

Mailroom volunteer essential part of team

Helping out while husband serves in Iraq

By Alexandra Williams
284th Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

Everyday there are 2,000 mailboxes to fill, hundreds (sometimes thousands) of pieces of mail to be sorted and 300-400 boxes waiting to be distributed in just a few hours at the Giessen Community Mail Room.

With only three mail clerks to handle the task in addition to serving customers at the window, having the help of a dedicated volunteer is a major force multiplier. Driven by her dedication and desire to help Soldiers and families, Anita Wood has become an essential member of the CMR team.

"Anita started working here June 2 — the same day I started working at the CMR; and she's a godsend," said mail clerk Kathryn Underwood.

Hard to find volunteers

"Most people are not interested in volunteering at the CMR. They

think we have nothing to do. Then again when we do find volunteers they often stop coming back after a few days because they realize it's hard work and it requires a lot of dedication," Underwood said.

"Anita comes here every day, five days a week, and works six to seven hours. She never takes a day off. We are really happy about this because we can use all the help we can get to make sure our patrons get their mail as fast as possible," she said.

Underwood said she is impressed with Wood's work attitude and dedication because even if they could hire more clerks, Wood could not apply.

"Because of the security clearance only U.S. citizens can apply for mail clerk positions," she said.

"Every time when I went to the mail room I saw how busy the clerks were. One day I jokingly said to them that I would drop by the next day and help them out. That's how everything started," Wood said.

"A few days later I went to the Red Cross and attended a volunteer orientation. When I finally

showed up in the CMR and told them I was ready to work they were very surprised," she said.

"I decided to volunteer because it gets me out the house. The work has become my job; I just don't get paid. I plan to come here at least until my husband returns from Iraq, but even then I will find time to help out," she said.

"I am responsible for the mailboxes on one side of the CMR. It's a lot more work than one would think. I sort the mail, stamp it, prepare labels when it has to be forwarded — it's really a lot of work, but I enjoy doing it," she said.

"I even got letters from deployed soldiers thanking me for helping forward their mail. And every now and then someone drops by to thank me. The work is very rewarding. I know that everyone is desperate for his or her mail and I am doing my share to help make sure they get it a little faster," Wood said.

Anyone interested in volunteering at the mail room can sign up at the 284th Base Support Battalion's Army Community Service. For more information on the work in the CMR call mil 343-6558.



Photo by Alexandra Williams

Mailroom volunteer Anita Wood helps community members receive their holiday mail a little faster.

Building character integral to Giessen Elementary curriculum

By Alexandra Williams

284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

Helping students build character and become strong people is an integral part of the curriculum at the Giessen Elementary School.

"We started integrating 'Character Building' in our curriculum last year and it was a great success," said principal Barbara Mueller.

"Once a week we announce a word that describes a character trait, and the classroom teachers explain to their

students the meaning of the word," she said.

Twice a semester all teachers are asked to assign a character trait to each of their students, and Mueller presents them with a certificate stating the student's name and the character trait best describing the student, she said.

"We want them to see what a good person they are and celebrate the good things in our students, but also encourage them to build up their character," she said.

"I received a certificate for responsibility. Responsibility means that you are always doing what you ought to do," said

fourth-grader Isabella Schaffino.

"Next I want to improve my courage because that's another good trait. Courage means that you are brave and that you always stick up for the right thing even though your friends may not," she said.

"My trait is accountability. That means that I always use my own knowledge and my own brain. I am proud of this certificate and I will try to do things even better now. I also want to improve my creativity. I like 'Character Building' because I learn to be a fair person and how to do things better," said fifth-grader Nicole McDougal.

"They tell us a new word at the school and then we read the definition in a book. My trait is honesty. Sometimes it is easy to be honest and other times it is not. What I've learned is that honesty is good. Another good character trait is courage and I want to work on this one," said Allysha Cipriano, who attends fourth grade.

"I forgot what my certificate said, but my favorite character trait is honesty and I want to improve this character trait so I can get a certificate for that the next time," said first-grader Katherine Slyghter.

"Honesty is important because when you are honest, even if it is hard to say the truth, people don't get hurt and they know they can trust you. I like to learn about character building because it helps me to become a strong person," she said.

"I forgot the character trait my teacher gave me, but my favorite one is friendliness because being friendly to others is very important," said Judson Hayes who attends first grade.

"You need to treat others fine and not just yourself. This will make you very happy. But, you can also be friendly to yourself. Sometimes this is important too, because then you feel good and then it is easy to be friendly," he said.

"Next I want to build my courage. I want to be brave and help others. I think friendliness and courage go well together. Sometimes it is a hard task to build up a character trait, but we learn that it is worth it," Hayes said.



Photo by Alexandra Williams

Students celebrate positive character traits during an award ceremony at Giessen Elementary School.

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen

Clay Aiken fans reach out to 501st FSB Soldiers

By Alexandra Williams
284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

Fans of American Idol runner-up Clay Aiken support not only their idol but also the soldiers of Company A, 501st Forward Support Battalion. Every day packages and letters for the soldiers arrive at the house of the battalion's rear detachment commander, Capt. Joseph Kurtzweil.

"I still can't believe how many people care for the deployed troops and that my mother, who is a great Clay fan, made all of this happen," said Kurtzweil's wife Angie, who is a member of the Company A Family Readiness Group.

Kurtzweil's mother, Susan Jones, is an employee of Wiesbaden's 3rd Corps Support Command who moved from North Carolina to Germany this summer to be close to her daughter's family.

"It all started when I saw the second American Idol show here on AFN. I saw Clay performing and I instantly liked his music," said Jones.

"I wanted to find out more about the CD release parties in Europe and about him, so I did some research on the Internet and I came across this message board of Clay's fan club. Because Clay is supporting charitable organizations many of his fans follow his lead.

"In the forum many of Clay's devotees posted messages saying that they wanted to do something for the deployed Soldiers, but did not know what to do and how to do it. I knew that the soldiers in Angie's company lacked many things and that mail is a morale booster for them, so I left a message with Angie's name and email address," Jones said.

"I didn't really expect that many emails after my mother told me about the message she posted," said Kurtzweil.

"I thought that they wanted to send me a couple of compact discs and maybe a few T-shirts, but then I received so many emails from people who asked what they could send and what the Soldiers needed downrange that I was surprised," she said.

Just a couple of weeks later the donation started to come in.

"It was funny when we received the first packages. My husband went to the mailroom and he was told that he might need a truck to



Photo by Alexandra Williams

Michael Anderson (left to right), Susan Jones, and Hannah and Angie Kurtzweil sort and rearrange donations sent to Kurtzweil to be forwarded to the Soldiers of Company A, 501st Forward Support Battalion, stationed in Iraq.

pick up the mail. He thought the mail clerk was joking, but after he saw all the boxes he had to come back home and borrow a neighbor's van. It was incredible.

"Some boxes were even as tall as I am and weighed about 70 pounds each," Kurtzweil said.

"People are sending snacks, board games, cards, CDs — but also T-shirts and hats. It's a lot of variety and it's more than what I expected," she said.

Packages from every state

"I was overwhelmed that so many fellow Americans care for our Soldiers," Kurtzweil said.

"We received packages from every state," added Jones.

"Many people put notes with their packages and many of those notes or letters they

are sending make you cry. Some people explained that they do not have much money so they could not send much but one CD. I am touched by the generosity of those people," she said.

Kurtzweil writes the names of the senders in a book and after mailing the packages off to the Soldiers she'll send thank you notes to everyone, she said.

"I will accept packages for as long as we are here because even after our Soldiers are leaving there will be replacements, and I know that they will be happy to receive those packages," she said.

Members of her FRG come to assist Kurtzweil in repacking the items and sending them off to Iraq. She needs all the help she can get as every day more mail comes in, she said.

"I think it's just wonderful," said Michael Anderson, whose wife, Pfc. Melissa Kilgore-Anderson, is assigned to Company A.

"It helps out with the morale of the Soldiers because they know that someone out there cares for them," he said.

"This is our first deployment and I just love to see all the stateside support for our troops. It's also exciting to see that someone, Susan, cares enough to help our Soldiers. She took the time to write to the fan club and initiate the project. It's good for the morale of our Soldiers," said Tania Hua, spouse of Spc. Henry Hua.

"The Soldiers will appreciate all of this," said Company A 1st Sgt. Luis Gonzales, who just returned to Germany for a two-week rest and recuperation leave.

Effort appreciated

"One must see the expression on a Soldier's face when they receive letters and packages. I really appreciate everyone's effort to support our troops. It surely helps to keep their morale up," he said.

Army Community Service workshops

Computer Basics

The 284th Base Support Battalion Army Community Service hosts Computer Basics classes in Giessen Dec. 16, 23 and 30 from 2-4:30 p.m. The focus is on simple word processing, preparing MS Word/Resume Builder versions of federal resumes. Assistance will be provided in setting up an email account and general Internet usage. Because of limited space, advance sign-up is required. For more information call mil 343-7618.

Translator service

The Butzbach Outreach Center offers translation service every Wednesday from 10-11 a.m. for German letters, bills and calls to local vendors such as the phone company. For details call civ (06033) 925329.

Bad Nauheim Outreach

The Bad Nauheim Outreach Center offers assistance all year long. For more information on services provided and workshops of-

fered call mil 324-566 or civ (06031) 813566.

Tea time in Butzbach

The Butzbach Outreach Center hosts Tea Time every morning from 8:15-9 a.m. for tea, coffee and conversation. Everyone is welcome. For more information call civ (06033) 925329.



Soup's On

The Giessen ACS hosts a Soup's On/Hearts Apart luncheon Dec. 18 and 26 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for family members, Soldiers and civilian employees. Take a break from work or step out of the house to enjoy a free lunch. Children are welcome. For details call Deborah Gantt at mil 343-6039.

Respite care providers sought

The Exceptional Family Mem-

ber Program seeks respite care providers for families with special needs (children and adults). Anyone interested may call Florine King at mil 343-7618.

Multicultural support group

Army Community Service hosts a multicultural support group every third Thursday of the month to support foreign-born spouses. For details call Patricia Harper at mil 343-6910.

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen

Community spotlights

Force protection help needed

Force protection of assets from acts of terrorism is a complex challenge. To accomplish this endeavor the 284th Base Support Battalion Security Division needs everyone's help. Continue to be vigilant in unpredictability, situational awareness and reporting any suspicious activity to the BSB Security Office at mil 343-7699/7666 during duty hours, and the Military Police at mil 343-8601/7606 after duty hours. Do not become complacent and remember, security is everyone's responsibility.

Ironside Lanes update

The 284th Base Support Battalion Ironside Lanes Bowling Center sponsors an **evening out for couples** Dec. 13 from 7-9 p.m. Cost is \$31.90 for two hours of bowling and two steak dinners. A **Christmas Party** with a complimentary holiday buffet takes place Dec. 20 from 8 p.m. to closing. The bowling centers will remain closed Dec. 25. A **Celebrate Sober New Year's Party** takes place Dec. 31 from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. Entry fee is \$10 per person and includes extreme bowling, shoe rental, party favors and a breakfast buffet. Children under 4 enter free. The Outback Lounge hosts a **New Year's Eve Party** Dec. 31 from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Entry fee is \$10 per person and includes party favors, door prizes, karaoke, breakfast buffet and a glass of champagne. For details call the bowling center at mil 343-6172.

Friedberg Bowl events

The Friedberg Bowling Center sponsors a **Kid's Nickelodeon birthday party drawing** Dec. 16 at the center. Drop boxes are located throughout the community. The center hosts **Uniform Bowling** every day from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Everyone in uniform can bowl two games for 75 cents and shoe rental is free. Hit a strike with Saddam Hussein on the head pin and get a free combo meal; hit Osama Bin Laden and bowl for free; or hit Kim Jong Il and get one free game during **Bad Guy Bowling**. The center closes at 6 p.m. Dec. 24 and remains closed Dec. 25. Call mil 324-3270 for details.

Thrift Shop hours

The Butzbach Thrift Shop will be open every Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Friedberg Thrift Shop opens every Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Outdoor Rec trips

Outdoor Recreation sponsors a **Skiing trip to Winterberg** Dec. 13. Cost of the trip is \$69 and includes instruction and



Photo by Alexandra Williams

G-A club supports Soldiers, families

Members of the German-American friendship club "Die Brücke" meet at the house of club member Elisabeth Marich (center) to gather snacks and toiletry items the club bought to be sent to deployed Soldiers of the 1st Armored Division Engineer Brigade. "We held an Oktoberfest at Giessen Keller Theatre and we used the funds we made to purchase those items for the Soldiers," said club member Evelyn Schmadel. Anyone interested in participating in the club's activities, such as ladies gatherings, family picnics or winter walks can meet the group every first Wednesday of the month at 8 p.m. at the Dachcafe in Giessen. It is not necessary to become a club member to participate in any of the events. For more information call Klaus Leske at civ (06404) 660 060 or Gaby Stephan at civ (06401) 1253.

equipment rental. A trip to the **Nürnberg Christmas Market**, Germany's largest Christmas market dating back to the 1600s, is scheduled for Dec. 20. Cost is \$39 for adults, \$29 for children 4-11. For more information call the Outdoor Recreation center at mil 343-8202.

Outprocessing briefing

The next PCS/ETS outprocessing briefing is scheduled for Jan. 13 at 10 a.m. in Building 4 on the Giessen Depot. Outprocessing Briefings are mandatory 75-90 days before DEROS or separation. For more information call mil 343-8077.

Red Cross classes

The Giessen Red Cross sponsors an **Adult and Child First Aid class** Dec. 12 at 8 a.m. Class space is limited reservation is required. The Red Cross also has **Santa suits for rent**. For details call mil 343-1760.

Stylist, nail technician sought

The Giessen Beauty Shop located in the Giessen PX seeks a stylist and a nail technician. For more information about the job requirements and pay, pick up an application at the shop Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. or call civ (0641) 4941741.

Keller Theatre comedy

The Keller Theatre presents the musical comedy "Carol's Christmas" Dec. 11-13 and 18-20. Tickets are \$10 or 10 euros for adults, \$9 or 9 euros for students and \$8 or 8 euros for children age 6-12. Children under six are not admitted to Keller Theatre productions. For information call the box office Wednesday to Friday from 4:40-8 p.m. at mil 343-6515.

Arts and Crafts in Giessen

The 284th BSB Arts and Craft shop in Giessen hosts a **watercolor class** Dec. 11 from 4-6 p.m. The cost is \$15, but there is a 50 percent deduction for participants whose spouse

is deployed. A **Christmas wreath class** is scheduled for Dec. 12 from 4-5 p.m. The cost is \$15. Call mil 343-6672.

ACAP brief

The 284th BSB Army Career and Alumni Program hosts a preparation briefing and job assistance workshop Dec. 16-17 in Giessen. For more information call Claire Sowinski at mil 343-9332.

Christmas pet clinic

The mobile vaccination clinic will come to Butzbach's Shoppette parking lot Dec. 17 from 10 a.m. to noon, the Bad Nauheim Commissary parking lot from 1:30-2:30 p.m. and Friedberg's McArthur Housing (by the BOQ) from 3:30-4:30 p.m. The cost for each vaccination is \$16.

Holiday services

Catholic Holiday program: A **Penance Celebration** takes place Dec. 16 at 5 p.m. in Friedberg and Dec. 18 at 6 p.m. in Giessen. **Christmas Mass** will be held Dec. 24 at 4 p.m. in Giessen and at 8 p.m. in Friedberg. A **Christmas Day service** will be hosted Dec. 25 at 9 a.m. in Giessen and at 11:30 a.m. in Friedberg. A **Feast of Mary, Mother of God Mass** is scheduled for Jan. 1 at 9 a.m. in Friedberg and at 11:30 in Giessen. **Protestant Holiday program:** An **Advent service** will be hosted Dec. 14 and 21 at 9:30 a.m. in Friedberg and at 10 a.m. in Giessen. **Christmas Eve Candlelight service** takes place at 7 p.m. in Friedberg and Giessen. A **Christmas Day service** is also held Dec. 25 at noon in Friedberg. A **Gospel Watchnight** is scheduled for Dec. 31 at 8 p.m. in Giessen and a **New Year's Eve service** takes place Dec. 31 at 9 p.m. in Friedberg. The Friedberg Chapel hosts a **Candlelight and Communion Christmas Eve Service** Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. This is a general Protestant service. Everyone is invited. For details call Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Robert L. Ford at mil 324-3208/3508. For all other services call mil 343-8020.



Photo by Alexandra Williams

Sandell bats cleanup

Tina Sandell, 284th BSB school liaison officer, was selected as this year's final Separate Or Recycle Trash award winner. Lt. Col. Bart Shreve, 284th BSB commander, presented her with the award, a \$25 AAFES gift certificate and a portable CD-player with headphones.

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen

Mail from Baghdad

A letter to the 284th BSB community

Dear friends,

Thank you so much for sending boxes for our work with the orphanages in Baghdad. We will be making another visit very soon to deliver the items that you have sent. We have already received 222 boxes from American families in Germany and the States.

In our sector, which represents the oldest sections of Baghdad, we are working with three orphanages, two Muslim and one Roman Catholic.

The children really appreciate our visits.

Chaplain Hoover of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery, Chaplain Leonard of the 501st Forward Support Battalion and Chaplain Lopez of the 1-3rd Battalion, 124th Infantry have done the bulk of the work.

They frequently visit with the children. Unit commanders are

setting aside funds to conduct repairs, replace carpets, paint and provide generators and air conditioning units. We have spent or designated nearly \$20,000 for these renovations.

Your willingness to share in this enterprise that we call "Operation Helping Hand"

will go a long way in communicating the

love and goodwill of Americans.

Thank you for your kind support. The orphanages have long been

neglected, and your contributions are making a difference.

Again, on the behalf of the orphanages, thank you. Please remember our Soldiers in your prayers too.

Sincerely,
Chaplain (Maj.) Dean Bonura, 1st Armored Division

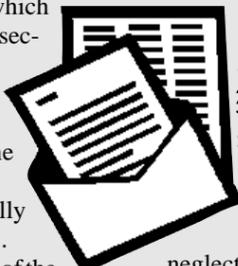


Photo by Alexandra Williams

Sending holiday greetings downrange

Families and friends of deployed Soldiers record holiday greetings for their loved ones during the Thanksgiving dinner in the Howze Dining Facility in Friedberg. The event was sponsored by the 104th Area Support Group and took place in eight dining facilities throughout the ASG including Giessen and Friedberg. About 100 families in the 284th Base Support Battalion took advantage of the offer to greet their deployed spouses or friends. After editing, the tapes will be given to the rear detachment commanders to be sent downrange.

Highlighting a few great Havoc Soldiers

Commentary by 1st Sgt. Robert R. Baker Jr.
Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th Engineer Battalion

In every battalion there are so many heroes and hardworking Soldiers that it is almost impossible to single all of them out.

Here in Camp Ultimo in Baghdad the 16th Engineer Battalion is blessed to have some of the best Soldiers serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. These Soldiers make every mission a total success and I am proud that they are the Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th Engineer Battalion.

One example is our support platoon, which rises early each day to prepare the meals, fuel vehicles and supply line companies with all the items necessary for their different missions.

One of the hardworking Soldiers in that platoon is Spc. Norman Crews from Richmond, Va. Every morning he gets up at 4 a.m. to prepare breakfast for over 450 soldiers in the camp.

The S2/S3 section is working 24 hours a day to provide

critical information guaranteeing seamless battalion operations. One of the outstanding Soldiers in that section is Spc. Andrew Custer from Tionesta, Pa. This dedicated Soldier is currently working with the newly created Iraqi Security Forces. He runs background checks and conducts interviews with local nationals to weed out the ineligible applicants.

No mechanized engineer battalion can operate effectively without the support of its maintenance section. This fine group of talented young mechanics works some of the longest hours in camp. From generator repairs to complete engine overhauls, the maintenance section does it all.

Newly promoted Pfc. Mohamed Azeez from Sri Lanka is an excellent example of the spirit that runs through this section. Recently he spent several long days assisting local workers with the different generators that provide electricity to the camp. It was his expertise that brought two broken generators back to full operational status.

Last but certainly not least is the administrative and

logistical platoon. This section provides communication, clerical, religious and logistical support to the battalion. They provide the necessary paperwork to the right channels so every Soldier's personal and professional needs are met.

Spc. Roy Everett from Greenville, N.C., conducted service on over 30 radios during Operation Catamount Re-Fit, a battalion mission to completely service and fix all the equipment, personnel and weapons of the battalion in preparation for future wartime missions. In a mechanized engineer battalion this is a huge job considering the amount of radios, vehicles, tents, weapons, Soldiers and other equipment in the battalion, especially in field conditions. Communications are essential to mission accomplishment, and Spc. Everett's hard work ensured a steady flow of information by repairing all defective systems.

Those Soldiers mentioned are just a few of the heroes working in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Most importantly, however, they are members of HHC, 16th Engineer Battalion, who are proudly making every mission a total success.

More community spotlights

Bank holiday schedule

The Community Bank in Giessen opens Dec. 24 and 31 from 9 a.m. to noon, Dec. 27 regular Saturday opening hours and remains closed Dec. 22, 25, 26, 28 and Jan. 1. The Friedberg Community Bank opens Dec. 24 and 31 from 9 a.m. to noon and remains closed Dec. 25, 26 and Jan. 1.

Winter concert

The Giessen Middle/High School hosts a winter concert at the Giessen Chapel in Marshall Housing Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. This event is open to the entire community.

Angel trees

The Friedberg and Giessen Community Banks are collecting gifts for their Angel Tree projects through Dec. 18. Donations will benefit the children of service members in our community. For more information call the Friedberg Community Bank at mil 324-3282 or the Giessen Community Bank at mil 343-7280.

School Age Services Winter Camp

The 284th BSB School Age Services Winter Camp runs from Dec. 22 to Jan. 2 (closed

Dec. 25-26 and Jan. 1). For more information call Giessen SAS at mil 343-6128, Friedberg SAS at mil 324-3492 or Butzbach SAS at civ (06033)65961.

SAS winter festival

The 284th Base Support Battalion School Age Services sponsors a Winter Festival Dec. 12 from 7-9 p.m. The fest is open to all children age 12 and under. Children must be accompanied by their parents. Entry is \$3 per person for children 3 years and up and includes refreshments and games. Santa Claus will be present for photos. For more information call mil 343-6128.

Cookie contest

The Giessen Commissary sponsors a Holiday Cookie Contest Dec. 18. Bring your favorite cookies and recipe to the commissary for judging. The prize is a \$25 gift certificate. For more information call mil 343-8448.

Santa home visits

The 2-3rd Field Artillery, Bravo Battery Family Readiness Group delivers Santa to your house Dec. 15 and 17 from 4-6 p.m. for \$5 per family or \$10 for two or more families to visit children and give out candy canes. For details call Lani at civ (0641)9482418.

414th BSB – Büdingen, Hanau

Community notes ... Community notes

Ski Austria

Ski and snowboard on the Kitzsteinhorn Glacier in Austria, Dec. 19-21. The price of \$269 for adults includes two nights in a hotel with breakfast and dinner, two-day ski pass for the glacier, ski rental, transportation and beginner ski lessons. Children age 4-12 pay \$189; children under age 4 pay \$80. Call civ (06181) 88-8891 or mil 322-8891 for details.

Polish pottery

Shop for Polish pottery with Hanau Outdoor Recreation Dec. 12-14. Cost is \$60 per person. A U.S. passport is required. Visit Hanau Outdoor Recreation in Building 459 on Old Argonner Kaserne or call civ (06181) 88-8891, mil 322-8891.

AFAP

Army Family Action Plan needs your ideas. AFAP is a grassroots program to resolve issues affecting Army quality of life. The annual 414th Base Support Battalion's AFAP conference will be held Feb. 10-11 at the Community Activity Center, Building 1351 on Fliegerhorst Kaserne, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. If you have an issue you would like to address or would like to be a conference volunteer contact Rick Krenz at mil 322-5308.

Babes in Toyland

Enjoy a musical performance at the Five Pfennig Playhouse, Dec. 11-13, 18-20 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at the Hanau USO on Pioneer Kaserne. Call mil 322-8725. The playhouse is in Building 405 on Old Argonner Kaserne.

Andrews Federal Credit Union open

AFCU will be open Christmas Eve from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and New Year's Eve from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Gelnhausen Elementary School events

Dec. 10-13: Holiday gift shop in the gym for students.

Dec. 16: PTA meeting at 6:30 p.m. with a Holiday Music Concert in the school gym. All grade levels will perform.

Dec. 18: Student of the Month ceremony at 11:15 a.m. in the conference room.

Dec. 18: Kindergartners will be the guests of the Horst German Kindergarten. This German exchange program features a visit from St. Nicholas, treats, Christmas carols, a bonfire and entertainment by the German kindergartners.

Eating for Life

Do you need help with your New Year's resolution to eat healthier? If so, come to the Hanau Health Clinic on Dec. 17 from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and learn about counting carbs, reading labels, controlling your blood pressure and cholesterol with diet and making the right food choices. The class is open to all adult ID card holders and no registration is required. For information call Christina Jackson at mil 345-4040, civ (06033) 982140 or Brandon Jones at mil 328-6656, civ (06181) 500-6656.

Youth of the Year Program

Will you be 14 and no more than 18 years of age by Jan. 31? Do you have a record of active and continuing service amounting to more than two years in your Youth Center? Do you volunteer? If so, you could be eligible for the Youth of the Year Program and win a \$10,000 scholarship. Deadline for all applications is Dec. 19. For information call Hanau Youth Services at mil 322-8231, civ (06181) 88-8231; or Büdingen Youth Services, mil 321-4793, civ (06042) 80793.

Job recruitment

The Kellogg Brown and Root

R&R return schedule
Check the list below for the day you must return to battle. The report time is 3 a.m. at Rhein-Main's tent city.

Arrived:	Return:
Dec. 9	Dec. 26
Dec. 10	Dec. 27
Dec. 11	Dec. 28
Dec. 12	Dec. 29
Dec. 13	Dec. 30
Dec. 14	Dec. 31
Dec. 15	Jan. 01
Dec. 16	Jan. 02
Dec. 17	Jan. 03
Dec. 18	Jan. 04
Dec. 19	Jan. 05
Dec. 20	Jan. 06
Dec. 21	Jan. 07
Dec. 22	Jan. 08

company is recruiting people to work in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan for January to February 2004. They'll be at the Hanau ACAP office, Building 11, Room 325 on Pioneer Kaserne, Dec. 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a presentation and to answer questions. You should have a resume available. Call mil 322-8308. They're seeking to fill positions including Army postal specialist, ammunition specialist, air control group-airfield logisticians and load planners, warehousemen,

cooks, finance personnel, fire-fighters, food service worker, fuel system operators, mine clearing equipment specialist, heavy equipment repair specialist and more.

FAST classes

Functional Academic Skills Training is an academic course to provide soldiers with on-duty instruction in reading, mathematics and language skills. The class is four hours each day for three weeks, Monday to Friday. People with a GT score below 100 and non high-school graduates are advised to take advantage of this program. The class is free to all logistically supported individuals and their family members who may enroll on a space-available basis. Contact an education counselor to determine eligibility and placement. For information call the Pioneer Education Center at mil 322-8380. Classes are scheduled for Jan. 8-30, 1-5 p.m.; Feb. 2-24, 8 a.m. to noon.

ID card office moves

The ID card, DEER, passport, and Installation Access Control System offices will be moving. Currently located in Buildings 5 and 24 on Pioneer Kaserne they will relocate to the Central Processing Facility in Building 21, Rooms 8a and 8b on Pioneer Kaserne. The move is scheduled for Dec. 19 and 22. The offices will not be open during the move. If you have questions call mil 322-9371 or civ (06181) 88-9371.

ACAP Job Assistance

Learn job-search techniques, financial planning, how to write resumes and cover letters, interview techniques and how to transfer your military skills to the civilian world at a job assistance workshop. The next workshop is Dec. 9-10, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Army Career and Alumni Program office, Building 11 on Pioneer Kaserne. Call mil 322-8356/8308.

Army Learning Center tutor

The Pioneer Education Center offers free academic tutorial assistance in preparation for GT improvement,

general college courses and prerequisite study for service schools. The tutor is available Tuesday and Thursday from 6-9 p.m. Call the Pioneer Education Center at mil 322-8380 for information.

Force protection Training

Force Protection Training, Level 1, is required for all U.S. military and civilian employees, U.S. dependents who are at least 14 years old and all local national employees and contractors. The next session is Dec. 11 at Pioneer Kaserne's Evening Star Theater at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Training can be scheduled for after-duty hours or weekends for units and civilian groups if coordinated in advance. For more information call mil 322-8455.

Nutrition nuggets

Join the WIC staff every third Tuesday of the month from 12-12:30 p.m. at the Wolfgang Outreach Center, Building 514, for discussions on hot topics in nutrition. Bring your lunch and a friend. Registration is not necessary and participation is free. **Dec. 16**— "Get Fit for the New Year" and make a realistic New Year's resolution to last all year and learn what it means to be fit.

CLEOS visits

CLEOS visits Büdingen and Gelnhausen monthly for parents to make registrations and pick up new hourly care cards without having to travel to Hanau. CLEOS will be in Büdingen Dec. 12, Jan. 27 and Feb. 24 from 12:30-2 p.m. and in Gelnhausen from 2:30-4 p.m. Teenagers who use the Galaxy or Millennium Teen Centers must be registered with CLEOS. Call mil 322-9144 or civ (06181) 88-9144.

ACAP job

A full-time counselor is sought for the Army Career and Alumni Program center to provide job search instruction and counsel clients on job search plans. Applicant must have a masters degree in counseling, human resources or an associated discipline. Submit resume and cover letter to hanauacap@resourceconsultants.com or fax to mil 322-8304, civ (06181) 88-8304, Attn: Bob Scheider. Refer to position number 1104OS003. The closing date is Dec. 15.

Fliegerhorst Thanksgiving draws crowds

The Hanau community Thanksgiving dinner held at Fliegerhorst Kaserne Nov. 21 was a taste treat for the 300 people who attended. The early turkey dinner was organized and cooked by the staff of the 414th Base Support Battalion's Army Community Service. Traditional food was served including a selection of pies which made for tough choices for Lorena Rodriguez and Kayla Byers. Guests included the 414th BSB commander, Lt. Col. Amy L. Ehmann, and members of the local Bundeswehr.



Photo by Dennis Johnson

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414th BSB – Büdingen, Hanau



**Thanksgiving
2003 around
the community**
Photos by Dennis Johnson

Chief Warrant Officers Bill McCain and Ron Welch unpack boxes of turkeys. Above left: Boice family members send holiday greetings to Iraq.

Soldiers and family members packed Hanau and Büdingen dining facilities for feasting, celebration and to send holiday greetings to absent friends and loved ones serving in Iraq on Thanksgiving Nov. 27.

The celebrations included entertainment by Native American performers.

In Hanau, the 130th Engineer Brigade hosted a special Thanksgiving dinner for their guests

from the German Bundeswehr.

As in year's past, the Hanau Warrant Officers Association donated free turkeys and food to needy community members. More than 200 frozen turkeys and bags of groceries were handed out to unit representatives on Old Argonner Kaserne Nov. 25. The food was to be further distributed to deserving families throughout the community.



A member of the Great Plains Indian Dancers performs traditional dances and songs from several different tribes during the festive meal at the Pioneer Dining Facility.



In a long-standing tradition, officers serve patrons holiday grub at the Pioneer Dining Facility.

People turn out in force for Smokeout event

Runners, walkers celebrate Great American Smokeout

Sixty-four people gathered at the Pioneer Fitness Center Nov. 20 to participate in a five-kilometer Fun Walk/Run to celebrate the 26th annual Great American Smokeout. Sponsored by the 414th Base Support Battalion Health Promotion and Community Health Offices, the Great American Smokeout is a day when smokers are encouraged to quit, even if just for one day.

"Smoking is the number one preventable health problem in the United States," said Kay Harris, 104th Area Support Group Health Promotion coordinator.

People with dogs, children in strollers and

on bikes, the 414th BSB commander Lt. Col. Amy L. Ehmann and many 502nd Engineers all participated. Before the walk/run started, a "cold turkey," a gift basket of coffee mugs and a teddy bear donated by the USO and T-shirts were raffled off.

"We offer education and support to help people when they're ready to quit being a tobacco user," said Kathleen Ackermann, a 414th BSB community health nurse.

Although this was not a "race," Sgt. Pablo Caballero of the 320th Engineer Company was the first to complete the five-K course in a time of 19:40.

Edwin Torres, Pioneer Fitness Center director, starts the Great American Smokeout Five-K Fun Walk/Run.

Photo by Dennis Johnson



Flu shots: Take a step in the right direction toward better health by getting a vaccination

By Dennis Johnson
414th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

Much of the illness and death caused by influenza, what we commonly refer to as “the flu,” can be prevented by a yearly flu shot. People in high-risk groups and people who are in close contact with those at high risk should get a flu shot every year.

A flu shot will usually prevent you from getting sick, but not always. If you do get the flu, it will likely be much less severe than if you hadn’t had the shot, perhaps lasting one to two days instead of a week. You will not get the flu from the shot.

Flu shots are available at the Hanau Health Clinic in Building 245 on New Argonner Kaserne at the immunization clinic, open Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:30-11:15 a.m. and 1-4 p.m., and Thursdays from 1-4 p.m. Shots are available to all active-duty military and authorized ID card holders. The shots are free to active-duty military and are priced according to status for all others.

If you think the flu is just a bad cold, think again. For most healthy people the flu may result in a week of misery at home in bed, but

the flu can kill too. The flu and pneumonia — the most common complication of flu — are the fifth leading cause of death among Americans over 65 and the sixth leading cause of death among all Americans. In 1918-1919 there was a worldwide pandemic of flu that killed 600,000 people in the United States and over 22 million people worldwide.

For each person who died of the flu in the United States, an estimated 50 people had come down with the disease. Of the 2 billion people living at the time, it is estimated that half were infected. The strangest thing about the 1918-1919 flu pandemic was that it stuck down more young healthy people than the old and infirm. No outbreak since has equaled the great flu pandemic of 1918-1919. Recent outbreaks — the 1957 Asian flu, the 1968 Hong Kong flu, the 1972 London flu and the 1976 swine flu — have been minor in comparison. But even with modern medicine and no flu epidemics in sight, the flu still claimed over 36,000 lives in the United States last year.

Will you catch the flu?

The U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 35-50 million Americans are infected during the flu season, which

typically lasts from November to March. Children are two-to-three times more likely than adults to catch the flu, and children more easily spread the virus to others.

People at risk for serious complications from the flu include people over 65 and those with chronic lung diseases such as asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Because schools are an excellent place for flu viruses to spread, families with school-age children have more infections than other families, with an average of one-third of the family members infected each year. Although most people recover from the flu, the CDC estimates that more than 100,000 people are hospitalized and more than 36,000 people die from the flu and its complications every year in the United States. The cost in health care expenses and loss of earnings because of illness and death due to flu and pneumonia in 1995 totaled \$22.9 billion.

Who needs a flu shot?

A flu shot can be given to anyone over six months of age who wants to avoid the flu. People who provide vital community services such as police, fire department and emergency medical services should get a flu shot so their services are not disrupted during a flu outbreak.

Pregnancy can increase the risk for complications from the flu, and pregnant women are more likely to be hospitalized from complications of the flu than non-pregnant women of the same age. In previous worldwide outbreaks of the flu deaths among pregnant women were associated with the flu. Pregnancy can change the immune system in the mother as well as affect her cardiovascular system. These changes may place pregnant women at increased risk. Because the flu shot is made from inactivated viruses, many medical experts consider flu shots safe during any stage of pregnancy. However, since miscarriages most often occur in the first trimester of pregnancy, doctors usually don’t give a flu shot during the first trimester to avoid a coincidental association with miscarriage.

Women who will be beyond the first three months of pregnancy during the flu season should get a flu shot. Pregnant women who have medical problems that increase their risk for complications from the flu should get a flu shot before the flu season, no matter their stage of pregnancy.

It is safe to get a flu shot if you’re breastfeeding. A flu shot cannot cause flu in you or your baby.

Healthy children age six to 23 months are at substantially increased risk for influenza-related hospitalizations. Influenza vaccination of all children in this age group is encouraged.

The risk of catching the flu during travel depends on the time of year and where you’re

going. In the tropics the flu can occur any time of year. In the Southern Hemisphere most flu activity is from April through September, the winter period there. In the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, travelers can also get the flu during the summer, especially when traveling as part of a large tourist group that includes people from areas of the world where the flu is active.

If you’re at high risk for complications of the flu, call your doctor to see if you should get a flu shot, especially if you plan to travel to the tropics, travel with large tour groups at any time of year or travel to the Southern Hemisphere from April through September. There is more information about influenza prevention for travelers at the CDC traveler’s health website.

Vaccine composition

An influenza vaccine contains various strains of inactivated influenza viruses that are representative of viruses likely to circulate in the upcoming season. The strains are updated annually.

Adverse reactions

Inactivated influenza vaccine contains viral proteins but no live virus and cannot cause influenza. Respiratory diseases after a flu shot are just coincidental and not related to the shot. The most frequent side effect of vaccination is soreness at the vaccination site that may last up to two days. These local reactions generally are mild and rarely interfere with the normal daily activities.

Fever, malaise, myalgia and other symptoms can occur following vaccination and most often affect people who have had no previous exposure to the influenza virus antigens in the vaccine, such as young children.

These reactions begin six to 12 hours after vaccination and can persist for one to two days. Immediate reactions — hives, angioedema, allergic asthma and systemic anaphylaxis rarely occur after an influenza vaccination.

These reactions probably result from hypersensitivity to some vaccine component, most likely residual egg protein (from the vaccine manufacture) and occur among people with severe egg allergies. There are protocols available for giving flu shots to people with egg allergies.

No need to fear shot

People concerned about the pain of injection should keep in mind that it’s a small needle hardly hurts at all, officials said. A quick shot in the arm beats a week in bed with a fever, chills, aches and a runny nose any day. (Information for this article came from the Centers for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/fluvac.htm.)

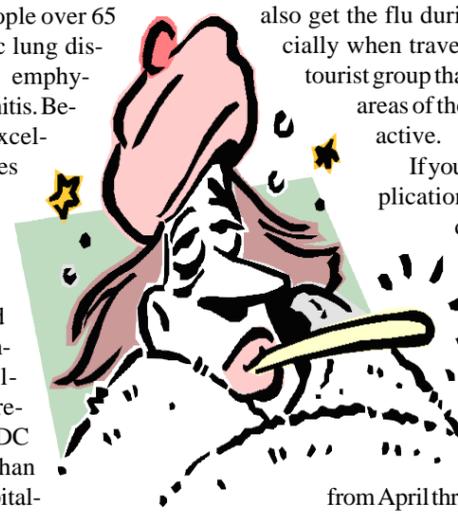


Photo by David Ruderman

Paying respect to veterans

JROTC Cpl. Wignelia Cruz of Hanau High School hands a paper “buddy poppy” to Matt Atkins, age 19, at the Hanau Commissary Nov. 22. The JROTC cadets were out in force to help raise money for veterans of Foreign Wars Post 880. Atkins, son of Sgt. 1st Class Mark Atkins of the 39th Finance

Battalion, said he intended to enlist shortly. “They’re a big help,” said Post 880 commander Charlie Byers as he oversaw the JROTC volunteers. Funds are channeled to the national FW and are used to help wounded and sick soldiers, he added. By the end of the day the youths had collected \$550 for the FW.