

Austin signs new strategy for unmanned aerial systems **A7**

Tree-mendous tradition sparks holiday magic

BY BLAIR DUPRE
 Sentinel News Editor

The holiday season came alight as Fort Cavazos held the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony Friday at III Armored Corps Headquarters at Fort Cavazos.

During the event, attendees enjoyed holiday music — performed by members of the 1st Cavalry Division Band — sang holiday carols together and were treated to a special performance by the Meadows Elementary School Choir.

“It’s truly an honor to stand before you tonight as we gather to celebrate one of the most special traditions here at The Great Place — the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony,” said Col. Lakicia Stokes, U.S. Army Garrison-Fort Cavazos commander, during her opening remarks. “This is a time for us to come together as a community to share and enjoy the season and reflect on the year that has passed.

“As we light the tree, let it remind us that the warmth of the season is reflected in the support we give one another throughout the year,” she continued. “It is our shared camaraderie, kindness and service that makes this place so special.”

The tree stands 50 feet tall and consists of 9,000 individual red, white and blue lights.

“Each light symbolizes hope, unity and the sacrifices made by our Soldiers, their families and those civilians who support our mission,” Stokes said. “This season invites us to celebrate not only the holidays, but also the spirit of togetherness and gratitude that binds us as a Fort Cavazos family.”

Before flipping the candy cane switch, Lt. Gen. Kevin D. Admiral, III Armored Corps and Fort Cavazos commanding general, took to the podium, expressing gratitude for the community and tradition.

“The tradition of the Tree Lighting Ceremony dates back to 1960,” he said. “After more than six decades, I’m proud to say we’re continuing to carry on that strong tradition. This tree serves as a symbol that bridges the Fort Cavazos Soldiers,

See **Tree Lighting**, A6



Photo by Blair Dupre, Sentinel News Editor
 Lt. Gen. Kevin D. Admiral, III Armored Corps and Fort Cavazos commanding general, and Command Sgt. Maj. John P. McDwyer, III Armored Corps and Fort Cavazos command sergeant major, assist Terren Lott, 10, and Emberly Frincke, 5, as they flip the switch during the Tree Lighting Ceremony Friday at III Armored Corps Headquarters at Fort Cavazos.

NEWS BRIEFS

DFMWR gifts trees to troops

Trees for Troops will start at 10 a.m. Friday at Phantom Warrior Stadium. Trees are given on a first-come-first-serve basis until gone. Soldiers in grades E-1 to E-5 may pickup 10 a.m.-1 p.m. All other DOD cardholders may pick up their tree after 1 p.m. Each household may only receive one tree and must have a valid DOD ID card to present at pickup. Please come prepared to load the tree with supplies. For more information, visit cavazos.armymwr.com/view-event/trees-troops/6623898/94233.

Veterans ride free in CenTex

The Central Texas Vet-Ride Program offers veterans, their spouses and dependents free transportation through The HOP for uses including medical appointments, government offices, grocery stores, school and shopping. For more information, visit ctadvrc.org/programs/veterans/central-texas-vet-ride-program.

Submit Impact Aid survey

Anyone working on Fort Cavazos in any capacity who has children attending school in a local school district should fill out an Impact Aid survey. Impact Aid helps to fund instructional materials, salaries and enrichment programs for schools, and the amount of funds received is dependent on the number of surveys received. To fill out the survey or for more information, call the School Liaison Office at 254-288-7946.

DFMWR hosts Nature in Lights

Fort Cavazos Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation is hosting Nature in Lights Friday through Dec. 31 at Belton Lake Outdoor Recreation Area. It is open 5:30-11 p.m. and costs \$20 for a car, minivan or pickup truck; \$35 for limousines, 15-passenger vans or recreational vehicles, aka RVs; \$55 for a 24-passenger van; and \$80 for a 47-plus-passenger van or larger bus.

People can also enjoy Santa’s Village at Live Oak Pavilion, Santa’s Depot near the marina and pony rides at BLORA Ranch, all 5:30-11 p.m. Friday through Dec. 24. For more information, visit cavazos.armymwr.com/view-event/nature-lights/6600704/93405.

III Armored Corps, allies finalize plans for CPX II

BY MAJ. TIFANI SUMMERS
 III Armored Corps Public Affairs

III Armored Corps concluded its final planning event, or FPE, Nov. 22 in preparation for the upcoming Command Post Exercise, or CPX, II to be held this February.

The five-day FPE brought together over 100 military and civilian planners from across the globe to refine exercise design, scenario development and solidify training objectives. CPX II, a form of computer-based wargaming, serves as a rehearsal for the culminating, computer-simulated warfighter exercise, or WFX, WFX 25-4, which will begin at Fort Cavazos this spring.

“This planning event is about setting those final critical conditions to enable executing our CPX II rehearsal in February,” explained Maj. David Clouse, III Armored Corps lead exercise planner.

III Armored Corps, tasked by its higher headquarters U.S. Army Forces Command to execute a warfighter with three NATO divisions, aims to enhance interoperability between its allies to prepare for

See **Allies FPE**, A6



Photo by Maj. Tifani Summers, III Armored Corps Public Affairs

Maj. April Howard, a III Armored Corps logistics planner, briefs U.S., French and German planners during the III Armored Corps’ final planning event for Command Post Exercise II Nov. 18 at Fort Cavazos.

Families board Snowball Express



Photo by Ayumi Davis, Sentinel Editor

Kekoa Valencia, 7, grabs candy from people sending Gold Star families off on the bridge to the airplane for Snowball Express Saturday at Killeen Regional Airport at Killeen, Texas.

BY AYUMI DAVIS
 Sentinel Editor

KILLEEN, Texas — Fort Cavazos leadership, members of the Gary Sinise Foundation and more gathered to send off Gold Star families to Walt Disney World Resort at Orlando, Florida, for the annual Snowball Express Saturday at Killeen Regional Airport.

The Gary Sinise Foundation, founded by actor Gary Sinise, hosts a five-day experience every December for Gold Star children and spouses/guardians at the amusement park, sending 1,750 people.

“We want them (Gold Star families) to have a magical experience,” said retired Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, a member of the Gary Sinise Foundation Advisory Board. “We want them to have this memory

of having been to Disney World from a grateful American public, because we’re sitting there because we appreciate their service and their sacrifice.”

Lynch and his wife Sarah have been with the foundation since its inception in 2011.

“It’s unbelievably enriching and rewarding because you’re in the presence of heroes,” Rick said. “These are the survivor families, of those who fell in defense of our freedoms. Being with them is inspiration because what we want to make sure they know is we don’t forget. We don’t forget their losses.

“Now Sarah and I had the privilege of commanding the 3rd Infantry Division in combat, and 153 Soldiers died under my command,” he continued. “So this is personal to us. When we come to do these things, it’s very important to make sure that

See **Snowball Express**, A6

Drive sober: Our mission, lives, families depend on it

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. AMADOR AGUILLEN
13th ACSC Command Sergeant Major

December is a time of family gatherings, celebration and reflection. It's also National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month, a nationwide initiative established in 1982 to raise awareness about the dangers of impaired driving and to promote safer roads.

This observance is critically important for us here at Fort Cavazos, as the world's premier mounted force begins with the safety and well-being of our Soldiers and their families.

During the holiday season, alcohol-related incidents tend to rise. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports an average of 37 fatalities occur daily in December due to impaired driving. These statistics are more than just numbers — they represent lost lives, grieving families and futures cut short. As Soldiers, our mission is clear: to fight and win our nations wars. But readiness starts with us, and impaired driving undermines everything we stand for.

Our Soldiers are the lifeblood of our formation. They are integral to every success we achieve, from maintaining supply lines to meeting national objectives and maneuvering anywhere in the world. Yet, the ripple effects of one bad decision — choosing to drink and drive — can compromise the mission, devastate a family and impact our entire team.

I urge leaders to be positively intrusive and know more about their Soldiers than a nametape. I challenge them to speak directly with their formations about this serious issue. Take the time during unit safety briefings to emphasize the importance of personal accountability

and the consequences of impaired driving. Remind our Soldiers there is no excuse for risking their lives, or the lives of others, by getting behind the wheel after drinking.

Here are some steps we can take as a team:

1. Plan ahead: Encourage Soldiers to arrange a designated driver, utilize ride-sharing apps or take advantage of local programs like The Hop.
2. Look out for each other: Build a culture where battle buddies intervene if someone appears unfit to drive.
3. Leaders set the example: Whether attending unit gatherings or personal celebrations, demonstrate responsible behavior.
4. Be mindful of stress: The holiday season can be very challenging for many. Leaders should watch for signs of stress or emotional hardship in their Soldiers and guide them to available resources, including behavioral health services.

This month is also an opportunity to reflect on how we care for one another beyond the mission. As Soldiers, we are the backbone of our nation's freedom. Protecting our team — whether on the battlefield or on the roads — is not just a duty but a moral obligation.

As we celebrate the holidays, I encourage everyone to enjoy this season safely and responsibly. Let's ensure our Soldiers return to their families after the festivities, not to a courtroom or, worse, a tragedy.

Together, we can make this holiday season one of joy, gratitude and renewed commitment to our values and mission.

Drive sober. Stay vigilant. And let's start the new year with all our Soldiers ready to accomplish whatever challenges lie ahead.



Amador Aguilén

Army Family Team Building celebrates 30th birthday

BY DIANE WILLIAMS
ACS Employment & Volunteer Service Branch

Wow! It's so hard to believe that it's already been 30 years. The Army Family Team Building program was established in 1993, created in response to the growing recognition of the critical role military families play in supporting Soldiers and enhancing Army readiness by equipping them with tools, knowledge and resources to navigate military life. The initial plan was to create a program, improving overall readiness of the force by teaching and promoting personal and family readiness. The program assists America's Army in adapting to a changing world, and responds to family issues in lessons learned from recent deployments. Thus, AFTB was born.

The program came in hot and heavy; classes were filled with family members struggling with the Army life. This new program assisted with acclimating into the Army community and becoming more self-sufficient, particularly during a time when service members were being called to war. Most notably, these classes were fun, and the material was delivered in a manner family members understood. This is mainly because the classes were mostly taught by volunteer family members. Class topics ranged from the rank structure, acronyms, customs and traditions of the Army. There was even a class on

dealing with grief. The AFTB curriculum was much more than the necessities of learning the Army. There were also classes on personal development skills and top-notch professional leadership skills. Not only were spouses and family members filling these classes, service members and Department of the Army civilians were as well. Effective conflict management, exploring personality traits, winning at time management, effective communication for leaders, supporting others through coaching and mentoring and so much more was taught through these classes.

As a former AFTB student and instructor and now the program manager, I can tell you from first-hand experience how beneficial the program is for military families. AFTB has a great history, but it's not done.

Of course, just as everything else has evolved, instead of filling the classroom seats, most choose to do AFTB classes online. It is more convenient, but nothing compares to the comradery built from an on-site AFTB class. I am still connected with some of the ladies I met back in 2001 from my first AFTB class. That AFTB class showed me I wasn't alone in this huge organization, but, rather, I had become a part of a huge family, a family

that helped me to learn and thrive. I have seen countless family members come through AFTB and connect with others. It is always satisfying to see individuals exchange contact information, because that said to me, that individual is no longer alone.

Thirty years later, and AFTB is still not done. We have additional service delivery methods, but are still changing lives and empowering individuals to being more. Many family members learn the Army through trial and error; with AFTB, there's no need. AFTB is incredibly rewarding, but don't just take my word for it, ask your neighbor who attended a class.

For a listing of all AFTB classes, to attend in person or for us to come to you, call 254-287-1127 or email usarmy.cavazos.id-readiness.list.acs-afb@army.mil. Classes are also available online from the Army Family Web Portal site at olms.armyfamilywebportal.com/course/index.php?categoryid=4.

On Monday, AFTB will be celebrating 30 wonderful years of existence. We invite you to log onto your Facebook page and share your AFTB story or memory or say, "Happy Birthday!" and tag Fort Cavazos Army Community Service-Family Programs. We hope to hear from you!



Diane Williams

GREAT PEOPLE AT THE GREAT PLACE

BY AYUMI DAVIS
Sentinel Editor

With an installation as large as Fort Cavazos, sitting at nearly 215,000 acres, there are numerous buildings, roads, fences, parking lots and other structures. More specifically, there are over 10,500 assets on the installation, and each one requires inspections and management to ensure they're maintained. This is where Directorate of Public Works realty specialists, like Alonzo Coleman, come in.

Coleman handles real estate planning, acquisition management and disposal of Fort Cavazos real estate assets.

"I think it's great being able to be trustworthy of managing DOD (Department of Defense) assets, assets that belong to the taxpayers as well, and ensuring that the Soldiers, the families and DA (Department of the Army) civilians have the inventory, the assets and infrastructure they need to accomplish the mission," he said.

One of Coleman's responsibilities is conducting real property updates to buildings on post for DOD audits. In the third quarter of fiscal year 2024 alone, Coleman completed updates to over 130 assets.

"I perform a physical inventory inspection, site inspections, paperwork validation and ensuring that the system of record is updated and reflects the paperwork," Coleman explained. "And if it doesn't reflect the paperwork, we have to come up with ways to get close as possible to

validate that information that's in the system of record."

While each asset may be different, there is certain data Coleman must track from each item, totaling over 52 data elements each, he explained.

"Every building, every road, every fence, every parking lot, transmission lines, dams — you think of it, we have to account for," he said. "We have to validate the place-of-service date; make sure that it meets the facility category, in which the Army assigned it to be on what we paid

for; ensure that it exists ... and the cost that we spent on it as well."

Coleman has been with DPW for 15 years. Prior to that, he served in the Air Force for 20 years, working in logistics. When he retired from the military as a master sergeant, he worked as a DA civilian because he always wanted to continue on with the DOD mission, he said.

"I figured anything outside of DOD, I wouldn't find the satisfaction," Coleman expressed. "It was a decision to continue on what I call the fight, continue

on in a DOD mission because I do find DOD is a real satisfying agency for me. It's ingrained in me. I like knowing that I truly contributing to the DOD mission and all our warfighters, despite what branch they may belong to, and I'm able to actually see and feel my contributions throughout the world.

"You feel that you're part of the entire team," he added.

Outside of work, Coleman enjoys improving his financial literacy, watching basketball and spending time with his family.



Photo by Ayumi Davis, Sentinel Editor

Alonzo Coleman, realty specialist, Directorate of Public Works, poses for a photo Oct. 3 at the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Office at Fort Cavazos.



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Fall cleanup collects over 90,000 pounds of litter

BY CHRISTINE LUCIANO
DPW Environmental

In a display of environmental stewardship and community responsibility, Soldiers spread out across the installation and training areas to tackle challenges of illegal dumping during the post-wide fall cleanup Dec. 2-6.

The biannual cleanup event takes place every spring and fall in an effort to combat the growing challenges of illegal dumping. From tires and furniture to appliances and construction waste, the training areas have become a target for those seeking to dispose of materials improperly. The cleanup effort also included conducting installation police call and maintenance within the cantonment areas, family housing and unit motor pools.

The 504th Military Intelligence Brigade was one of many military units who tackled the task with determination. Sgt. Maj. Ryan Munroe, 504th MI Bde. operations sergeant major, explained his experience participating in two prior cleanup events provided him valuable insights into the logistics preparation.

Along with training areas 72, 73 and 74, 504th MI Bde.'s footprint extends into Montague Village and West Fort Cavazos cantonment. Munroe explained how scouting their areas beforehand has proven to be a game changer in terms of the warfighter's time management and effectiveness.

"We have a recurring OPOD (operation order), so our AO (area of operation) doesn't change and gives us a more efficient way to get after the massive bulk piles faster as opposed to wasting time driving around looking for them," he said.

Munroe pointed out the irony in how some individuals publicly express their admiration for the troops but fail to back up their words with responsible actions. Beyond the aesthetic and ecological damage, trash, hazardous material and debris also create obstacles that hinder training.

"Illegal dumping shows a lack of respect for the warfighter and directly impacts our ability to train effectively and safely," he said. "The more time we spend, training hour wise, coming out here and cleaning up after irresponsible individuals is time that an intelligence Soldier isn't working on problems going on around the globe."

Throughout the day, vehicles headed to the consolidation point to unload items into collection containers for trash, metal and concertina wire and designated areas for hazardous materials and items for the Defense Logistics Agency. Some of the larger items collected and taken directly to

the landfill was a fiberglass johnboat, deer stands, multiple couches and love seats and roofing materials.

By the end of the week, 504th MI Bde.'s efforts added to the collective effort of 67,200 pounds of trash, 21,640 pounds of scrap metal, 1,180 pounds of concertina wire and 125 tires.

The trash will be taken to the Fort Cavazos landfill, and the scrap metal and wire gathered will be processed by Fort Cavazos Recycle, generating revenue to help support events for Soldiers and the community events.

The community is encouraged to support the warfighter by doing their part and reporting any instances of illegal dumping to appropriate authorities.

Citations for criminal trespassing and illegal dumping or theft of services can easily add up to a monetary fine and lead to the possibility of an arrest.

If someone observes another engaging in illegal dumping, take note of critical details such as the date and time, location, description of the person and/or vehicle, and type of waste dumped, and report the incident to the Directorate of Emergency Services at 254-287-4001.



Photos by Christine Luciano, DPW Environmental

Soldiers from 504th Military Intelligence Brigade load up shingles illegally dumped in training area 74 during the installation-wide fall cleanup Dec. 2 at Fort Cavazos.



Soldiers throw litter collected from one of their designated cleanup areas into a trash dumpster at the consolidation point Dec. 3 at Fort Cavazos.

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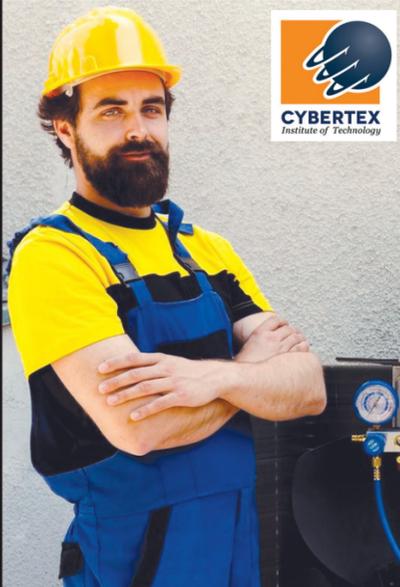
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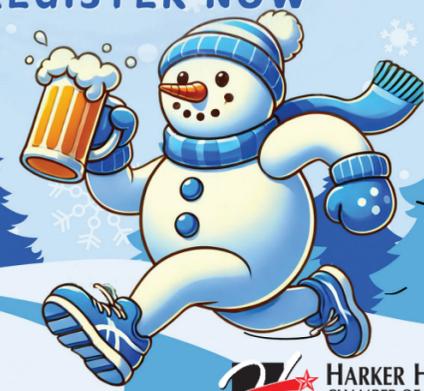
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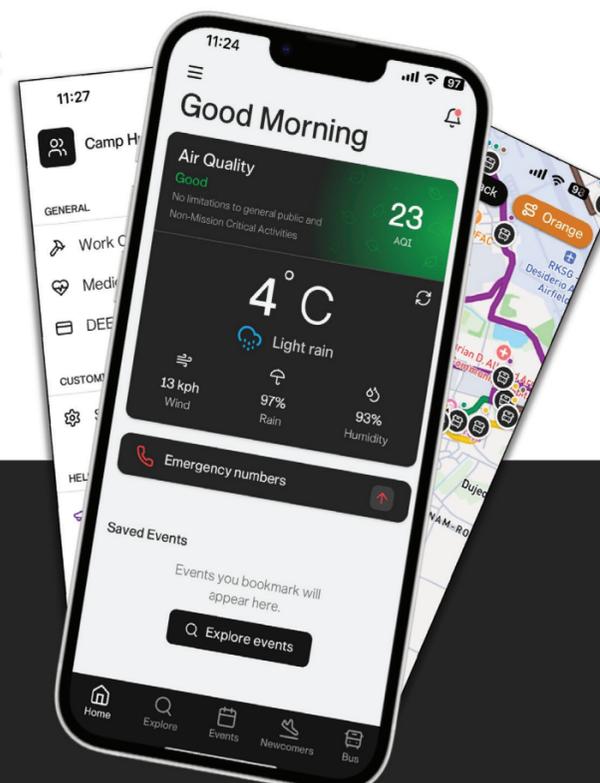
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Artillery training builds bonds, sharpens readiness at Fort Cavazos



Photos by Shawn Davis, Fort Cavazos Public Affairs

Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, conduct range training exercises in a M109A7 Paladin self-propelled howitzer Nov. 20 at Fort Cavazos. The latest variant of the M109 weapons platform, the M109A7 utilizes novel, electrical loading systems and shares parts with the Bradley Fighting Vehicle chassis to streamline production, parts acquisition, maintenance and training in order to minimize operational costs.

BY ERIC FRANKLIN

Fort Cavazos Public Affairs

The deep boom of the M109A7 Paladin echoed across the training area, marking an unforgettable moment for newly assigned Soldiers.

Among them were Pfc. Bennett MacFarland and Pfc. Annaliese Raigoza, cannon crew members with the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. The live-fire exercise signaled the beginning of their journey into the fast-paced world of artillery.

"I've just been in a Paladin, driving around and learning how to shoot the rounds," said MacFarland, who joined the unit less than a week ago. "It's really fun once you get a feel for what you're doing and your job. Everyone helps each other out. It's like being part of a family."

MacFarland's words highlight the strong connections within the unit. Operating the M109A7 Paladin takes more than individual skill, it depends on teamwork. Unit leaders emphasize these exercises are essential for developing trust and coordination in high-pressure combat scenarios.

The 2nd Bn. commander, Lt. Col. Robert Graves, emphasized the importance of regular, focused training to keep the unit prepared and effective in the field.

"Like many skills, these skills can atrophy over time," Graves said. "Training together and training often is the best way to maintain and build that lethality."

The M109A7 Paladin, the Army's latest self-propelled howitzer, features upgraded electrical systems that improve precision, reliability and efficiency, making it a key asset on the battlefield.

"It's an improvement over the older hydraulic systems, allowing for more accuracy and consistency in the movement of the turret," Graves said.

For Soldiers like Raigoza, mastering the advanced technology has been both a challenging and rewarding experience. Joining the Army brought her technical skills and a newfound sense of community.

"Everyone has each other's back, no matter who you are or where you came from," Raigoza said. "My chief and my section really helped me out. They taught me a new meaning of brotherhood."

Raigoza's transition to Army life was eased by the support she found within her unit. For her, the camaraderie is just as significant as mastering the technical demands of artillery operations.

"The training I do with my team here prepares us for when we go to war or for anything the military sends us to do," Raigoza said.

Graves highlighted the decisive role of artillery on the battlefield, emphasizing

its importance across all environments and combat domains.

"Artillery is the ultimate decider on the battlefield," he said. "It impacts the fight in all types of weather and terrain. If you want to be in touch with every part of the Army and joint force, artillery positions you to see the whole picture and have a key critical part in it."



Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, operate the M992 Field Artillery Ammunition Supply Vehicle Nov. 20 at Fort Cavazos. The M992 FAASV's purpose built to keep pace with self-propelled howitzers during combat, allowing the mobile capabilities of the M109A7 to fully shine throughout the field.

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m. Monday-Friday
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday
Dinner: 5-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m. Monday-Friday
Lunch: 11:30-1 p.m. Monday-Friday
Dinner: 5-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
Manager: 254-288-9538

(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 5-6:30 p.m.
(HOLIDAY): 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM Building #21020 Battalion & 58th St.						
Closed due to renovation.						

Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m. Monday-Friday
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday
Dinner: 5-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
COR: Richard Johnson: 254-535-6845

(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 5-6:30 p.m.
(HOLIDAY): 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

NORTH FORT CAVAZOS Building #56320						
SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Breakfast: 5:30-8:30 a.m. Sunday-Saturday
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Sunday-Saturday
Dinner: 5-7:30 p.m. Sunday-Saturday
COR: Richard Johnson: 254-535-6845

Building #56447 is only for overflow.
(HOLIDAY): 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

BLACK JACK Building #34002 Old Ironsides Ave. & Pyongyang Dr.						
SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m. Monday-Friday
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday
Dinner: 5-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
Manager: SFC Moore: 254-618-8914

(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 5-6:30 p.m.
(HOLIDAY): 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT Building #9205 Battalion & 21st St.						
SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m. Monday-Friday
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday
Dinner: 5-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
COR: Richard Johnson: 254-535-6845

(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 5-6:50 p.m.
(HOLIDAY): 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

CULINARY OUTPOST FOOD TRUCK 1 The Lonestar Conference Center						
SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m. Monday-Friday
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday
Dinner: Closed
NCOIC: SSG Lopez: 787-414-1259

CULINARY OUTPOST FOOD KIOSK Old Ironsides and Pyongyang Drive						
SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

BRK, LUN, DIN: 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Friday (WNNK): 8 a.m.-6 p.m.
Food Advisor: SFC Moore: 254-618-8914

Patriot Inn Building #12007 Old Ironside & 33rd St.						
Closed until further notice.						

Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m. Monday-Friday
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday
Dinner: 5-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
Food Advisor: W01 Greene: 843-901-0260

(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
(BRUNCH/SUPPER): 5-6:30 p.m.

CULINARY OUTPOST FOOD TRUCK 2 1-44/4-5 ADA BN area parking Lot						
SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m. Monday-Friday
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday
Dinner: Closed
NCOIC: 254-288-9538

Culinary Outpost Food Truck 3 has the same hours of operation as Food Truck 2, operating on a rotation

Installation Food Service: 287-6595 | III Armored Corps Food Service: 287-0573 | Division Food Service: 287-3134

Holiday: Tradition symbolizes commitment

Tree Lighting: *Continued from A1*

their families and the amazing Central Texas community.

"As I mentioned, the tree was dedicated with the help of the dedicated workers of Dominion Energy," he continued. "Our garrison team Soldiers and civilians work

hard to make this lighting a success. That's the kind of partnership that we have here at The Great Place. As we light this tree this evening, let us take a moment to honor our Soldiers, Army civilians, families, veterans and retirees for their selfless service and commitment through their hard work. III Armored Corps

continues to be the most effective fighting force in the world, and it's because of the great Soldiers and families and civilians that make up this team."

Admiral, along with Command Sgt. Major John P. McDwyer, III Armored Corps and Fort Cavazos command sergeant major, were joined by Terren Lott, 10, and Emberly Frincke, 5, to assist in flipping the switch.

Following a countdown, the tree flickered to life, and the cheers of Fort Cavazos leadership, community leadership and many of those who live and work at The Great Place were heard.

Santa himself was escorted onto The Great Place after the ceremony, riding in one of the Fort Cavazos Fire Department fire trucks. Families followed him inside the headquarters building where they

posed for photos and enjoyed company and hot cocoa.

"Whether you're here for the festivities, the food or simply to enjoy the company of friends, family and neighbors we hope you leave with a sense of peace, joy and renewal," Stokes concluded. "Let's make this season bright and full of hope as we continue to support one another in every way. Happy holidays to everyone."



Photos by Blair Dupre, Sentinel News Editor

From left, Darrah Woods; Jonathan Woods, 4; Lillian Woods, 7; and Staff Sgt. Kenny Woods, 3rd Security Force Assistance Brigade, pose with Santa after the Tree Lighting Ceremony Friday at III Armored Corps Headquarters at Fort Cavazos.



Santa Claus greets children and their families at the conclusion of the Tree Lighting Ceremony Friday at III Armored Corps Headquarters at Fort Cavazos.

Fort Cavazos leaders help send off Snowball Express

Snowball Express: *Continued from A1*

everybody knows we acknowledge their sacrifice and we never forget."

One Gold Star mom, Janice Johnson, was excited to take her granddaughters, Serena

Johnson, 17, and Sian Johnson, 16, on the trip, saying it would be their first time.

"Before he (my son) passed away, he wanted to take them there, but he didn't get a chance," she said. "He passed away, so I'm very excited to take them."

Johnson's son, Sgt. 1st Class Roderick Johnson died Dec. 4, 2011 from cancer. Going to Gold Star events gives her lots of great support, she said.

"I try to support some of their families too, because I know what they have been through and what they're going through, because I went through losing my oldest son," she said.

Before the families boarded, they were able to interact with dogs from the GOTEAM Therapy, Crisis and Airport Dogs, Inc. and listen to remarks from Brig. Gen. Geoff Van Epps, III Armored Corps deputy commanding general of maneuver, and Rick.

"This is such a great program and a great way to honor our Gold Star families," Van Epps said. "I really want to thank the Gary Sinise Foundation for their incredible generosity, and American Airlines for being such a great partner for this operation. I also want to thank the city, the airport and the installation staff from Fort Cavazos, who provide the support that helped make this possible and help synchronize all of the other partners that are part of making this operation such a success.

"We remember the sacrifice that you have made," he continued, speaking to the Gold Star families. "We will never forget. We continue to honor you, and we hope that you enjoy the few days that you have ahead of you."

Rick read a letter from Sinise for the Gold Star families, in which Sinise wrote his joy in providing this experience.

"While our hearts are heavy at the circumstances that brought everyone together today, I'm grateful we can honor deserving families, remembering their loved ones who are no longer with us as we wrap our arms around each and every one of you," Rick read. "We do not forget, and this amazing event allows the American people who support the Gary Sinise foundation to bring some joy and new happy memories to this special group at the most magical place on Earth — Disney World.

"Please know that we do not forget your loved ones or your sacrifices," Rick continued to read. "They are in our heart always, and I know in my heart they want you to have the best time this week, laugh, have fun, meet new friends and remember — America loves and supports you. From all of us at the Gary Sinise Foundation and all the supporters, always remember we love you."

After the remarks, Gold Star families boarded the plane, with volunteers, Fort Cavazos leadership, member of the Gary Sinise Foundation and Patriot Guard Riders lining the bridge to the airplane, waving flags, giving high-fives and passing out candy.



Photo by Ayumi Davis, Sentinel Editor

Chante McClendon, Gold Star family member, pets therapy dogs during the Snowball Express sendoff Saturday at Killeen Regional Airport at Killeen, Texas.

Forum crucial for addressing questions, developing solutions

Allies FPE: *Continued from A1*

large-scale combat operations, or LSCO.

Clouse elaborated on the exercise objectives, saying FORSCOM's focus was on the tactical requirement of certifying its divisions and corps. III Armored Corps, Department of the Army and the French, German and U.K. equivalents strategic interoperability outcomes were agreed upon during previously held country-to-country staff talks.

He also emphasized the importance in building human and technical interoperability while planning together to ensure a cohesive fighting formation during conflict. During this warfighter iteration, for the first time, five NATO allies will participate — four exercising from Europe and one here at Fort Cavazos.

Clouse went on to discuss some challenges planners encounter when preparing for a multinational exercise.

"There's a lot of complexities with time zones, with language, with our communication equipment, our mission command information systems — all of which have different ways that they communicate, which require different cross-domain solutions or technical things to enable us to be able to talk and execute a simulated warfighter together," Clouse said. "So, CPX II and this planning event is about finding where all those friction points are and finding ways to mitigate those, so that we can actually go into a war simulation and fight together."

Earlier this year, 1st Armored Division trained at Fort Bliss, Texas, during WFX 25-1, while III Armored Corps exercised mission command from here. This training event allowed III Armored Corps and 1st Armored Division to validate its standard operating procedures, communication platforms and assess identified training objectives.

III Armored Corps will switch roles during CPX II from being a higher command, or HICOM, and become the training audience with U.S. Army Europe and Africa serving as the HICOM, along with observer-controller support from the Mission Command Training Program at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

While the culminating warfighter will be computer simulated, over 1,000 personnel from the U.S., Germany

and France will converge to work side-by-side to operate as red and white cells, as well as role players during the simulated scenario.

"The warfighter series is a great opportunity for us to train from the division level under the corps level," said German army Lt. Col. Michael Spannaus, Germany's lead exercise operations planner, assigned to 10th Panzerdivision. "This is actually one of a kind for us."

Spannaus previously served with U.S. forces at USA-REUR-AF Headquarters in Wiesbaden, Germany, where he was fully integrated with the staff. According to Spannaus, this experience at higher echelons helped him understand U.S. Army procedures, and he believes increased understanding of each other's culture, language and doctrine helps formations adapt faster when a mission arises.

"Having multinational partners like the French and also the British, who have already experienced the warfighter exercise series in the past, provides a great input for 2025 for us to learn as a response cell," Spannaus expressed.

Warfighters aim to stress the corps and its divisions to prepare their formations to deploy and fight adversaries in a contested theater with synchronized multidomain effects.

"It's best that we train as we fight," said Maj. April Howard, a III Armored Corps logistics planner. "We will most likely fight in a joint environment with our NATO allies, and we need to have a shared understanding of how they operate

and how we can streamline our reporting and our logistics systems no matter where we are in the world."

Howard participated in the III Armored Corps Sustainment Integration Center during the FPE. The center's priority for the working group was to exchange knowledge with NATO allies to ensure a comprehensive sustainment strategy in preparation for multidomain and LSCO. During the FPE, participants shared their methods, systems and processes of supporting their perspective warfighters.

"We're integrating our allies' capabilities into the war simulation to create the most realistic scenarios and create a single logistics operation picture," Howard explained. "This forum is crucial for addressing questions and developing solutions to friction points."



Photo by Maj. Tifani Summers, III Armored Corps Public Affairs

From middle, Lt. Col. Brandon Essiet, III Armored Corps' chief of future operations, and German Lt. Col. Michael Spannaus, 10th Panzerdivision's lead exercise operations planner, receive an exercise design brief during the final planning event for Command Post Exercise II Nov. 18 at Fort Cavazos.

Modernizing force: Austin signs new strategy for unmanned aerial systems

BY C. TODD LOPEZ
DOD News

WASHINGTON — The Department of Defense announced Dec. 5 that Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III has signed a new, classified strategy for countering the effects of unmanned systems, also called “drones.”

According to an unclassified fact sheet released by the department, unmanned systems are increasing in capability and are posing ever-increasing threats to the U.S. and its allies.

“Enabled by growing commercial innovation and the increasing sophistication of artificial intelligence, autonomy and networking technology, unmanned systems are fundamentally changing how militaries of all sizes, capacities and capabilities — as well as non-state actors — achieve their objectives,” the fact sheet says.

Countering the effects of those unmanned systems has been a priority for the secretary of defense since he took office in 2021, said the Pentagon press secretary during a briefing Dec. 5. The new strategy strengthens efforts already underway by the department to deal with the growing threat.

“Unmanned systems, more commonly known as drones, have the potential to pose both an urgent and

enduring threat to U.S. personnel, facilities and assets overseas and increasingly in the U.S. homeland,” said Air Force Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder. “The threats presented by these systems are changing how wars are fought. With this singular strategy for countering unmanned systems, in conjunction with other major DOD initiatives ... the DOD is orienting around a common understanding of the challenge and a comprehensive approach to addressing it.”

The new strategy builds on other major DOD initiatives, including the standup of the Joint Counter-Small Unmanned Aerial Systems, or UAS, Office, the establishment of the Warfighter Senior Integration Group, and the launch of the Replicator 2 initiative meant to defend against threats posed by small aerial systems.

The new strategy is classified, but the associated unclassified fact sheet reveals some of the efforts the department plans to take as part of that strategy.

One effort involves gaining a better understanding of the threats posed by unmanned systems and improving the ability of American forces to detect, track and characterize those threats.

Another aspect of the strategy is to build counter-unmanned system efforts and knowledge into existing U.S. military doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities and policy.

Through the strategy, the department also commits to delivering adaptable counter-UAS solutions more quickly and at scale, including by working more closely with U.S. partners and allies.

Of note also is the department, within the strategy, recognizes the vast difference between the low cost of developing and deploying unmanned systems and the high cost the U.S. currently spends to defeat those systems. Here, in the strategy, the department commits to reducing the imbalance.

Ryder said the strategy allows the department to approach the threat posed by UAS in a way that’s “comprehensive, cohesive and holistic.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jasmine McCarthy, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

Spc. Edgar Galvan, a geospatial intelligence imagery analyst, Main Command Post Operational Detachment, 1st Cavalry Division, Texas Army National Guard, conducts counter-small unmanned aerial systems training May 15 in Boleslawiec, Poland.



Courtesy photo

Lagerhof Inn sits July 29 at Baumholder, Germany.

DOD authorizes additions to TLE

BY MYARMYBENEFITS

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Effective Nov. 27 the number of days a service member may receive temporary lodging expense, or TLE, has increased from 14 days to 21 days when moving to a permanent duty station within the continental United States, or CONUS. TLE is an allowance that partially reimburses a service member for the cost of lodging and meals when they or a dependent occupy temporary lodging during a permanent change-of-station move.

In certain CONUS military housing areas that have a shortage of permanent housing, service members may encounter significant delays in obtaining permanent housing and may need to utilize TLE for longer than 21 days. In these areas, service members be authorized up to 60 days of TLE. Currently, six housing areas are authorized extended TLE: Atlantic City, New Jersey; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Kittery, Maine; Palmdale/Edwards Air Force Base, California; Vandenberg Space Force Base, California; Moody Air Force Base, Georgia; and Bath, Maine.

This expansion of TLE supports Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin’s Taking Care of People initiative as outlined in his memorandum, “Our Enduring Duty to America’s Service Members and Their Families,” by easing costs that can strain budgets and cause financial uncertainty during PCS moves.



Photo by Winifred Brown, Camp Zama Public Affairs

Yuko Otsuka, left, assistant manager of Camp Zama Army Lodging, and Shealy Tae Kyong, front desk supervisor, work at the facility’s front desk April 18, 2021, at Camp Zama, Japan.

A Five-and-a-half-mile
Holiday Light Attraction

2024 Fort Cavazos Nature In Lights

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THROUGH Dec 31st
5:30 - 11 p.m.

\$20 per carload

Additional rates may apply based on vehicle size

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Live Oak Pavilion
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& photos with Santa.

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Near the Marina

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*lap children ride free

Pony Rides

BLORA Ranch

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Photos by Janecze Wright, Sentinel Living Editor

I was amazed at the sheer size of the Christmas tree and the nutcrackers December 2023 at the entrance of the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center at Grapevine, Texas.

'Tis season at Gaylord Texan Resort

BY JANECEZ WRIGHT
Sentinel Living Editor

GRAPEVINE, Texas — The Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center, located just over two hours from The Great Place, is known for providing upscale resort accommodations, family-friendly activities including an on-site water park and a spacious meeting space perfect for hosting professional or personal events.

But the resort also comes alive as a winter wonderland during the festive holiday season.

My best friend LaTrice graciously took me to the resort just before Christmas last year, and I'm still

raving about it a year later.

Walking into the venue, I was struck by the size of the space and everything in it.

A massive Christmas tree that transitioned from green to purple hues anchored the center of the space, flanked by two equally gigantic nutcrackers.

Crowds of guests swarmed the areas in front of and adjacent to the holiday scene to take photos or pose for selfies.

We did the same and wandered around to see what else the venue had to offer.

Entering the Christmas Village, we were struck by the beautiful Christmas carousel at the center of the space.

Complete with colorful horses and lively music, it was quite nostalgic.

The indoor ice-skating rink was also a pleasant surprise. Skaters glided across the ice with ease, some with the assistance of bear-themed walkers. We watched but decided against lacing up.

Ice skating may not be my thing, but I got excited watching guests fly down snow-covered lanes face-and-feet first at Snow Flow Mountain, the

indoor snow tube station. We were excited to give it a try, but a generous number of guests with tubes in hand were already in line, so we passed.

Continuing the snow theme was the Snowball Build and Blast station that allowed visitors to hurl real snowballs at targets.

After grabbing some hot chocolate to warm up, we shopped a variety of holiday finds at Emporium in the Village.

We looked forward to seeing the much anticipated "ICE!" featuring Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," an exhibit featuring ice sculptures created by more than 40 master ice carvers using more than two million pounds of ice, but the show was sold out.

This year's show features Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and promises larger-than-life ice sculptures, thrilling frozen slides and awe-inspiring tunnels, so I would buy tickets early.

From the scenery to the activities and everything in between, the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center during the holidays is the place to be.

There were so many fun things to do, we couldn't get to them all. Thankfully the resort transforms for the holidays every year, and we look forward to going again.

"ICE!" featuring "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," runs through Jan. 5, 2025. Prices start at \$28.99 for adults 12 and older, and \$19.99 for children 4-11.

For more information, visit christmasatgaylord-texan.marriott.com/.



My best friend LaTrice and I pose in front of a peppermint-themed Christmas tree December 2023 at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center at Grapevine, Texas.



The Christmas carousel at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center at Grapevine, Texas, brought back nostalgic memories of childhood.



I was pleasantly surprised to see the ice-skating rink inside the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center at Grapevine, Texas.

Sam's (Book) Club

2024 Year in Review: Year of growth, branching out to new genres

BY SAMANTHA HARMS
Command Information Chief

It feels almost impossible to believe we are already at the end of the year. Holiday plans are the talk of the office, with the promise of leave just around the corner. Intentions and goals for 2025 are the talk of the internet, with everyone reflecting honestly on how this year went.

Part of that reflection typically involves a person's Spotify Wrapped — an annual feature from the audio streaming platform that celebrates music, podcasts and audiobooks users enjoyed throughout the year. The company provides a deep dive into your listening habits, such as how many minutes you spent listening to music or what song you played the most in a single day.

As I was beginning to write this month's column, I remembered that Goodreads — a social-cataloging website where users can keep track of books they want to read, have already read or are in the process of reading — does their own version of Wrapped. And I thought to myself, why not do my own for this year's column?

By the numbers in 2024

- Total pages read: 3,381
- Average book length: 375 pages
- Longest book: "From Blood and Ash" by Jennifer Armentrout (622 pages)
- Shortest book: "The Book of Charlie" by David Von Drehle (194 pages)
- Five-star ratings: Five ("Billy Summers" by Stephen King, "How to Solve Your Own Murder" by Kristen Perrin, "A Court of Thorns and Roses" by Sarah J. Maas, "My Own Words" by Ruth Bader Ginsburg and "The Book of Charlie" by Von Drehle)
- Minutes spent talking about a book: Limit does not exist

Most common genre

While the column explored a wide range of topics, fantasy (and of course fiction) emerged as the most common genre of 2024. This is all

thanks to books like "A Court of Thorns and Roses" and "From Blood and Ash." These stories captured readers' imaginations and kept the pages turning with their engaging narratives and unique themes.

Most engaging moments

Whenever reading a novel, it is hard not to have the story carry with you, at least for a while. Here are a few standout moments I had while reading this year:

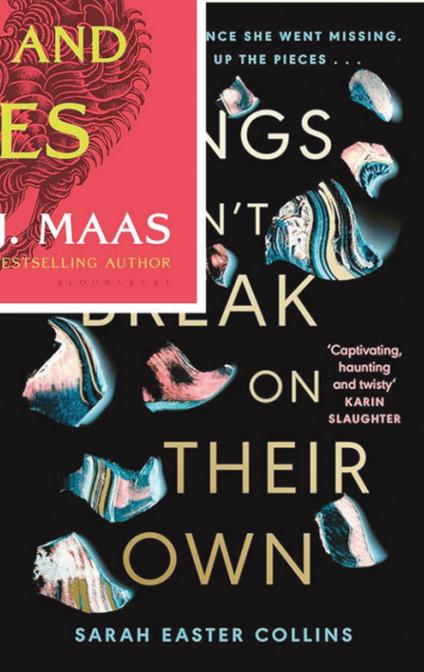
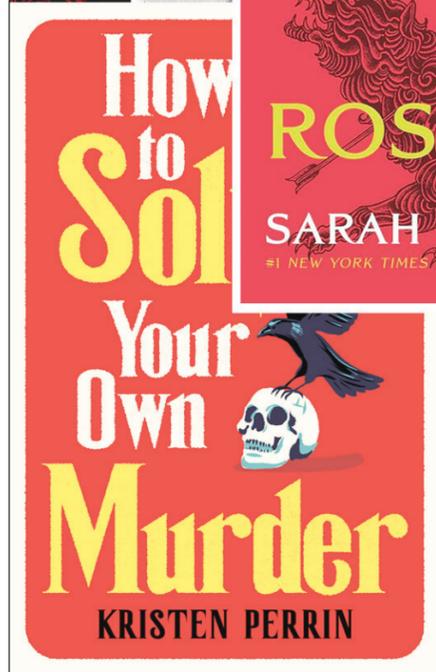
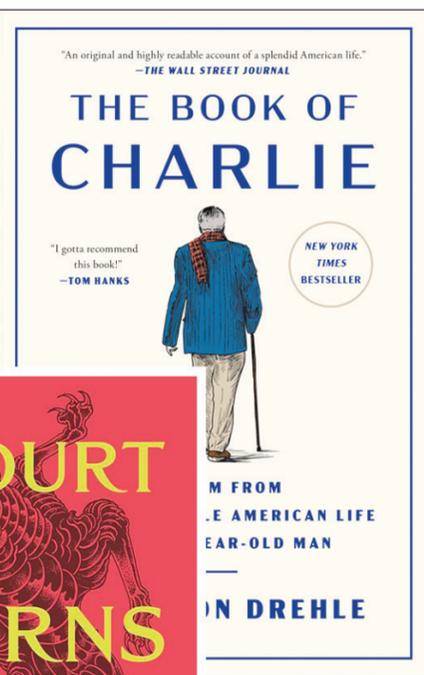
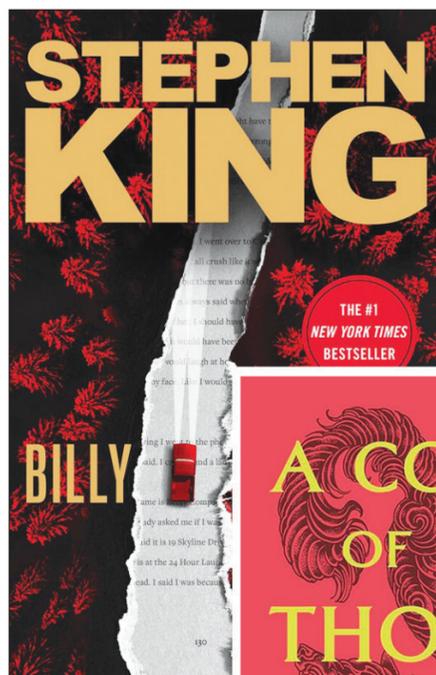
- "My Own Words" motivated me to think critically about leadership, justice, equality and personal growth.
- "Billy Summers" had me dissecting the complexity of right and wrong through the lens of a hitman's journey.
- "The Book of Charlie" offered a touching look at resilience across generations, as well as provided insights into Kansas City, Kansas, where I call home.
- "Things Don't Break on Their Own" by Sarah Easter Collins resonated deeply, prompting conversations about overcoming life's challenges.

Most recommended book

"A Court of Thorns and Roses" by Sarah J. Maas is the book I recommended to people the most in 2024. This fantasy novel captivated me with its lush world-building, complex characters and gripping story of love, betrayal and courage. Plus, it is the perfect book to dip your toe into fantasy and romance. Whether you are new to the genre or a longtime fan, this book brought the fantasy community to the forefront like no other.

Looking ahead to 2025

I am still in the process of planning what next year's column will look like, as every year I try to evolve what I am picking up from the library. Some of the things I'm considering are staff picks from the Casey Memorial Library, books that changed history, forgotten classics, books adapted into movies/tv shows or simply suggestions I pick up along the way. But no matter what, 2025, just like any other year, is the perfect time to read more.



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Pumpkin
1-yr, 8-mo-old, domestic short hair, gray & white, female.



Spincer
5-yr-old, domestic short hair, gray & white, male.



Thomas O'Malley
1-yr, 1-mo-old, domestic short hair, orange & white, male.



Comet
2-yr-old, domestic short hair, black & white, male.



Garfield
3-yr-old, domestic short hair, orange, male.



Hans
6-mo-old, domestic short-haired tabby, brown & black, male.



Shania
1-yr-old, basenji mix, tan & white, female.



Harley
1-yr, 1-mo-old, Labrador retriever mix, tan & black, female.



Jolly
1-yr, 1-mo-old, Labrador retriever mix, brown & white, male.



Spencer
3-yr-old, pit bull mix, white & black, male.



Maxwell
6-mo-old, American foxhound mix, brown & white, male.



Oliver
1-yr-old, German shepherd mix, tan & brown, male.

Celebrate holidays more while wasting less

BY CHRISTINE LUCIANO
DPW Environmental

This holiday season, consider celebrating in a way that's kinder to the environment. Take on the challenge to reduce waste, reuse items and recycle responsibly. Fort Cavazos Recycle and the Classification Unit offer services to help the warfighter, civilians and their families make eco-friendly choices not just during the holidays, but throughout the year.

Kandice Hines, qualified recycling program manager for Fort Cavazos Recycle, oversees operations at the recycle facility located off 72nd Street and Railhead Drive. She emphasizes while Fort Cavazos' single-stream operation includes equipment to quickly move and separate recyclables, employees still handle and sort items manually.

"Contamination is one of the biggest challenges in recycling — items like food waste, urine bottles and diapers can ruin entire loads of recyclables, reducing their values, creating extra costs for sorting and disposal and leading to hazardous work conditions," Hines explained.

Hines encourages everyone in the community to help prevent contamination by recycling correctly. Blue containers are for loose and unbagged single-stream recyclables that includes paper, plastics #1 and #2, cardboard and metal cans. Individuals can utilize any of the 500 blue recycle containers across the installation or bring their recyclables directly to the recycle facility.

Items including scrap metal, household appliances, civilian clothing and shoes, lead acid batteries, tires with rims, cooking oil, unbroken pallets and empty fuel and water cans can be taken to the recycle facility's scrap yard. Additional services offered include the cardboard exchange program, which allows individuals to pick up boxes and packing paper for free on first-come, first-used basis, and also motor pool roll-off services for military units doing a purge or cleanup event within their footprint.

"Recycling right not only helps the environment, but is an economic opportunity to generate funds and support Fort Cavazos community events and initiatives," Hines said. "Recycling creates a better future for the warfighter and families, enables the warfighter to focus on mission readiness while upholding stewardship and fosters sustainable practices."

This past year, Fort Cavazos Recycle donated more than \$363,000 to the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation to sponsor community events, like the fireworks and entertainment for Freedom Fest, Single Soldier Fest, Oktoberfest and Nature in Lights.

For household hazardous waste commonly found in the garage, shed and underneath the sink, along with residential electronic waste, the Classification Unit, off of Ivy Division Road and 37th Street, offers Department of Defense personnel and their family members over the age of 18 a service to safely dispose of items.

Residential electronic waste items eligible for turn in include phones, game systems, flat screen televisions, computers without hard drives and other electronics. Some leftover or used household products contain chemicals that can present safety concerns if not managed properly, and include items like unwanted paints, detergents and cleaners, pesticides and herbicides, non-vehicle batteries, aerosol cans, oil and filters.

The collection center's easy and free service also diverts household hazardous waste from ending up in the installation's landfill, and unused leftovers are placed into an on-site storage facility ready for free issue to others that may need them.

"Fort Cavazos Recycle and the Classification Unit offer a wide range of programs and resources to support the Warfighter, families and the Fort Cavazos community," Hines said. "We're here to help reach out to our team, and let's work together to make a difference."

This holiday season, rethink, reduce, reuse and recycle to create lasting, positive impacts for the community and the environment. For more information, visit [Facebook.com/FortCavazosRecycle](https://www.facebook.com/FortCavazosRecycle).



Photo by Christine Luciano, DPW Environmental

Ben Sparlin and Raul Negrón, material handler and sorters for Fort Cavazos Recycle, hand sort cardboard material from a conveyor belt Dec. 6 at the recycle center at Fort Cavazos. Team members must consistently monitor the conveyor belt to pull out trash and potentially harmful contaminants.

Houses of Worship

FORT CAVAZOS CHAPEL SERVICES



CATHOLIC
Sunday Mass, 9 a.m., Main Chapel, www.facebook.com/FtCavazosRomanCatholic
Noon Mass, Monday through Friday, Main Chapel
Confession after Mass or by appointment, call 254-286-6749, Main Chapel

PROTESTANT
St. George Parish (Anglican, Lutheran, Episcopalian), Sunday, 9 a.m., Old Post Chapel, <https://www.facebook.com/SaintGeorgeFortCavazos>

SPANISH PROTESTANT
Alcance, Sunday, 1:30 p.m., Veterans OIF Chapel.

GOSPEL CONGREGATION
Gospel Service, Sunday, 11 a.m., Memorial Chapel, <https://www.facebook.com/ComancheHappeningsNow>

TRADITIONS
Traditions Service, Sunday, 10 a.m., Ironhorse Chapel, www.facebook.com/groups/fhtpws/

CHAPEL NEXT
Contemporary Service, Sunday, 11:15 a.m., Main Chapel, <https://www.facebook.com/FortCavazosChapelNext>

OPEN TABLE
All-Inclusive Christian Chapel, www.facebook.com/OpenTableChapel

WFC PROTESTANT
Non-Denominational Protestant, Sunday, 10:30 a.m., West Fort Cavazos Chapel, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064944031364>

JEWISH
Shabbat Service, Friday, 6 p.m., Lucky 16 Chapel

MUSLIM
Friday Jumrah Prayers at 1:30 p.m., 25th Street Chapel

OPEN CIRCLE
Camp Finlayson, contact Linn Vodisek, vodiseklinn@gmail.com

BUDDHIST
Soku Gakkai International (SGI) Nichiren, Online, contact Martin Bonner, 254-258-0844
Theravada, Thursday, 11:45 a.m., Memorial Chapel

NORTH FORT CAVAZOS
Call 254-286-5223 for service schedule and Bible study

ADDITIONAL SERVICES/STUDY
Children in the Middle, call 254-288-1913 to reserve, Family Life Chaplain Training Center
Men of Honor, Contact Ken Wooten, 254-466-6254

Protestant Women of the Chapel (PWOC), Tuesday, 9-11:30 a.m., Main Chapel, www.facebook.com/FortHoodPWOC
Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS), www.facebook.com/FortHoodMOPS
Club Beyond-High School, Contact Frank Ayala, fayala@clubbeyond.org
Club Beyond-Middle School, Contact Frank Ayala, fayala@clubbeyond.org
Catholic Women of the Chapel (CWOC),

Tuesdays from 9:30-11:30 a.m., bimonthly
Thursday 5-7 p.m., Main Chapel. Facebook: Fort Cavazos CWOC (Catholic Women of the Chapel)
Catholic Youth Ministry-Crusaders, 8-12 grades, Contact Maria Fuavia, 573-842-8181
Catholic Religious Education-CCE, Wednesday, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Main Chapel, Contact Maria Fuavia, 254-287-0241
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Institute of Religion Classes, Tuesday from 7:30-8:30 p.m. at 13th ACSC Chapel, Contact Chap. Seth Porter, 281-235-7841

* Holiday hours and events are posted on the Garrison Chaplain's Facebook page, [facebook.com/FortCavazosChaplain](https://www.facebook.com/FortCavazosChaplain)*

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Religious Support Operations office at 254-288-6545.

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HEALTH TRICARE regions change next year

Understanding the New TRICARE Contract Region Changes

Starting on Jan. 1, 2025



West Region Contractor Change
TriWest Healthcare Alliance will replace Health Net Federal Services, LLC.

Six States Shifting to West Region
Arkansas, Illinois, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wisconsin move from the East to West.

East Region Contractor
Humana Military remains the contractor.

West Region



Six States Moving From the East to the West



East Region



What You Need To Do

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm your information in DEERS If you pay enrollment or premium payments by credit card or bank transfer, you will need to transfer your payment information by Dec. 31, 2024 Check if your providers are in the TriWest network starting Nov. 2, 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm your information in DEERS If you pay enrollment or premium payments by credit card or bank transfer, you will need to transfer your payment information by Dec. 31, 2024 Check if your providers are in the TriWest network starting Nov. 2, 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm your information in DEERS |
|---|---|---|

Graphic courtesy of TRICARE

TRICARE will be moving Arkansas, Illinois, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin from the East Region to the West Region Jan. 1, 2025.

BY TRICARE COMMUNICATIONS

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — Jan. 1, 2025, marks the start of health care delivery under TRICARE's new regional contracts. There will be changes to the TRICARE regions in the U.S. as part of the new contracts. While there will still be two TRICARE regions, six states currently in the East Region (Arkansas, Illinois, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin) will move to the West Region. There are also some zip codes in four of these states that will be exceptions to the region changes.

"Knowing which region you're in is crucial to understanding if you need to take any steps by January 1," said Zelly Zim, health systems specialist, TRICARE Health Plan Policy & Programs Branch, at the Defense Health Agency.

If you live in one of these states, or a state that's currently in the West Region, your regional contractor will switch to TriWest Healthcare Alliance on Jan. 1, 2025. This means a beneficiary should:

- Provide recurring payment information to TriWest by Jan. 1, 2025, if beneficiaries pay for their TRICARE coverage via bank electronic funds transfer, debit card or credit card. Beneficiaries don't need to do this if they pay by military pay system allotment — that will transfer automatically.
- Create an account on TriWest's patient portal at tricare-west.com/content/bnfs/home/tw/apps/login.html.
- Check TriWest's provider directory to see which providers are in TriWest's network for any beneficiaries starting Jan. 1, 2025.

If beneficiaries live in the current West Region, they will need to take these actions, too. TriWest will also be the beneficiaries' new regional contractor.

States switching regions

Six states are moving from the East Region to the West Region:

- Arkansas
- Illinois
- Louisiana
- Oklahoma
- Texas

• Wisconsin
If a beneficiary's state is switching regions, Humana Military will continue as their TRICARE contractor through Dec. 31. Before then, beneficiaries should check the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System to confirm that all of their information is up-to-date.

However, there are some small areas within Arkansas, Indiana, Missouri and Wisconsin that will be exceptions to these region changes. These areas are called "carveouts." They're "carved out" from the rest of their state because they border another state with a nearby military hospital or clinic and are part of its Prime Service Area, or PSA, where a beneficiary may be eligible to get services.

A PSA is a geographical region (40 miles around a military hospital or clinic) where TRICARE Prime is available. These carveouts are part of PSAs retained under the Base Realignment and Closure program from the 1990s. These PSAs cross borders into a neighboring state. To maintain the integrity of these PSAs, these carveouts will be managed by the regional contractor of the region where the PSA is centered.

Arkansas

If beneficiaries live in certain ZIP codes in one of the below counties in Arkansas, they are staying in the East Region.

Humana Military will remain their regional contractor. This is different from the rest of Arkansas.

- Clay
- Craighead
- Crittenden
- Cross
- Greene

- Mississippi
- Poinsett
- St. Francis

Beneficiaries can see if their region is changing by visiting tricare.mil/change, scrolling to the right navigation bar and entering their ZIP code in the tool called "What's my TRICARE region in 2025?"

If a beneficiary does live in the carveout area, he/she doesn't need to take any steps to keep their coverage.

Indiana

If beneficiaries live in certain ZIP codes in one of the below counties in Indiana, they are in the new West Region. TriWest will be their new regional contractor. This is different from the rest of Indiana.

- Benton
- Fountain
- Lake
- Vermillion
- Warren

Missouri

If beneficiaries live in certain ZIP codes in one of the below counties in Missouri, they are staying in the East Region.

- Butler
- Dunklin
- New Madrid
- Pemiscot

Wisconsin

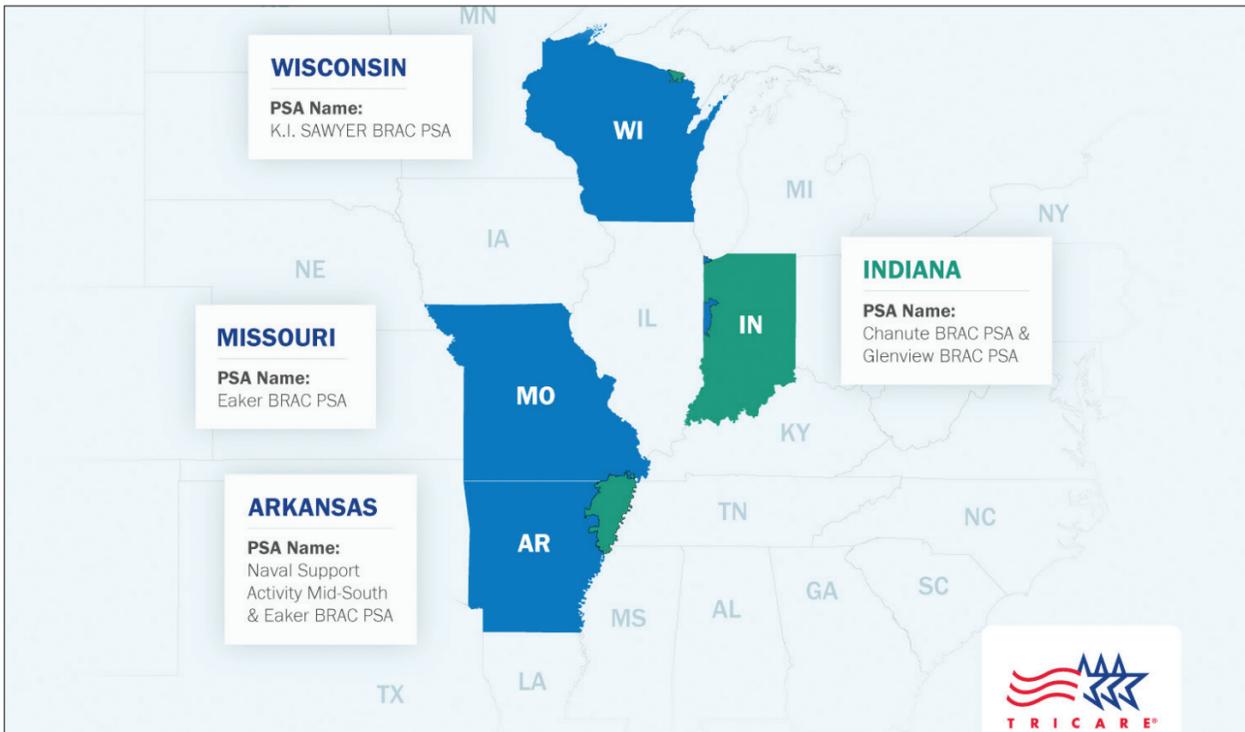
If beneficiaries live in certain ZIP codes in the below county in Wisconsin, they are staying in the East Region. Humana Military will remain their regional contractor. This is different from the rest of Wisconsin.

- Florence

For more information on TriWest, visit tricare.mil/west. For more information on TRICARE, visit tricare.mil.

“Knowing which region you're in is crucial to understanding if you need to take any steps by Jan. 1.”

— Zelly Zim, health systems specialist, TRICARE Health Plan Policy & Programs Branch



Graphic courtesy of TRICARE

There are some small areas, or "carveouts," within Arkansas, Indiana, Missouri and Wisconsin that will be exception to the region changes TRICARE is enacting Jan. 1, 2025. They are carved out from the rest of their states because they border another state with a nearby military hospital or clinic and are part of its Prime Service Area, where beneficiaries may be eligible to get services.



SPECIAL DELIVERIES

OCT. 17

A daughter, **Ainsley Craig**, to Zachary and Hailey Craig, 1st ABCT.

NOV. 15

A son, **Skyler Jace Ordon**, to Jayvee and Shiela Ladia.

NOV. 18

A daughter, **Lucina Auria**, to Stefan and Lucia Gonzales.

NOV. 19

A son, **Lucas William**, to Matthew Kelley and Melar Mckonnen, 1st Cav. Div.

NOV. 20

A son, **Kamari Charles**, to Hunter and Syrai Rhea, III Armored Corps.

NOV. 22

A son, **Thomas Jordan Jr.**, to Thomas Sr. and Hunter Mitchel, 1st ABCT.

A daughter, **Adelina Andrea**, to Andy Mendoza and Valeria Cobos, 3rd ABCT.

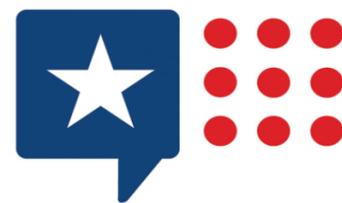
NOV. 23

A son, **Amari Je'Von**, to Elijah and Ziria Lacy, III Armored Corps.

NOV. 24

A daughter, **Mehlani Violet**, to Jaydelyn Oshita, 11th Sig. Bde.

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PRESS 1

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Photos by Ayumi Davis, Sentinel Editor

Dr. Gabriela Mora, conductor of the Williamson County Symphony Orchestra, conducts the audience to clap during a piece of the “A Nutcracker Christmas” concert Saturday at Howze Auditorium at Fort Cavazos.

‘A Nutcracker Christmas:’ Orchestra performs 18th annual holiday concert at Fort Cavazos

BY AYUMI DAVIS
Sentinel Editor

Over 500 people listened, laughed, clapped and sang along to the Williamson County Symphony Orchestra’s “A Nutcracker Christmas” concert Saturday at Howze Auditorium.

This year marked the 18th year of the orchestra offering a concert at Fort Cavazos. Along with a suite a music from the famous ballet “The Nutcracker,” the orchestra also played a medley from “The Sound of Music,” “Carol of the Bells,” “The Christmas Song,” “Hallelujah Chorus” and a medley of songs from the armed forces.

“I love it,” said Norma Hernandez, community activities coordinator for the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation. “This rounds out my year of special events. I like doing what I’m doing, but this one — I like symphonies. I like that you get to see a lot of people with the same interest in classical music and things of that nature.”

Hernandez has coordinated and attended the concert 11 years. Her favorite part is the armed forces medley, as people from each branch will stand when their force’s song is played.

“That is very emotional, very touching,” she said. “I love to see people from the different branches — family members, service members, retirees — stand up.”

Alice Sakharov, concertmaster for the Williamson County Symphony Orchestra, agreed with Hernandez’s sentiments.

“For everybody who served, when they hear their Army song to stand and everyone claps, it’s really emotional,” she said.

During the concert, Dr. Gabriela Mora, conductor for the orchestra, expressed the group’s wish to see audience members enjoy themselves.

“We prepared this with our hearts,” she said. “All these wonderful musicians on stage are giving their time and their talents every week to prepare for you this concert for this season, so we can all go home and



Cellists with the Williamson County Symphony Orchestra perform “A Nutcracker Christmas” concert Saturday at Howze Auditorium at Fort Cavazos.

feel the joy and the happiness not only of Christmas, but of the music itself.

“I hope this concert is inspiring, the music we are bringing to you is making joy and kindness to your hearts and that this will remain with you, not only during Christmas, but for a long time in the future,” she continued. “Thank you so much for being here, and I hope you’re enjoying this concert.”

Erin Eskew, Army spouse and freelance reporter for the Killeen Daily Herald, brought her four kids to the concert and said they all “absolutely loved it.” As a mom who homeschools, she added it was great for them to receive music appreciation with known songs.

“It’s neat when the tunes are familiar,” she said. “So it was really exciting to bring them out for a Christmas concert to see the orchestra, and we got some pretty good seats up toward the front, too, so they were able to actually see when they were going to play the cymbals or to see the harpist and see how the music kind of worked together and the different instruments that made the

different sounds.”

Events like these are great ways to expose children to different experiences, Eskew said.

“It’s really neat to have the opportunities like that brought in here and, with my husband deployed, it’s neat for four boys, and they range from 6 to 10, and so getting them all kind of wrangled and out is a job in and of itself,” she said. “And then to get there and have things cost a lot of money, and then you hope that you get your big bang for your buck. It’s really neat to know that it is free, so that helps the pressure be lower. But our enjoyment of it is like millions of dollars worth.”

“(I watched) my children bob along to the music; quite a few times they would recognize the song, and I could see their face light up, and they would like bounce in their seat or nod their head,” she continued. “So it’s amazing to me, and I’m so grateful for the musicians and all the time that they put in to making this opportunity possible and, hopefully, inspires my children to play musical instruments as well as they get older.”



Erin Eskew, Army spouse and freelance reporter for the Killeen Daily Herald, smiles and listens to the Williamson County Symphony Orchestra while one of her sons, Teddy, 6, sits on her lap, during the “A Nutcracker Christmas” concert Saturday at Howze Auditorium at Fort Cavazos.

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 CERTIFIED 2021 NISSAN ROGUE SPORT FWD S STK#55397A Sale Price \$20,335	 2022 NISSAN KICKS SV FWD STK#220138 Sale Price \$20,800	 2017 HONDA CR-V EX-L 2WD STK#42956B Sale Price \$20,999	 2022 HYUNDAI VENUE SEL IVT STK#220156 Sale Price \$20,999	 2021 SUBARU CROSSTREK PREMIUM CVT STK#54871A Sale Price \$21,995	 2023 NISSAN VERSA SR CVT STK#220132 Sale Price \$21,999	 2022 FORD ESCAPE SE FWD STK#13189A Sale Price \$21,999
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