, the band’s concerts are free and open to the public.

Ride the Myer Flyer

The Myer shuttle service, between Myer, Henderson Hall and the Pentagon, has resumed. Please keep in mind that riders will be required to show their CAC or military ID to the shuttle driver.

Face coverings will be required for all riders; and only a maximum of 50% of passengers will be allowed on the bus at this time. Food or drink are not authorized while on the bus.

Protect information

Individuals should be skeptical of anyone contacting them from the federal government. No agency will call, email or text demanding personal information or money to get a COVID-19 vaccine certificate or passport.