

Serving the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), the Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield communities

## Army Chief of Staff visits Stewart, Hunter

Pfc. Benjamin T. Brody  
Staff Writer

As one of his first official visits since taking office in August, the Army's top Soldier visited Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield Nov. 20 and 21 and observed a Bradley Fighting Vehicle gunnery exercise by C Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment.

Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker also spoke with troops returning from Iraq and toured the National Guard Training Center at Stewart.

The gunnery exercise took place at Stewart's Multi-Purpose Range Complex, where Schoomaker thanked Soldiers for their bravery in Operation Iraqi Freedom and discussed the impending reorganization of 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) and the impact it will have on Marne Soldiers.

"America is enormously proud of you and of the 3rd Infantry Division," Schoomaker said to a small group of OIF veterans at Warrior's Walk. "As you know, most of America rode with you on that road to Baghdad."

Schoomaker discussed areas that could be improved

upon with the Soldiers, such as availability of small arms protective insert armor plates that can stop 7.62mm rounds and the lightweight M4 carbine to replace the M16 rifle.

"We're doing everything we can to get you ready to go - equipment, training, and people," he said. "Next month we should have 100 percent of troops in Iraq equipped with SAPI armor."

Both Schoomaker and 3rd Inf. Div. commander Maj. Gen. William G. Webster, Jr. expressed praise for the Marne Soldiers' dedication and professionalism.

"Everyone who has visited Stewart since the division has returned has been surprised that no one is whining or complaining about having to go to war, or even losing comrades," Webster said. "Our guys are anxious to get their equipment back in order and get prepared for whatever the nation needs them to do next."

Schoomaker agreed, saying that the Soldiers wounded in OIF that he visited wanted to get back to the fight because they were worried about their buddies.

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Pfc. Benjamin T. Brody

Lt. Col. Gary Luck, commander of 3/15 Inf. and 3/15 Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Gallagher explain their battalion's training exercises to Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker.

## 260th Soldiers return home

Pfc. Emily J. Danial  
Staff writer, Hunter Public Affairs

Family and friends of approximately 50 Soldiers from the 260th Quartermaster Battalion were reunited with their loved ones at Hunter Army Airfield's Army Community Service ballroom Nov. 18.

Most of those returning had been deployed since March, some since February, but all had one thing in common — they were ready to come home.

The family of 1st Lt. Nick Bauer drove more than 800 miles from Queens, N.Y., to meet him. Bauer's sister Stephanie, mother Susan, father Steve and three aunts said they loaded up a rental minivan and Bauer's car Nov. 16 to make the trip to see him safely home.

"I'm thankful they were here, and glad to be back," said Bauer amidst a crowd of relatives.

The 260th's mission in Operation Iraqi Freedom was to provide bulk transportation support to Army, Marine and Air Force units in support of the entire theater of operations.

The battalion transported more than 50 million gallons of fuel in 5,000- and 7,000-gallon tanker trucks to its supporting units, including the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized).

Providing fuel for mechanized forces was essential to mission accomplishment, since vehicles such as M1A1 Abrams tanks don't get the best gas mileage in the world — less than a half-mile per gallon — and because of these vehicles' fast-paced rate of movement.

The battalion also provided humanitarian support to the local population.

Returning on the flight were Lt. Col. Myron M. Fonseca, 260th Qm. Bn.'s commander, as well as the battalion's colors.

Another 109 of the battalion's Soldiers are still deployed as a part of other task forces.

Arriving at ACS to cheers, tears, and

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Pfc. Emily J. Danial

Jason Sibley, 2, son of 260th Sgt. Leroy Sibley, presents Command Sgt. Maj. Heriberto Vazquez, 260th command sergeant major, with a small token of his esteem Nov. 18 at the Soldiers' welcome home ceremony.

## Ga. roads to close for 3ID post exercise

Press Release

3rd Inf. Div. PAO

Command Post Exercise "Marne Blitz" begins at Fort Stewart Dec. 1 and ends Dec. 4. The CPX will involve approximately 3,000 Soldiers and 700 vehicles.

This CPX is the first conducted by the 3rd Infantry Division since its return from Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Liberty, Bryan, Evans, Tattall and Long County residents' cooperation with the Fort Stewart Military Police is greatly appreciated by the Commanding General of the 3rd Infantry Division and Fort Stewart.

In the interest of safety, the following road networks on Fort Stewart will be closed Dec. 1 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dec. 4 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and will have military police conducting traffic control operations.

Ga. Highway 119 North will be closed from gate 5 to the installation boundary. To travel to and from Pembroke and Stewart, use U.S. 280, I-95, U.S. 17, Ga. 196 and U.S. 84 or via Glennville on U.S. 280, U.S. 25 or Ga. 196.

Ga. 144 East will be closed from the installation boundary on the Richmond Hill side near I-95 to 144 West at the intersection of Stewart and Country Road 63. To travel from Stewart to Richmond Hill, use U.S. 17, Ga. 196 and U.S. 84. Travel between Glennville and Stewart on U.S. 25, and Ga. 196.

Ga. 47/Sunbury Road will be closed from the installation boundary prior to the Wright Army Airfield turnoff, with a detour at Ga. 47/Sunbury and Joseph Martin Drive back to U.S. 84 in Hinesville. Residents living within the detour will be granted access, otherwise please use General Screven Ave. to

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## Ethan's wish comes true at Georgia bases

Pfc. Benjamin T. Brody  
Staff Writer

Five-year-old Ethan Hobbs of Thomson, Ga., suffering from cancer, had a dream to become a Soldier one day, and with help from real Soldiers at Fort Benning, Fort Stewart and Fort Gordon, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation that is precisely what happened.

Hobbs and his family spent four days touring the three bases and experiencing what military life is all about.

Stewart hosted Hobbs and his family for two days; during this time the young Soldier

met 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) commander Maj. Gen. William G. Webster, who presented him with his Challenge Coin, and hoisted Hobbs and his sister, Elizabeth, upon his shoulders to show them around his office.

"This has been just awesome," said Judy Hobbs, Ethan's mother. "He's beside himself with excitement."

Webster empathized with the Hobbs family, saying that his wife had repeatedly battled cancer in the past. Hobbs was diagnosed with rhabdomyosarcoma, a form of cancer, when he was three. His mother said that Ethan would take a military policeman

action figure and its German Shepard guard dog along with him to his early chemotherapy treatments. She added that the hope of one day being a Soldier kept Ethan motivated and inspired as he underwent the cancer treatments. Hobbs is currently in remission and has been out of treatment for nearly a year.

At the Fort Stewart Museum, Hobbs was introduced to Daisy, a military police working dog, and got inside an MP Humvee. After a tour of the museum, 3rd Inf. Div. Command Sgt. Maj. Julian Kellman gave

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Pfc. Benjamin T. Brody

Hobbs and Staff Sgt. William Estes happily examine the Commander's Coin given to Hobbs by garrison commander Col. John Kidd.

**Weather Forecast**

<b>FRI</b>	High 68°	Low 34°
<b>SAT</b>	High 63°	Low 41°
<b>SUN</b>	High 72°	Low 52°

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# ... Dreams come true

## ETHAN

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Hobbs his coin and helped him into a miniature Battle Dress Uniform, donated by the Enlisted Spouse's Club and complete with Marne patches. Kellman and Staff Sgt. William Estes, Hobbs' escort, then promoted Hobbs to Staff Sergeant and pinned his new rank on his collar. Hobbs also recieved several gifts from My Force, a store in the Post Exchange.

Representatives from the Vietnam Veteran's of America, Liberty Chapter also presented Hobbs with an honorary membership and a stuffed toy dog that he promptly named Daisy.

Ethan was then driven off in an MP squad car, and shortly found himself participating in an "arrest" of a suspected felon. When the "suspect" ran from the arresting officer, Daisy pursued and quickly dragged him to the ground.

"I want a dog like this," Hobbs said. "Is she for sale?"

"It's great that someone so young is showing an interest in the military police," said military policeman Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Wettstein. "I'm glad we are able to give him a good experience today."

The Hobbs family then drove to the 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery motor pool where they examined a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, a Multiple Launch Rocket

System, a Paladin self-propelled howitzer and heavy trucks. Soldiers from 1/41 also escorted Hobbs to the battalion's Engagement Simulator Trainer.

The next day, Hobbs ate breakfast in the Division Artillery dining facility, then went to 4th Battalion, 64th Armor's motor pool, where he sat in an M1A1 Abrams battle tank.

Hobbs also went with 4/64 to Evans Field, where he actually got to drive as well as shoot simulated tanks, Bradleys and humvees.

The Hobbs family's last stop was Gordon before heading home to Thomson to a hero's welcome at his elementary school.

During his day at Benning Nov. 17, Hobbs went through abbreviated versions of Basic Training, Airborne School and Ranger Training, and rode in a Stryker Tactical Vehicle.

Hobbs finished his tour with a visit to Fort Gordon, Ga., Nov. 20. He toured the Signal Corps Museum, rode in a World War II-era Jeep and rode in the back of an MP car to his hometown of Thompson, Ga., for a parade in his honor.

"It takes a whole community to make this happen," said Paulette Brown, marketing and communications director for the Make-A-Wish Foundation's Marietta office. "Ethan is having a great time - really a dream come true for him."



Photos by Pfc. Benjamin T. Brody

Hobbs meets 3rd Inf. Div. Commander Maj. Gen. William G. Webster in his office at Stewart.



Pfc. Jacob Deaton, 3rd MP Co., shows Hobbs a MK 19-3 grenade launcher mounted atop a humvee outside the Stewart Museum.



3rd Inf. Div. Command Sgt. Maj. Julian Kellman helps Hobbs into a new set of BDUs.



Hobbs and his father, Mike, participate in a mock traffic stop.

Hobbs examines the "gun" he will use in a mock traffic stop with the military police.



Hobbs exits the turret while he and his brother Benjamin explore a Bradley Fighting Vehicle at 3/15 Infantry's motor pool.

# Stewart, Hunter raise \$345,000 for CFC

**Spc. Jacob Boyer**

Staff Writer

The 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) surpassed its goal for this year's Combined Federal Campaign, but it is not too late for federal employees to contribute to the charity of their choice in 2004.

The division raised more than \$345,000 after setting a goal of \$300,000 for this year's campaign, said Master Sgt. Miguel E. Cruz, CFC installation coordinator for Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield. The theme for this year's CFC is "What Makes America Great." The division surpassed last year's amount of \$340,000.

"I congratulate all Marne Soldiers and family members for your efforts in association with this tremendous humanitarian mission," said Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., 3rd Inf. Div. commanding general. "Our support of this once-a-year campaign is indicative of the American spirit, heart and good will. Now thousands of local, national and international agencies will be able to continue their work in making the quality of

life better for Americans and peoples in need everywhere."

There is still time to contribute and have the money collected through payroll deductions, Cruz said. Those who still want to give should contact the representative at their units or directorates.

"Contributions will continue to be collected until the middle of December," he said. "Normally that is the cut-off for payroll deductions to start in January 2004."

The contributions may not count toward Coastal Georgia's goal for this year, but they will still go to help several worthy causes, Cruz said. More than 1,200 agencies benefit from the fundraising effort.

"There are many agencies used by Soldiers and their families that really need their contributions to operate and assist with their needs," he said. "Some examples are the Red Cross, Army Community Service and Child Services."

The Combined Federal Campaign was established by Executive Order in 1961 to give federal workers an effective annual charitable campaign that could be accom-



plished through payroll deductions, Cruz said. The campaign is the only authorized on-the-job solicitation of federal workers outside of service relief drives and emergency disaster appeals.

More than 1.46 million federal employees contributed more than \$241 million to CFC in 2001, the latest year for which statistics

are available.

"Thank you for your participation in our local effort in conjunction with the rest of the Department of Defense," Webster said of Marne Soldiers and Fort Stewart personnel. "Once again, we have demonstrated great team work and community spirit — thank you all."

## PERSCOM to suspend enlisted promotion requirements

**Compiled by Spc. Robert Adams**

Staff Writer

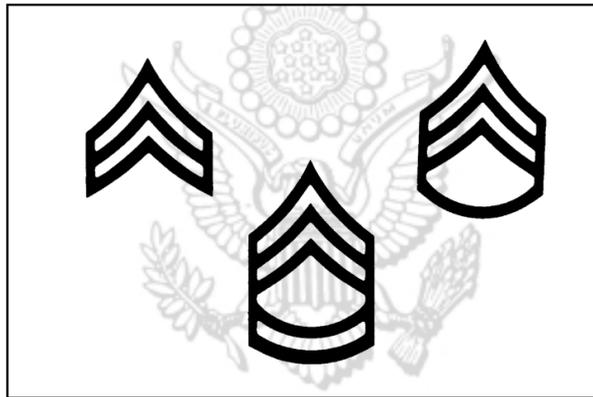
Personnel Command announced a Jan. 1 suspension of conditional enlisted promotions for all sergeants through sergeants first class who are Active Army, National Guard, and Reserve to support ongoing operational efforts.

This announcement clears the way for qualifying sergeants through sergeants first class to pin-on their earned stripes without having to attend NCO development schools.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Valerie A. Brooks, military personnel technician, 3rd Soldier Support Battalion, verifies the suspension supports the high number of Soldiers involved with Operation Iraqi Freedom and other deployments who cannot go to the required schools.

The announcement said the current promotion policy for recommendation and consideration for promotion remains in effect. This policy requires that sergeants be Primary Leadership Development Course graduates prior to recommendation to staff sergeant; staff sergeants be Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course graduates to be eligible for sergeant first class consideration; and sergeants first class be Advance Noncommissioned Officers Course graduates before qualifying for master sergeant consideration.

"Now Soldiers who meets the additional requirements for promotion can be automatically promoted without having the Primary Leadership Development Course or Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course," Brooks said.



Additionally, soldiers who previously met the cutoff scores for promotion and did not have PLDC or conditional promotion, will be promoted with an effective date of Jan. 1, 2004, provided they meet all other eligibility requirements for promotion, according to Brooks.

Also Soldiers who were administratively reduced under the provisions of current promotion policies based on their inability to complete the requisite NCOES course are not affected by this decision, according to a DA memo.

Soldiers currently promoted conditionally to sergeant, staff sergeant or sergeant first class based on their promotion require-

ments will be considered promoted without further condition and no promotion order adjustments will be required.

Requirements to add statements outlined in Army regulations which state that a "Soldier who has not met NCOES requirements is promoted conditionally until completion of the scheduled NCOES class, and if the Soldier fails to do so will be subject to administrative reduction," will no longer be included in promotion instruments, according to the memo.

Also Reserve and National Guard Soldiers must be assigned to the higher graded position prior to promotion, the memo said.

Soldiers who elect to separate or retire voluntarily will be considered fully eligible to do so in their current grades regardless of their NCOES status, provided they are otherwise eligible, the memo also explained.

The linkage of NCOES and promotions remains an important and integral aspect in the professional development of the NCO Corps. Commanders and Training and Doctrine, retain full responsibility to train Soldiers in skills that support promotion and utilization, the memo also said.

For more information, Active Army Soldiers can contact Master Sgt. Fred Liggett, personnel policy integrator, phone: DSN 225-7960, e-mail: [fred.liggett@hqda.army.mil](mailto:fred.liggett@hqda.army.mil), National Guard Soldiers can contact Master Sgt. Chris Van Briesen, enlisted personnel policy, phone: DSN 327-3401, e-mail: [christopher.vanbriesen@ngb.army.mil](mailto:christopher.vanbriesen@ngb.army.mil) and Reserve Soldiers can contact Sgt. Maj. Julian Edmondson, personnel policy integrator, phone: DSN 225-7948, e-mail: [julian.edmondson@hqda.army.mil](mailto:julian.edmondson@hqda.army.mil).

# Marne Six Sends

**Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr.**  
3rd Inf. Div. commanding general

**MARNE SIX SENDS ...**  
Reorganization.  
The Marne division is a superior team of teams with small competent well drilled Soldier teams at its heart; so what does reorganization mean to you the Marne Soldier?  
The average Marne Soldier will not initially notice much of anything that is different during the reorganization process. However you will soon notice that the organization of your teams at battalion and brigade levels will

change somewhat.  
Our normal three maneuver brigades, three supporting brigades, and divisional troops will be permanently organized into four units of action. The current Engineer brigade headquarters will lead one of the new units of action. The aviation brigade will have the division cavalry squadron and one infantry battalion as part of its organization. The Division Artillery headquarters will retain the Multi Launch Rocket System battalion and additionally have the air defense artillery battalion as a subordinate unit. The division base will also include a division support brigade.

The new units of action will continue to change over time as we use a spiral development approach. We will implement changes and then go train. We will AAR after training and start the cycle over.  
The unit of action teams will maintain access to joint fires ranging from close air support to in-direct fire from all weapons. These teams will be just as lethal as our brigades are now, but provide the Army with greater flexibility as we prepare for any and all contingencies.  
Mission .....Soldiers.....Teamwork  
Have a Great Thanksgiving!  
MARNE SIX OUT

## 3ID makes child's dream come true

**Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr.**  
3rd Inf. Div. commanding general

The 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) recently hosted a very special visitor for two days. His name is Hobbs and he is five years old. Hobbs is a typical child of his age and is known by his parents to get into everything! Unlike most five years olds, however, Hobbs has been diagnosed with a cancer called rhabdomyosarcoma. Hobbs has had a long-standing wish to be a Soldier and thanks to the help of the Make a Wish Foundation, that wish came true last week. I would like to share with you a summary of Hobbs' visit, as told by an installation employee who helped escort Hobbs and his family:

affection from both the Soldiers and civilians expressed not only to Hobbs, but to include his mother, father, brothers, and sister. His parents were so overwhelmed and touched at the expressions poured upon them.  
During a taping at the museum on their final day here, they shared part of their story on camera. Mike Hobbs, the big, muscular-bound person that he is, was in tears. Needless to say so was Judy Hobbs. Mike, the father, said that he realized that these Soldiers are just like him — they have families and they go to work everyday. Judy, Ethan's mom, stated that a Soldier here told her that he had a brother who had cancer when he was six years old, and today is 20. She said she likes to hear stories like that, not of those who did not sur-

vive. Judy said there was no way they were going to give up on Hobbs. She doesn't hang around those people who have that 'give up' mentality.  
We can all be so very, very proud of what was done for that family, and especially Hobbs in his two day visit with us. From the Military Police, 2nd Brigade, Division Artillery, to Evans Field Simulations, Museum, DIVARTY Dining Facility at DIVARTY, and not to leave out the Enlisted Spouses Club, My Force at in the Army Air Force Exchange Service Post Exchange, and the local Vietnam Veterans Chapter .... all just pulled out so many stops. Mike said that when they got back and caught their breath, he would definitely assemble the tokens and remind Hobbs of the value of this visit for a long time to come."

What a great story! I want to personally thank everyone who was involved in hosting Hobbs and his family. Hobbs' cancer is currently in remission but he continues to undergo the routine and frequent medical screening necessary for all cancer patients. Your gracious hosting of this young "Soldier" and his family helped them forget about Hobbs' cancer for a couple of days and showcased one of our bedrock themes ... that in the Army we take care of our own. I have recently used The Frontline as the forum to relay my command philosophy to you. Hobbs' visit is a great example of our installation and units exhibiting Mission, Soldiers, and Teamwork. When we instill these values in ourselves and exhibit them every day in our profession, great things happen! Keep up the great work.  
**Rock of the Marne!**

## Leadership course leaves lasting effects

**Spc. Katherine Robinson**  
Editor

### Commentary

I had the honor of picking up my co-worker, Sgt. Mason T. Lowery, from the Primary Leadership Development Course Sunday, for one of his breaks from the course.  
Lowery is currently learning to lead Soldiers at the course, which most of you know the Army requires Soldiers to take when they are promoted from specialist to sergeant.  
When I picked up Lowery it was immediately apparent the course had already effected him.  
Before even getting in the car, he peered into my back seat and said, "I know that's not your TA-50 I see in your POV Soldier."  
When the vehicle inspection was over, we headed back to post. The conversation was sparse, and carried primarily by me, punctuated with several "hooah's" in response from him.  
When we pulled up to the installation gate, Lowery handed me his Army Values card instead of his identification card, and informed me that, "that's all you need, hooah."  
One strange side effect I noticed was that Lowery no longer remembers his name. He referred to himself as "Gator 84" or sometimes, "Gator 7" and adamantly insisted everyone else do so as well. I have no idea what that means.  
Actually, 84 is his student number and he is a member of the 3rd Platoon

"Gators." At the time he was the platoon sergeant, hence the "Gator 7."  
It was also evident that Gator 7 has already attended a few classes of the "jokemaster course," as my associate editor, Spc. Jonathan M. Stack, refers to it. This secretive class is the only solution we can come up with as to why, when a Soldier pins on stripes, he immediately holds the key to an endless storeroom of jokes and phrases like, "when they were handing out brains, you thought they said, 'trains' and got on one," or "did you use a Hershey bar to shine your boots?" and, "tore out the doggone frame," whatever that means.  
Gator 7 has called the office once since that day, but his dialogue was so rife with "hooah's" I really have no idea what he said. Either he made a friend named, "Dexter" or he had an urgent message for Superman. Who knows.  
I think he also said he's been fired from his job as platoon sergeant, citing the fact that he was "too good looking." I wonder.  
When I told him about a new Department of the Army memo which suspends the PLDC requirement for



promotion after Jan. 1, the news was met with silence. But he regained his usual hard-charging attitude within seconds.  
During a few moments of lucidity, this stellar model of the Noncommissioned officer corps told me some of the things he's learned in his short time at the course. The highlight, I think, and something that has impacted him, was that a leader needs his leaders, he needs his peers, but more than anything he needs his subordinates. "You can't be successful without the help of your subordinates, hooah," he said.  
Whatever goes on at this mysterious school, deep in the woods of Fort Stewart's training grounds, it obviously leaves an impression on the minds of its students. The sign at the entrance apparently means what it says, "Enter to learn — Leave to lead."  
If, after a mere four days, Gator 84 has already started to undergo a change, how much will a month morph him?  
He's not the first Soldier I've seen go off to PLDC and walk out changed. Maybe it isn't always noticeable (other than the unintelligible new language, and the unfortunately irreversible effects of the jokemaster course,) but if you look closely, you'll always see something new in a PLDC graduate's demeanor. Something that says he now understands a little bit where his leaders have been coming from all these years, hooah.

## Marne Voice

THE FRONTLINE

Readers respond to the question:

Do you think it is important to budget for the holidays, and why?

"Definitely, we have a lot of responsibilities over the holidays, not budgeting leads to a lot of hardships."

**Staff Sgt. Elian C. Strachan**  
HBB, DIVARTY



"Yes, but people shouldn't wait till the holidays to budget."

**Spc. Eric L. Burgos**  
HHC, 1/120th

"Budgeting is essential, but its never too late to buy last-minute gifts."

**Spc. Chris Dehart**  
HHC, 1/120th



"It's important to budget so you don't go broke and have to ask your company commander for Army Emergency Relief applications."

**Capt. Jeff Thomas**  
HHC, 11th Eng.

"Yes, because you want to buy everything your family likes, but if you can't afford it, you can't afford it."

**Rosalie Miller**  
Spouse



"Yes, because people tend to spend more than they should over the holidays, and later on they feel the crunch."

**Sgt. Stanley Walker**  
HHT, 4/278 ACR

The Frontline joins the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) Commanding General, Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., in wishing the Marne Division, family and friends a safe and happy Thanksgiving.



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Send to:  
Public Affairs Office  
Attn: The Frontline, Editor  
101 W. Bultman Ave.  
Suite 101  
Fort Stewart, Ga. 31314-4941

## THE FRONTLINE

MILITARY NEWS: 767-3440  
ADVERTISING: (912) 368-0526  
Volume 19, Number 12  
Publisher  
3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) Commander — Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr.  
Consolidated Public Affairs Office  
Director — Lt. Col. Clifford J. Kent

This civilian enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Frontline are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or U.S. Forces Command. It is published weekly using offset printing by the Public Affairs Office, Fort Stewart, Georgia

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31314-5000. Phone number: 912-767-3440 or 767-8072  
Printed circulation up to 22,000. All editorial content of the Frontline newspaper is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Public Affairs Office of Fort Stewart, Georgia and the 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) and is printed by Morris Newspaper Corporation of Hinesville, Inc. a private firm

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in no way connected with the Department of the Army, under exclusive written contract with Fort Stewart, Georgia. The civilian printer is responsible for commercial advertising. Subscription rates are \$9 for three months, \$16 for six months and \$30 for 12 months. Rates are for third class mail, inside the continental U.S.



Photos by Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

Repairs and modifications to the 11,375-foot runway at Hunter, the longest east of the Mississippi River, were completed Oct. 21.

# Hunter airfield repair nears completion

Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

Hunter Public Affairs Office

The runway and tarmac at Hunter Army Airfield, which has undergone repairs and renovations for the past four years, will be fully serviceable by the end of this year.

The \$23.4 million project, which began in July 2000, has focused on runway repair, ramp resurfacing, markings and an infrastructure fence.

Chief Warrant Officer Charles E. Childers, airfield safety manager, noted the project has served many purposes to the personnel who work on and around the airfield.

"Safety and security have increased because of the repairs," he said. "And the airfield now has the capacity to accommodate more aircraft and larger aircraft."

During the past 12 months, more than 380 cargo aircraft carrying 12,000 short tons of equipment have moved through the airfield, making the project that much more timely, according to Rick Mansford, air operations coordinator.

"The repairs couldn't have come at a better time," he said. "The usable life of the runway and taxi areas has been extended at least another 20 years."

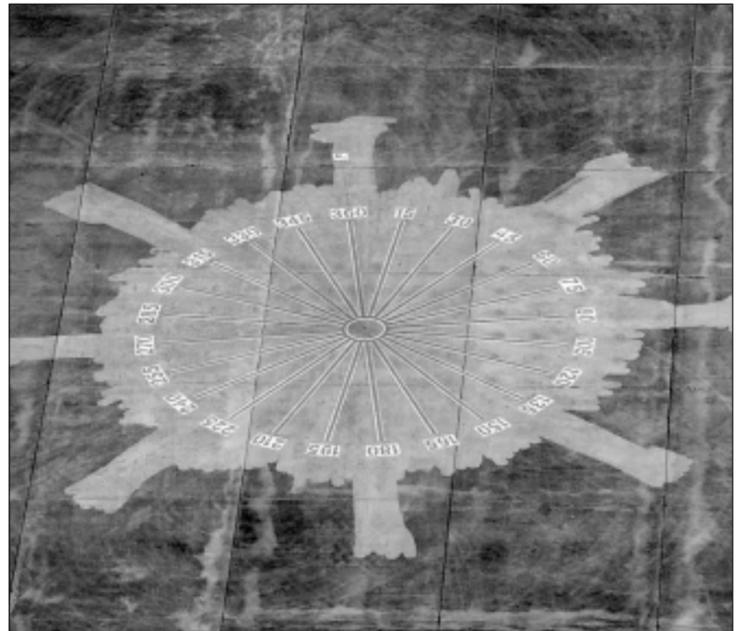
Planning for the project began in 1996, with a three-phase plan formally submitted in June 1998. In February 2000, the Department of the Army approved the proposal, and five contractors were hired to complete the multiple projects.

Phase one, which kicked off in July 2000, included the replacement of runway, taxiway, approach and helipad lights.

Floodlights and the radio transmitter tower were also repaired or replaced.

Additionally, the hazardous cargo area was increased in size to handle two fully loaded C-5 aircraft at a time.

The largest undertaking of phase one, repair of the East Ramp, took more than three months to complete.



The recently-painted compass rose on the north side of Hunter airfield is used for traditional orientation of rotary wing aircraft.

"There were a number of areas that were deteriorating," Mansford said. "Rotary-wing aircraft would blow debris from the surface around, damaging many aircraft in the area."

Mansford added, "Before the repairs began, the ramp was completely closed for parking."

Once completed, East Ramp's maximum on ground parking capability increased to 14 C-5s.

Taxiway 5, located on the west end of the airfield, was also completely resurfaced by the end of phase one.

Phase two saw the completion of repairs and resurfacing of the remaining six taxiways.

The most important and noticeable addition, according to Childers, was the infrastructure fence that spans the entire perimeter of the airfield.

"Before the fence was up, there were quarterly occurrences of wildlife on the airfield – deer, dogs, alligators – being struck by aircraft," he said. "(The fence) has dramatically increased the safety

of aircraft operating on the airfield."

Childers added that prior to the erection of the fence, anyone who wanted to drive on the airfield could. "The increase in physical security on the airfield has improved dramatically."

The final phase of the project, which began in November 2002, is one-third complete.

The 11,375-foot runway resurfacing and repair was finished Oct. 21.

The remaining two projects are final airfield markings and concrete work and construction on the petroleum, oil and lubrication island located near the East Ramp.

According to Mansford, the estimated time of completion is "by the end of the calendar year."

With all concrete and pavement work on the runway completed, Hunter airfield awaits a complete surface evaluation by a team from the Army Corps of Engineers out of Vicksburg, Miss. The evaluation will be conducted within the next 30 days.

# Hunter's CSM speaks about women in the Army

Jennifer Wingfield

3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs Office

Rounding out the month for military guest speakers at the St. Simon's Island Marshes of Glynn Rotary Club Meeting Nov. 21 was Hunter Army Airfield's Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Mittie Smith.

Her speech focused on women in the military. She talked about some of the reforms made by women in service, particularly the U.S. Army.

"Women have made so many tremendous strides and successes over the years," Smith said. "Not just in the military, but in society. Women in the military have always been a part of our story, as they joined their husbands in the early wars by serving as cooks and nurses and primarily as caregivers.

"World War II brought about greater changes and diversity for women," she continued. The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was created, yet women were still not recognized as full members of the Army.

"Even in 1973 when the Army became an all volunteer force, women still faced obstacles," she added.

Smith continued, "Operation Desert Shield/Desert

Storm served as the largest deployment of women in Army history. They were there in combat services and combat support positions, proving their ability to meet the challenges of modern warfare on today's high tech battlefield.

"Women must be prepared to face the unknown regardless of the position they hold," she said.

"Leadership roles are steadily increasing. Fields are continually to open for women. And now pay is equal to men based upon rank," Smith added. "I am a woman, but I am a soldier also and I have responsibilities. And we have to do what we have to do. I am prepared and ready to go."

Smith gave credit to her husband, now retired from the military, for his support.

"He makes sure that I have everything I need," she said.

When questioned as to who holds the rank at home, Smith replied, "When I take off this uniform, I am still a wife."

Smith concluded that she has been excited about being in the Army for 22 years.

"Now I can make a difference and reach back and pave the way for others," she said.



Jennifer Wingfield

Command Sgt. Maj. Mittie Smith, Hunter Garrison Command sergeant major, speaks at the St. Simon's Island Rotary club as Bill Ray, Golden Isles Rotarian, looks on.



Spc. Bill Putnam

President George W. Bush signs the Fiscal Year 2004 Defense Authorization Bill for a record \$401 Billion during a short ceremony at the Pentagon Nov. 24. Sen. Susan Collins, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Michael Hagee, Rep. Duncan Hunter and Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Peter Schoomaker look on as Bush signs the bill into law.

## Army gets budget for new fiscal year

Aaron Westbrook

Special to The Frontline

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush has signed the National Defense Authorization Act, providing \$401 billion for the Department of Defense in fiscal year 2004, including \$93.3 billion for the Army.

This year's Army budget is an increase of \$2.3 billion from last year, and that does not include funds from the \$87.5 billion Defense supplemental appropriations for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Afghanistan reconstruction passed by Congress earlier this month.

The Army's \$93.3 billion in the Authorization Act will include an increase in troop strength by 2,400 for an overall authorized Army end-strength of 482,400 troops.

The budget also provides \$35 million for establishment of the fifth and sixth Stryker Brigade Combat Teams. The first two SBCTs were formed at Fort Lewis, Wash. The first SBCT — 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division — deployed to Iraq this month. The second SBCT — 1st Brigade, 25th

Infantry Division — is now training at Fort Lewis. The 172nd Infantry Brigade at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, and the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Polk, La., were scheduled to be the next two SBCTs. The 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii and a brigade of the 28th Infantry Division, Pennsylvania National Guard, were scheduled to be the fifth and sixth.

About \$37.4 billion will be going to the Army's military personnel, which will include an average pay raise of 4.15 percent.

The Army will be receiving \$2 billion for aircraft, with the Comanche helicopter estimated to receive \$1.1 billion of it. About \$1.5 billion was authorized for missiles, almost \$2 billion for weapons and tracked combat vehicles, and \$1.4 billion for ammunition.

The Army will have \$31.2 billion for operations and maintenance expenses for this year.

Congress passed the Department of Defense Appropriations Act Oct. 31, waiting only for the passing of the National Defense Authorization Act signed by the

president this morning — to put the DoD budget into affect.

### FY04 Budget

- Includes \$93 billion for the Army
- Increases troop strength by 2,400
- Provides funds for two new Stryker brigades
- Increases average pay 4.15 percent
- Includes funding for Comanche helicopter

# Volunteering: fulfillment in giving to others

**Spc. Jacob Boyer**

Staff Writer

When Soldiers and their families first come to a new post, they may find themselves with a lack of things to do. Spare time can begin to feel tedious, and even if they want to find something to do, they may not know where to look. At Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, Army Community Service can provide many volunteer opportunities that allow members of the military community to give of themselves while they fill those hours of boredom.

ACS links volunteers with more than fifteen agencies at both Stewart and Hunter, said Vickie Wiginton, volunteer coordinator and family readiness group program manager for both posts. Her office has helped 140 volunteers donate more than 9,500 hours of their time on the two posts since

Oct. 1.

"One of the benefits of volunteering is getting out of the house," she said. "It also gives people the opportunity to learn skills, make new friends and expand their interests."

Many volunteers give their time because they are passionate about it, Wiginton said.

"It lets them make a difference," she explained. "They pick something they care about because they know the difference it makes. It's self-satisfying. Fulfilling that passion is a big part of it."

Another benefit of volunteering is the opportunity to develop job skills, Wiginton said. Volunteers have worked for the Staff Judge Advocate, the Public Affairs Office and several other professionally-oriented agencies at Stewart and Hunter. It may not lead to a job where someone volunteers, but it can lead to good recommendations from the

people who work there.

"We make sure the volunteers (in these cases) aren't promised a job," she said. "Even though it isn't employment, it is resume-building. It can definitely increase your marketability as a potential employee."

Although people are free to volunteer with any agency either on or off-post, Wiginton suggests that those who want to volunteer with agencies at Stewart and Hunter coordinate through her office.

"If people want to get involved, they can go straight to an agency, but the best way to start off is at my office," she said. "It enables us to get the right paperwork done, and we can interview them to determine what they're interested in."

While ACS can place volunteers with offices around post, they cannot put a volunteer in a Department of the

Army civilian slot that needs to be filled, Wiginton said.

One of the biggest efforts ACS coordinates volunteers for is the family readiness groups for the units here, she said.

They allow family members to get information on and stay connected with their loved ones' deployed units, which makes them a natural place for family members to volunteer.

"FRGs are really our big one," Wiginton said. "We also put a lot of volunteers with the schools on post, Winn Army Community Hospital and the Red Cross."

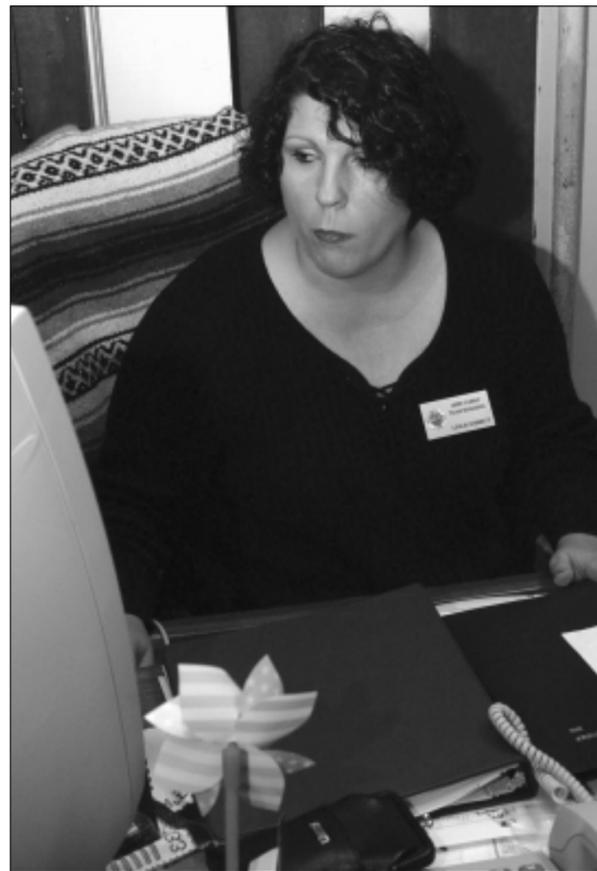
Another big group of volunteers is the coaches for Youth Services' sports teams, according to Wiginton.

"That's a big need," she said. "Most of the coaches are parents getting involved with their kids' teams, but we always need more."

ACS also organizes several big events throughout the year that give people in the Stewart and Hunter communities a chance to give back, Wiginton said. One example is the recent Make a Difference Day. The next big event is the Special Olympics, which will be held Dec. 5.

"Some people can only find one or two days a year they can volunteer," she said. "They've got other personal commitments, and they need to make plans. These events give them a chance to fulfill their passions."

One way volunteers are recognized at both Stewart and Hunter is the commanding general's Pot of Gold Award, Wiginton said. It was started in 1992 as a special award for volunteers on the installations. The commanding general would go to the place where a volunteer worked and present the award personally. With time, it evolved into an annual ceremony.



Photos by Spc. Jacob Boyer

**Leslie Barrett, who volunteers as an office manager for Army Family Team Building, enters data into a computer. Barrett volunteers 40 to 60 hours a week because of the opportunities for travel it has led to.**

"Because of commitments and the number of volunteers here, we had to make it a structured, formal ceremony," she said. "It's an extra award for volunteers who go above and beyond to make a big difference at the installations."

To be eligible, a person must volunteer a minimum of 20 hours per month for six months, Wiginton said. He is nominated by the agency he helps, and can only win the award once each time he or his family is stationed here.

Wiginton said she feels the volunteer effort here is excellent, but there is always room for improvement. "We're not all perfect, but I feel like most of our volunteers are pleased with what they're doing," she said. "Any job has its ups and downs, but there are more ups in volunteering because you're doing it from your heart. "Volunteers are amazing individuals. There's no pay. Some times it costs them money because they need to buy things. But they make those sacrifices, both time and money, because they care and they realize there's a need."



**Monica Mitchell leads children in her preschool arts and crafts class as they clean up after a day of making Native American headdresses. She volunteers because she enjoys helping the community and working with children.**

# Simulation center provides realistic training

Spc. Katherine Robinson

Editor

The Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith Simulation and Training Technology Center in Orlando, Fla., is focused on enhancing Soldier training technology to make it more realistic.

Recently renamed after a fallen warrior from 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), the center features in-depth simulated scenarios in many areas of training from first aid to piloting a helicopter.

The center's mission statement reads, "to enhance Soldier readiness by researching and developing training simulation, test and training instrumentation and mission rehearsal simulation solutions and transitioning solutions to acquisition programs, our Soldier, the

defense community and our allies."

"Our mission, in a nutshell, is to support Soldier training," said John Hart, one of four STTC deputy directors. "We view the Soldier as our ultimate customer."

Everything in the center is geared toward making what the military already has better, or developing new equipment and technology. One of the first sights that greet the eye upon entry to the centers' simulation bay is the Embedded Training for Dismounted Soldiers section, where several mannequins are dressed as Soldiers, but with a few extras.

One Soldier has a tiny screen attached to his helmet that extends down over one eye. He has a miniature keypad strapped to his wrist, and he carries a screen map that looks like a

small, lightweight laptop computer attached to his regular gear.

This equipment "allows the Soldier to have digital capabilities on the battlefield," said Pat Garrity, a center employee. The Soldier, a squad-leader as identified by his equipment, can watch his squad members' movement on the screen map and can also send the image from the screen map to the eyepiece.

Garrity said the Soldiers' weapon is equipped with a thermal sight, so he can point the weapon out the window and scan for enemies without putting himself in danger by poking his head out. The image from the sight-picture goes directly to the Soldier's eyepiece.

Behind the model Soldiers, a mixed reality Military Operations in Urban Terrain station uses a combination of virtual reality and a physical environment to simulate combat in an urban environment.

Using blue-screen technology, a building-front façade becomes a battleground as a Soldier, armed with a demilitarized, laser-equipped rifle, dons the virtual reality headset and suddenly sees lights, enemies, hostages and destruction inside the building. What the headset wearer sees, bystanders can also see on a screen just behind him.

Another station houses the Institute of Creative Technology, where, according to the center's Joe Brennan and Matthew Trimmer, video games and training can be intertwined through technology. The section focuses on graphics, artificial intelligence and three-dimensional audio to make games more realistic, Brennan said.

Trimmer demonstrated Full-Spectrum Warrior, the first first-person strategy game ever designed. Aside from being played on Xbox, the game is used for actual training in several places, he said.

The center also features a first aid station where dummies with gruesome injuries can be monitored on realistic screens; a weaponer station with several scenarios that tell the shooter where he was aiming, where he hit, and where he was aiming just after the shot; arcade-like helicopter and humvee simulators; remote controlled robots and portable anti-aircraft weapons among other things.

The center is part of the Army's Research and Development Engineering Command.



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Guests try out the weapons simulation during a tour of the facility during the Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ray Smith STTC dedication. The facility was named for a fallen 3rd Inf. Div. hero Nov. 7.

## Marne TV

November  
2003  
Schedule

Marne TV can be found on Comcast Cable Channel 16 every day of the week. Tune in to the Marne Report seven times a day for the latest from Stewart and Hunter.

5 a.m.  
5:30 a.m.  
6 a.m.  
7:30 a.m.  
8 a.m.  
8:30 a.m.  
9 a.m.  
11:30 a.m.  
Noon  
12:30 p.m.  
1:30 p.m.  
4:30 p.m.  
5 p.m.  
5:30 p.m.  
6 p.m.  
6:30 p.m.  
7 p.m.  
10 p.m.  
10:30 p.m.  
11 p.m.

Army Newswatch  
**MARNE REPORT**  
Navy News  
Army Newswatch  
**MARNE REPORT**  
Navy News  
Air Force News  
Army Newswatch  
**MARNE REPORT**  
Navy News  
Air Force News  
Army Newswatch  
**MARNE REPORT**  
Navy News  
Army Newswatch  
**MARNE REPORT**  
Navy News  
Army Newswatch  
**MARNE REPORT**  
Navy News  
Army Newswatch

### Fort Stewart Tree Lighting Ceremony

The ceremony will begin at 5 p.m.  
and the arrival of Santa Claus at  
5:30 p.m., Dec. 11, Bldg. 1

### Hunter Tree Lighting Ceremony

The ceremony will begin at 4:45  
p.m. at Garrison Headquarters on  
Dec. 12



# Reenlistment brings Soldier closer to personal goals

**Pfc. Emily J. Danial**  
Staff writer, Hunter Public Affairs

When she joined the Army in February 2000, Spc. Bikiesa Anderson wasn't planning to stay in for more time than her contract dictated.

However, as with many things in the Army, that original plan didn't quite cut the mustard, because on Sept. 18, with her estimated time of separation date fast approaching, Anderson, like a multitude of others before her, once again raised her right hand and committed to four more years.

"I didn't feel I was where I wanted and needed to be, as far as my career was concerned, before I got out of the military," Anderson said.

Having spent her first four years in the Army with the military occupational specialty 74C (communications computer operator), Anderson, who is part of Hunter Army Airfield's Headquarters Company, Headquarters Command, said she was now re-classing to be a 74B (information systems operator/analyst).

"As far as training and computers go, I want to get a degree in computer science by the time I get out," she said.

The new MOS, Anderson said, provides more of the type of experience she wants to have under her belt to start a career after her time in the Army is done.

"Eventually, I want to go work for a big computer company like Microsoft," she said. "That's part of my five-year plan."

Anderson, a 25-year-old Philadelphia native, said she joined the Army with the intent of becoming a medic, but there were

no available openings for that MOS.

"They said I could either work as a Nuclear, Biological and Chemical specialist or as a 74C," she said. "I heard 'chemical' and thought about it, but then they told me I would be in the field all the time, walking around with full NBC protective gear, looking for traces of chemicals. That's when I decided to go for 74C."

Now, however, Anderson said she is interested in getting more advanced computer training than the MOS afforded her, and re-classing to 74B was the answer.

Anderson called her time in the Army so far "an experience to remember."

"If I could describe it in one word, that word would be 'interesting,'" she said. "I've met a lot of different people from all over the place. If I had the choice, I'd do it again. But, when I first came in, if I'd had the option, I would have been a 74B, done my four years, gotten out and gone to school."

After her 74B training is done, Anderson will be stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas, she said.

"I was told it was nothing but desert there, in the middle of nowhere," Anderson said. "Sounds great."

With four more Army years ahead of her, Anderson had a few words of advice for her peers.

"When your contract is almost out, if you're not comfortable with going back into the civilian world, go ahead and reenlist. Make a plan, set a goal and don't let anything stray you away from that goal."

Take it from someone who's well on the way toward reaching hers.

## Soldier's Creed

Clip, laminate and keep.

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

# SAFETY INFORMATION



## Thanksgiving Day Safety Flyer

1. Thanksgiving, a truly American holiday when family and friends pause from their daily pursuit, gather together to celebrate the bounties of our great nation. Thank you — Soldiers, civilians and family members of the Marne Team — your daily service to this division, installation, and our country ensures our continued ability to support our nation's policies, allowing all Americans to reap the benefits of freedom.

2. Whatever your holiday plans, I ask each of you to keep safety firmly fixed in your minds. The Marne Team has made great strides in integrating risk management procedures into mission plans and operations. I urge each of you to use these same risk management procedures to identify, assess, and control hazards associated with your off-duty activities during this Thanksgiving Holiday.

3. The risks associated with privately owned vehicle operations increase during the holiday travel periods. The primary cause of accidents is behavior commonly known as aggressive driving. Through lack of courtesy, breaking rules, or angry driving we increase our chances for an accident. I ask every Soldier, civilian, and family member to minimize the danger through personal recognition and control of these aggressive actions. I am convinced that through personal risk management we can reduce POV accidents for every member of the Marne Team.

4. Together we can make this an "ACCIDENT-FREE" holiday period for the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield.

*William G. Webster*  
WILLIAM G. WEBSTER  
Major General, USA  
Commanding

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Pfc. Benjamin T. Brody

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker observes a "casualty" during a training exercise by 3/15 Inf.

## CSA

from page 1A

The chief of staff observed training exercises conducted by 30th enhanced Heavy Separate Brigade, a North Carolina National Guard unit that is preparing to deploy to Iraq, and gave tactical guidance to the troops there. The unit practiced traffic control operations and vehicle search tactics.

Later that morning, as "Charlie Rock" 3/15 Inf. Bradleys lined up behind berms at MPRC, three Blackhawk helicopters landed by the range control tower and Schoomaker as Webster stepped out onto the range to observe the company's live fire training.

Rounds streaked downrange as the Bradleys advanced on their targets. The Soldiers dismounted three times and lay heavy fire on enemy targets and fighting positions. Schoomaker and the command staff followed closely in humvees and on foot, watching as the infantrymen quickly reached their objective and evacuated their "casualties".

After the exercise, Schoomaker met with the 3/15 Soldiers to review their performance and discuss areas they felt could be improved in the Army.

Schoomaker said the Soldiers 'made a lot of noise out there and looked pretty good,' which is high praise from a former squadron commander of 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment — Delta.

"I chose 3rd Infantry Division for reorgani-

**"I want to keep Soldiers together — train them cohesively, deploy them as teams and bring them home as teams."**

Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker  
Army Chief of Staff

zation because it is just out of Iraq, full of combat-experienced leadership and Soldiers," Schoomaker said. "With the division home, knowing what worked and what didn't in Iraq, General Webster can do some experimentation for the Army as it moves toward modularity."

Marne Soldiers will certainly feel the effects from the division's upcoming reorganization, and from the Army-wide shift toward a modular, more agile fighting force. The shift is aimed to increase stability within the unit, which translates to greater stability in Soldiers' families, according to Schoomaker.

"It's time we stopped reassigning Soldiers just because they've been somewhere for three years. I want to keep Soldiers together — train them cohesively, deploy them as teams and bring them home as teams," Schoomaker said. "With less frequent turnover, units can

build a foundation of experience as long as there is professional development. Investing in leadership training equates to investing in the unit."

The 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Ky. also will participate in a reorganization similar to the Marne Division's to increase its versatility and agility.

"My experience in Special Operation plays a part in my ideas about modularity, but all of my experiences over three decades of service point to a need for this reorganization," Schoomaker said. "The Army has changed a lot throughout my career, from a post-Vietnam, non-volunteer force that had a great deal of difficulties — you can't compare today's Army with how it was. The level of discipline, training, and equipment are so superior today. But it's not enough that we're the best army in the world. Are we as good as we can be?"

Schoomaker cites the need for all Soldiers to be proficient in basic Soldiering skills, not just combat arms personnel, for the Army to reach its full potential.

"We need to focus on each Soldier being able to take care of himself, then able to take care of his buddy, then able to take care of his larger team," Schoomaker said. "It's all part of the warrior ethos: Mission first, never quit, never accept defeat, never leave a fellow American behind."

## ROADS

from page 1A

Gate 1 or Olmstead Drive to Gate 2.

Hunting will not be permitted on Stewart from Dec. 1 to 4. **Permits and emergency travel:** Emergency vehicles will be allowed access through Gate 5, Ga. 119 and Gate 3, Ga. 47. Installation employees, not including those who work at the Simulation Center, requiring access through Gate 3 or Gate 5 must obtain an access permit from the Military Police Station located at Building 280.

All questions should be directed to the Stewart Provost Marshal Office at 767-7908, 767-4895 or 767-2965.

## RETURN

from page 1A

hyperactive offspring, the home-bound 260th Soldiers wasted no time getting to their families.

Prior to 260th's return, Jené Brown, wife of Sgt. Robert Brown, said, "I'm very excited to see him, but cautious, because I know how the military can be."

"He's made me very proud," she said. "You learn to adapt to the deployments, being a military wife for so long."

Mindy Sibley, wife of Sgt. Leroy Sibley, said the separation from her husband was "challenging, but we got through ... we're glad they're coming home safe and sound."

She said the family had looked for different ways to pass the time while her husband was gone.

"We went to visit my in-laws, we went to Sea World ... the kids

(Megan, 5, Logan, 3, and Jason, 2) ask a lot where daddy is, but we got a map so they can see exactly where he is," she said.

Spc. James Masterson, came home to a baby girl he was seeing for the first time that night, 3-month-old Madison.

"I just want him home, to be a family with his little girl," said Masterson's wife, Crystal, as she waited for her husband's arrival. Madison is the couple's first child.

After a couple days off, the unit will take care of its redeployment tasks so the Soldiers can have a work-free Thanksgiving with their families.

Bauer summed up the night's atmosphere succinctly.

"I'm just happy, what more can I say?"



Pfc. Emily Daniel

Capt. Gregory Brown, 260th QM Bn., reunites with his 3-year-old daughter Sally.

# Army addresses deployed Soldier pay problems

Eric W. Cramer

Special to The Frontline

WASHINGTON — The Army is working on immediate actions to eliminate the pay problems of deployed Soldiers, and long-term solutions are also underway.

"The basic pay and allowances for most Soldiers is there. It's the situation-unique entitlements based on location, dependent status, special skills — these are the one's that, because they require additional documentation and inputs, fall through the cracks," said Eric Reid, chief of Finance & Accounting Oversight and Field Operations Division, U.S. Army Finance Command.

Reid said most difficulties lie in special entitlements built into the pay process.

"For example, the day a Soldier steps in country, he starts receiving hostile fire pay. He also is eligible for hardship duty pay location, but although his time starts on the first day, he has to be there for 30 days to be eligible. After 30 days, it's paid retroactively to the first day. He is also eligible for a combat zone tax exemption, and possibly for a family separation allowance. For some entitlements, the finance technician must input it in the system on a monthly basis," Reid said.

"The hardship duty pay is an example, they have to do an input every month for that entitlement," he said.

This issue becomes even more complex for Soldiers who are in specialized units like Special Forces, who receive

special entitlements including jump pay and extra pay for doing high-altitude, low-opening jumps. "But there aren't that many Soldiers who do those things," Reid said.

In addition to the hardship duty pay for Soldiers in theater, he said there is one other major entitlement that must be entered separately each month for most Soldiers, the Continental United States Cost of Living Allowance. "Yes, the General Accounting Office used a case study technique which focused on only Special Forces and Military Police units, but I can tell you there are similar problems across the board that we're working to address," Reid said.

He said most problems occur for Reserve component Soldiers when they are either initially mobilizing or when they return from mobilization.

"There are some issues where there are delays in getting them in the system when they mobilize and off the system when they're demobilized," Reid said.

He said that in the case of the 19th Special Forces, 5th Battalion, B Company, studied by the GAO, the problem was primarily human error, first by the demobilization station not stopping pay and then at home station when a technician used the wrong transaction to correct the problem.

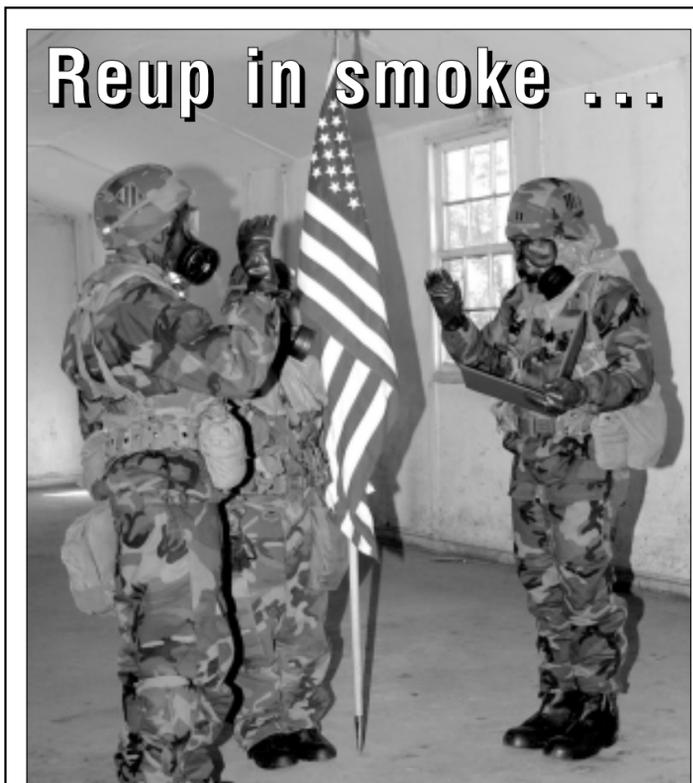
"We're providing additional training to reduce the chance of these errors happening," he said. "Additionally, input systems are already being changed to warn a user before executing potential errors like the one that occurred with the 19th Special Forces."

Reid said the Defense Finance and Accounting Service sent a team to Iraq to help the finance personnel there learn to use their systems more effectively. He said a planned move to an integrated pay system for both active and reserve component Soldiers will automate many of the special entitlements by spring of 2005.

In the interim, plans call for immediate and near-term efforts to increase training, enhance procedural guidance, and provide some limited changes to the existing pay system. The plans include automation of hardship duty pay, the largest non-automated pay for the theater, in April 2004. A mid-term period beginning in six months and running to 36 months from now, will address pay account access and the development of a "Forward Compatible Pay system" that will integrate active and reserve component pay systems. The long-range period, beginning in three years, includes the development and fielding of the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System that will integrate the active and Reserve component pay functions with personnel functions into a single process.

He said the plans will begin to solidify soon.

"The HDP-L is scheduled for automation earlier, in April 2004. That will alleviate a potential source of error," Reid said. "What we're doing now is a lot of things to help Soldiers using the current infrastructure. The long-term automated solutions will happen in that mid-term period, when we get the integrated active and Reserve component pay system. That will be the first time we've ever had that."



Spc. Jonathan M. Stack

(Right) Capt. Bill A. Papanastasiou, HHC, 3rd Inf. Div. commander reenlists Spc. George Hood, HHC, 3rd Inf. Div., in the Stewart NBC chamber. Hood reenlisted for three years and the college incentive.

## Reserve, NG get commissary benefits

Press Release

Special to the Frontline

The Department of Defense announced Tuesday that with the president's signing of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004, effective immediately, the following members and their dependents will be permitted unlimited access to commissary stores:

- Members of the Ready Reserve (which includes members of the Selected Reserve, Individual Ready Reserve and Inactive National Guard) and members of the Retired Reserve who possess a Uniformed Services Identification Card.

- Former members eligible for retired pay at age 60 but who have not yet attained the age of 60 and who possess a Department of Defense Civilian Identification Card.

- Dependents of the members described above who have a Uniformed Services Identification Card or who have a distinct identification card used as an authorization card for benefits and privileges administered by the Uniformed Services.

The Authorization Act will also

have a direct benefit on Fort Stewart, according to Lt. Col. Price Reinert, supply management officer for the Fort Stewart National Guard Training Center.

"Soldiers here will be able to do more shopping, which will contribute greatly to the economy of the post," he said. "Also, with a greater number of Soldiers shopping, the commissary might supply a greater variety of products to respond to the increased demand."

"Instructions have gone out to all continental U.S. stores informing them that reservists now have unlimited shopping and telling store managers how to welcome members of the National Guard and Reserve to the full use of the commissary benefit," said Patrick Nixon, deputy director of the Defense Commissary Agency.

"Commissary shoppers will begin to see banners saying 'Welcome Guard and Reserve to Full Time Savings,' along with other events recognizing these new full-time shoppers."

Guard and Reserve members were authorized only 24 commissary shopping days per calendar year until today when the president signed the National Defense Authorization Act, which con-

tained provisions eliminating the restrictions.

Commissaries have immediately adopted the new provisions, which means Guard and Reserve members will no longer have to present a Commissary Privilege Card when they shop.

"I want to thank Congress and the Department of Defense for their efforts in bringing the commissary shopping privilege to the total force," Nixon said. "The Congress included unlimited commissary benefits in the National Defense Authorization Act thus making full time shopping possible for the men and women who serve their nation in the National Guard and Reserve."

Nixon noted that special thanks should go to Charles Abell, principal deputy under secretary of defense for personnel and readiness. Abell acted decisively and immediately in providing interim authority for the Reserve component to have full-time commissary shopping just in time to take advantage of holiday savings.

For more information about the Defense Commissary Agency, see their Web site at <http://www.commissaries.com/> [<http://www.commissaries.com/>].



# Soldier Systems Center celebrates golden anniversary

Special to The Frontline

NATICK, Mass. — The Soldier Systems Center celebrated its 50th anniversary with cake, music and stories from the battlefield at a packed Hunter Auditorium Oct. 21.

Kicked off by the singing of the national anthem by Massachusetts State Trooper Sgt. Dan Clark, a prayer by Chaplain (Maj.) John Wheatley, installation chaplain, and a few selections from the Massachusetts State Pipes and Drum Corps, the program was a time to reflect on the past, speak about today and look to the future of what started as the Quartermaster Research Laboratory in 1953.

"All of you remain true to your mission—supporting the warfighter. You make our warfighter more efficient, improve the quality of life and indeed, save their lives by the work you do every day," said Col. David Bongi, acting deputy commanding general for operational readiness, Research Development and Engineering Command and installation commander, in his opening remarks.

Lt. Col. Charles Dean, moderator for the event, narrated a brief slide show, highlighting achievements such as food irradiation and improvements made to boots, sprinkled with video clips from former employees discussing their work.

In one video segment, a helicopter pilot in Vietnam recalled how a steel protective plate strapped to his body stopped a .50 caliber bullet, saving his life. In another clip, a former Ranger and Soldier Systems Center employee

recounted how his PASGT helmet saved his life while in combat in Panama.

Judging from audience reaction, the stars of the morning were the Soldiers invited to give testimonials of how the equipment developed here affected them. Body armor was the common thread.

Sgt. SirVantis Dennis, 3rd Infantry Division (Mech.), was struck squarely in the front of his Interceptor Body Armor vest by an unexploded rocket-propelled grenade, causing a bruise the size of the ceramic plate insert tucked inside the vest, while caught in an ambush during fighting in Operation Iraqi Freedom. In the same firefight, he was struck again, this time by a rifle round that was stopped by the plate.

"I guarantee you two strikes, and I'm out," Dennis said. "I'd like to thank the Lord and the people who invented this piece of equipment. I'd like to thank you for all that you've done for us."

His tank getting pounded by Iraqis in a separate battle, Sgt. David Dellenbaugh, a gunner also with the 3rd Inf. Div., resorted to leaving the confines of the cabin to return fire.

"There are no right words to say," Dellenbaugh said, who was struck by a rifle round on the outer edge of his protective plate, the vest itself absorbing some of the impact. After discovering he was all right, he kept on firing. "I just want to thank you for saving my life and keeping me in the fight."

Jumping into northern Iraq along with 1,000 fellow soldiers, Pfc. Christopher Taffoya with 173rd Airborne

Brigade, 2nd Infantry, 503rd (Airborne) Battalion, benefited from the airdrop mission at the Soldier Systems Center.

On the ground, his unit was tasked with starting a police force. When a grenade exploded nearby during a patrol, he was wounded in the legs but his body armor caught shrapnel in the lower back that would have severely injured or killed him.

The equipment developed here "got me in safely and got me out," Taffoya said.

1st Sgt. Colin Rich, 504th Parachute Infantry, survived a strike in the rear of his MICH helmet from a sniper rifle. He's still suffering from the effects of the injury, but he said he is amazed at how a helmet not designed to stop a large, high-velocity round protected him.

"This facility has a profound impact on everybody in the military," Rich said. "Continue to increase our odds. Continue to make (our advantage) as lopsided as possible."

Dean showed a few animated clips depicting the future, with new and advanced ways to fuel, protect and equip warfighters to provide an overwhelming edge on the battlefield.

"As with any anniversary celebration, we look ahead to the next half century, and the Soldier Systems Center will continue its tradition of excellence in all of our areas," Dean said.

For more information on the Soldier Systems Center, please visit our website at <http://www.natick.army.mil>.

## Fort Stewart Museum

*The Fort Stewart Museum will close for regular visiting hours starting December 1, for gallery and exhibit renovations.*

*The Museum will re-open for regular visitation March 2.*

*Regular office hours will be maintained by museum staff and other museum services are still available during this period.*

*For information contact Walter Meeks, III or Jeff Reed at 767-7885.*

## CENTCOM NEWS

### Two Soldiers injured in IED explosion near Shkin

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Two coalition Soldiers were wounded when their vehicle struck an improvised explosive device on a mounted patrol in the vicinity of Shkin about 1 p.m., Sunday.

The Soldiers received initial medical treatment on the scene and were evacuated by air to the medical facility at Salerno firebase for further care and evaluation.

There were media from several news outlets accompanying the Soldiers. However, no media personnel were seriously injured in the incident.

No further information is available at this time.

### Task Force "All American" Soldiers disrupt attempts to emplace IED

AL FALLUJAH, Iraq — Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 16th Mechanized Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, attached to 82nd Airborne Division, killed three enemy personnel placing an improvised explosive device last night at approximately 8:30 p.m.

The Soldiers were conducting a patrol along the intersection of Highway 1 and Highway 10 when they observed two individuals digging a hole in the median. A sedan arrived shortly after. Three personnel exited the car and began walking towards the two individuals digging. One of the individuals from the sedan was carrying a large object to the hole.

The observing troops determined that the individuals were emplacing an IED and initiated direct fire.

Three of the personnel were killed. One of the individuals fled to the north with the unknown object, while another escaped to the south.

Soldiers immediately contacted the local police

force. They arrived at the scene and took possession of the vehicles and bodies. No Coalition Soldiers were injured in this incident.

### 220th Military Police Brigade Soldier dies

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A 220th Military Police Brigade Soldier died when his patrol vehicle rolled into a canal near Al Iskandariyah at approximately 4:30 a.m. Nov. 23.

Rescue attempts were unsuccessful. The Soldier was evacuated to the 28th Combat Support Hospital and pronounced dead on arrival.

The Soldier's name is being withheld pending next-of-kin notification.

This incident is under investigation.

### Iraqis prevent IED attack in 82nd Airborne Division's area of operation

ISKANDARIYAH, Iraq — Iraqi civilians warned personnel from the Iraqi Railroad of an improvised explosive device placed on the tracks near Iskandariyah early this morning. The Iraqis flagged down the train to show them exactly where it was located.

The IED was made from three 155mm artillery rounds, all linked together. An explosive ordnance disposal team, attached to the 82nd Airborne Division, arrived at the scene and disarmed the IED. The rail line reopened at approximately 1 p.m.

Assistance between the people of the Al Anbar Province and the 82nd Airborne Division is increasing each day. The Iraqis' cooperation with coalition forces is helping the continued effort to turn Iraq into a democratic country.

# 3ID IN BRIEF

## Stewart

### Winter Special Olympics

Event will be held at Marne Lanes 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Dec. 5. Approximately 40 to 50 volunteers are needed. What a difference your hugs and cheers can make to these outstanding athletes!

If you cannot stay the entire day, you can come for a portion of the day and be a cheerleader for all of the athletes. For units or large groups call 767-3195 and we will fax you a group registration sheet.

### Old fashioned Cantina

BOSS is sponsoring an old fashioned Cantina 3 to 6 p.m., Dec. 4 at Sports USA.

### MOAA Seminar

On Dec. 8, the Military Officers Association of America will be at Stewart to conduct an informative seminar entitled, "Marketing Yourself for a Second Career". The guest speaker will be Col. Jerry Crews, retired. Several of the topics that he will discuss include the following:

- Your competition for finding a job
- Perceptions civilian employers have of military personnel
- A plan for your job search
- Resumes
- How employers read your resume

- Networking and penetrating the hidden job market
- Preparing for and conducting a successful interview
- Salary negotiations and benefits packages
- Rejection

The Seminar is open to officers, noncommissioned officers and their spouses who are planning on leaving active duty in the next one to five years.

ACAP will be hosting this event at Club Stewart in the Liberty Room from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. As seating is limited, we ask that you please call 767-8677/2234 to reserve your space.

### Fort Stewart Museum

The Fort Stewart Museum will be closed during visitor hours for renovations from Dec. 1 to March 2. Regular office hours will be maintained, and other museum services will be available.

### Child and Youth Services

The Central Registration office located in Bldg. 443 has changed operational hours. The new hours will be 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday.

The office will not be closed from 1 to 2 p.m. as previously scheduled.

## Hunter

### Thrift Shop

The Hunter Thrift Shop is open on Wednesday, Friday and the first Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with consignments accepted from military identification card holders from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

It has a great assortment of bargains from baby clothes to furniture. All proceeds are returned to the Hunter Community in scholarships, grants to units, and through other military organizations. Donations are accepted and volunteers are always welcome.

For more information contact the Hunter Thrift Shop at 352-0376."

### Salsa lessons

Hunter Club is under renovation, however activities are still ongoing.

There will be free Salsa lessons 7 to 10 p.m. Wednesdays. For more information call 353-7923.

### Youth Services

School Age Services is open 6 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. during school. There are before and after school programs for 1st through 5th graders. Enjoy fun and leisure activities, educational, tutoring, computer lab, sports, fitness and more.

Join the 4-H community club,

photography and technology groups. Check with your school for transportation. For more information, call 352-5708 or 352-6705.

### Toys for Tots

The drive has already begun and boxes were placed in the community this weekend. A box for people to donate new toys will be at the PX, the Commissary, ACS Bldg., Stewart and Hunter Credit Union and at the Hunter Chapel.

These boxes are in place now until Sunday, Dec. 14.

### Library

The grand opening of the Hunter Library is projected in early January. The new facility will include features of the Stewart Library, including DVDs, talking books and more.

### Community Meeting

A community meeting is scheduled at ACS, 7 p.m., Dec .9.

### Auto Craft

Cars and some light trucks can get oil changed for \$19. Buy tires and get them mounted and balanced FREE. Buy a set of four, get them mounted, balanced, and the front end aligned FREE. For more information call 352-6244.

## Winn Army Community Hospital

### Tuttle Information Desk

Tuttle Army Health Clinic's new Information Desk phone number is 352-6500.

### Flu Shots

Flu shots are available for all ages at Winn's immunization clinic 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, call 370-6878.

### Satellite Refill Pharmacy

The satellite refill pharmacy located at the PX is open for business. Hours of operation are 9 to 11 a.m. and noon to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Prescriptions can be refilled by calling 767-6633 or online at [www.winn.amedd.army.mil](http://www.winn.amedd.army.mil).

### Physical Exam Section

The physical exams section is now located with the allergy/immunization clinic at Winn. The clinic will be open 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For more information, call 370-6619.

### Intervention Services

Families with children up to 3-years-old who may be at risk for developmental delays can call

Educational and Developmental Intervention Services for a free screening.

Services include home visits, occupational therapy, special instruction, physical therapy, speech and language therapy, vision and hearing screenings, family training, developmental screenings and assessments. For more information, call 370-6349.

### Additional Parking

An additional parking lot on Harmon Ave., adjacent to Winn and next to the sports complex, is open for patient parking.

### Winn Seeks Volunteers

Winn is looking for adult volunteers to help out in a wide range of areas from administrative specialists to chaperones to certified or licensed nurses. The next mandatory orientation will be held 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Dec. 5. For more information, call 370-6903.

### Tuttle TRICARE enrollment

TRICARE enrollment briefings for Tuttle are held by appointment from 9 to 11 a.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 1 to 3 p.m. Thursday. To schedule an appointment, call 767-6633 or 1-800-652-9221.

## Atencion! Atencion! Atencion!

A toda nuestra comunidad de habla hispana.

El equipo del ARMY FAMILY TEAM BUILDING,

Tiene el orgullo de invitarles a la primera parte de el

Primer nivel de sus clases, completamente en

espanol.

Acompananos a aprender mas acerca de ARMY, sus

Costumbres, Cortesias, Tradiciones, La Cadena de Comando, su lenguaje especial y mucho mas.

Enterate de los recursos y las agencias que estan

disponibles en nuestra comunidad para ayudarnos.

Al conocer mas de la estructura del ejercito, tendremos mas entendimiento y podemos desenvolvemos mejor.

Estas clases se llevaran a cabo el 4 de diciembre, en el

Army Community Center, a las 6 p.m.

Para registrarse o si necesitas mas informacion puedes llamar a

Maggie Ortiz al 368-7615, o, a Stacy Thompson al 767-2382.

No faltes!

Te Esperamos!

## MATCH POINT

**When putting out a campfire, drown the fire, stir it, and drown it again.**

**REMEMBER, ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT FOREST FIRES.**



A Public Service of the USDA, Forest Service and Your State Forester.



## If you accidentally discover an archaeological site on Fort Stewart:



1. Cease what you are doing immediately.
2. Notify Range Control at 767-8777.
3. Do not attempt to unearth the object or remove it.



## POLICE REPORTS

• **Subject:** Private, 22-year-old male, Aviation Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Driving under the influence, speeding 71/45 mph  
 • **Location:** Hinesville

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 21-year-old female, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Possession of marijuana with intent to distribute  
 • **Location:** Hinesville

• **Subject:** Family member, 33-year-old female  
 • **Charges:** Aggravated assault, simple assault  
 • **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 22-year-old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Driving while license suspended, speeding 74/55  
 • **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 21-year-old male, Aviation Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Driving under the influence of alcohol, failure to obey traffic control device  
 • **Location:** Hinesville

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 21-year-old male, 1st Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Following too closely  
 • **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Sergeant, 22-year-old male, 2nd Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Disorderly conduct  
 • **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Specialist, 27-year-old male, 2nd Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Disorderly conduct  
 • **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Family member, 38-year-old female  
 • **Charges:** Failure to stop at posted stop sign, driving on expired license, failure to wear seatbelt  
 • **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Private 2, 20-year-old male, 2nd Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Failure to exercise due care, too fast for

conditions, drunken driving, failure to obey general order (drinking under age)  
 • **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Corporal, 26-year-old male, 2nd Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Driving under the influence of alcohol, too fast for conditions  
 • **Location:** Hinesville

• **Subject:** Private, 36-year-old male, Engineer Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Driving under the influence  
 • **Location:** Walthourville

• **Subject:** Specialist, 23-year-old male, 1st Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Driving under the influence, laying drag  
 • **Location:** Hinesville

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 21-year-old male, Division Artillery  
 • **Charges:** Obstruction of justice, battery  
 • **Location:** Statesboro

• **Subject:** Sergeant, 24-year-old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Speeding 80/55, driving under the fluence  
 • **Location:** Liberty County

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 20-year-old male, 2nd Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Driving while license suspended, speeding 61/45  
 • **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Staff Sergeant, 43-year-old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Attempting to elude police, no tag  
 • **Location:** Hinesville

• **Subject:** Lance Corporal, 21-year-old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Burglary, possessing firearm/knife in committing crime  
 • **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Sergeant, 25-year-

old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Driving under the influence, speeding  
 • **Location:** Garden City

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 20-year-old male, 2nd Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Possession of alcohol by a minor  
 • **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Specialist, 19-year-old male, Division Artillery  
 • **Charges:** Underage drinking, driving with suspended or revoked license

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 22-year-old male, Aviation Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Driving under the influence  
 • **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Staff Sergeant, 35-year-old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Driving under the influence, refused to obey officer's directions  
 • **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Specialist, 27-year-old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Conspiracy, larceny of AAFES property, contribution to the delinquency of a minor, soliciting another to commit an offense  
 • **Location:** Hunter

• **Subject:** Specialist, 24-year-old male, Engineer Brigade  
 • **Charges:** Assault consummated by battery  
 • **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Specialist, 21-year-old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Driving while license suspended, speeding 60/45, failure to appear  
 • **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Staff Sergeant, 35-year-old male, separate battalion  
 • **Charges:** Deposit account fraud  
 • **Location:** Hinesville

## ASK THE JUDGE

**Q:** I'm looking to buy a used car and I've heard about the "MILES" program. What is it and is it right for me?

**A:** *Whether or not The Military Installment Loan and Education Services program or MILES, is right for you depends on your circumstances. The important thing to remember is that MILES is not military run or endorsed – it is merely staffed by a number of prior service members and is marketed exclusively to Soldiers and sailors. While this may make dealing with MILES more comfortable for the typical Soldier, you must remember that it is a business and businesses are around to make money...your money.*

What is MILES? The program is designed to provide Soldiers with no or bad credit the means to purchase a vehicle. MILES acts as a go between among dealers, a lender (currently U.S. Bank) and the Soldier. While MILES targets mostly junior enlisted, in May the program changed to no longer allow E-1s in the Army, Navy or Marines to participate.

On the plus side, MILES can help a Soldier with credit problems find and finance a car. Additionally, MILES has entered into an agreement with participating car dealers to only sell its customers vehicles that meet certain standards, which MILES established. Finally, MILES puts some price limitations on the dealers to avoid over-charging.

However, the interest rate on the loan is high at 18.75 percent. Agreeing to finance a car with such a high interest rate can be risky. If you sell the car before the loan expires, the value of the car may be less than what you need to pay off the loan. If the car gets repossessed or totaled, you may be responsible for a great deal of money if the car does not bring much money in at the auction or if the insurance payment is less than you expected. Unfortunately, MILES' interest rate does not change, no matter what the Soldier's credit rating might be. Many banks and credit unions offer rates of 5 to 6 percent, which could save customers a substantial amount.

Another downside is that MILES typically requires their customers to buy extended warranties for the vehicles, even if they are not necessary or wanted. Finally, the customer is responsible for negotiating the price of the car, which may not be fair despite the limitations placed

upon the dealer by MILES.

**Q:** I am confused. If I don't use MILES, how can I get a car loan? And, what if I have bad credit? Is there any other way to get a loan?

**A:** *There are a number of ways to obtain a car loan. Buyers may opt to use "direct lending," which is obtaining a loan directly from a bank, finance company or credit union. Once the buyer and dealer agree on a price, the buyer uses the loan to pay the dealer for the vehicle. Credit unions and banks rarely charge a financing fee for these loans. Also, some banks or lenders will pre-approve current customers for a certain loan amount. If you already have a relationship with a lender, contact your lender and see if you qualify.*

More commonly, a vehicle is financed via a "dealership financing" agreement. Here, a buyer and dealer enter into a contract where the buyer agrees to pay the amount financed, plus whatever finance charge the dealer chooses to assess. Typically, the dealer will sell the contract to a bank or some other lender who, in turn, will be in charge of collecting the buyer's payments.

What if you have bad credit? Soldiers with parents or spouses who have good, established credit may ask them to act as "co-signers" for an auto loan. The upside for the Soldier is that a co-signer with good credit can make up for the Soldier's lack of credit or poor credit history. However, the downside is that some people are reluctant to act as co-signers. Why? Simply put, if you fail to pay for the car, the co-signer is responsible for your loan. Also, your failure to pay could damage your co-signer's credit rating. Another possible downside concerns ad valorem tax, which you may be responsible for if a co-signer's name appears on your registration.

Most importantly, shop around. Comparing offers for financing and for the vehicle itself is the best way to get a good deal. If you are on a tight budget, be certain that your choice of vehicle is practical. Don't make the mistake of buying a car that is more than you can afford – repossession will severely jeopardize your ability to obtain a vehicle in the future.

For more information visit these websites: [www.pueblo.gsa.gov](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov), [www.usmiles.com](http://www.usmiles.com), [www.consumerreports.com](http://www.consumerreports.com), [www.edmunds.com](http://www.edmunds.com).

One environment.  
One simple way to care for it.

 Earth Share

[www.earthshare.org](http://www.earthshare.org)



# Mad mortarman ...

## Delta Battery seeks and waits

Sgt. 1st Class Todd Oliver

Special to The Frontline

AL HAWIJA, Iraq — The men of Delta Battery are in search of the "Mad Mortarman."

Well, that's not exactly true. The 173rd Airborne Brigade's artillery unit has an idea where he is and he certainly knows where they are. It's just that the boys of Delta are hoping to drop in on this man, drop a 105mm howitzer round in on him to be exact.

From the nearby town of Al Hawija, the Mad Mortarman lobs both mortar and artillery shells

and rockets at Forward Operating Base McHenry, home to 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment.

Without making light of the situation, Delta Soldiers did the only thing a bunch of artillerymen could do; they dragged their guns out to the FOB and waited.

They still wait.

But they're the patient kind, and they're confident they'll get the Mad Mortarman.

It's just a matter of time.

"The initial plan was to be here for a day," said 1st Lt. Kyle Barden, Delta's fire direction officer. "The base was getting mortared a lot, so we wanted to come out here, get an acquisition, shoot back and hopefully get the Mad Mortarman. We realized that wasn't feasible and are going to be here an undetermined amount of time."

From the look of things, according to Barden, the base was being bracketed. The Mad Mortarman was getting smarter, and the smarter he got, the closer he was getting to the unit.

"He knows what he's doing. He was getting more and more accurate. He had rounds fall short of the FOB and other rounds land far. They (1/12) already had their 120mm mortars out here, but they brought us out for the extra firepower and the extra reach."

"The 120mm mortars response time is not as fast as ours," said Delta's 1st Sgt. Frank Marcantonio. "And the mortars can't

reach as far as we can. Our counter fire time is just a lot quicker."

"We do two things, we shoot harassment and interdiction fires or we shoot counter fires," Barden explained.

By using sophisticated radar systems, the battery is able to determine from what location artillery or mortar rounds or rockets are being fired. This system, theoretically, should allow the battery to quickly kill anyone firing at them.

The rockets are jury-rigged and fired from unconventional platforms (a fancy term for a dirt hill), this makes the tracking of their trajectories all the more difficult.

Still, the Mad Mortarman can be tracked.

"He knows that if he hides in the town, we won't shoot back," Barden said. "We just have to be 'on it' and we need some luck. Not only do we have to be on it, he has to be slow."

**1st Lt. Kyle Barden**  
Delta's fire direction officer

Marcantonio doesn't think luck will have anything to do with it.

"No, not luck," he said. "We just have to get cleared to fire."

**Editor's note:** Sgt. 1st Class Todd Oliver is a journalist with the Southern European Task Force, and currently attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Iraq.



PFC Brandon R. Aird

**Delta Battery Soldiers quickly dismount their vehicle during training exercises in Iraq.**