

Fire responders connect with dedicated 5G network

By **BUD McLAUGHLIN**

Staff writer

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In an emergency, when lives are on the line, time is of the essence.

While “every second counts” may be a cliché, it’s a fact to first responders.

That’s why fifth generation wireless communications is such a vital asset.

“5G is an enabler within the nationwide public safety broadband network, otherwise known as FirstNet,” Redstone Deputy Fire Chief Robert Simmons said. “5G is a tool within a toolbox.”

FirstNet is a broadband network that ensures first responders will have priority and preemption to transmit data over the cellular broadband network. The concept came about in the wake of 9/11 when a limited bandwidth hampered first responders’ communicating because they were on the same network as the public.

“FirstNet was driven by the findings of the 9-11 Commission. Their report recommended a nationwide network for first responders, and legislation was passed in 2012 directing the Department of Commerce to develop a nationwide dedicated network,” Simmons said.

Now, Redstone Arsenal becomes the first installation with an approved infrastructure application.

“Redstone was the first installation to begin building infrastructure to support FirstNet and 5G,” Simmons said. “Construction is ongoing to build the towers that will house FirstNet and 5G.” The construction includes three towers, 28 small cell antennas and about 41 miles of fiber.

“With FirstNet, we’re going to get priority and preemption,” Simmons said. Which means devices on the public safety channels will receive priority with data transmission. “Adding 5G to that will allow for more bandwidth and the ability to move data quicker.

“If we have a patient who is having a heart attack, we have the ability to transmit EKG data to the hospital,” Simmons said. “Where 5G gives us improvement is we are able to move more data quicker. For example, a paramedic can do an ultrasound in the field and send it to a doctor in real time.”

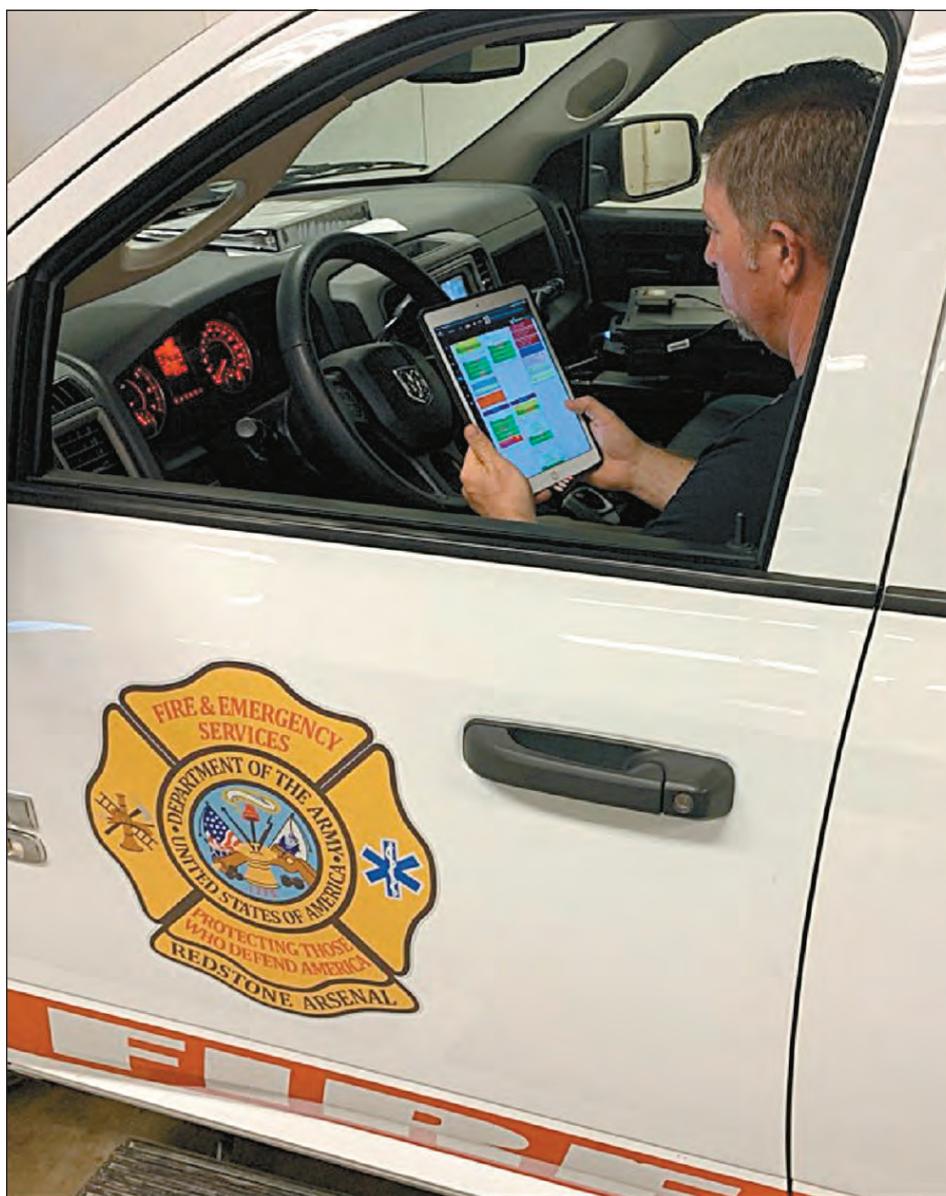


Photo by Erin Elise

Redstone Deputy Fire Chief Robert Simmons checks fire department staffing levels using his FirstNet connected iPad.

Simmons gave an example of the tornadoes that ravaged the state in April 2011. Networks and communications were down throughout Alabama.

“If you compare it to what we had in 2011 when the tornadoes came and communications were lost,” he said. “We

didn’t have FirstNet.

“One of the things we need in times of crisis is the ability to communicate. Having this network gives us the ability to communicate and 5G further improves our ability to communicate and move data wirelessly.”



MILITARY

Rifles delivery bolsters Senegal armed forces.

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COMMUNITY

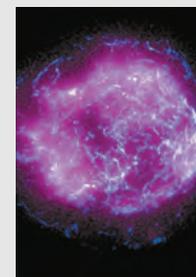
Veteran centenarian receives recognition.

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FEDERAL

NASA telescope sends first science image.

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SPORTS

Senior softball players ready to take field.

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Let's be perfectly clear about bag policy at venues

Snippets

By Jonathan Stinson
Assistant editor

Let's talk about plastic bags.

No, not the ones you get at the grocery store. I mean the only types of bags allowed in sporting events across the nation. The clear ones that they used to make middle schoolers use after the Columbine shooting.

Trust me, I've never given a second thought to these either, at least not until a few weeks ago.

So there we were, my wife and I, on a cold Tuesday night trying to figure out how to get out of one of the city's new parking garages. Specifically, the one directly across the street from the main entrance to Propst Arena at the Von Braun Center.

I have two comments on that parking garage. One, despite using it half a dozen times or more, I still feel like a rat in maze anytime I'm trying to find an exit out to the street. Two, the only elevators that ever seem to function are the ones located on the far opposite side of wherever I've parked. And, of course, the only parking spots we ever seem to find are on the top two levels. The thing is practically brand new, how can the elevators already be broken?

We were running that rat race because we got a couple tickets to a Havoc game. Eventually, we made our way out of the parking garage, across the street and started to go through security.

Whenever I go somewhere like a stadium or really any place that's going to a large gathering point for the general public, I've never given any consideration to whether that place is going to have metal detectors or some form of security at the door. I just assume they are and I'll just

leave my pocketknife in the car.

It's not something I have to give a lot of thought to because the contents of my pockets don't change. I carry my keys and a little pocketknife in my right pocket, while my wallet, Air Pods and a pack of gum rides in my left. My cellphone is usually either in my jacket if it's cold or my back pocket.

That's probably more than you ever wanted to know about what's in my pockets, but I wanted to make the point that I have the ability to carry everything I could possibly need at any given time inside the pockets of any pair of pants I put on.

Most women reading this column probably know where I'm going with this, but for the guys, your wife, girlfriend, daughter or female acquaintance can't do this.

It's not because women need to carry more things than men. It's because most of the time I have more storage capacity in my pants than my wife does in any purse/clothing combination she chooses on any given day.

A purse isn't a fashion accessory. It's a necessity.

What that means is when we go to a place like a Havoc hockey game my wife has to look up the venue's rules on what types of purses are allowed into the venue. This can vary widely from place to place, but just about everywhere has some restrictions on what type of purse a woman can bring with them.

This is one of a million things that she must do just to partake in society that I wouldn't think about in a million years. I know that's not saying much because many people have described me as dense. They used other words that I can't necessarily print, but that was their general point.

So, she looked on the website and it had some specifications about sizes and she grabbed one of her small purses that was well within what the venue had listed. I don't remember the exact dimensions, but it could hold her cellphone, wallet and a tampon. That's it though.

So, imagine our surprise when we were told at the door that her purse either had to be clear or about the size of a 4x6 photo. A bag that size won't even fit most cellphones.

Apparently, the clear bag policy had been in place for a while, but since we only go to one or two hockey games a year, and it wasn't listed on the website, we had no idea.

There was now a choice to be made. Walk back to the parking garage, up three or four flights of stairs (remember the elevators are out), put the purse in the car and then walk back or just go home.

I might walk up four flights of stairs once a day, but I'm not doing it twice.

So, on the way home my wife checked again to see if there was any mention of a clear bag policy that she may have missed. There was not.

Later that night she sent off a few emails to whoever she could find on the contact page for Propst Arena and made a few points.

One, she was not thrilled about the pros-

pect of having to carry a clear bag and allowing everyone to see her carrying things like tampons. Two, it would've been nice to know before going through all the trouble of showing up. And, three, this particular policy predominately and unfairly singled out women, which was a pretty bad look in 2022.

She's right on all counts.

Shortly after her email, the website was changed to reflect the policy, but nobody ever bothered to address the other two points. So allow me.

First, I watch people every single day keep people safe without discriminating against half of the population. It's possible. And I'm sure there's some middle ground between allowing 4x6 postcard and banning anything larger that could be more accommodating and not force women to make so many compromises just to attend a sporting event. Sports in general don't have the best track record when it comes to inclusion and the blanket "clear bag" policies are just another example.

Secondly, I urge every man out there to just start carrying his wife's or girlfriend's tampons into sporting events for them. They'll easily fit in our pockets, even with all the other stuff we have in there.

Personally, I'll gladly throw those bad boys down in the bin you empty your pockets in before you go through the metal detector and dare the person working the door to say something about it. I promise I can make things a lot more awkward and uncomfortable than they can imagine, and I'll get a kick out of it. Knowing me, I'd probably fit a whole box full in my pockets and leave all of them there but one or two.

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First responder spotlight

By SKIP VAUGHN

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Jon King

What do you think of your job?

"I enjoy it very much," Jon King, access control technician for Drodex in support of ATF's National Center for Training and Explosives, said. "Learning from the ATF. Just handling IEDs and putting out fires. We're access control here but they actually let us participate in the courses. I've been here for two months now. It's given me the desire to start my own security contracting company."

King, 28, from Tucson, Arizona, started working here in January. He grew up in an Army family. The Toney resident and his fiancée, Kemmy Graham, plan to marry on Dec. 22. He enjoys traveling. King has rental properties which he manages, and he does coding to develop apps. "Since I'm from Arizona, I've always rooted for the Phoenix Suns," he said.

Crimes, accidents & other occurrences

The Directorate of Emergency Services, Law Enforcement Division, provided the following list of reported incidents Feb. 6-13:

Feb. 6: Airbags deployed when a vehicle swerved off a roadway and struck a fire hydrant. Redstone police conducted a series of field sobriety tests which the driver failed. The driver was transported to the police station, processed and cited for driving under the influence and damage to government property.

Feb. 8: Redstone Police Investigation was notified of a positive urinalysis test of an active-duty service member. The individual admitted to knowingly consuming edibles containing CBD/THC-8.

Feb. 9: A two-vehicle accident occurred at the corner of Honest John Road and Vincent Drive. Vehicle 1 was traveling south on Vincent when it turned onto Honest John into the path of vehicle 2.

Feb. 9: Redstone police conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle with expired tags. The tags expired in 2020 and the driver had a revoked license since 2020. The driver was cited for both offenses.

Feb. 10: Redstone police responded to Gate 10 for a report of a man dressed in all red jumping the fence to gain access to the installation. Huntsville police advised Redstone police they had the individual in custody and transported to the gate to transfer custody to Redstone police. Redstone police were able to locate the area where the individual had set up camp. The individual was processed and cited for unlawful entry onto a military installation.

Feb. 12: A two-vehicle accident occurred near Gate 8. Traveling west on Goss Road, vehicle 1 veered into vehicle 2's lane, causing a collision. Both vehicles had minor damages.

Citations included one for driving while license is suspended or revoked, one for damage to government property, one for driving under the influence, seven for expired registration, one for no insurance and 22 for speeding.

Getting to know you

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Name: Jeremy Belcher

Position: Engineer, structural development and integration division, Combat Capabilities Development Command Aviation & Missile Center

What did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to be an engineer. I always liked to fix things and know how they work.

What do you hope to accomplish in 2022?

Just trying to survive. I've got two little kids. My wife, Julie, and I have two boys, Jacob, 3, and Joshua, 1.

What is the best part about your job?

I like the fact it has a little bit of everything. I like to be able to do analysis, hands-on testing and a little bit of travel.

Who is your hero, and why?

I'd say my wife. She works a full-time job and still takes care of our family. She is a quality engineer at the Toyota



engine plant in Huntsville.

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

I would say I would get as many friends and family and just have a big party.

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

"Live life to your fullest." That's from my mom (Becky Belcher of Birmingham).

What do you like to do to pass the time?

I like to work on my project cars. Go hiking. And I just got a 3D printer so I'm learning all about that.

On this date in history: Feb. 23

In 2012: A series of attacks across Iraq left at least 83 killed and more than 250 injured.

In 1998: Tornadoes in central Florida destroyed or damaged 2,600 structures and killed 42 people.

In 1945: During the Battle of Iwo Jima, a group of U.S. Marines reached the top of Mount Suribachi on the island and were photographed raising the American flag.

In 1883: Alabama became the first U.S. state to enact an anti-trust law.

In 1836: The Siege of the Alamo (prelude to the Battle of the Alamo) began in San Antonio, Texas.

In 1778: Baron von Steuben arrived at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, to help to train the Continental Army.

Quote of the week

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

— Barack Obama

Final Salute

Richard Crimes, a Vietnam veteran, died Feb. 16. He was 73. The Huntsville native was a draftee who served in Vietnam from October 1970 through October 1971 with the 598th Light Maintenance Company which was part of the 931st Engineering Group. He left the Army in January 1972.

Crimes served as historian for Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1067 of Huntsville. He did videography and photography for the chapter.

"It is with great sadness we recognize the passing of Richard Crimes, a great supporter and life member of VVA Chapter 1067," Charlie Miller, the chapter president, said. "Richard served as the chapter photographer for over 10 years, not only for (us) but provided photos and videos for other veterans organizations. God bless his family. We will miss him."

Editor's note: If you know a veteran who has passed away, email their information to jonathan.stinson@theredstonerocket.com to be included in the next Final Salute.



File photo

Richard Crimes served as historian for Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1067 of Huntsville.

Tell us about ...

By **SKIP VAUGHN**

Rocket editor

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Your hometown.

"I'm from Cleveland, Ohio," Jerry Hazlitt, operations assistant for MWR Post Restaurant Fund, said. "I was 8 when we moved down here. I remember how it used to snow every winter. I remember spending a lot of time downtown and on Lake Erie. I still have family in Cleveland. I have three sisters and one brother, which I'm the youngest. The majority of my family still resides in Cleveland, Ohio. I'm a Cavaliers fan even though they're not winning right now, and an Ohio State Buckeyes fan."

Hazlitt, 32, has lived in Alabama since 1999. The Huntsville resident has worked at Redstone 10 years. He has a son, Kyrie, 5. Hazlitt enjoys running, playing basketball, drawing and photography. He roots for the Ohio State Buckeyes and the New Orleans Saints.

"I've been in food service 15 years. We want to make sure people are happy with it," he said.



Jerry Hazlitt

Soldier/civilian/family readiness briefs

By Army News Service and Defense Department websites

Contract award announcements

Lockheed Martin Corp., Orlando, Florida, was awarded a \$138,916,495 cost-plus-fixed-fee other transaction agreement for federation, testing and user operational assessments of the Spike non-line-of-sight missile system. Bids were solicited via the Internet with one received. Work will be performed in Orlando and Haifa, Israel, with an estimated completion date of Jan. 30, 2025. Fiscal 2021 aircraft procurement, Army funds in the amount of \$25,048,867 were obligated at the time of the award. Army Contracting Command, Redstone Arsenal, is the contracting activity.

Qualis Corp., Huntsville, was awarded a \$28,565,478 modification to contract W91260-21-F-5006 for advisory and assistant services for training. Work locations and funding will be determined with each order, with an estimated completion date of Feb. 28, 2026. Army Contracting Command, Redstone Arsenal, is the contracting activity.

Amentum Services Inc., Germantown, Maryland, was awarded a \$7,932,336 modification to contract W58RGZ-17-C-0011 for logistics support for fixed-wing fleets. Work will be performed in Germantown with an estimated completion date of May 31. Fiscal 2022 research, development, test, and evaluation, Army funds and operation and maintenance, Army funds in the amount of \$7,932,336 were obligated at the time of the award. Army Contracting Command, Redstone Arsenal, is the contracting activity.

Army outlines climate change strategy

WASHINGTON – Producing a fleet of field purpose-built, hybrid-drive tactical vehicles by 2035 and providing 100% carbon pollution-free electricity at Army installations by 2030 are among the goals outlined by the Army's first Climate Strategy as the service adapts to the effects of changing weather.

Additionally, melting Arctic ice has opened new trade routes in the northern hemi-

sphere while increasing great power competition for natural resources, said Paul Farnan, acting assistant secretary of the Army for installations, energy and environment.

Extreme weather and natural disasters pose a looming danger to national security and Army installations. Changing rain and snow patterns threaten water supplies.

"We recognize that climate change is a threat to U.S. national security and the well-being of the American people," Farnan said. "But beyond that broader threat, it's also already affecting our Soldiers in their everyday lives where we have to operate."

The Army introduced the new strategy as the service looks to bolster its installations against those dangers as well as reduce consumption of electricity and natural resources.

By reducing fuel requirements, electric and hybrid vehicles will help boost energy efficiency, Farnan said.

"We're going to increase the efficiency of the force," he said. "We can reduce the amount of fuel required for our vehicles systems. And that's less logistical power lines that we have to supply our forces. Which means greater on-station time for the combat vehicles (and) less combat forces are being pulled off the frontlines to protect these resupply lines."

Farnan acknowledged that the service will face challenges in developing the capability to recharge electric combat vehicles in austere environments by 2050, which is a key objective stated in the strategy. The service has also been researching hybrid vehicle propulsion and power generation systems to fully incorporate the capabilities into its fleet.

The Army expects the Electric Light Reconnaissance Vehicle's first prototype to enter testing in September 2023. The service also plans to field an all-electric, non-tactical vehicle fleet by 2035 and will explore using hybrid vehicles if supplies of electric vehicles do not meet requirements.

Army leaders hope that in turn the efforts will boost Soldier and installation readiness and effectively build a multi-domain, sustainable land force.

Military

Rifles delivery bolsters Senegal armed forces

By TIM HANSON

Security Assistance Command Public Affairs

The Security Assistance Command's delivery of the latest tranche of 1,250 M4A1 rifles arrived in Dakar, Senegal Jan. 21, providing partner capacity for counterterrorism efforts.

The shipment of weapons is part of a foreign military sales effort that will include up to 5,000 M4A1 rifles and accessories expected over the next couple of years.

The Senegal armed forces are upgrading their small arms and light weapons as part of a broader modernization effort. The first phase is replacing its current M16A1s with M4s.

The president of Senegal, chief of defense staff and Gendarmerie commander have all expressed a preference for U.S. manufactured weapons.

"This (delivery) will be physical proof of our reputation as a reliable partner who is responsive to their needs," said a representative from the Office of Defense Cooperation in Senegal.

Allies and partners are a top priority for both the Department of Defense and Army. This sale helps build partner capacity by improving Senegal's capability to deter threats through greater interoperability.

Senegal's budgeting process does not allow for large procurements, so they have been purchasing the acquisitions with Senegalese national funds in small tranches and have been willing to pay for rapid delivery.

According to a Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command Security Assistance Management Directorate official, "the M4A1s are one of our high demand commodities and buying more to support urgent requests will be a good strategic decision."

Deliveries, however, can be a long and complicated process due to the many touch points between DOD, the defense industrial base, manufacturers, global logistics, country teams, partner requirements and various timelines.

One way USASAC is able to support urgent or timely requests is through Special Defense Acquisition Funds. SDAF is a program where the Army security assistance enterprise can project FMS requirements and obtain funding to buy those items ahead of an official request from a partner nation.

"Another really cool aspect of using



The delivery of 1,250 M4A1 rifles arrived in Dakar, Senegal Jan. 21. The shipment of weapons is part of a foreign military sales case that will include up to 5,000 M4A1 rifles and accessories expected over the next couple years. The Senegal armed forces are replacing their current M16A1s with the M4s in a modernization effort to upgrade their small arms and light weapons.

Courtesy photo

SDAF, is you can combine demand signals from multiple FMS customers, and ultimately save money by ordering in a large quantity, which in turn lowers the price per item," AFRICOM forward Country Program Manager Stefanie Adkins said.

Using SDAF stocks or other means to improve acquisition and delivery times have bolstered a key partner aligned with

shared objectives in the region.

"In this situation, what TACOM is really doing a great job of is, they are anticipating the partner's requirement and ensuring it can be met quickly when they are prepared to purchase additional stock," Adkins said.

While delivery is a critical case milestone, under USASAC's Total Package Approach, the post-delivery training

and follow-up sustainment support are equally important considerations to ensure the customer can operate and sustain their equipment.

USASAC's M4A1 rifle delivery to Senegal is an example of the strategic effects achieved through small FMS cases, with the ability to build trust and create long-term partnerships that help ensure a stable regional capability.

From small-town product to engineering role model

By **KATIE DAVIS SKELLEY**

DEVCOM Aviation & Missile Center

Public Affairs

Perseverance, patience and persistence.

Those qualities have guided Christine Dedrick all through her life, from growing up on a farm in rural Alabama to her career with the Combat Capabilities Development Command Aviation & Missile Center.

And they have paid in dividends. Dedrick was recognized Saturday at the Black Engineer of the Year Awards as the winner of the BEYA Outstanding Technical Contribution in Government award.

Dedrick said she learned early to tackle challenges head on and make the most of opportunities. Going from a small high school with a graduating class of 79 to a flagship university was a culture shock for the Greensboro native.

“My first class at Alabama was in a big auditorium – we probably had more than 79 students in that biology class!” she said with a laugh.

Dedrick said there were not any black



Christine Dedrick

female engineers to serve as role models in her small town but “my math teacher in high school was the person that who

See Model on page 7

Model

Continued from page 6

said, ‘Oh, I think you would make a great engineer.’”

But arriving at the University of Alabama, Detrick realized that she was initially at a disadvantage compared to fellow students from larger schools with more diverse curriculum. That didn’t deter her.

“Most high schools have a calculus class but we didn’t, our highest math class was differential equations,” she said. “But you don’t know what you don’t know until you get into that situation. I quickly learned not to be shy in getting the extra help I needed from my teachers and tutors at UA.”

After graduation, Detrick moved to be closer to her sister, a journalist in Huntsville, and joined the DEVCOM AvMC team. She is matrixed to the Program Executive Office for Intelligence Electronic Warfare & Sensors at the Aircraft Survivability Equipment Program. She works on the next generation lightweight, laser-based infrared countermeasure system that will be used to defeat current and emerging missile threats that target rotary-wing, tilt-rotor and small fixed-wing aircraft. Simply put, she works to protect the aircraft that keep Soldiers safe.

When not at work, Detrick enjoys spending time with her family and volunteering with her sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. Detrick also serves as a mentor for young women interested in their own STEM careers, being the role model that she herself needed growing up.

Detrick said it was a surprise to learn she had won the BEYA award. But she started to realize something was up when her co-workers were suspiciously present for a briefing she had prepared for her boss.

“To me, it was a shock and such an honor,” Detrick said. “I am really thrilled. I have received awards before, but this one really means a lot to me because it’s focused on STEM, specifically. And that’s what I’ve done all of my life – guide people to math and science. That is something that’s been so close to my heart. It can really open doors to so many things and I love that. Just look at me!”

Hiring fair helps build aviation, missile enterprise

By KERENSA HOUSTON

Aviation and Missile Command Public Affairs

For more than three decades, BEYA – Black Engineer of the Year Award and Becoming Everything You Are – has played a significant role in recruiting minorities into STEM careers.

But it's so much more than that.

While the Aviation and Missile Command's involvement in the conference is relatively new, the military is one of BEYA's largest science, technology, engineering and math employers.

The BEYA STEM Conference brings together professionals and students from all over the country for three days each year to share experiences, career information and to network. And though it's marketed as a recruiting event for minorities interested in STEM careers, ethnicity does not exclude anyone. It is open to existing Department of Defense employees, high school graduates, students enrolled in college or technical/vocational programs, recent graduates, 30% disabled veterans and those who are reinstatement-eligible. There are also positions available in non-STEM disciplines.

At the 2021 conference, AMCOM made 15 tentative job offers and ultimately hired 10 people.

“I never considered a job as a government civilian for myself – mainly because I assumed it was unattainable. When the opportunity presented itself, I was eager to take advantage.”

Kiran Zeedar

AMCOM Safety Office

Kiran Zeedar was one of them.

“I am half Indian,” she said. “My (maternal) grandparents emigrated from India at the ages of 16 and 21 to the USA to build a life for themselves and (their) kids.”

While she was in her final semester of college last year, a family friend told Zeedar about the BEYA conference.

“I never considered a job as a government civilian for myself – mainly because I assumed it was unattainable,” Zeedar, a Huntsville/Madison native, said. “When the opportunity presented itself, I was eager to take advantage.”

After submitting her resume, she got a call from one of the division chiefs in the AMCOM Safety Office.

“I did not have a specific position in mind when applying,” Zeedar said. “However, I was ecstatic when learning what my position would be during the phone interview. I

have a (bachelor's degree) in materials engineering from Auburn University and I was excited to learn that I would be able to apply my educational knowledge in this position with AMCOM Safety.”

Zeedar has been a safety engineer in the AMCOM Safety Office Aviation Division for about eight months and is still trying to find her niche.

“Our office ensures the safety of the Soldiers when using systems provided to them in the field,” she explained. “I always enjoyed and excelled at science and math throughout my childhood.”

Though she wasn't exactly sure what she wanted to be professionally, Zeedar said she knew she wanted to help people. In her newfound profession, she's helping Soldiers and doing what she said she loves.

“I simply want to help others and helping those that risk their lives for our freedom is

the most humbling and gratifying job I can imagine,” she said.

Zeedar's co-workers and the professional environment have added more enjoyment to her job. She's looking forward to what her professional future holds.

“My career goals are to gain new experiences and discover what I'm best at,” she said. “In my position, I have exposure to multiple duties/responsibilities and freedom to explore which of those fits me best.”

The 36th BEYA STEM Global Competitiveness Conference, Feb. 17-19, included in-person awards and mentoring programs at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C.

The Army Materiel Command held a virtual hiring event Feb. 18-19 in hopes of filling more than 200 jobs – including nearly 30 positions at AMCOM.

“We will be able to showcase AMCOM job opportunities to high school and college students pursuing STEM careers. Participation is critical – this STEM event is great for direct recruiting and attracting STEM professionals to the Army and the AMCOM,” Haley Ferguson, AMCOM G-1 Operations and Strategic Recruitment Division chief, said. “Participation will assist in achieving our diversity and inclusion goals.”

COVID frequently asked questions and answers

1. What is considered “close contact”?

Answer: Close contact is defined as someone who was within 6 feet of a person who has contracted COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Starting from two days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated and irrespective of whether the person with COVID-19, or the contact of such a person was wearing a face covering or mask or respiratory personal protective equipment. Not applicable to health care workers when following appropriate infection control precautions.

Reference: Force Health Protection Guidance (Supplement 15) Revision 3-Department of Defense Guidance for Coronavirus Disease 2019 Laboratory Testing Services.

2. If I am in “close contact” with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, do I also have to quarantine?

Answer: Asymptomatic personnel with potential exposure to COVID-19 based on close contact who: (1) are unvaccinated; or (2) have not received a recommended COVID-19 booster dose when eligible will remain out of the workplace for five calendar days. Regardless of vaccination status, a symptomatic person with potential exposure to COVID-19 based on close contact must wear a mask in the workplace for 10 calendar days from the date of their last close contact (i.e., day zero) with someone with COVID-19, even if mask wearing is not otherwise required by DOD guidance.

Reference: Force Health Protection Guidance (Supplement 18) Revision 1-Department of Defense Guidance for Protecting All Personnel in Department of Defense Workplaces During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic.

3. If I am not fully vaccinated, do I have to test to enter a DOD facility?

Answer: Yes, DOD civilian employees who are not fully vaccinated must comply with all DOD requirements for individuals who are not fully vaccinated, including those requirements related to masking, physical distancing, and travel. Weekly COVID-19 testing is required for those DOD civilian employees who are not fully vaccinated, including those who have medical or religious exemptions. DOD civilian employees who telework or work remotely on a full-time basis are not subject to weekly testing but must provide a negative result from a test performed within the prior 72 hours for entry into a DOD facility. DOD contractor personnel and official visitors must attest to being fully vaccinated and, if not fully vaccinated, present the results of a recent negative COVID-19 test as a condition of physical access to DOD buildings and DOD-leased spaces in non-DOD buildings in which official DOD business takes place.

Reference: Force Health Protection Guidance (Supplement 23) Revision 3-Department of Defense Guidance for Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination Attestation, Screening Testing, and Vaccination Verification.

4. If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, am I protected by natural immunity, or do I still need to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Answer: You should get a COVID-19 vaccine even if you already had COVID-19. Getting sick with COVID-19 offers some protection from future illness with COVID-19, sometimes called “natural immunity.” The level of protection people get from having COVID-19 may vary depending on how mild or severe their illness was, the time since their infection, and their age. No currently available test can reliably determine if a person is protected from infection.

All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States are effective at preventing COVID-19. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine gives most people a high level of protection against COVID-19 even in people who have already been sick with COVID-19.

Emerging evidence shows that getting a COVID-19 vaccine after you recover from COVID-19 infection provides added protection to your immune system. One

study showed that, for people who already had COVID-19, those who do not get vaccinated after their recovery are more than two times as likely to get COVID-19 again than those who get fully vaccinated after their recovery.

People who were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma or people who have a history of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in adults or children (MIS-A or MIS-C) may need to wait a while after recovering before they can get vaccinated. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

Reference: Center for Disease Control.

5. Does the COVID-19 booster have to be from the same manufacturer as the initial vaccine?

Answer: If you received...

Pfizer-BioNTech

Who should get a booster: Everyone 12 years and older

When to get a booster: At least five months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series

Which booster can you get: Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most* situations. Teens 12–17 years old may only get a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster

*Although mRNA vaccines are preferred, J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine may be considered in some situations.

Moderna

Who should get a booster: Adults 18 years and older

When to get a booster: At least five months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series

Which booster can you get: Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most* situations.

*Although mRNA vaccines are preferred, J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine may be considered in some situations.

Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen

Who should get a booster: Adults 18 years and older

When to get a booster: At least two months after receiving your J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccination

Which booster can you get: Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most situations.

Reference: Centers for Disease Control.

6. If I’m unvaccinated and test positive for COVID-19, do I need to continue to test to enter DOD facilities?

Answer: Employees who have recovered from a recent COVID-19 infection are exempt from screening testing for 90 days following their documented date of recovery from a medical provider.

Reference: In accordance with HQDA EXORD 225-21 COVID-19 Steady State Operations FRAGO 10.

7. What is the requirement for personnel attending meetings in a government owned/leased/occupied facility?

Answer: Meeting request packets for indoor and outdoor meetings, events, and conferences, that are sponsored by the Army with more than 50 participants must be submitted thru the Vice Director of the Army Staff (vdas) for the senior official performing the duties of the undersecretary of the Army.

Reference: In accordance with HQDA EXORD 225-21 COVID-19 Steady State Operations FRAGO 12.

Retired trailblazer continues to make difference

By **BUD McLAUGHLIN**

Staff writer

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Though she is retired from a rewarding career with the Missile Command, Alfreda Warner Green is not resting.

"After focusing on Soldiers for 38 years (34 years in government and four as contract support), I am channeling my focus to supporting my community and nation," she said.

Green believes she was the first GS-15 African American woman assigned as a logistics director/product support manager at the Missile Command. Her career also led her to be the first female African American to win the prestigious Army Acquisition Executive's Excellence in Leadership award, "Logistician of the Year," in 2016, she said. Green retired in December 2017 as an AMCOM matrix employee at the Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space.

A graduate of Alabama State University, Green began her government career as a GS-5 intern and advanced to the GS-15 supervisory level before retir-

ing. Green said she has performed logistics functions as an inventory manager, weapons systems coordinator, Reset integrator, deputy director, prior to being promoted to logistics director/product support manager.

"I managed up to 65 personnel and a budget of up to \$50 million," Green said.

She performed work on the Chaparral, Nike Hercules, Patriot, Hellfire, JAGM, APKWS and TOW missile systems.

"I was responsible for inventory management, provisioning, procurement, contract actions and engineering to ensure proper logistics actions were conducted throughout the weapon system's life cycle," Green said.

A career highlight was establishing the Reset Program effort during the Iraq conflict.

"This was challenging because it was critical time to get Soldiers the parts they needed to deploy expeditiously," Green said.

Originally, there was no budget for execution of Reset, she said. "Under the direction of Mr. Michael Hartwell, numerous coordination with general officers up to HQDA levels was conducted.

"After many briefings, we received necessary funding to support each applicable AMCOM weapon missile system."

Green was assigned to PEO Missiles and Space in 2008 and her workload included "acquisition cradle to grave efforts."

"This assignment enabled me to assist the product manager in making critical decisions necessary to ensure products would be supportable," she said.

Green said while she enjoyed her career and gained satisfaction for her work, it's time to turn her attention to other interests.

A relative of Coretta Scott King, Green said she has civil rights embedded in her heart and mind.

"When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something, you have to do something," she said, quoting late U.S. Rep. John Lewis. "I have become actively engaged in social action with my sorority, Huntsville Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Inc.

"This is how I will continue to make a difference in the world."



Courtesy photo

Alfreda Warner Green retired from supporting Soldiers to supporting her community.

Medal of Honor recipient made ultimate sacrifice

By JOE LACDAN

Army News Service

WASHINGTON – On a fall morning in 2005, Kasinal Cashe-White received an inconspicuous phone call from the Army.

She learned that her brother, Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe, had suffered injuries during his deployment in Iraq. Aware of her baby brother's stubbornness and knack for surviving injuries, she didn't think much of the news. Instead of pressing his unit for more information, she drove to her job in Florida where she worked as a nurse.

Kasinal felt confident her little brother could survive anything and would find his way back home in good health. Few could blame her for thinking so.

How could she have known that thousands of miles away, in the sandstorms of Iraq, her brother had done the unthinkable? How could she have imagined that at that very moment, Al had been in the biggest fight for his life?

Al had already been on missions during the Gulf War and then returned to the Middle East again for the 2003 invasion of Iraq. "We all always felt like Al came home," she said. Kasinal had always taken pride in her brother's choice to join the military. Since enlisting in July 1989, he'd become an accomplished infantryman. Sixteen years later, Al had neared the end of his fifth Army deployment.

Later that day, she received a second call from a Soldier with the 3rd Infantry Division — her brother's unit. She knew then Al hadn't suffered a minor wound.

"We're going to take care of him," the Soldier told her. "We've got this." Kasinal could hear the Soldier's voice trembling and her heart sank. She knew something had gone terribly wrong.

During a security patrol in Iraq, Oct. 17, 2005, Al did what few could fathom.

He walked through the flames of a burning Bradley Fighting Vehicle, his uniform singed by the roaring fire, to rescue the fellow Soldiers he cared for deeply.

Even as flames from the burning vehicle seared his skin, he ignored his own pain so that he could, again and again, pull his fellow Soldiers to safety. The burns he suffered as a result of those actions covered 70% of his body.

Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe became the first African American Medal of Honor recipient since the Vietnam War era on Dec. 16, 2021. He was posthumously awarded the Medal from President Joe Biden. His widow, Tamara, accepted the



Courtesy photos

His peers said that Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe, a former drill sergeant, dedicated his career to helping fellow Soldiers. It was his concern for his teammates that drove him to make the ultimate sacrifice on Oct. 20, 2005 in Iraq. The Soldier pulled out six Soldiers and an Iraqi translator from a burning Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

award on his behalf.

An air evacuation team later flew Al to Germany and eventually to Brooks Medical Center in San Antonio. Despite the many surgeries and the harrowing efforts of Army medical teams there, Al succumbed to the injuries he had suffered in Iraq.

The Army initially awarded Al the Silver Star for his actions in Iraq. But after 15 years of petitioning and garnering the support of politicians and fellow Soldiers, that award was upgraded, and in December 2021 the president of the United States awarded Al the Medal of Honor.

Kasinal said she wish she had spent more time with her brother during his years in the Army.

"Sometimes," she said, her voice wavering. "The guilt of taking him for granted is almost too much to bear."

Cashe, the youngest of 10 children, was born in 1970 just outside Orlando, Florida.

One year later, the Walt Disney Company opened its largest theme park in Orlando: Walt Disney World, an amalgam of pop culture and nostalgia fused into one beaming resort of colorful attractions and rides. The park turned the Orlando region into one of the world's largest tourist destinations.

The resort, and the wealth it brought, contrasted greatly with the neighborhood where Cashe and his nine siblings grew up in near poverty. It was his older sisters and brothers who were largely responsible for Cashe's upbringing, and they said they saw him as both headstrong and adventurous.

"He'd jump off a building just to see if he could do it," Kasinal said.

The care he received at home was something he'd eventually replicate with the Soldiers who served with him during his 16 years in the Army.

Those who knew Cashe said his actions that fall night in 2005 in Iraq did not surprise them. They knew him to be a "Soldier's Soldier," one who would put his reputation and job on the line for a teammate.

Col. Jimmy Hathaway, Cashe's company commander in 2005, recalled one such instance when a troubled Soldier was on the brink of receiving an Article 15 and a possible discharge. A determined Cashe helped save the young Soldier's career.

Cashe lobbied for the Soldier, Hathaway recalled, promising the chain of command that the Soldier had potential and could be valuable to the unit.

"He said 'Take his time, but don't take his money,'" Hathaway recalled. "He saw the good in everyone."

That Soldier went on to serve another four years, Hathaway said, ultimately earning high marks from his peers.

As a one-time drill sergeant, Cashe knew how to build civilians into Soldiers. In his years training recruits at Fort Benning, Georgia, he also developed an understanding of what it took to foster camaraderie in his platoon, and what it meant for Soldiers to place their lives in each other's hands.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Chris McKenzie said Cashe was obsessed with building a formidable platoon before a deployment.

"He would bug the crap out of me about pulling this guy or that guy," said McKenzie, Cashe's first sergeant.

Noncommissioned officers must also know their Soldiers to gain better trust on the battlefield, and Cashe took that seriously, those who knew him said. He made it a point to know his Soldiers off duty and always asked what they'd be doing on the weekends.

"He knew their background, he knew their strengths, and he knew their weaknesses," said Lt. Col. Leon Matthias, Cashe's platoon leader during the 2005 deployment. "He knew how to motivate them and get the best out of them."

Matthias said he remains in awe of what he witnessed in the early morning hours of Oct. 17, 2005.

At the time, 2nd Lt. Matthias and Cashe led 1st Platoon in Alpha Company, 1-15th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division near the Iraqi town of Ad Duluiya, northeast of Balad near the banks of the Tigris.

On that October night, as blistering winds blew desert sand sideways, their

two-vehicle Bradley Fighting Vehicle patrol would embark on what should have been a typical five to six-mile sweep of a supply route from Forward Operating Base McKenzie through Ad Duluiya. The patrol's mission: clear the roadway for the safe passage of a convoy making a supply run later that day.

During the mission, a sandstorm blanketed the combat patrol team and turned what should have been a short patrol into a slow deliberate route clearance. The Bradley drivers, gunners and tank commanders could barely see the road and the vehicle in front of them.

It wasn't the first time Cashe and his teammates had patrolled the route or other supply routes outside of FOB McKenzie. But since the time they'd first started patrolling those routes, insurgents had attacked the softer targets of convoys with small arms fire or improvised explosive devices.

In September 2005, for instance, a convoy run by a defense contractor made a wrong turn and insurgents ambushed the convoy, blowing up several of the vehicles and killing several civilians. The fate of that convoy, escorted by another Army unit, weighed heavily upon the Soldiers' minds.

Soldiers on the Oct. 17 mission also had to contend with other factors. The Soldiers of the 1-15th Infantry Battalion faced the fact that Air Medical Evacuation had degraded due to the sandstorm passing through the area.

The Soldiers also had to overcome the challenge of getting into and out of the city, as they had few exit points. This allowed insurgents to effectively emplace IEDs on the roads between FOB McKenzie and the town of Ad Duluiya.

"We were in a pretty precarious position of how do we secure (the logistical convoy?)" Hathaway said. "And then how in turn do we take care of ourselves? So if we do get hit, how would we get guys to the hospital? We went through all these discussions."

To make matters worse, two of four Bradley Fighting Vehicles were pulled from the patrol due to maintenance issues right as the unit prepared to go outside the wire. Unit leaders quickly huddled to assess and mitigate the risk. The Soldiers cross loaded the Bradleys and the patrol departed a little after midnight on Oct. 17.

A slight grin crept over Cashe's face. Cashe knew what his team had to do.

"We've got to protect those people," Hathaway recalled Cashe saying. "We've got to go. It's our job."

Matthias, who had recently returned

See Medal on page 16

Medal

Continued from page 15

to the unit from mid-tour leave, parked his lead BFV at the test fire pit outside the gate to test fire the BFV machine gun and his M4 rifle. Cashe, knowing his platoon leader was still adjusting to the recent time zone change, moved his BFV into the lead position in their order of march.

“Hey sir,” Cashe said to Matthias, his platoon leader as he drove around his vehicle. “I’ve got point tonight.”

Matthias could only shake his head as Cashe passed his vehicle and moved through FOB Mackenzie’s entry control point. Those would be the last words exchanged between the two Soldiers.

During the mission, Soldiers had to depend on the BFV’s thermal vision and their night vision goggles to see the roadway, and they drove at speeds no greater than 10 miles an hour.

“The dust storm moving through was intense,” Matthias said.

Moving the convoy through the darkened desert, the Soldiers scanned the road for IEDs and obstacles. About 10 minutes into the trip, Matthias saw a tremendous flash of light envelop the lead vehicle, blinding his vision. He felt the kick of an IED and quickly radioed “IED contact” to Alpha Company while trying to communicate with Cashe’s vehicle.

Enemy forces then attacked the convoy with a flurry of small arms fire. Matthias directed his gunner to suppress enemy fire on both sides of the road.

Matthias had desperately tried to make contact with Cashe’s vehicle as the fire in and around Cashe’s vehicle grew in intensity.

Then Matthias saw it.

A silhouette of two Soldiers emerged from the Bradley’s gunner and tank commander hatch and into the swirling sandstorm. He knew immediately it was Cashe and Connelly.

“I’ve only seen scenes like that in movies,” Matthias said.

The force of the blast had ripped open the vehicle’s fuel cell, creating a blazing inferno.

“We had been hit before,” said retired 1st Sgt. Peter Black, the 3rd platoon sergeant in Alpha Company at the time. “I just had never seen anything like this.”

The Bradley’s loading ramp remained shut because the unconscious driver could not lower it, trapping five Soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter inside. Cashe and a fellow Soldier rushed to the driver and pulled him out of the driver’s seat and onto the pavement.

Cashe moved toward the back of the Bradley and began his attempts to open the secondary oval troop door on the Bradley ramp. When the door was finally opened he assisted then-Staff Sgt. Douglas Dodge in exiting the Bradley.

“We’ve got to get the boys out,” Cashe said, as he moved Dodge to the side of the road with his uniform drenched in fuel, flames began to burn him as he reached into the Bradley but Cashe shrugged it aside. Cashe continued to pull one Soldier after another out of the vehicle until the flames too completely covered his own body.

As Matthias’ Bradley continued to fire upon the insurgents, he released his Soldiers to assist the burning Soldiers in extinguishing the flames. Cashe continued to move in and out of the burning Bradley to pull Staff Sgt. George Alexander, Sgt. Gary Mills, Sgt. Michael Robertson, Spc. Raymond Salerno and the Iraqi interpreter. All were alive except for the Iraqi interpreter who succumbed from his wounds on site.

“He does not know who he is pulling out because the fire is so intense,” Matthias said.

On every patrol, even when his team engaged in firefights with enemy forces, Cashe would check on every one of his troops, those who knew him said.

Cashe would take a level-headed approach to each mission and never dove headstrong into a firefight. Matthias said he would take a step back and assess probable scenarios and course of action.

That October night, as the Bradley burned and his fellow Soldiers lay trapped inside, Cashe did not hesitate, his teammates said.

“We never had to worry about not being safe,” said Charles Jones, an ex-Soldier who deployed with Cashe in 2005.

Cashe remained as the vehicle and his uniform continued to blaze. He didn’t accept treatment until he saw the medical team load the last injured Soldier.

“I saw a hero last night,” Air Force Maj. Mark Rasnake wrote in October 2005,

after he and an intensive care unit treated six burn victims on the morning of Oct. 17.

Rasnake said he learned of Cashe’s story, how he kept returning for his trapped men as his own body burned and how he refused help until the last man had been rescued.

Surgeons spent hours working on his wounds so that Cashe could be transported to the U.S. But Rasnake said the damage to Cashe’s lungs looked too severe.

All six Soldiers who survived the blast had massive burns. Cashe had suffered the most burns of all, Rasnake wrote. His uniform had melted onto his skin.

Three days later, on a hospital bed at Brooks Medical Center, Cashe turned to the nurses to utter his first words since regaining the ability to speak.

“How’re my boys doing?” the medical staff would later recall Al saying.

With his own life in limbo and his body completely scarred, Cashe’s first thoughts laid with his Soldiers. Five of the six he rescued would eventually pass, succumbing to their injuries from that terrible night. Cashe himself would pass on days later on, Nov. 8, 2005.

As Kasinal recalled, she visited the hospital right after Cashe had been born. At the time, she was only 12 years old. In the hospital there she had seen her baby brother taking some of the first breaths of his new life.

At Brooks Army Medical Center’s burn treatment center, she sat with him in his final days of life. There she witnessed his last breath.

For years now, Cashe had been asking his big sister to visit him at one of his overseas posts. She’d always promised that she would, but she’d never found the time.

“I always told him, ‘OK next time,’” he said. “I didn’t get that next time.”

While not every Soldier survived the blast, each made it back the U.S. to receive treatment. The gravity of Cashe’s actions still echo today.

“To love someone so much that you would give your life for them,” Kasinal said, pausing, “that’s a heck of a tribute.”

Al’s bravery in Iraq would later capture national headlines. In the years that followed, Al’s family fought and campaigned for him to become the first African American Medal of Honor recipient since the Vietnam War.

On an unseasonably warm December afternoon in 2021, in the White House’s East Room, his family accepted the award they had sought for so long. Weeks earlier, the Defense Department announced that it had upgraded Al’s posthumous Silver Star to the Medal of Honor.

Al’s widow, Tamara, accepted the medal from President Joe Biden in a ceremony on Dec. 16.

Before Cashe-White made the trip to the nation’s capital to witness her brother’s widow accept the Medal of Honor, she first visited his grave near their childhood home in Oviedo, Florida.

A gray cobblestone bearing Al’s name sits on a bed of rocks, covered by a bouquet and American flags. Periodically, veterans set military coins upon the stones in tribute. For 16 years, Cashe-White has visited his grave.

“He did it out of pure love for his ‘boys,’” Kasinal told a television news reporter in Orlando.

A day after the White House ceremony, the Defense Department inducted Al, along with Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Celiz and Master Sgt. Earl Plumlee, into the Pentagon’s “Hall of Heroes” – a place that honors service members who have earned the Medal of Honor.

“We love him ... we miss him,” Cashe-White said during the Dec. 17 ceremony at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, a military installation adjacent to Arlington National Cemetery. “But this honor ... even though it took a while, we never lost the strength of the 3rd ID. They stood behind us.”

Cashe-White recently reflected on her brother’s sacrifice 16 years ago, before the scheduled Medal of Honor ceremony that honored him and two other Soldiers.

She recalled the years of lobbying, and the years of support she received from Lt. Gen. Gary Brito, Al’s one-time battalion commander, who now serves as the deputy chief of staff for Army personnel. It had been Brito who pulled together the affidavits and submission packets needed to move the Medal of Honor award forward.

“It’s like having the world on your back ... it has been an uphill battle,” she said. “Now it’s ‘ome full circle. It’s been a long hard fight.”

Members of the 3rd ID still approach Kasinal thanking her and to pay tribute to her fallen brother. She said she still receives phone calls and messages from the unit to this day.

“They never forgot him,” Kasinal said. “He’s gone but the memory’s there. The love has grown.”

Al left behind two children and his daughter, Alexis, attended the Medal of Honor ceremony in December.

DAU Corner

CONNECT Live!

Thursday, 02/24/2022
10:30 A.M. CST

<https://www.dau.edu/events>

CONNECT Live is where contracting professionals learn from each other. Ask questions, share best practices, discover valuable tools & resources, and so much more. Nothing is off limits. Best of all, it is a place where contracting professionals can connect with each other, and leverage our collective contracting knowledge.

COR Office Hours

Tuesday, 03/01/2022
10:45 A.M. CST

<https://www.dau.edu/events>

DAU hosts the virtual COR Office Hours every Tuesday starting at 11:45 a.m. ET for one hour. These live virtual office hours were created for the DoD COR community, which not only includes CORs, but also program managers, contract specialists, contracting officers and requiring activities who manage CORs. The idea is to connect people, ideas, resources and information in this community together.

Leading Acquisition Series: Using Empathy as a Leadership Superpower

Wednesday, 03/02/2022
11:30 A.M. CST

<https://www.dau.edu/events>

This presentation will cover the concept of empathy and provide a common definition from the perspective of a professional environment. It will also provide an understanding of why a nexus exists between empathy and how a leader behaves.

Let's Talk Agile Webinar: Defense Counterintelligence & Security Agency-Using Agile to Protect Our Nation's Critical Assets

Wednesday, 03/02/2022
12:00 P.M. CST

<https://www.dau.edu/events>

The Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) continues to drive digital transformation of personnel vetting and industrial security missions through the use of the DoD Adaptive Acquisition Framework, industry best practices, and a tenacious focus on the digital foundations for cloud services and data management.

Flight test leader receives engineering recognition

By JASON CUTSHAW

Space and Missile Defense Command Public Affairs

The Space and Missile Defense Command once again secures the high ground in technological leadership.

Rihana Williams, flight test lead for the SMDC Engineering and Test Directorate's Mission Execution and Test Resources Division, received a Black Engineer of the Year Award as a Modern-Day Technology Leader during the 36th annual BEYA science, technology, engineering and mathematics awards ceremony. She was recognized virtually during the award ceremony Feb. 18.

Williams is responsible for ensuring the successful test planning of representative scenarios, integration, and execution on console for flight tests involving the Navy Strategic Systems Programs, Army Rapid Capabilities and Critical Technologies Office, industry partners and U.S. test ranges.

"Being awarded always has an element of surprise," she said. "I do my job not with the mindset of 'if I do this, someone will award me,' but rather 'I'm doing this because I know it's one small piece in helping to protect our nation and that's an award in and of itself. It did give me a tiny bit of validation that people of color and diverse cultures have significant roles in the strength of our nation, now and in the future.'"

Williams is working as the flight test director for a set of joint and developmental flight experiments focused on hypersonic technology. She said the purpose of the campaigns are to mature and integrate incremental elements of the Army and Navy weapon systems for eventual fielding on an Army transporter erector launcher or a Navy platform.

She has previously worked in many different test director, oversight and planning roles with support spanning Army, Navy and Missile Defense Agency flight tests.

"The honor is incredible," Williams said. "There are hundreds of applicants across the United States that are considered. So, to think my efforts in technology stood out among the group, is not to be considered a small feat. I'm grateful to the Technical Center leadership for thinking enough of my accomplishments and contributions to the command to submit the package.

"I'm extremely grateful for my parents instilling in me a strong belief system and values that have been necessary to sustain me when the nights are long and the workload doesn't seem worth the fight. Their words to either run fast and stay in place, or run twice as fast as that and go places beyond imagination, resonate with me continually. I've chosen the latter and am flattered to be awarded for it."

Williams was nominated by SMDC for her role in the testing of the Army's hypersonic program, as well as being a role model in her community.

"We couldn't be more proud of Rihana," Mike Krause, director of the SMDC Technical Center Engineering and Test Directorate, said. "She continues to shine as a leader, an engineer and a role model for others to emulate. In her personal time, she supports a number of community organizations in increasing the awareness of STEM opportunities for women and minorities."

Besides being a forum to recognize outstanding engineers, BEYA STEM offers another opportunity to recruit STEM talent and add diversity to the workforce. Several SMDC senior leaders served as mentors during the virtual 2022 BEYA STEM Global Competitiveness Conference, Feb. 16-18.

SMDC was represented by Richard De Fatta, Space and Missile Defense Center of Excellence director; Thomas Webber, Technical Center director; Steve Pierce, chief technology officer; Neset Akozbek, senior research scientist; and Terry Carlson, command chief cyber strategist.

"This is SMDC's second year participating in the mentorship program," Priscilla Williams, SMDC Equal Employment Opportunity Directorate manager, said. "The Stars and Stripes Mentorship Program provides an opportunity for leaders in science, technology, engineering and mathematics to increase interest in, and passion for, STEM. Our SMDC leaders engaged with some of the best and brightest students



Courtesy photo

Rihana Williams, flight test lead, Mission Execution and Test Resources Division, Engineering and Test Directorate, Technical Center, Space and Missile Defense Command, virtually received a Black Engineer of the Year Award as a Modern-Day Technology Leader during the 36th annual BEYA science, technology, engineering and mathematics awards ceremony Feb. 18.

and recent graduates to educate, mentor and introduce them to SMDC's mission and career opportunities.

"This is also an opportunity to support SMDC and Department of the Army's objective to create and maintain a pipeline of STEM talent that reflects the face of the nation."

Take time to share with others, reflect, energize



Photo by Erin Elise

The Spiritual Resiliency Office is on the first floor of Garrison headquarters building 4488.

Spiritual Resiliency Office open at the Garrison

By REBECCA SALLEE

Staff writer

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The religious education director of Bicentennial Chapel had an idea last fall that he said was created by a concern about stress in the workforce.

Frank Leon, who has held his position in the Army for 19 years, including the last two at Redstone Arsenal, noticed an increase of anxiety in people who crossed his path at Redstone, due in large part to issues relating to the pandemic.

“We needed a place to build their spiritual resilience,” Leon said, whose idea was to establish a place outside the chapel where anyone affiliated with the Arsenal could pop in without an appointment and get support.

Within two weeks of mentioning the idea to his “boss,” Garrison Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Charles Lahmon, the Garrison commander had approved the use of space in an office in the Garrison headquarters building 4488.

Three weeks later, the Spiritual Resiliency Office was open for “business.”

Since then, Leon and others who staff the SRO have had some 350 “engagements,” the word he uses to describe visitors to the office.

The SRO is not affiliated to any religious organization and offers brochures and resources targeted to a variety of faiths or no religious affiliation on such topics as depression, anger and emotions.

But the office is not religion-based, Leon said. “The purpose was not to make it a ‘little chapel.’”

People can come in and say hello. Sit and chat for a few minutes while enjoying a cup of coffee or tea or a light snack, budgeted from the chapel’s tithing fund. Or ponder the posted “thought of the day.”

Visitors can also receive a free hardback blank journal, which Leon believes is one of the best tools in the resiliency toolbox.

“I’ve given out over 200 and I just ordered 200 more,” he said.

The journals are embossed with the Garrison logo and the words “Spirit strong.” Leon encourages people to use the journals to write down meaningful passages, quotes or even song lyrics, something that is “meaningful to you,” he said.

Putting thoughts to paper “connects you to something higher than yourself,” he said.

To date, the most frequently recurring topics from visitors to the SRO are work issues, purpose, the future/retirement and COVID-19-related anxiety and stress.

“All conversations are confidential, Leon said.

Visitors with more personal issues such as marriage or family problems are referred to other resources on post, including Army Community Service, the Garrison chaplain, or the Military and Life Family Counseling Program.

But if you just want to blow off steam, the SRO is the place for you. Even those who are teleworking from home are invited to use the service telephonically, Leon said.

“We are a religious support office. Support is in our title. It’s about building relationships,” he said.

The SRO initiative supports the Commanders Readiness & Resilient Council and the Chaplain Corps’ commitment to investing in people, connecting them in spirit, and cultivating community.

The SRO is open five days a week from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is staffed by the Garrison chaplain, assistant chaplain, Leon and one of several religious affairs specialists, depending on the day.

It’s located at building 4488, room D-120. No appointment is necessary. For more information, call 876-5956.

Community

Veteran centenarian enjoys his vanilla ice cream

By **BUD McLAUGHLIN**

Staff writer

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To this day, “Big Daddy” still requires a hefty scoop of vanilla ice cream before bed.

And he is 100 years old.

Ivan Toney Sr. celebrated his centennial recently and he was served his favorite dessert by family and friends to mark the occasion at the Floyd E. “Tut” Fann Veterans Home. The Triana Historical Society sponsored a celebratory program that included presentations and gifts by Madison County Commissioner Violet Edwards, 1st Sgt. Larry Jackson of Lee High JROTC, Historic Huntsville Foundation, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc. Delta Omega Zeta Chapter, and the North Alabama Veterans and Fraternal Organizations Coalition.

Wrapping up the program was a drive-by parade featuring the Buffalo Soldiers 10th Cavalry Reenactment.

Toney served in the Army from 1944-46 where he was stationed in the Philippines and Western Atlantic and worked in chemical warfare. Upon his discharge, he returned home to Alabama and worked at Redstone Arsenal until retiring.

Born Feb. 3, 1922, in Madison County, Toney was reared on a farm by his grandparents, Alex and Eva Fullenwider. In 1940, he met Mattie Irving at New Hope School in Limestone County.

“They were sweethearts from the start,” said his grandson, Dr. Kerry Weaver.

On March 20, 1941, he married Mattie Irving. They were married for 77 years before she died in 2018. They had five children: Mahalia Toney Warner, Ivan Toney Jr., Harris Lee Toney, Catherine Toney and Pearlie Toney Jones.

“(He) was an avid hunter, fisherman and gardener,” Weaver said. “Upon his retirement, they would load the boat and go spend hours at ‘buckeye and the ditch,’ catching catfish and brims.”

Weaver said his grandfather was known throughout the community for his generosity.

“After ensuring that his family was taken care of, he would share with the community,” he said. Toney was the first person on his street to own a car and he

and his wife would provide the transportation for the neighborhood.

To his grandchildren, Toney was known for his signature “call” to the chickens and the hogs. “Their feeding time was one of their most memorable moments of growing up,” Warner said.

During the late fall, the entire family would gather to partake in the process of making sausage, cleaning chitterlings, and frying pork skins. It was indeed a family affair.

Sunday dinner was the highlight of the week at the Toney home, Warner said. And the tradition has carried on for more than 50 years. Dinner was prepared to perfection for his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and anyone who stopped by.

And, of course, when the meal was finished, everyone knew it was time to get “Big Daddy” his bowl of vanilla ice cream.

Photo courtesy of Kerry Warner

Ivan “Big Daddy” Toney Sr., 100, is a WWII veteran and retired from Redstone Arsenal.



1st Sgt. Larry Jackson of the Lee High School JROTC presents a gift to Ivan Toney Sr.

Photo courtesy of Kerry Warner

Housing residents survey deadline looms

By **BUD McLAUGHLIN**

Staff writer

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It's the final push. Or the final count-down. Or the home stretch. Or the 11th hour.

Whatever you want to call it, if any Red-stone Arsenal housing residents haven't turned in their surveys, it is time to do so.

The deadline to return them is Thursday. Residents who have not received a survey should email armyhousingsurvey@celassociates.com.

celassociates.com.

At this month's Facebook Town Hall meeting, Garrison Commander Col. Glenn Mellor stressed the importance of residents returning the survey.

"We take these surveys very seriously," he said.

As of last Thursday, 143 surveys have been returned out of 329 sent out Jan. 11 for 43.4%. Last year, 46.6% were returned.

Any and all feedback is welcome and encouraged. The surveys take about 10 minutes and the results are strictly confidential.

Don't Forget!

the Tenant Satisfaction Survey is Happening Now



Share your thoughts and feedback on how we are able to help create exceptional living experiences for you and your family!

The survey has been sent from ArmyHousingSurvey@celassociates.com to the email address on file.

If you did not receive a survey link, you can contact the above email address to receive a new survey link and passcode.

Love languages speak volumes in relationships

By **BUD McLAUGHLIN**

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The pandemic has caused changes upon changes in the way we interact – at work, at play; at the store and at home.

While the changes at play and the store mainly dealt with masking and social-distancing, the changes at work and home became intertwined.

Teleworking became the new norm. It had its advantages – saving money on gas and not eating out – and its disadvantages – things normally left at work were now home and people were “stuck” at home.

Couples’ relationships were strained; some, unfortunately, were shattered and unable to be repaired.

Answering this need, MWR and Army Community Service have offered virtual workshops and classes. A popular one was Feb. 14 – Valentine’s Day – “Five Love Languages Couples Enrichment Training.”

More than 100 people took part in the virtual class – a number that surprised Family Advocacy Program Manager Tim Rolfe.

“We never had that many people when we would do the classes face to face,” Rolfe said. “It speaks to the times we are in. Relationships have certainly been impacted.”

The class covered the five love languages – words of affirmation, quality of time, receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. “The Five Love Languages” is a book by Gary Chapman that was published in 1992.

Though it is 30 years old, the information holds up with those who have read the book and those who haven’t.

Rolfe said he received a comment from a woman who had read the book and said the class was “a really great reminder.”

“My husband and I are going to go back and review,” the woman said.

Rolfe said he brings his personal experience to the class, as well.

“Sharing my own experience ... drives the point home,” he said. “I hope the genuineness and sincerity came through.”

Rolfe shared an example of each of the “languages:”

Words of affirmation: Use words to

HOW TO SPEAK YOUR PARTNER'S LOVE LANGUAGE

WHICH LOVE LANGUAGE?	HOW TO COMMUNICATE	ACTIONS TO TAKE	THINGS TO AVOID
 WORDS OF AFFIRMATION	Encourage, affirm, appreciate and listen actively.	Send an unexpected note, text, or card.	Not recognizing or appreciating effort.
 PHYSICAL TOUCH	Non-verbal use of body language and touch to show love.	Hugs, kisses, cuddling.	Physical neglect or abuse.
 RECEIVING GIFTS	Thoughtfulness, make your Spouse a priority.	Give thoughtful gifts and gestures. Express gratitude when receiving gifts.	Unenthusiastic gift receiving, forgetting special occasions.
 QUALITY TIME	Uninterrupted and focused conversations. One on one time is important.	Create special moments, take walks and do small things with your partner.	Distractions when spending time together. Long time without one-on-one time.
 ACTS OF SERVICE	Let them know you are wanting to help, to lighten their load.	Make them breakfast or dinner. Go out of your way to help with chores.	Lacking follow-through on small and large tasks.

See Love on page 27

Motorcycle riding season rolling up the highway

By REBECCA SALLEE

Staff writer

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Spring is just around the corner and for many motorcyclists, it marks the opening season for pleasure riding.

But before you hit the road on your motorized two-wheeler, experts have some suggestions to make your rides safe.

Charlie Carter, Garrison safety specialist, is in charge of motorcycle training on post, but he is also a leisure rider himself.

Scheduled maintenance including changes in the bike's oil and other fluids is critical, Carter said, adding that if it has been in storage for the winter, he has additional tips.

"If the motorcycle has been sitting for a while, you should add Stabil, a fuel additive, to help stabilize the fuel so it doesn't coagulate," he said.

It's also important to check tire pressure and tire wear. Check for "flat spots" on tires and replace them, if necessary.

Carter keeps his motorcycle on a stand during the winter for tire preservation, and also uses a battery "trickle" to keep it constantly slow-charged.

Even through the winter, when he doesn't yet ride, Carter said he starts his motorcycle once a week to keep the engine purring.

Motorcycle riders who bring their bikes to the Arsenal are reminded of the following specific rules and regulations:

Always have proof of registration and insurance and your motorcycle license as these things can be "spot-checked" at any time.

Wear a helmet that has been approved by the Department of Transportation.

Wear a reflective vest.

Wear boots that cover the ankles.

Wear a jacket, preferably leather with long sleeves as a "protective skin."

Wear long pants.

Guards at the entrance check points may not check for all of the above, but the rules are enforced by Redstone police, Carter noted.

Generally, groups of motorcyclists don't ride on the Arsenal due to strictly enforced speed limits.

"The top speed limit on post is 50 miles an hour," Carter said.

Special event motorcycle rides, such as those honoring Vietnam veterans, must be approved in advance by the Garrison, he said.

Official motorcycle safety training is provided on Redstone but only to active-duty military.

When Carter teaches classes, awareness is at the top of his list.

"You must be seen, heard, and anticipate any and every situation," he said. "Cars are most likely looking for large vehicles when they look right and left."

Motorcycles appear as "a small speck" in the eye of a driver who may not see you and pull out in front of you.

Intersections and multiple-lane highways are especially high-risk places for motorcycles.

"We must stay alert to stay alive," he said.

Finally, Carter reminded drivers of larger vehicles to use extra care when driving around motorcycles.

"Motorcycles have no protection and can't stop quickly like a car," he said. "Do not tailgate, and give motorcycles proper space."

For more information on these tips or the motorcycle safety class, call Carter at 313-3294.



File photo by Eric Schultz

Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Juan Jimenez completes a motorcycle training course in December 2020.



File photo by Eric Schultz

Garrison Commander Col. Glenn Mellor rides his motorcycle during a training session in December 2020.

Love

Continued from page 26

incorporate a sense of affirmation; they must be sincere.

Quality time; Needs to be a designated point of each day for undivided attention. "Just being in the same room to-

gether does not equal quality time" and "God gave us two ears and one mouth - we should listen more."

Receiving gifts: The individual receives something tangible - "your partner is thinking of you."

Acts of service: Do things for your spouse, complete unexpected tasks for your partner. "Things are good in the

Rolfe home when I fold laundry."

Physical touch: For some adults, touch is essential and will speak much louder than words. Holding hands while taking a walk, a peck on the cheek.

While it's clear no relationship is perfect, Rolfe said a long-term couple recognizes the strengths and weaknesses of each other.

"Their relationship was not absent of challenges, they keep coming back to their foundation," he said. "Speaking your partner's love language will not change the past but may improve the future."

"You need to keep your partner's emotional love tank full. Make them feel secure in your love."

Green Beret sees combat near Cambodian border

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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February was a big month in the military career of Vietnam veteran Dick James.

He left San Jose State and joined the Army on Feb. 14, 1962, Valentine's Day, to get even with his girlfriend for breaking up with him.

"It didn't faze her one bit," the Clarkston, Washington, resident said laughing.

He left the Army on Feb. 13, 1968, as a staff sergeant after two enlistments, 1962-65 and 1965-68. This included a year and a half in Vietnam with the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne).

Before arriving in Vietnam on Feb. 13, 1966, James already had deployment experience. He spent seven months in Ethiopia in 1964 as the demolition specialist on a 12-man Special Forces team. Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie had requested Army Special Forces teams to help train and advise his soldiers for their border war with Somalia.

James was a 23-year-old sergeant when he arrived in the Mekong Delta in 1966. He started out as the assistant intelligence sergeant in Detachment A-412, Company D at the 12-man team's camp Cai Cai which was 2,000 yards from the Cambodian border. He was there from February-July 1966 which proved to be his most eventful five and a half months in Vietnam.

"That place was in the middle of Viet Cong territory," he said.

The troops were out in the open along the Cai Cai River. On his first 10 patrols, James was involved in at least one firefight. "On a couple of the patrols, I was actually involved in several firefights," he said.

A patrol April 3, 1966, stands out in his memory because he found himself fighting alone against the enemy. James and Sgt. 1st Class Noakes were the Special Forces advisers to the Vietnamese troops on this patrol. Their interpreter was a tall Vietnamese man named Sahn. They got close to the border in an open area. Noakes decided to set out alone to get near the border and see if he could gather intelligence. Suddenly the troops encountered heavy enemy rifle and machine gun fire. The interpreter, Sahn, and the Vietnamese troops ran and left James on his own with his radio.

"I became the main target. Several of the bullets were going between my feet. It was pretty scary," James said. "Noakes and I were able to meet up and make it back to camp in one piece."

James was later told that Sahn was a Viet Cong informant. An American, Capt. Donker, was in the observation tower at the camp when he was killed by a British 25-pounder artillery shell. The Americans surmised he was fired upon by the supposedly neutral Cambodian outpost.

From July 1966 to June 1967, James was assigned to



Courtesy photo

Dick James, of Clarkston, Wash., lost use of his left eye more than a decade ago. He served in Vietnam from 1966-67 with the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne).

Vietnam revisited Part 358 in series

Detachment A-422 at Vinh Gia. He served as the demolition sergeant, supply sergeant and heavy weapons sergeant for the team. He was the intelligence sergeant there from August-December 1966. He was the team's radio operator from November 1966 to June 1967. "We were short-handed all the time," he said laughing.

The Vinh Gia camp closed in June 1967 and was transferred to the Vietnamese. James went to Detachment B-42 in Chau Doc from June-August 1967 as the radio operator. He extended his yearlong Vietnam tour to 18 months.

"I saw sporadic action at Vinh Gia but not nearly as much as Cai Cai," James said. He was uninjured – "I always ducked at the right time," he said – but blood clots in his legs became a service-connected disability. He received the Bronze Star for his service.

Before leaving San Jose State to join the Army, James finished high school in Carmel, California. He quipped that he's still a senior at San Jose State. James used the GI Bill to go through flight school at Sierra Academy of Aeronautics in 1968-69 at Oakland International Airport. He graduated in 1969 with a commercial pilot's license with multiengine and instrument ratings. He also received a certified flight instructor license for both airplanes and instruments. He had almost 2,500



Courtesy photo

In 1965, Sgt. Dick James was a demolition sergeant in the 3rd Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, N.C. He was selected to march in the president's inaugural parade that year.

hours of flying time as a pilot. But the blood thinning medications, including Coumadin, he was prescribed for the blood clots in his legs cut short his flying career.

James was a mail carrier for 13 years for the U.S. Postal Service in San Jose before retiring in 1985 on disability. His 19 years of government service included his six years in the military.

He and his wife of nearly 40 years, Linda, have a combined three children – a daughter and two sons – and five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. His photography hobby turned into a 25-year career as a freelance commercial photographer. He has also written four published books about his military service. At 79 he is a life member of the Disabled American Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Special Forces Association. He has a 100% unemployable disability rating from Veterans Affairs for his blood clots in his legs and his back problems.

James shared his views on this nation's commemoration of 50 years since the Vietnam War.

"Well, I think it's long overdue and little-known," he said. "They don't seem to be trying to promote it."

Editor's note: This is the 358th in a series of articles about Vietnam veterans as the United States commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

Federal

NASA telescope sends first science image

By NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

NASA's Imaging X-Ray Polarimetry Explorer, which launched Dec. 9, has delivered its first imaging data since completing its monthlong commissioning phase.

All instruments are functioning well aboard the observatory, which is on a quest to study some of the most mysterious and extreme objects in the universe.

IXPE first focused its X-ray eyes on Cassiopeia A, an object consisting of the remains of a star that exploded in the 17th century. The shock waves from the explosion have swept up surrounding gas, heating it to high temperatures and accelerating cosmic ray particles to make a cloud that glows in X-ray light. Other telescopes have studied Cassiopeia A before, but IXPE will allow researchers to examine it in a new way.

In the new image, the saturation of the magenta color corresponds to the intensity of X-ray light observed by IXPE. It overlays high energy X-ray data, shown in blue, from NASA's Chandra X-Ray Observatory. Chandra and IXPE, with different kinds of detectors, capture different levels of angular resolution, or sharpness. An additional version of this image is available showing only IXPE data. These images contain IXPE data collected from Jan. 11 to 18.

After Chandra launched in 1999, its first image was also of Cassiopeia A. Chandra's X-ray imagery revealed, for the first time, that there is a compact object in the center of the supernova remnant, which may be a black hole or neutron star.

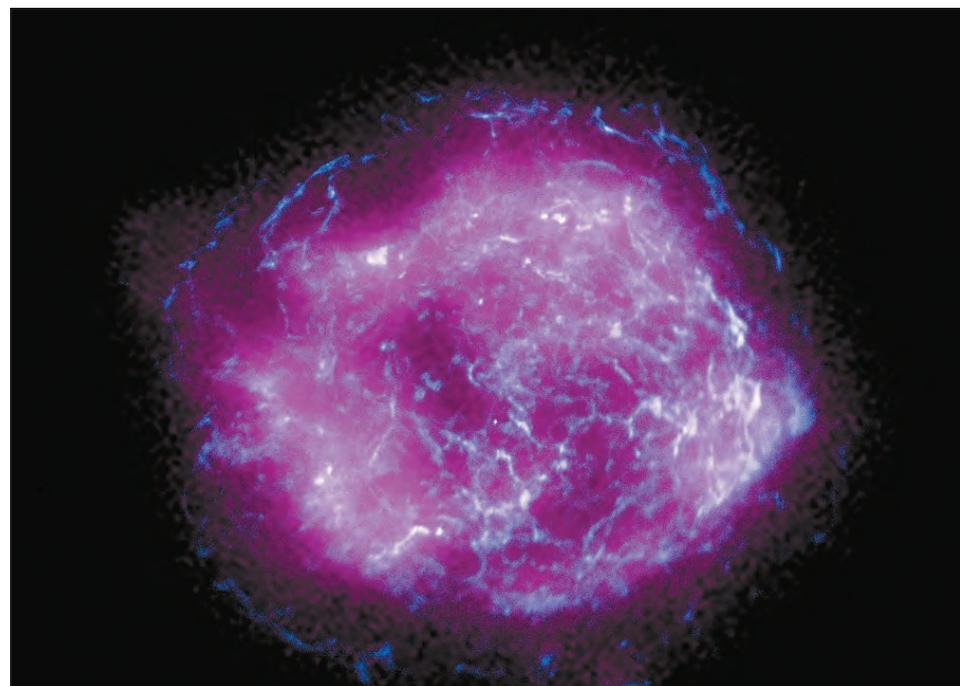
"The IXPE image of Cassiopeia A is as historic as the Chandra image of the same supernova remnant," said Martin Weisskopf, IXPE principal investigator based at Marshall Space Flight Center. "It demonstrates IXPE's potential to gain new, never-before-seen information about Cassiopeia A, which is under analysis right now."

A key measurement that scientists will make with IXPE is called polarization, a way of looking at how X-ray light is oriented as it travels through space. The polarization of light contains clues to the environment where the light originated. IXPE's instruments also measure the energy, the time of arrival, and the position in the sky of the X-rays from cosmic sources.

"The IXPE image of Cassiopeia A is bellissima, and we look forward to analyzing the polarimetry data to learn even more about this supernova remnant," said Paolo Soffitta, Italian principal investigator for IXPE at the National Institute of Astrophysics in Rome.

With polarization data from Cassiopeia A, IXPE will allow scientists to see, for the first time, how the amount of polarization varies across the supernova remnant, which is about 10 light-years in diameter. Researchers are currently working with the data to create the first X-ray polarization map of the object. This will reveal new clues about how X-rays are produced at Cassiopeia A.

"IXPE's future polarization images should unveil the mechanisms at the heart of



NASA photo

This image of the supernova Cassiopeia A combines some of the first X-ray data collected by IXPE, shown in magenta, with high-energy X-ray data from Chandra, in blue.

this famous cosmic accelerator," Roger Romani, an IXPE co-investigator at Stanford University, said. "To fill in some of those details, we've developed a way to make IXPE's measurements even more precise using machine learning techniques. We're looking forward to what we'll find as we analyze all the data."

IXPE launched on a Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida, and now orbits 370 miles above Earth's equator. The mission is a collaboration between NASA and the Italian Space Agency with partners and science collaborators in 12 countries. Ball Aerospace, headquartered in Broomfield, Colorado, manages spacecraft operations.

NASA photo



Space hero

Dan Massey is the latest team member from NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center to be named a Space Hero. Massey is the Huntsville Operations Support Center training lead for the Space Launch System Program. His efforts over the past three-plus years have led to the successful execution of the SLS Engineering Support Team standalone and enterprise joint integrated simulations, directly affecting the support team's readiness to assist in the upcoming Artemis I launch. Each week, the Exploration Systems Development and Space Operations mission directorates recognize Space 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.

Photo Booth

By Skip Vaughn



What is your favorite pastime?

"Jogging. I've been running since I started cross country in high school (at Hoover High). And I didn't run for a team in college. I was a coxswain on the crew team in college (at Auburn University). I try to run about three times a week because I love it. I love running." – **Amy Wasyluka, an attorney in AMCOM Legal**

Teams working toward Artemis I launch

By NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center

Work continues inside the Vehicle Assembly Building at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in preparation for the Artemis I wet dress rehearsal test, currently targeted for next month.

Teams have been installing the flight termination system on the rocket and working on the first of a two-part test of the system. For safety, all rockets are required to have a flight termination system that the Space Launch Delta 45 can use to terminate the flight if necessary. Once the rocket and spacecraft systems are verified during wet dress rehearsal testing, the 322-foot-tall rocket will roll back into the Vehicle Assembly Building for final inspections and checkouts, including the second part of the flight termination system test, ahead of returning to the pad for launch.

The team is also installing instrumentation on the twin solid rocket boosters

and core stage, as well as instrumentation needed for the wet dress rehearsal rollout. Artemis I is a flight test, and engineers will capture as much data as possible on the performance of all the systems that are part of the Space Launch System rocket and the Orion spacecraft as well as the Kennedy ground systems that support the vehicle during rollout, wet dress rehearsal, and launch. Not only will this be the first integrated flight for SLS and Orion, but it will be the first use of many new ground systems. Thousands of sensors and special instruments will monitor the rocket and spacecraft as they make the 4-mile journey to Launch Complex 39B next month. The team is also working to inspect and install thermal blankets on the core stage engine section.

Up next, the team plans to power up Orion as part of testing the flight termination system and then close the spacecraft's hatch after powering it down.



NASA photo by Cory Huston

Teams with NASA's Exploration Ground Systems and contractor Jacobs lower the Space Launch System core stage – the largest part of the rocket – onto the mobile launcher, in between the twin solid rocket boosters, inside High Bay 3 of Kennedy's Vehicle Assembly Building on June 12, 2021.

Sports

Senior softball players ready to play ball

By GREG WARNICK

Huntsville Senior Softball leagues

Brahan Spring Park fields 1 and 2 will soon be alive with the sounds of senior softball.

The Huntsville Rockets Senior League for players 55 and older, along with the Huntsville Recreation League for players 63 and older, have already started meeting and planning the season. In fact, with the recent nice weather, some players have already started coming out and taking some batting practice.

Last year was a year of change for the leagues. Both the Rockets and the Recreation League added teams with the Rockets fielding six teams and the Recreation League fielding five.

Chris Maggio, last year's Rockets director, and Scott Apgar, last year's Recreation League commissioner, attributed much of the growth to the Redstone Rocket's coverage of the leagues. For the first time, the Huntsville Rockets split their season into a spring season and a summer season and had a double elimination tournament for both seasons. For the April, May, and June spring season, the navy blue team had the record, but the royal blue won the tournament. The maroon team had the best record in the July, August and September summer season and also won the summer tournament.

The new Rockets director, Gary Wilkison, is an old hand at managing the league as he has been the Rockets director in previous years. This year the Rockets season will begin in April and last until mid-September with a double elimination tournament to follow.

The Recreation League's season last year began in April and lasted until early September. Although the Recreation League doesn't maintain records or standings, the red team dominated the first half of the season – primarily due to some Rockets players who had reached the age to qualify for the Recreation League. The second half of the season saw the blue, gray and purple teams play better and challenge the red team. Due to some injuries, the green team didn't win as many games as expected. Retired Brig. Gen. Bob Drolet, player/coach of the green team, noted that the green had the oldest roster and needed an influx of younger players to better compete. The Recreation League also hired umpires and scorekeepers last year – a change from previous years when players called and scored the games.

The Huntsville Senior Softball leagues are sponsored by the Huntsville/Madison County Senior Center, and both are recruiting players for the upcoming season. Practices will begin in March and league play begins in April. The Rockets and the Recreation League will play 30-35 games. For information, email Huntsville-srsoftball-info@googlegroups.com, or call Becky Rollston of the Huntsville/Madison County Senior Center at 880-7081.

Editor's note: Greg Warnick coaches the blue team in the Recreation League.



Royal blue's Jim "Hitman" Myers connects during a 21-15 win over the gray team in Rockets league action Sept. 2, 2021, on field 2 at Brahan Spring Park.

File photo by Skip Vaughn



6U Redstone Raptors outlast Northern

By **SKIP VAUGHN**

Rocket editor

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The second quarter made the difference for the 6-and-under Redstone Raptors.

Josiah Lee scored all four of his points in the second as the Raptors beat Northern 8-4 on Friday at the Youth Center. Redstone outscored the visitors 4-0 in the quarter on his two

Photo by Skip Vaughn

Josiah Lee brings the ball up court for the Raptors in their 8-4 win over Northern.

baskets for a 5-2 halftime lead.

“I feel good,” the shooting guard said. “I love basketball.”

Lee had eight rebounds and seven steals for the Raptors (8-3). Isaiah Jones and Christopher Scarborough scored two points apiece.

“Just a lot of hard work they put in,” Raptors coach Stacey Elliott said. “Just perseverance.”

Ayden Wilson had three points and five rebounds for Northern (5-2).

“They threw the ball away,” Northern coach AC Crutcher said of her team.

Super Bowl champion Rams built tough

At least the halftime show was memorable.

I was pulling for the underdog Cincinnati Bengals in the Super Bowl. They of course fell to the Los Angeles Rams 23-20 at SoFi Stadium, the Rams home.

This continued a disturbing trend for yours truly in championship games. I was pulling for Alabama to beat Georgia for the national championship because

I had predicted before the bowl games that the Crimson Tide would win this final matchup.

I've already conceded that my LA Lakers will not win the NBA championship. LeBron James' team is struggling this year.

The Super Bowl halftime show was classic with Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Kendrick Lamar, Mary J. Blige and Eminem.

The commercials during the game were good, too.

But the game was a downer. My son, Cole, and I were really pulling for the Bengals. We watched the game together at a local sports restaurant filled with enthusiastic fans and big-screen televisions.

I hope we'll have a major league baseball season, assuming the labor dispute will be resolved. I'm pulling for the At-

From the sidelines

By Skip Vaughn
Rocket editor

lanta Braves to defend their championship. My support may not be a good omen.

6U Lakewood Lakers edge Redstone in final minute

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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After two lead changes in the final minute, the Lakewood 6-and-under team prevailed.

Aquarius Rhodes hit a jumper with 45 seconds left as the Lakers edged Redstone 10-9 on Feb. 14 at the Youth Center. This came 15 seconds after Redstone went up 9-8.

"I shot from the white line," the shooting guard said as he pointed out the spot on the floor. "I'm happy."

Rhodes, 6, scored all four of his points in the fourth quarter. His first basket tied the score at 7-7 in the quarter's opening minute.

The score was tied 2-2 after one quarter. Redstone (7-5) led 6-5 at halftime and 7-5 after three quarters.

"We started off slow in the first half," Lakers coach Michael Davis said. "We made a few defensive adjustments toward the end of the first half. At halftime we made some changes to the roster for the second half starting five. It was a back-and-forth game in the third quarter. And the start of the fourth, the momentum swung our way late in the game. Two big shots (by Rhodes) late in the fourth quarter put us up for good."

Kyrie Robison and Dylan Fletcher added three points apiece for Lakewood (7-2-2).

Khalil Jones had eight points, nine rebounds and four steals for Redstone. Beau Daniel added five re-



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Lakewood's Aquarius Rhodes, right, gains defensive possession against Redstone's Khalil Jones.

bounds and five steals.

"Missed too many free throws," Redstone coach



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Redstone's Beau Daniel looks to pass during Lakewood's 10-9 win.

Darelle Jones said. Both teams had one game left apiece in the season.

Rivera leads 10U Redstone Warriors past American

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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In a fast and furious finish, Japhet Rivera drove his team to victory.

Rivera scored nine of his 14 points in the fourth quarter as the 10-and-under Redstone Warriors beat American 31-25 on Friday at the Youth Center. The Warriors outscored American 14-11 in the fourth.

Rivera had five rebounds, three steals and two assists as Redstone finished its year at 7-3-2.

"They weren't playing good defense because they got cocky when they got the lead," the point guard said. "Then we took it over."

Warriors coach Greg Knight was impressed all year by Rivera.

"He's good," Knight said. "He played good defense, offense. He's an all-around ballplayer."

"See all those steals he gets. Anticipation. He's just got that knack. I don't know where he gets it. He has that instinct. He's going to make a good ballplayer for some team someday."

Landon Hobson and Ben Rodriguez scored six points apiece. Isaiah Gilbert had six rebounds and three blocks.

"Teamwork made the dream work," Knight said.

Tamarian Brooks had 17 points and 10 rebounds as American finished at 4-8.

"I just thought our boys played hard to the end," American coach James Mills said. "And number 4 (Rivera) outlasted us. He's just a lot quicker than we are when it comes to transition."

Photo by Skip Vaughn

Japhet Rivera finishes with 14 points, five rebounds, three steals and two assists in Redstone's 31-25 win over American.



Your glory days in sports

By **SKIP VAUGHN**

Rocket editor

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What is the highlight of your athletic endeavors?

“I tried out for all the sports – football, basketball and track and field. This was in high school and junior high from 1982 to 1986,” Leroy Allen Jr., organizational resources specialist in the Garrison’s Directorate of Human Resources, said. “I did track and field, basketball and football at Alexander Junior High and Brookhaven High School in Brookhaven, Mississippi. In junior high track and field, I broke several meet records in the 440-yard dash in McComb, Mississippi, in 1982. I had track scholarship offers at Alcorn State University. And I was a walk-on in the 400 meters at Alcorn. I ran track for Alcorn State University in 1987. I got my bachelor’s in management from the University of Maryland in 2010 and I got my MBA in 2013 from the University of Phoenix.

“I coached a youth basketball team. My son and my daughter were on a team in Yongsan, Seoul, South Korea, in 2011.”

Allen, 53, from Brookhaven, Mississippi, has worked at Garrison Human Resources since November 2020. He arrived at Redstone from Seoul, South Korea, in July 2014. Allen worked at the Military Personnel Division from July 2014 to February 2018; and he worked at the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center from March 2018 to October 2020. He and his wife of 34 years, Margie, reside in Harvest. Their son, A.J., 25, resides in Clarksville, Tennessee; and their daughter, Erykah, 24, of Harvest, attends the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Allen enjoys reading about health diets and human resources. He roots for the Alabama Crimson Tide.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Leroy Allen Jr., of Garrison Human Resources, played high school sports in Mississippi. He ran track at Alcorn State University.

What? Last monday was a holiday? I completely teleworked the whole day!

Don't sweat it Hazard. Presidents' Day will come around again next year!



JIM BORRICH
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Sports & Recreation

Bass/kayak tournament

The Tennessee Valley Chapter of Army Aviation Association of America will sponsor their annual Bob Vlasic Classic Bass/Kayak Tournament at Jackson County Park, May 12. Entry is \$30 for kayakers and \$60 for boaters and will launch at safe light 5:30 a.m., weigh in 2 p.m. There is a 100% payout. Places will be determined by number of entries and five fish total: (length) Kayak and (weight) Boat. There is also Big Fish (length) prize for Kayak, \$200; and Big Fish (weight) prize for Boat, \$400. A picnic will follow. For more information, call Kayak: Mitch Delk 755-0730 and Boater: Rich Arnold 842-9061.

Senior softball

Get into the swing of senior slow-pitch softball. They have three leagues beginning with the Rockets League for those 55 and older, the Recreation League for those 63 and older, and the Triads for 71 and up. All games will be played at Brahan Springs Park, fields 1 and 2. Practices will begin in late March, and their seasons will begin in late April. They play two games a week, ending around Labor Day. Players are needed. For information email Huntsville-srsoftball-info@googlegroups.com or call Becky Rollston of the Huntsville/Madison County Senior Center at 880-7081.

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.

Veterans of foreign wars

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

Blacks in government

Huntsville-Madison County Chapter of

Blacks In Government has its general membership meeting the third Thursday of the month via Zoom at 7 p.m. BIG functions as a knowledgeable, problem-identifying and solving organization for civil servants. For more information email Mary Peoples at maryd6519@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.vietvetsv.org.

Miscellaneous Items

Men's ministry

Men's Ministry addresses the needs of men and plants seeds for spiritual growth in Christ. Call Harry Hobbs at 783-1793 for more information.

Young citizen of month

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

ACS volunteers needed

Army Community Service seeks volunteers for its information and referral desk in the Pershing Welcome Center, building 3443 on Aerobee Road. Hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. You get to build a rapport with the community. You're supporting Soldiers, family members and civilians. If interested call Stephanie Young 876-6661.

Rocket Announcements

Lifesaving class for Redstone

Redstone fire department offers a "Stop the Bleed" program which teaches how to use a tourniquet and stop major bleeding. Anyone on post is invited to take the class. "It's free. They get a certificate afterward, and they get a lifesaving skill," lead instructor Ian Voisine, fire captain/paramedic at Station 1 on Rideout Road, said. To schedule a free four-hour class, call Station 1 at 842-2584.

Merit award scholarships

The Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club will award educational merit awards in 2022 to eligible students who are affiliated with and acting as contributing members of the Redstone military and government civilian community. There are two types of scholarships to apply for this year: RSAMCC Merit Award, for members of the club and their dependents; and the Military Community Scholarship, where applicants do not need to be a member of the club. More information and the online application form can be found on the RSAMCC webpage, www.rsamcc.org/merit-awards. The deadline to apply is midnight Feb. 27. For information email rsamccmeritawards@gmail.com. RSAMCC is a 501c private organization not affiliated with Redstone Arsenal or the Army.

Tax assistance center

Aviation and Missile Command's Commander Maj. Gen. Todd Royar took a moment to meet with and thank the volunteers who will be manning this year's Redstone Arsenal Tax Center. The tax assistance center is open through April from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, building 3439 on Honest John Road. Services are provided to the military community on a first-come, first-served basis, no appointments. Bring all tax documents, previous year's tax return, and completed intake form.

Comedy show/dinner

North Alabama Veterans and Fraternal Organizations Coalition will present "An Evening of Laughter with Jody Fuller" comedy show and dinner April 2 at The Summit. Tickets are \$50 per person, dinner included. Social starts at 5:30 p.m. and dinner/show at 6. Purchase tickets online at <https://conta.cc/3fE2KjL> or contact KC Bertling at 541-0450 or presidentcoalition@gmail.com.

Thrift Shop job position

The Redstone Thrift Shop is looking to hire an assistant manager for a six-month trial period. This position requires knowledge in retail sales, data entry and organizational skills. Excellent computer skills, including Microsoft Office with software and hardware troubleshooting abilities. The assistant manager will work with volunteers and paid staff. He or she must have good interpersonal skills, be dependable and enthusiastic with a positive attitude; must be able to multitask; will oversee donations, consignments

and must be able to lift up to 25 pounds. Post access is preferred. Work hours are 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday and 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. the first Saturday of the month excluding holiday weekends. Resumes are accepted at rsamanager@knology.net. Apply by close of business March 9. For more information, call Sophie Gentry 881-6992 or email rsamanager@knology.net. The Thrift Shop is a nonprofit organization on Redstone Arsenal; it is however not affiliated with Redstone or the Army. This is not a government job.

Marksmanship clinic

The Revolutionary War Veterans Association's, Project Applesseed will conduct a ladies only two-day rifle marksmanship clinic and telling the history of what led up to and the events of April 19, 1775. The clinic will be in the South Huntsville area at Hobbs Island Shooting Range, 3682 Hobbs Island Road, from March 12-13. For more information or to register, go to <https://appleseedinfo.org>.

Military service displays

Decatur Public Library is honoring military service with displays through March 28. "A History in Postcards" is located in the main seating area of the library. "Morgan County & Beyond" is at the display cases in the main area. For more information, visit www.myDPL.org/military.

Health department ratings

The Madison County Health Department has released its weekly food/lodging establishment ratings for Feb. 7-11. The highest scores included AFC Sushi at Publix 574, 4851 Whitesburg Drive, 100; Pine Grove Nutrition LLC, 7127=C Wall Triana Highway, Madison, 100; Kroger Store 517 (Seafood), 6070 Moores Mill Road, 100; First Baptist Church Daycare, 600 Governors Drive SW, 100; Bowler Hat Brewing Company, 7429 Highway 72 West, Unit C, Madison, 100; Publix Super Market 573 (Bakery), 6707 Highway 431 South, Owens Cross Roads, 100; Von Braun Center Arena Beverage S, 700 Monroe St., 100; and Von Braun Center (Catering-South Hall), 700 Monroe St., 100. The lowest scores included Mei Wei Asian Diner, 6290 University Drive NW, 81; and Wayback Burger, 6290 University Drive, 80.

St. Patrick's Day parade

The 45th annual Ellen McAnelly Memorial St. Patrick's Day Parade is scheduled March 12 at 11 a.m. in downtown Huntsville. The community event, organized by the Irish Society of North Alabama, will be taking place for the first time since 2019. Organizers are looking for groups to join the parade. The parade, presented by Straight to Ale Brewing, welcomes a variety of groups of all sizes such as clubs, families, organizations, businesses and sports teams. For more information, call Lisa Bollinger 468-5612 or visit IrishSocietyNA.org/parade.php.