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photo by Spc. Brian Murphy

Pvt. 2 LaToya Presnall displays her 25 various medals she's earned since she began competing at the age of 15 years old.

All-Army hopeful gets tough break

BY SPC. BRIAN MURPHY
Editor, The Voice

Growing up LaToya Presnall had three dreams ñ to be a veterinarian, play professional basketball and to compete as a track star in the Olympics.

It's the third dream that should have people taking notice. Since she began seriously competing in the world of track and field at the age of 15, Presnall has given the competition reason to worry.

Four times Presnall earned All-City, All-District, All-Regional honors and twice she qualified to compete at the All-State level. In 1999, during her senior year of high school, Presnall went undefeated in the long jump. Presnall's room displays her more than 50 various awards, medals and plaques she accumulated during her short track career in the 100-meter, 200-meter, 400-meter relays and long jump.

But for one reason or another, the scholarships didn't come and Presnall was forced to find another way to achieve her dream. Presnall left her home in Toledo, Ohio for the Army when she enlisted last June.

"I have an uncle in the Army," Presnall said. "He told me about the All-

Army track team. I figured they would keep me in shape and I looked at it as another way to get to the level I wanted to be at."

Shortly after Pvt. 2 LaToya Presnall, who is an electronic non-communication interceptor/analyst, working with the 742nd Military Intelligence Battalion, arrived here in December, she asked Staff Sgt. Derek Sierra for help. Presnall explained to the platoon sergeant, from Headquarters and Operations Company, 742nd MI Battalion that she wanted to compete with the All-Army track team and asked him to help her get there.

"He had competed for a spot on the All-Army boxing team," Presnall said. "He is been to where I want to be. I knew he could get me to that level."

Presnall and Sierra faxed her information to the coaches of the All-Army track team and were told she had been invited to try-out for the team. Everything was set for Presnall, until she sprained her ankle just weeks before the try-outs. The injury would keep her from trying out.

"It was definitely disappointed," she said. "But I won't give up. This will just make me work harder to get to there next year."

It's that type of attitude that has earned Presnall a solid reputation for her solid soldiering and athletic abilities.

"Presnall is a good soldier who seems to be a team player," said Capt. Paul Kirschbaum, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 704th Military Intelligence Brigade. "She takes part in unit events and always has a positive attitude."

Kirschbaum also points towards Presnall's Army Physical Fitness score, which was above 280 as a positive indicator of her soldier abilities.

"Initially I was surprised because I thought that I would have heard about [her track background and being invited to All-Army track try-outs] before," Kirschbaum said. "But knowing the kind of shape Presnall is in, it made sense. She is quiet about her abilities, but it is a quiet confidence."

Kirschbaum considered Presnall's invitation to the All-Army track try-outs a great opportunity for a young soldier.

"We have some real talent in the Army in regards to sports, particularly in track, boxing, and wrestling," he said. "It is an inspiration to other soldiers to see their peers compete at national and international levels."

When reenlisting, knowledge is power

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS WILLENE ORR
Brigade Reenlistment

It has often been said that we perish for lack of knowledge. We also can perish for not applying the knowledge. Most soldiers are either misinformed or uninformed on reenlistment options. Here is an overview of the five-reenlistment options currently available:

Regular Army Reenlistment Option

Qualified soldiers may reenlist for two, three, four, five, or six years and will be assigned in accordance with the needs of the Army. Soldiers in the rank of staff sergeant or higher who have 10 or more years Active Federal Service (AFS) will be restricted to an indefinite term of reenlistment to their retention control point.

Current Station Stabilization Reenlistment

Initial term and mid-career soldiers, who are staff sergeant or below may reenlist from two to six years. For CONUS based soldiers, this option guarantees up to six months stabilization from date of reenlistment for soldiers who reenlist for two years. It guarantees up to 12 months from reenlistment date for those who reenlist for three years. For those who reenlist for four or more years, this option guarantees up to 12 months stabilization from Expiration Time of Services date.

Army Training Reenlistment Option

Qualified soldiers, staff sergeant and below, with less than 10 years of AFS may reenlist for three to six years. Guarantees to qualified soldiers a choice for new Primary Military Occupation Specialty, Skill Qualification Identifier, Additional Skill Identifier, language training, or airborne training. Additionally soldiers who reenlist for this option with training in a career management field other than 11, 12, 13, and 19 must reenlist for a minimum of four years.

Overseas Assignment Reenlistment Option

Initial or mid-career soldiers, who are staff sergeant or below with less than 10 years of AFS may reenlist for three to six years. Additionally, soldiers who reenlist for a long tour area must reenlist for a minimum of four years.

CONUS Station-of-Choice Reenlistment Option

This option guarantees assignment for at least 12 months at the CONUS station of choice for soldiers reenlisting for three to six years. Initial or mid-career soldiers, who are staff sergeant or below, may reenlist for this option.

Initial Term (serving on first enlistment) eligibility:

- Non-promotable corporals/specialists with GT 100 or higher
- Promotable corporals/specialists or higher without regard to GT

Mid-career (serving on second or subsequent

enlistment) eligibility:

- Promotable corporals/specialists with 525 or more promotion points and six or less years AFS at ETS
- sergeants with less than seven years AFS at ETS
- Promotable sergeants with 650 or more points
- staff sergeants

In addition, all soldiers are required by AR 601-280 to receive a reenlistment interview from their company commanders within 90 days after arrival and 15 to 16 months before their ETS. Soldiers also are required to receive an interview from their battalion career counselor 13 to 14 months before ETS. Although a soldier's reenlistment window does not open until 12 months from ETS, their options can be ran 13 months prior to ETS. So the key is to know your options and remember, the retention process begins the day soldiers arrive to the unit.

Have you talked to a soldier about reenlisting today?

For more information on retention, please contact your respective career counselors:

704th MI Brigade:
Sgt. 1st Class Willene Orr (301) 677-0164
741st MI Battalion:
Staff Sgt. Veronica Ingle (301) 677-0157
742nd MI Battalion:
Staff Sgt. Cynthia Kling (301) 677-0117
743rd MI Battalion:
Staff Sgt. Shelley Pringle (303) 677-5048

EDUCATION BRIEF

BY DEBRA T. DAY
BRIGADE EDUCATION COUNSELOR

Public Law 106-419, Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000, provides an opportunity of enrollment into the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) for certain Veterans Education Assistance Program (VEAP) era active duty soldiers (enlisted or officer) meeting the established criteria to receive the MGIB. To be eligible a soldier must have served continuously on active duty from October 9, 1996 through April 1, 2000 and be a VEAP par-



ticipant on October 9, 1996. Participants are defined as service members who opened a VEAP account; participants do not have to have contributions remaining in the account to be eligible under this law. The eligible soldier makes an irrevocable decision to enroll in the MGIB no later than October 31, 2001 by signing a Department of Defense Form 2366.

A payment of \$2,700 is required when participating in this conversion. A soldier may choose between lump sum or pay reduction. Each soldier must contact the local Finance and Accounting Office to coordinate the lump sum or pay reduction. The total of \$2,700 must be paid within 18 months after the DD Form 2366 is signed. If the total payroll reduction is less than \$2,700 after 18 months, the soldier will lose all benefits, and any money contributed will not be refunded. Soldiers

may combine pay reduction and lump sum options to ensure the \$2,700 is paid within the required 18 months. The law does not authorize any exceptions to the 18-month period to pay the \$2,700. No refunds are authorized under the law.

Soldiers will have no VA educational benefits available from the date of their completed DD Form 2366 until the \$2,700 has been paid in full. Remember that an individual has 18 months from the date of the signed DD Form 2366 to complete the full payment of \$2,700. Eligible soldiers will be entitled to receive 36 months of full-time benefits, provided they have not used more than 12 months of benefits under VEAP. Any VEAP benefits used greater than 12 months will be reduced from the 36-month entitlement. Since the election to convert is irrevocable and the payments are nonrefundable, soldiers must ensure their decision to convert is cautiously made.

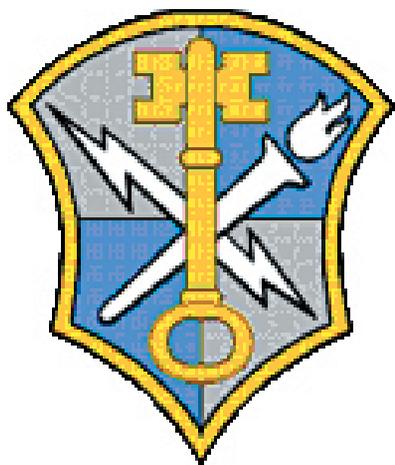
Some of the colleges delivering classes to Fort Meade:

ANNE ARUNDEL COMMU-

NTY COLLEGE offers associate degree/certificate programs on Fort Meade. Courses offered are lower level (100-200) and are held at Meade Senior High School. You may call AACC at 410-672-2117/3554 for additional information or visit the website at <http://www.aacc.cc.md.us>.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY offers various graduate and undergraduate degrees/certificates on Fort Meade. Classes are held at 8452 Zimborski Avenue. You may call BSU at 301-912-2318 for additional information or visit the website at <http://www.bowiestate.edu>.

For information, guidance, and/or completion of VEAP to MGI Bill conversion under Public Law 106-419, see your Army guidance counselor at the Army Education Services Division located at 8601 Zimborski Avenue. The hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Friday 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call (301) 677-6421 for additional information.



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Commander
704th MI BDE
ATTN: IAMS-PAO (Editor, The Voice)
Fort Meade, MD 20755-5930
DSN 923-0069
Commercial (301) 677-0069

U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command 704th Military Intelligence Brigade

Commander
Col. Deborah J. Beckworth

Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Major Randy Wilson

Acting Brigade S-6
Lt. Col. Danny Mason

Public Affairs Officer
Lt. Col. Danny Mason

Public Affairs NCOIC / Editor
Spc. Brian Murphy

Graphic Artist
Spc. Anishka Forbes

704th MI Brigade Mission

The 704th Military Intelligence Brigade conducts continuous full-spectrum signals intelligence, computer network and information security operations directly, and through NSA to satisfy National, Joint, Combined and Army information superiority requirements.

Focus

To ensure mission accomplishment in an ethical environment while providing opportunities for individual professional growth and satisfaction, we must have:

- Competent and caring leaders,
- Well trained and fit soldiers,
- Efficient, effective unit operations,
- Unit cohesion and pride,
- Planned, orderly growth and change.

Boot Camp goes Hollywood

COMMENTARY BY SPC. BRIAN MURPHY
Editor, *The Voice*

Temptation Island. Survivor. The Tom Green show. The Jerry Springer show. The Real World. Alf.

I admit, I have watched my share of garbage television. When there is nothing else on I sometimes find myself watching these shows. And yes, I can even feel myself getting dumber.

Most of these shows are just harmless ways to hold yourself over while waiting for dinner or relaxing from another tough day at work. But it is the newest reality-based show that has me more than a little peeved. The suits at FOX television, those lovable lads who brought you Temptation Island, have created Boot Camp.

What, you say? Boot Camp already exists? Well, it hasn't been exploited and commercialized yet — well — until now.

The general idea for the new show, according to FOX, is to invite 16 contestants to surrender every aspect of their civilian lives in order to participate in a game of elimination set against the backdrop of a military-style training program.

Doesn't sound juicy enough? How about this — during each of the episodes these poor saps will take part in a mission that tests their training and ultimately reveals the weak links in the squad. The bottom line is, losers will leave and the last soldier standing will walk away with \$500,000. Who wouldn't put up with a few drill sergeants screaming in your face for a half million dollars?

To further mock the military, the creators of Boot Camp have come up with acronyms for the different phases and competitions throughout the show. There is H.E.R.O. (or Hostile Environment RECON Operation), M.E.S.S. (Military Extraction of Secret Serum), R.A.D. (Rappel and Destroy) and even H.E.L.L. (Hostage Evacuation — Laser Labyrinth).

Here is FOX's official preview for Boot Camp: Imagine the worst day of your life. Now make your boss a growling mass of intimidation that is more pit bull than human. Heap on a three-mile run, a hundred push-ups, and a free climb up a 60-foot rope. Take away a good night's sleep, a decent meal, and all your hair and replace them with mud under your finger nails, sweat on your brow, and tears of exhaustion. If you can roll all that into a 24-hour period and repeat the process for a number of grueling weeks, then you're ready.



cartoon by Mike Bochenek

If that is their selling point then we may be in luck. For every contestant who will appear on the show, there are hundreds or thousands who applied but were not selected. The following message is designed for those aspiring soldiers:

The producers of Boot Camp are already thinking of a sequel. They're going to start screening prospects for a chance to be on Boot Camp 2. Want to get a hand on your competitors? Want to give yourself a better chance to succeed once you get on the show? Want to earn cash while honing your push-up and sleep-deprivation skills? Go see your local Army recruiter.

Swagger in there and tell him you have what it takes to be all you can be. Tell him to put you in the world of combat arms or ask for a closer look at the new Army of One. Either way, pick a job, raise your right hand, repeat a few simple words and you'll be off to prepare for Boot Camp. After a few weeks of the real thing, how tough could the television show be? As soon as your initial enlistment ends, you'll be ready for Hollywood.

Getting accepted to U.S. Military Academy

BY CAPT. PAUL KIRSCHBAUM
HHC, 704th Military Intelligence Brigade

Every year the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York admits approximately 1100 civilians and soldiers to the Corps of Cadets. These 1100 are selected from a pool of nearly 14,000 applicants that come from all over the United States and several foreign countries. Those selected represent a diverse cross-section of American culture; prospective cadets come from all ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds, thereby creating a melting pot in the Corps of Cadets. However, regardless of how different students may seem when they arrive, all selected for virtually the same attributes: they must all have a strong academic background, proven physical abilities, and strong leadership potential. And in return for four hard years at the Academy, those selected earn a fully funded Bachelor of Science degree from a top engineering school, and more importantly, a commission in the Army as a second lieutenant. These benefits among others make the long road to getting in well worth the effort.

Before a candidate is evaluated on his or her academic, physical, and leadership potential, they must first meet some basic requirements. Each candidate must: be 17 but not yet 23 by July 1st of the year admitted, be a

U.S. citizen except for students nominated by another country, and not be married or have a legal obligation to support a child. In addition to meeting these criteria, candidates must pass an intensive medical exam (Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board), take the Physical Aptitude Exam, and win a nomination from a state congressman or representative. One loophole in the nomination requirement is for active duty soldiers: they only need a commander's endorsement to be considered qualified. Not needing a nomination is a great advantage to service members as it removes a major hurdle in the admissions process.

Additionally, all candidates must successfully take either the SAT or ACT and forward their scores to the Academy. Once these basic requirements are met, personnel applying to West Point can be considered serious candidates for admission, and then begins the true evaluation of each candidate's potential for success at the Military Academy.

The attributes mentioned above, academic skill, physical ability, and leadership, are what earn a candidate final admission to West Point. Academics play a large role in cadet life, as everyone must take a core set of 31 courses that includes chemistry, physics, calculus, statistics, philosophy, military history, economics, foreign language, and English. Candidates should have a strong background in mathematics, science, and English, particularly writing.

The physical training requirements demand a similar preparation. All cadets will participate in a physical regimen that includes swimming, boxing (men), wrestling (men), gymnastics, and the Master Fitness Trainer Course.

In addition, all cadets participate in either intramural competition or Corps Squad (varsity) sports teams every semester. Candidates should prepare with as much physical activity and team sports as possible, and active duty soldiers should have a solid APFT score.

The final part of the equation is leadership training. All cadets participate in summer training exercises and upperclassmen assume leadership roles during the academic year. Potential candidates should have a background in high school or team leadership positions, or if coming from active duty, should have a strong recommendation from their commander on their leadership potential.

Once evaluated on the merits of their abilities and skills, candidates undergo the final part of the admissions obstacle course: waiting to hear whether they are accepted into the Corps. This is often the most stressful part of the process, as many applicants are qualified but class size is limited.

In conclusion, the road to becoming a cadet is obviously long and difficult to navigate, but the rewards make it a most worthwhile trip.

New Single Parent Support Group

BY SPC. SHANNON MARTIN
741st Military Intelligence Battalion

Single Parent Soldiers of the 741st Military Intelligence Battalion and 704th Military Intelligence Brigade are pleased to announce implementation of a Single Parents Support Group. The first meeting was held in the Day Room of Bldg 9828 March 1.

During the first meeting, Maj. Jennifer Merkle, executive officer, 741st MI Battalion opened with a purpose statement followed by welcome remarks from Lt. Col. Walter Pollard, commander, 741st MI Battalion. Staff Sgt. Angela Gotwalt, collection manager, Company A, 741st MI Battalion and Spc. Natasha Brooks, signals analyst, Company A, 741st MI Battalion were introduced as founders of the support group.

Many issues were discussed during the initial meeting, which in turn broadened the direction and outlook of the group's initial goals. For example, Child Care Rates on post are determined by total

household income. This figure does not take into account situations such as dual military spouse separations. Another point of discussion centered on the Women Infants and Children (WIC) program, which requires enrollment and voucher pick-up based on the county of residence, rather than military affiliation. Although Kimbrough Medical Facility has a WIC office, they only provide services to members residing on post. Suggestions were made to base WIC services on military affiliation rather than county, and to reassess current qualification standards.

Financial matters were also discussed, especially those during Temporary Duty (TDY) and Temporary Change of Station (TCS) obligations. During these times, the soldiers Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) is taken away, but at the same time, the BAS is included in gross income, which is considered for Daycare, WIC, etc. This places additional financial hardships on many families who are already struggling to make ends meet. The support group plans to take this on as an action for

assessment.

Other items discussed were plans for Bar-B-Qs, swap meets for children's clothing/appliances, picnics, baby sitters exchange between members, etc. All the single parents could attest to the importance of having a shoulder to lean on in hard times, and having someone around who truly understands. This is what the group is about, to provide a level of support and understanding that may not currently exist. Meetings are open to all military branches, ranks, and civilians, regardless of parental or marital status. The group will focus on the needs and issues that face single military parents with a goal of providing beneficial information to supervisors, commanders, and anyone that may know a single parent who is in need of support.

Please come to our next Single Parent Support Group and let us know your issues so we can work together to find attainable solutions.

If you have any questions about this support group please contact Gotwalt at (301) 688-7654 or Merkle at (301) 677-0165 for more information.

BOSS program offers healthy alternative to video games

BY SPC. BRIAN MURPHY
Editor, The Voice

This is a message to all of the single soldiers who spend all of their free time watching television, playing video games and eating junk food in the barracks ñ step away from your room. Do something productive.

A healthier alternative to Doritos and Playstation 2 is the Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers program, which supports the overall quality of life for single and/or unaccompanied soldiers. The BOSS Program supports the chain of command by identifying quality of life (QOL) issues and concerns and by providing recommendations for QOL improvement.

The BOSS program also encourages and assists single soldiers in identifying and planning for recreational and leisure activities. It provides the opportunity for single soldiers to participate in their respective communities. The BOSS Program is separate and distinct from the major Army command (MACOM) Single Soldiers Initiatives program or any similar program in that the BOSS Program provides an avenue for single soldiers to surface issues and take part in activities but does not set policies or other guidance on issues. The BOSS Program is intended to enhance command authority, privilege and responsibility in maintaining standards of conduct, good order, and discipline, not to dilute.

ñThe BOSS program is an excellent opportunity for soldiers,ñ said Spc. Melissa Broaddus, BOSS representative, 742nd Military Intelligence Battalion. ñWe put together trips to New York. We go skiing in the winter. We have the funds to do different events. We just need to get the word out to more soldiers about the program.ñ

Another bonus for those soldiers with BOSS: free goodies.

ñLast year we got lots of different stuff to give away,ñ Broaddus said. ñWe had free tickets to football, baseball and hockey games. We couldn't give enough of them away.ñ

In 1989, the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center and major commands were tasked to develop a program to get single soldiers involved in determining their recreation and leisure needs. Implementation of the BOSS program began with single-soldier focus groups.

In 1991, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff formally expanded the BOSS program to include all areas of single soldiers' lives.

The BOSS program has several plans on the agenda. Some of the events service members can look forward to include: the annual Andrews Air Force Base Air Show May 19 ñ 20 and a white-water rafting trip planned for this summer.

Another opportunity BOSS offers local service members is the Partners-in-Education program. Interested service

members can donate a few minutes of their time each week to students at Meade Heights Elementary School by helping kids learn computers, reading, math or by being a recess pal.

BOSS meetings are held every third Wednesday of the month at 3 p.m. at Bldg. 9828. Post BOSS meetings are held every Thursday at 1:30 p.m. at McGill Recreation Center. For more information, contact your platoon sergeant or first sergeant.



Former commander waves good-bye

Capt. Patrick B. Mackin, commander, Company B, 742nd Military Intelligence Battalion, says farewell to his soldiers after his Change of Command ceremony at the Post Theater March 15. The new commander is Capt. Terry C. Hyman.

photo by Spc. Brian Murphy

Author brings his expertise to museum

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT. DENNY COX
SoundOFF!

The Fort George G. Meade Museum is known for its extensive collection of World War I exhibits and artifacts.

This is partly because the installation was founded as Camp Meade in 1917 during the height of the war to end all wars.

The museum's prized possession is a World War I Renault FT-17 battle tank nicknamed the "Five of Hearts." The tank was brought back from the war, restored completely and now sits in a place of honor inside the museum.

The arrival of a new museum technician has given the community a new expert to inventory, identify and preserve the museum's treasures.

Mark R. Henry, who was hired in December, is the author of three books about military history with a fourth due out later this month.

Henry's first book, "U.S. Marine Corps in World War I (1917-1918)," evolved from an interest he developed as a boy while learning about his grandfather, a Marine in World War I.

Henry had some photos, his grandfather's service-dress uniform and a strong desire to learn all he could about the man he had never met.

"I wrote a letter to Osprey Publishing offering to write a book about the Marines in World War I. They offered me a contract and I wrote the book," said Henry.

"The publishers liked it and asked if I could write any more. That led to the series on the U.S. Army in World War II," he continued.

Henry wrote "The U.S. Army in World War II (The Pacific)" and "The U.S. Army in World War II (The Mediterranean)."

The third and final book in the series, "The U.S. Army in World War II (The European Theater)," will be released March 25.

The four books are part of Osprey Publishing's Men-at-Arms Series.

The series is a source of information on the uniforms, insignia and appearance of the world's fighting men of past and present. It covers subjects as diverse as the Imperial Roman army, the Napoleonic wars and German airborne troops.

Each volume includes 40 photographs and diagrams, as well as eight pages of full-color artwork.

As the author, it was Henry's responsibility to provide the artist assigned to illustrate his books with historically accurate specifications of the equipment and clothing of the men-at-arms featured.

"I dressed my friends up in actual uniforms from



Mark R. Henry, a museum technician with the Fort George G. Meade Museum, stands in front of a World War I Renault FT-17 battle tank. Henry helps inventory, identify and preserve the museum's collection.

the period and took their pictures. The pictures were sent to the artist with exact instructions regarding the weapons and equipment they should draw," said Henry.

Most of the uniforms come from Henry's personal collection. He has items from the Civil War through World War II.

Anything he doesn't have is improvised for the pictures. "I needed a World War II soldier holding a machine gun tripod. So I had my model hold a pair of hedge shears over his shoulders as if they were the tripod."

"I sent the picture to the artist with a note to draw the tripod in place of the shears," he said. Henry said that each book takes him an average of eight months to write.

Henry receives a lump-sum payment for each book published, but said he didn't write the books for the money.

"I wrote them because I wanted to be published in the field. My real desire was just to work in military history," he said.

Henry has three more books scheduled for publication. He is writing books about the U.S. Navy in World War II and a two-part series on the Normandy D-day Invasion. They are scheduled for release in

2002.

The native of Coronado, Calif., earned a bachelor's degree in history from California Polytechnic University at San Luis Obispo. He is currently a candidate for a master's degree in history at San Diego State University.

Henry was an Army officer in the Signal Corps from 1981 to 1990. He served in the Army Reserve until 1994.

During his service, Henry was stationed at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., Fort Hood, Texas, and in Germany.

While at Fort Huachuca, Henry earned a small measure of fame as an extra in the movie "Geronimo."

"I played a cavalry trooper in the movie. At the time it was being filmed, I was a member of a troop of federal cavalry re-enactors," he said.

But studying and writing history have remained Henry's true love.

"The work that goes into my books is nothing that I wouldn't normally do in my spare time for fun," he said. "My hobby is my vocation and my vocation is my hobby."

The museum is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sundays. For more information, call 677-6966.

(This article is courtesy of the SoundOFF!)

No matter the service, wearing earrings on military installation not allowed

When it comes to the policy on men wearing earrings while in civilian attire on a military installation, the answer is simple — don't do it.

According to a message put out by Command Sgt. Maj. Sandra Matlock-Williams, installation command sergeant major, AR 670-1 for the Army; NAVPERS 1566651 for the Navy; for the Marine Corps its Marine Corps Order P1020.34 and the Air Force's AFI 36-2908 all state in one form or another that males are not permitted to wear earrings when in civilian attire on an installation.

"Let me put the confusion to rest," Matlock-Williams said. "All the services take a very similar stance on this issue when it comes to active duty (including guard and reserves). In plain English no service allows men to wear earrings even when in civilian attire while on a military installation."

And for those soldiers in the 704th Military Intelligence Brigade who still are not sure, the message is reiterated locally.

"The regulation spells it out clearly," said Command Sgt. Maj. Randy Wilson,

command sergeant major, 704th MI Brigade. "Male soldiers may not wear earrings while on a federal installation, on duty or off duty."

So what are soldiers and noncommissioned officers supposed to do if they come across a fellow male service member wearing an earring on post?

"It is your duty to execute the standards set forth in the regulations," Wilson said. "It is important to correct the young service members who may not be familiar with the policy. There are a small number of service members out there who do not know the policy. The rest of the service members might simply forget."

When confronting the service member, inform him of your name, rank, and make him aware of the regulation in a professional manner, Wilson said.

"If the service member refuses to remove the earring, get his information and report the situation through his chain of command," Wilson said. "If they continue to refuse, they could be subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice or their services' appropriate course of action."

Language Olympians aim for gold

BY SPC. BRIAN MURPHY
Editor, The Voice

What would the Olympics be without athletes such as all-world sprinter Michael Johnson, track and field's elite Marion Jones or the legendary Carl Lewis?

Better yet, what would the Olympics be if there were no summer or winter events? Or if the competition was based solely on who was the most proficient at their respective language? Could it be possible to medal in Chinese Mandarin, as opposed to the 100-meter dash?

It is possible, and that was the scene as more than 70 service members competed in the Fort Meade Joint Language Center Olympics at Bldg. 9828 March 20 - 23.

The purpose of the Joint Language Center (JLC) Olympics was to provide an enjoyable, yet very competitive environment in which linguists in the Fort Meade community, and select other units, were given an opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic skills, according to Chief Warrant Officer 2 Art Distelrath, officer in charge of the Joint Language Center.

The results of this competition will be used by the various commands to identify competitors for the World Wide Language Olympics held in May at Defense Language Institute (DLI), as well as the non-resident games (VTT) in April and May, held in the JLC. Additionally, the competition was designed to be a training tool and an incentive to develop the best possible linguists for Fort Meade, Distelrath said.

"This competition was open to any linguist on Fort Meade or the surrounding area," he said. "We set up these Language Olympics to be a mirror image of what these service members would see at DLI."

The Languages for the 2001 Olympics were Arabic (MSA), Chinese Mandarin, Korean, Persian-Farsi, Russian, and Spanish. For the competition, each of the linguists went head-to-head against fellow service members in events such as Twenty Questions, Powerword, Jeopardy and an Intel Triathlon.

"This is the first step in the local unit's evaluation of their service members," Distelrath said. "But this is also designed to be a fun and competitive event for all of the linguists. This was a chance for them to get out and show their linguistic prowess."

One of the "gold medal" performers who showed his prowess during the competition was Staff Sgt. Roland Huson, Russian linguist, 741st Military Intelligence



photos by Spc. Brian Murphy

Three Persian-Farsi linguists from the Joint Language Center run a half-of-a-mile lap around Bldg. 9828 during the Intel Triathlon portion of the competition. The Olympics were open to linguists from each of the different military services.

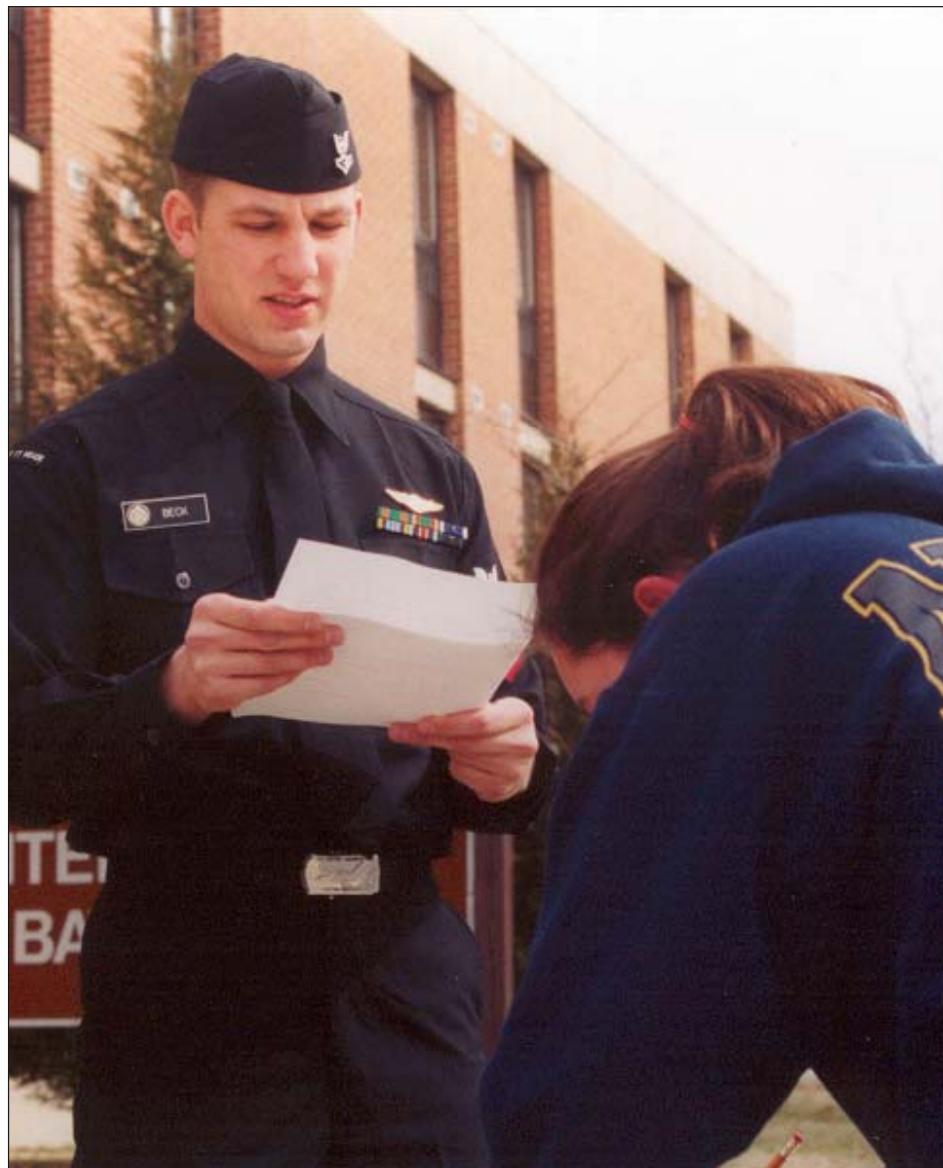
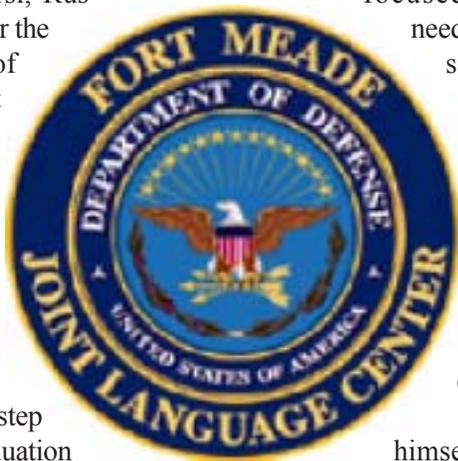
Battalion. Huson finished the competition as the overall winner for the Russian linguists, but it was how he won that was most impressive.

During the Russian Jeopardy event of the Language Olympics, Huson earned 12,700 points. What makes his score even more remarkable is the fact that the second place finisher, Petty Officer 1st Class Daniel Wedeking, finished the game with 900 points.

"I didn't know what to expect," Huson said of the Jeopardy event. "I focused on areas I felt I needed to know to do reasonably well during the competition. Afterwards I felt pretty good, but there were still some questions I knew the answers to but couldn't think of fast enough."

In order to prepare himself for the Language Olympics, Huson built up a personal library of books on Russia and the language. That's the mentality needed to be successful during the Language Olympics, according to Distelrath.

"This is a high-level competition," Distelrath said. "To be successful they need to be a good linguist. We built the competition and the individual events at a two-plus and higher level."



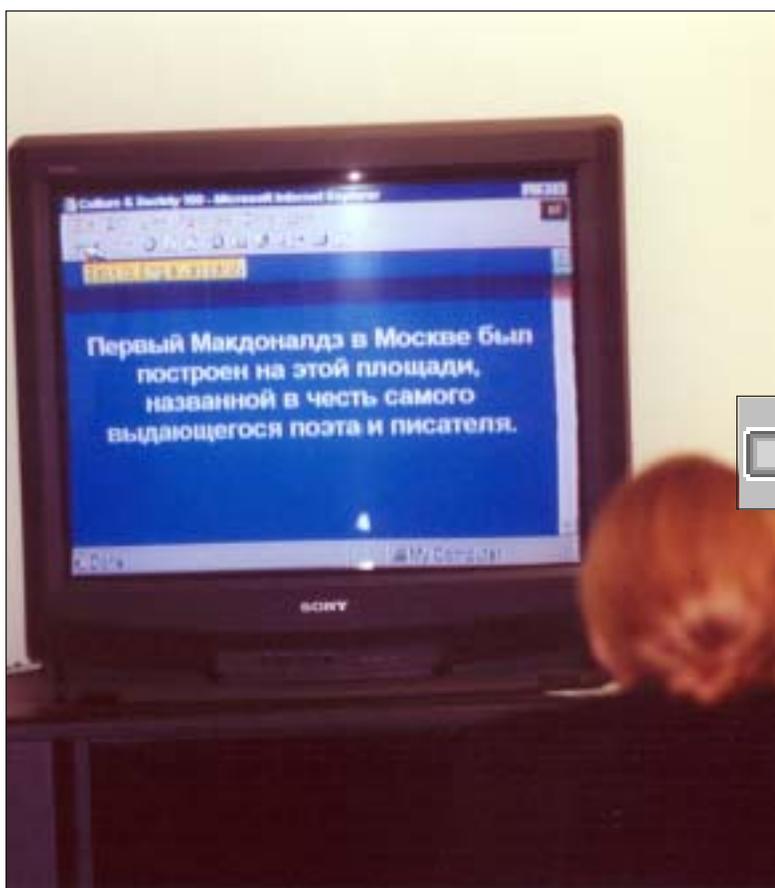
Petty Officer 2nd Class Derek Beck asks Petty Officer 2nd Class Jill Fox a series of questions in Persian-Farsi during the Intel Triathlon portion of the Joint Language Center Olympics held at Bldg. 9828 March 20 - 23. After completing the questions, Fox had to run another half of a mile before moving on to the next segment of the Triathlon.



Russian linguists Staff Sgt. Rebecca Bolton and Staff Sgt. Roland Huson prepare for the next round of Jeopardy.



Marya Ziegler reads the next question to the contestants.



The competitors then read the question in Russian on a television screen.



Huson answers another question correctly. He finished Russian Jeopardy with 12,700 points.



More than 70 service members competed in the Language Olympics this year.



First Lt. Michael Connel challenges his Persian-Farsi skills during the competition.

Around the Army

Army trains eBlack Hawk Downi actors

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (Army News Service) - Actors for the movie iBlack Hawk Downi trained at three Army installations in February before traveling to Morocco to film the battle scenes.

Actors Ron Eldard and Jeremy Piven, who portray helicopter pilots in the film, trained on simulations at Fort Campbell, Ky. Twenty-one actors who portray Army Rangers received instruction at Fort Benning, Ga., to add realism to their roles. And a group of actors were trained at Fort Bragg, N.C., on an urban combat course that simulated conditions in Mogadishu, Somalia.

On Oct. 3-4, 1993, while deployed to Somalia, U. S. Army Special Operations Command soldiers fought their bloodiest battle in decades. Two Black Hawk helicopters crashed, and 18 USASOC soldiers were killed before it was all over. The events of those two days ó the actions of Task Force Ranger and the Battle of Mogadishu ó are now being made into a movie.

Actors who trained at Fort Bragg included Bill Fichtner, who will take the part of Master Sgt. Paul Howe; Eric Bana who will play Master Sgt. John iMacei Macejunas; and Nikolaj Waldau, who will portray Sgt. 1st Class Gary Gordon.

First the actors received detailed instruction on the proper handling and operation of weapons used by the soldiers in Somalia. They were trained by Special Forces Advanced Urban Combat course instructors.

Sgt. 1st Class Chris Young, a marksmanship instructor, focused more on technique than hitting targets. He instructed the actors to shoot with both eyes open.

iItis a combat proven technique,i Young said. iThe guy that taught me how

to shoot was John Macejunas.i

After a morning of dry-fire, they moved from the classroom to the range where the actors fired both the rifles and pistols.

Next, Sgt. 1st Class Sander Kinsall led breaching training, or entering locked or obstructed doorways or windows using explosives. Kinsall showed the actors the proper and safe way to construct charges and firing systems that blow doors or destroy door locks while causing minimal damage to room interiors.

On the third day of training, the actors moved on to close quarteris battles ó entering and clearing a building of possible threats. Hour upon hour the actors lined up ó or stacked ó outside a room, entered a door and moved to a specified corner of the room engaging targets within their sector of responsibility. The instructors constantly reinforced learning by shooting questions at the actors.

iWhere should the brass fall,i asked Kinsall?

iOutside the door,i the actors responded.

iWhat are the principles of CQB?i asked Kinsall.

iSpeed, surprise and violence of action,i said Bano.

The final day of the actoris training culminated at Fort Braggis Military Operations in Urban Terrain site, a cinderblock mock village. There, the Special Forces soldiers demonstrated movement through a city that poses threats at every turn.

Fichtner, Bana and Waldau fought their way against an opposing force using simunitions through the mock city to a fictional helicopter crash site.

At Fort Benning, 1st Sgt. James Hardy, Ranger Training Detachment commandant, has a personal interest in the project.

His goal was to ensure the 21 actors playing the Rangers had a good understanding of the Ranger mentality and way of life and how events played out in Mogadishu those two days. Hardy was a team leader there and had been on several missions before being called home on an emergency. Although he didnt fight in the Oct. 3-4 battle, his soldiers did, and several died there.

When designing the training, they selected topics, iwe felt were the most significant in making an impression on these actors on what a Ranger actually is and what a Ranger does,i explained Hardy and Sgt. 1st Class Martin Barreras, RTD assistant commandant.

Ranger instructors taught classes from general military knowledge ó how to wear the uniform and customs and courtesies ó up to advanced marksmanship skills and flowing through and clearing buildings. The actors discussed the Ranger Creed and the Ranger history. They learned hand-to-hand combative techniques, how to tie knots and how to use radios. Actors playing medics worked with Ranger medics in combat scenarios. Task Force Ranger veterans talked about their experiences with the actors. On the fourth day of training, they fired M16-A2 rifles and squad automatic weapons.

While at Benning, the actors wore desert-camouflaged uniforms and nametags with their Ranger characters. They displayed the proper courtesies to each other. They moved like a military unit, with the characteris rank establishing who was the squad leader and so on.

Barreras said there were two reasons for the intense Ranger orientation. The first was so the actors would get an understanding of how it feels to be in a Ranger



photo by Maj. Jonathan Withington

Actor Bill Fichtner practices combative techniques with Staff Sgt. Tim Burke, 7th Special Forces Group (A) in preparation for the filming of eBlack Hawk Downi.

unit and secondly, he hoped it would carry over to the movie.

iI want them to remember the sense of teamwork that is inherent to a Ranger organization and the amount of attention to detail thatis required from every individual that is part of that team. I hope that once the filming begins and ... the movies does come out, thereis a positive impression or impact on the moviegoers on who a Ranger actually is and what a Ranger does,i explained Hardy.

iThe more information and techniques we can provide these guys the better they can portray what happened over there. You can see a difference in their conduct each day. Itis progressive. They dont know anything about being a soldier. Were giving them everything ó how to be a soldier, a Ranger and a leader ó all in five days.i

The movie is projected to be released in November 2001.

Army Rifle Team coach retires after 54 years of service

FORT BENNING, Ga. (Army News Service) ó A man who has given more than a half-century of service to the Army served his last duty day March 2.

William E. Krilling, 74, the coach of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit International Rifle Team for the last 28 years, retired after nearly 53 years of federal service. The retired Army master sergeant was honored at a retirement gala for his federal civilian service March 2 at the Columbus, Ga., Iron Works Convention and Trade Center.

Heis a man who commanders say personifies the word isoldier,i but he refers to himself as a isurvivor. i

Hundreds of people from seven different countries attended the dinner honoring this internationally respected shooter, coach and judge, including: Deiter Anschutz, president of the Anschutz Rifle Corporation; Horst Schreiber, the secretary general of the International Shooting Sport Federation; Gen. Jin Sam Lee, retired chief of staff of the South Korean army; Col. Jens Nyard, head veterinarian of the Norwegian army; Maj. Gordon R. Robert, the only active-duty Medal of Honor recipient; and numerous Olympic medalists from around the country.

Krilling, who said heis been almost everywhere in the world except the South Pole, said he has enjoyed his time with the Army, where he got to beat the enemy on the battlefield as well as on the competition firing line.

iItis hard to retire when you enjoy what youre doing,i Krilling said. iThereis always a challenge. I enjoyed what I did in the Army. Then I got out and got a job doing what I wanted to do most.i

Raised in Buffalo Lake, Minn., Krilling enlisted in the Army after graduating from high school in 1946. He started shooting in 1949 and first competed with the post team at Fort Belvoir, Va. He made the All-Army Team in 1954 and also shot for the national team. In 1958, he became a member of the U.S. Army Europe Rifle Team and was a member of the record-breaking national championship service rifle team. Krilling also won the title of the Worldis Best Shooter at the Conseil International du Sport Militaire ó the World Military Olympics, also known as CISM.

In 1959, he was assigned as a shooter and instructor at USAMU, Fort Benning, where he won a team gold medal and individual silver medal at the 1963 Pan-American Games.

In 1966 he won an individual bronze medal and a team gold medal at the World Shooting Championships.

Krilling, a USAMU Hall of Famer, won six national championship titles and set a National Rifle Association shooting record, which he held for 50 years. He also won four gold medals, one silver medal and two bronze medals in international competitions and was a member of two world-record-setting teams.

Since May 1973 at the USAMU, Krilling coached his team, which included 14 Olympians, to 105 CISM medals, 172 Championship of the Americas medals, 84 Pan-American medals, 185 World Cup medals and four Olympic medals. Krilling was also the 1998 U.S. Olympic Committee National Shooting Coach of the Year and one of the five finalists for USOC Coach of the Year. He was an Olympic jury member at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Australia, as well as at the 1996, 1992, 1988 and 1984 Olympics.

A decorated war veteran, Krilling received the Distinguished Service Cross ó the highest military award next to the Medal of Honor ó as well as the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart for his heroism during the Korean War.

Around the Army

New suicide prevention steps to be taken

The Army has developed a new suicide prevention campaign plan that officials said should be released to the field this spring.

“Soldiers, Leaders and Communities Saving Lives” is the plan’s title. It focuses on training people about how to recognize early signs of suicidal behavior and how to intervene.

The plan was formed after the Army had a 26 percent increase in active-duty suicides between 1997 and 1999, said Lt. Col. Jerry Swanner, the Army suicide prevention program manager at the Pentagon. He said the problem seemed to culminate in January last year when the Army had six confirmed suicides in the first five days of the year.

“Obviously, this caused great concern within the Army leadership,” Swanner said, adding that it prompted Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki to direct a complete review of the Army’s suicide prevention program.

The Department of the Army Suicide Prevention Working Group — which consists of policy officers, chaplains, and psychiatrists across the Army staff — launched into an exhaustive study, Swanner said. The group examined numerous reports and studies including the U.S. Surgeon General’s “Call to Action to Prevent Suicide,” published in 1999.

The group also met with leading civilian psychiatrists in the field of suicide prevention, including Dr. David Shaffer, who was commissioned by the assistant secretary of Defense for Health Affairs in 1996 to analyze all DoD Suicide Prevention programs.

“We used to believe that suicides were from stress, and if we reduced stress that would reduce the risks of suicides,” said Swanner. However, he said recent studies indicate the majority of suicides occur due to some form of psychiatric disorder.

Stress can trigger the desire to commit suicide, but stress alone is not sufficient enough for someone to commit suicide, said Col. David Orman, the psychiatry consultant to The Surgeon General of the Army.

The new Army suicide prevention model focuses on four major areas: developing life-coping skills, encouraging help-seeking behavior, raising vigilance on suicide awareness, and integrating and synchronizing unit and community programs.

Although draft versions of the new campaign plan have already been sent to the Army’s major commands, Swanner said he expects the official release sometime within the next six weeks.

He said the working group is waiting for a final DoD directive concerning psychological autopsies and the requirements for a standardized suicide surveillance format.

The new campaign plan encourages leaders to reinforce positive life-coping skills. One such program, which Swanner said originated in the 25th Infantry Division, is “Building Strong and Ready Families.” It focuses on developing interpersonal communication skills between married couples. The Army has recently funded a pilot program for a selected number of brigades.

About 75 percent of all soldiers who committed suicide last year were experiencing significant relationship problems in their personal life, said Lt. Col. Glen Bloomstrom, a chaplain in the Family Ministry Office for the Army’s Chief of Chaplains.

Some recruits enter the Army predisposed to mental illness, Swanner said. He said the Army Surgeon’s General Office and TRADOC are now determining the feasibility of pre-screening recruits for dysfunctional behavior during the early stages of initial entry training. He said those determined unfit for duty would ideally be separated before they reach their first unit of assignment.

On the other hand, Swanner said the Army should not discriminate against those who seek and receive mental health treatment. He would like to change the stigma associated with mental health care.

“We must tear down these barriers that prevent our soldiers from receiving the professional mental help that some so desperately need and deserve,” Swanner said.

Swanner said dramatic change could only occur if there is a shift in the “gung-ho, drive-on” mentality that implies seeking help is a sign of weakness.

When soldiers realize they need help, it is a sign of individual strength and maturity, Swanner said, not of weakness.

In the new program, the Army is turning to Living Works Education, a public service organization based in Calgary, Canada, that has developed a workshop titled “Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training” or ASIST.

The focus of the training is to provide anyone who might come in contact with a person at risk for suicide with the confidence and tools to take immediate life-saving actions, Swanner said, until the individual can be seen by a mental health care professional.

The goal is to eventually have one ASIST-trained soldier within every battalion to assist the commander in determining the actual risk of self-injurious behavior, Swanner said.

Chaplains now attend ASIST workshops as part of their formal training.

But Swanner said all counselors that come in contact with soldiers in need would benefit from the workshop. Trial defense lawyers, MPs and even unit leaders preparing for an extended deployment should take ASIST training, Swanner said. To accomplish this goal, the campaign plan calls for two ASIST trainers at every installation.

ASIST should be considered as “triage” for suicidal risk, Swanner said.

“Chaplains have been receiving training on suicide prevention for a long time now, but ASIST will give everyone that receives the training a common language,” said Lt. Col. Gregory Black, staff chaplain for the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine. “If a commander or counselor has to refer a soldier to Mental Health, they can give a proper risk assessment.”

To standardize suicide prevention training, USACHPPM and the American Association of Suicidology have published “Suicide Prevention, A Resource Manual for the U.S. Army.”

The manual is available on the USACHMMP web site at <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/default.htm>.

Throughout the creation of the campaign plan, one theme was emphasized over and over again by the senior Army leadership, Swanner said. That is, suicide prevention is a leader’s responsibility. Therefore, he said the plan was prepared to assist installation commanders in the refinement of their own suicide prevention policies and programs that are outlined in AR 600-63 and DA Pam 600-24.

“The bottom line is to get involved and take action,” Swanner said. “After all, you may be the very last person to have a chance to help.”

Army Reserves, National Guard to get more full-time support

WASHINGTON (Army News Service) — With the planned addition of about 5,500 full-time support personnel to the Army Reserve and 12,000 to the Army National Guard over the next 10 years, reserve-component units should be better prepared to meet the challenges of the Army’s high operational tempo, according to Army officials.

The 2001 National Defense Authorization Act began the full-time support ramp-up of more Army Guard/Reserve soldiers and military technicians a year earlier than originally slated, said Col. Bruce Wilson, a force development director with the Army’s Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations Office.

“I just talked to congressional leaders this past week and they remain committed to increasing our full-time support,” Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Plewes,

chief of the Army Reserve, told attendees at a 99th Regional Support Command Commanders’ Conference in Pittsburgh Feb. 24. “Our full-time force is a real success story. While the Air Force Reserve is manned with fulltimers at about 33 percent of its authorized strength, the Army Reserve has been getting the job done with about 10 percent.”

The need for more AGRs and military technicians in the Reserve, Plewes explained, is due to the increased operational tempo of the Army over the past 10 years which has placed heavy demands on the Reserve.

Military technicians work as Department of the Army civilians during the normal workweek and as reservists during their units’ drill weekends. AGRs work as soldiers both during the work-

week and drills.

The full-time support manages a myriad of unit administrative details such as pay processing, personnel records maintenance and supply actions, according to Wilson.

Work done by the AGRs and military technicians on a day-to-day basis allows reservists more time for training and executing their units’ mission rather than wading through piles of paperwork when they arrive for their monthly weekend duty, he said.

However, the ramp-up will not assign additional full-time support to units based upon the best unit justifications as has occurred in the past. The added manpower will be assigned based upon a formal risk assessment.

Manpower is directly tied to readiness, Wilson said, therefore those units

most likely to be called upon to support Army operations in the short term will have priority to be manned with more full-time support than those who are tiered to be mobilized at later dates.

For example, a transportation battalion slated to deploy overseas within 30 days of notification will more likely get more full-time support than a finance battalion scheduled to deploy 120 days after notification.

“Getting increased full-time support has been the Reserve and National Guard chiefs’ number one priority,” Wilson said.

“This initiative backs up the chief of staff of the Army’s commitment to fully integrate the Army’s reserve component with the active component and is very important to the transformation effort,” he said.

Around Town

The Battle of Gettysburg

BY CAPT. ALEC L. BLAKELEY

Comptroller, 704th Military Intelligence Brigade

Considered by most the turning point of the Civil War, this battle is clearly one of the most important in the history of our country. In three days of hard fighting that changed the course of U.S. history, the Battle of Gettysburg resulted in as many as 50,000 casualties - all American soldiers. As such a central event in our nation's history, it is important that we learn and understand the battle and honor the participants for their courage and dedication. Experience Gettysburg.

The Gettysburg Address



Abraham Lincoln
16th President

It was at Gettysburg on November 19, 1863 that President Abraham Lincoln delivered one of the most eloquent speeches in the history of the United States in commemorating the the soldiers in the battle.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives, that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate - we can not consecrate - we cannot hallow - this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us - that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion - that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain - that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom - and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.



photo by Tony Scafile

Local history buffs live out one of our nation's most important battles during the 137th Gettysburg Reenactment.

Go See It For Yourself!



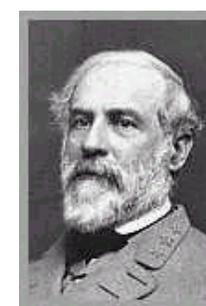
Members of the brigade stationed at Fort Meade are in close proximity to one of the most important battles in American history. In only a little more than an hour, you could be walking on hallowed ground, truly experiencing our military heritage. Whether you are of Northern or Southern descent, you will be fascinated by the places, stories, and people associated with the Battle of Gettysburg. If you are casually interested why not spend the day. Veteran battleground visitors will undoubtedly want to dedicate a weekend or more. Whatever your interest, don't pass up the opportunity to experience Gettysburg -- the battle and the town.

To get there, follow this route: Take either I-95N or I-295N to I-695N and head NW around Baltimore. After 10 miles or, take exit 19 at I-795NW towards Owings Mills. After about 8 miles, take the MD-30N exit (#9A), towards Hanover. Keep left at the fork in the ramp and turn left onto MD-140. After about 12 miles, take the MD-97N ramp towards Union Mills/Gettysburg. Drive for 20 miles and this road will take you directly into downtown Gettysburg.

George Meade vs. Robert Lee



Lee was the experienced, beloved General who had reinvigorated the South and led the Army of Northern Virginia (ANV) to many great victories. Meade was the reserved, calculating tactician newly raised to command of the Army of the Potomac (AOP) only as a compromise selection and because of his predecessor's failure to act. The ANV was in the midst of its second invasion of northern soil with the AOP trying to cover both Baltimore and Washington. Who would best take advantage of the terrain and circumstances and strike a devastating blow to the cause of the other? This campaign placed these strong, devoted, and capable leaders head-to-head.



Staff Ride

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 704th Military Intelligence Brigade is scheduled to conduct a staff ride to Gettysburg sometime this summer to study the battle. In addition, a simple tour of the battlefield will also be offered. If you would like to participate, please submit your name to Capt. Blakeley, DSN 923-0511, and your request will be honored on a space-available basis.

Want To Learn More?

There are a plethora of resources available on the battle - books, movies, diaries, letters, and much more. The Internet is a great source of information. For a listing of more resources, visit the RMO Brigade Intranet site and click on Gettysburg.

(<http://meade-704mi.army.mil/intranet.htm>)

References

Many resources were consulted in the preparation of this article. Of particular note are: Coddington, Edwin B. *The Gettysburg Campaign.* New York, 1979 and Long, E.B. *The Civil War, Day By Day.* New York, 1971. Both of these sources are available but out of print.

After the Battle

Despite the resounding Union victory, the war was still in doubt. Lincoln pressed Meade to follow up his victory by pursuing and crushing Lee's army, but it would be two more years before Appomattox. Grant, not Meade, would be the leader who Lincoln placed his trust in to finally finish the job.

SAFETY BRIEF

BY CAPT. ANTIONETTE N. RAINEY
SAFETY OFFICER

It is beautiful outside, the birds are singing, and the warmth of the sun seems to call us out from our winter refuge. The garage and lawn are full of debris from the winter; and the windows, roof, and gutters need cleaning. Sounds like it is time for...!Spring cleaning! but before we get started outside, let's look at an inside effort that will pay for safety dividends to you and your family for months to come - that is, getting rid of reducing potential home and people hazards inside the house.



What are the home hazards you say? These hazards would be anything that could reduce your home to rubble (e.g. chemical products, medicines, razor blades, needles, nails, tools, broken or cracked glass, etc.).

Let's start with the bathroom. Empty the medicine cabinets, shelves, and storage areas under the sink. Remove outdated medicines, all cleaning products,

and check for other items that could be flammable or cause injury (e.g., fingernails polish remover, peroxide, alcohol, scissors, nail files, glass containers, etc.). If you have young ones running about the house, you need to ensure their little hands and eyes don't have access to items that could injure or kill them. Sure - most dangerous products have childproof caps that can delay children from opening them. But don't bet the farm on these safety features when the life of a young child may be at stake! I've seen a toddler open a bleach bottle in under 4 seconds! Stow away cleaners, flammables, sharp objects, all chemicals, and medicines in a location where young children cannot reach them. Also, avoid using products in glass containers or other breakable glass objects in the bathroom. These include shampoo, hair conditioner, liquid soap, drinking glasses, etc. Additionally, it is wise not to use containers for plants that could fall and break in the bathroom. Oh, and how about unplugging that hair dryer that sets on the tank of an open toilet, and put it away. Now, you may be thinking to yourself that I'm nitpicking, but stay with me. It's my job as a safety professional to make you aware of ALL hazards.

Our next stop is the kitchen. You should never keep chemicals, cleaning

products, knives, glasses, flammables (matches), medicines (including vitamins), etc., where young children can reach them. We all know this! Check under the sink, in the cabinets, and on the kitchen working surfaces to ensure these types of items are properly stowed away. A good way to store your cleaning items is to store them in a plastic or rubber carrier made for toting window cleaners, cleansers, toilet bowl cleaners, etc. By placing them in such a container, you can then store them in the pantry on a high shelf or overhead cabinet. This applies to spray products, also - such as paints, insecticides, air fresheners, and cleaning products. Check the burner pans on the stove and the toaster for scraps that could ignite, and clean that oven!

Now, let's go to the garage. Good common-sense thinking tells us not to store insecticides near food and to store flammables in a storage locker made for such things. The garage is an ideal place to put just about anything and everything - from gasoline and oil to waxes and fertilizer. Move your flammables to an outside shed if you have one. Get rid of any chemicals, oils gasoline, etc., you no longer need or that is waste. Be sure to dispose of them according to local regulations.

Finally, throughout the house, you need to consider using childproof safety locks for cabinets and drawers that contain hazardous items. Also, the use of cord wraps for blinds, window locks, safety gates for stairs, oven locks, stove knob covers, outlet covers, etc., is advised. Check the yellow pages for current information on poison control centers and other emergency numbers; then, list these numbers near each telephone. Check your first aid kit, and ensure you have replenished any used supplies. Check your smoke detector for proper operation and replace the battery when necessary. Installation of a carbon monoxide detector and the purchase of a fire extinguisher are also good investments for home safety. In addition, don't forget to make sure your tools are stored properly.

As you carry out your spring-cleaning project this year, I hope you'll use the safety tips in this article to serve as a good guide for your household mishaps prevention efforts. After all, the cost to you is free - and it's relatively painless. Don't allow yourself or your family to learn safety lessons through agonizing personal experience - the process of recovery (if you get the chance) is oftentimes very painful and lengthy. It's simply not worth it.

CIVILIAN'S CORNER

BY SAM JONES
BRIGADE SENIOR CIVILIAN

LEGISLATIVE TSP UPDATE

When can I sign up for the Thrift Saving Plan under the new eligibility provisions of Public Law 106-361?

On October 27, 2000 President Clinton signed Public Law 106-361, which provides for immediate participation in the TSP for newly hired (and rehired) employees covered by FERS or CSRS. Currently, newly hired employees must wait until the second open season after they are hired (a six-to twelve-month period) before they can contribute to the TSP; rehired employees also have a waiting period. Public Law 106-361 allows Federal employees to begin contributing their own money (through payroll contributions) when they are hired. However, this provision applies only to employee contributions; agency contributions remain on the current open season waiting period schedule. This new benefit is planned for implementation in conjunction with the May 15, 2001, open season with elections becoming effective in July 2001. Participants who are currently in their waiting periods will be eligible to make a contribution election during the May open season.

What money can be rolled over to my TSP account? Can I roll over my regular IRA into the



TSP? How about money from my mutual fund or savings account?

Public Law 106-361, signed October 27, 2000, allows direct rollovers from qualified retirement plans established by your previous employer. These plans are limited to pension, profit sharing, and stock bonus plans, and include 401(k) plans.

This law also allows rollovers from conduit IRAs that were set up to accept distributions from qualified retirement plans. However, you cannot roll over money from a regular IRA, a mutual fund or savings account. This benefit will be available to participants in July 2001. Rollover forms will be available on the Web site.

How have the contribution limits changed for the TSP?

On December 21, 2000, President Clinton signed the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2001. This law contains a provision that increases incrementally the contribution limits to the Thrift Savings Plan for participants covered by FERS and CSRS. FERS employees may elect to contribute up to 11 percent of their basic pay each pay period during the May 15, 2001, open season; CSRS employees may elect to contribute up to 6 percent. These elections will become effective in July 2001. Effective January 2002 and each following year, the contribution limits will increase by one percent until January 2006, at which time the limit will be eliminated completely.

The IRS annual deferral limit (\$10,500 for 2001) remains in effect. There is also no impact on either the Agency Automatic (one percent) contributions or the Agency Matching Contributions.

(Article posted on www.tsp.gov)

MORE TSP TIDBITS

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board announced that Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) participants will be able to begin investing in the Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment (S) Fund and the International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund beginning with the Open Season in May 2001. The new S and I Funds will be in addition to the Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund, Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund, and Government Securities Investment (G) Fund, which are the current investment choices available to participants.

The new TSP investment funds had been delayed pending the delivery of a new record keeping system being developed for the Board by American Management Systems, Inc., of Fairfax, Virginia, and initially scheduled for implementation this year. Although a firm date still has not been established for the new system's availability, the two new offerings will be made available in May 2001 under the current record keeping system. The new record keeping system will be implemented sometime later but an exact date is not known at this time.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

Please welcome Ms. Patricia Davison, our new Program Security Manager and Mr. Scott Van Acker, our new TROJAN service desk operator. Ms. Davison will work on the Brigade Staff and Mr. Van Acker will work in the Army TCAE.

March Madness reaches Murphy Field House



This was the scene for most games during the season, Big Dog forward Jonathan Holloway darts through the lane for an easy lay-in while the defenders watch helplessly.

With a regular-season record of 13-2, the Big Dogs of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 704th Military Intelligence Brigade finished tied for the best record in the league and in second place for the men's intramural basketball season.

The highlights of the season include a 35-point victory over 94th IS and a 30-point blowout over the Student Company squad.

Some of the iFirst Team All-American caliber Big Dogs players include the backcourt trio of point guard Nadir Sayaad, guard Willie Scott and point guard Edward Smith.

The Big Dog big men who wreak havoc in the front court include forward Jonathan Holloway, forward David Philips and center Marcus Denson.



photos by Spc. Brian Murphy

Big Dogs coach Michael Bey talks to his team during a break in the action.



Thanks in part to their tenacious defense and potent offense, the Big Dogs earned a first round bye and a number-two seeding heading into the post intramural basketball tournament.



VISION STATEMENT

704th Military Intelligence Brigade



Be the premier Army team providing full-spectrum signals intelligence and operational support to warfighters and national command authorities *HERE AND EVERYWHERE.*