

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen

Students learn details about adult working life

Story and photo by Sarah Brown
Giessen Elementary School

Once a year during Groundhog Job Shadow Day children have a chance to spend a day at work with an adult to learn what a working day looks like for them.

In Giessen sixth-graders of the Giessen Elementary School shadowed 284th Base Support Battalion staff of all employment areas.

"I am shadowing Ruth Reichert from the Provost Marshal's Office. She is a language specialist. I like working here because there is always something to do. In the morning the other students that work here and I were given a tour and this afternoon I will go to a meeting with Mrs. Reichert. I like working here. I think it's interesting," said Christina Gilchrist.

Sixth-graders Mitch Prote and David Threet worked at Burger King and Anthony's Pizza.

"I love my job especially making the dough for the pizza. The best part was walking around picking up the trays. We also made one whopper," said Threet.

"When I am grown up I want to

be a Military Policeman but I'd like to work at Burger King or so when I am a teenager," said Prote.

Cynthia Cooper supervised both boys and enjoyed the day with the students, she said.

"The floor has never been so clean and sparkly. They are super. I like their teamwork. When they were cleaning one had the broom and the other the dustpan. I thought they were friends, but I just learned that they just met today. They are very professional," she said.

Reggie Casey and Josh Carabagh worked at the local postal office.

"I like handling the mail," Casey said.

"During our lunch break we were able to go the PX and play some of the games. That was fun, too," said Carabagh.

"I worked at the Giessen Child Development Center," said Troy Darby.

"It was fun working here, but it was also hard work. The hardest part was changing the diapers because it's gross and the children are always squirming," said Darby.

"Playing with the toddlers was



Troy Darby (left) and Kaleb Pontius play with children at the Giessen Child Development Center during this year's Groundhog Job Shadow Day Feb. 5.

fun," said Kaleb Pontius, who also was a shadow at the CDC.

Karie Lucas and Debbie Pantoja spent their day at the Giessen Post Exchange.

"I shadowed a cashier at the PX and I really liked it because it's

exciting to play around and to see all the people at the store," said Pantoja.

"Working at the cash register was fun, too. The job is easy and fun," said Lucas.

(Editor's note: Sixth-grader

Sarah Brown spent half a day at the Friedberg Tax center and then shadowed the 284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office staff writer while conducting interviews. Brown said she would like to become a reporter.)

Meet the staff:

ACS 'experts' help ease the stress of redeployment

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles introducing the staff of the 284th Base Support Battalion.

By Alexandra Williams

284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

As 284th Base Support Battalion officials prepare for the redeployment of Friedberg and Giessen Soldiers, spouses may seek the support of Deborah Gantt or Martha Pinion in preparation for reunion.

Gantt, Mobilization and Deployment Readiness Program manager for Giessen Army Community Service, and Pinion, Mobilization and Deployment Readiness coordinator for Friedberg ACS, use their expertise to assist families through the stress of redeployment and reunion.

"As the spouse of a (deployed) Soldier I know what families are going through. My husband and I had to go through separations many times so I know how spouses feel," said Gantt, who has been with Giessen ACS since November 2002.

The reunion can be very challenging

"The reunion can be very challenging, especially after such a long deployment. Things have changed during the separation and spouses may feel nervous or insecure about the redeployment. We offer training explaining the emotional cycle of deployment and how to handle the stress of rede-



Photo by Alexandra Williams

Deborah Gantt (left) and Martha Pinion of the 284th BSB Army Community Service help Soldiers and their families through the stressful time of redeployment.

ployment," she said.

Pinion looks back on a 30-year career of helping families and Soldiers in the military. "Twenty-two years of that time I've spent in three bases in Bad Hersfeld, Bad Kreuznach and Friedberg," she said. "There were many small deployments such as field exercises and the two Gulf Wars, so I have reunion and redeployment experience."

Gantt and Pinion offer reunion classes in

junior spouse talk about her anxieties, concerns and hopes about the redeployment while the senior spouse can talk about how feelings of loneliness are common during a separation and how to handle such feelings," Gantt said.

Counseling is confidential

"Though we keep a roster for recordkeeping purposes, the classes are confidential; no information will be released to others. The same applies to spouses who come to our offices or call us," Pinion said.

Spouses not able to attend the briefings can contact Gantt and Pinion at their offices, said Gantt.

"We are here to assist families who need support in handling the stress of redeployment, and our doors are always open," she said.

Training topics

Training includes topics such as: * Changes in the relationship. * Realistic expectations about the redeployment. * Recognizing and identifying the stressors during the deployment. * Finances during and after the deployment. * Communication. * Renegotiating and redefining goals in the marriage.

Gantt's office is located in Building 3 on the Giessen Depot and she can be reached at mil 343-6039. Pinion works in Building 3608 on Friedberg's Ray Barracks and can be reached at mil 324-3710.

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen

1st Brigade delivers supplies to Mustansyria school

Story and photo by Capt. Jean-Pierre Brown
1st Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office

As on any day in Baghdad, the sun rose Jan. 26 on the students of the Al-Jasmine primary school located in the neighborhood of Mustansyria. But on this bright day the students were in for a big surprise.

It was 10:30 a.m. and as the children were standing quietly in the backyard of the school preparing for the last day of examinations when U.S. Army Soldiers appeared.

About a dozen Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team including some from 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, arrived with loads of school supplies for the children of Al-Jasmine.

Soldiers enlisted the help of a disabled student in a wheelchair to distribute hundreds of backpacks loaded with school supplies of all types including pencils, crayons, copybooks, erasers and much other needed material.

McDonald's Corporation donated more than \$6,000 worth of crayons, and the citizens of New Ulm, Minn., added nearly \$10,000 worth of other supplies to the cause.

The supplies were mailed directly to the



Students of the Al-Jasmine primary school in Mustansyria surround 1st Brigade commander Col. Peter Mansoor, center, when they show off their new backpack that were distributed by Soldiers of the brigade.

Ready First Brigade, and its commander, Col. Peter Mansoor, arranged for the distribution to schools such as Al-Jasmine in the Rusafa district.

The charity event began with a speech by Lt. Col. Chuck Sexton, commander of 1-36th Infantry.

"We would like you to be our kids for a

few moments, because we miss our families back home and consider all Iraqi children as members of our extended family. So please accept our gifts," said Sexton.

"These school supplies are important to us because you children represent the future of Iraq," Mansoor told the students. "Use them for learning, use them with our best wishes, use them in peace."

The supplies are not gifts from the U.S. government, he said. "They are from your friends in the McDonald's Corporation, the people of New Ulm, Minn., and from many of our friends and families in the United States."

Organizations and individuals in the United States asked how they could help the Iraqi children, said Mansoor.

His reply was to "send school supplies for the kids — they are eager to learn but lack a great deal of support."

Sexton said that he was very happy to give the children these gifts, because when he is with the children he feels at peace and far away from military matters.

"These contributions were but a simple gift, but they symbolize a tremendous amount of caring and commitment extended and expressed by all Americans toward the Iraqi people," he said.

Flossing and deep scaling

Looking back on a four-decade-long career with Uncle Sam

By Petra Roberts
284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

When Marion Rudofsky, a dental hygienist with the Giessen Dental Clinic, originally applied for her job in 1963, her mother wanted to inspect the work place to ensure her daughter would be in good hands, working for the U.S. armed forces. Mom found the clinic to be acceptable, and Rudofsky began an over four-decade-long career with Uncle Sam and the Giessen community.

"When I first got here I asked myself how often I would climb these stairs to the dental clinic — one or two years maybe," Rudofsky said. Now 40 years later she looks back on having climbed 488,400 steps, having treated in excess of 71,000 customers, worked under more than 20 commanders in dental clinics in the former Ayers Kaserne in Kirch-Göns, Butzbach and Giessen.

"I was a dentist here 15 years ago, worked with her and I can tell you that she is an institution here," said Col. Carl Kruger, Hanau Den-



Photo by Petra Roberts

Col. Karl Kruger (from left), Marion Rudofsky, Capt. Michael Trout and Lt. Col. Bart Shreve.

tal Clinic commander, who came to Giessen to pay tribute to Rudofsky's long-standing service. "She is definitely a special member of this staff. The close relationship Marion has with us benefits the dental clinic in every way."

"When my family and I arrived in Giessen, Ms. Rudofsky made all the difference in our lives," said Capt. Michael Trout, officer in charge of the Giessen Dental Clinic. "Not only did she introduce me to everyone in the clinic, but also

helped me with getting to know my German neighborhood."

Rudofsky said she still enjoys her work and being able to help patients by educating them about dental hygiene.

Children are also among her patients. "It is a joy to treat children. They have no fear and are eager to learn about their teeth and dental hygiene," she said.

With more than 40 years of experience under her belt, Rudofsky knows what she's talking about.

Children's corner

YS baseball registration

The 284th BSB Youth Services holds registration for the spring baseball program through March 22 at the Child and Youth Services office in Building 3, Room 215 on the Giessen Depot. In order to play on a YS team children must be registered with CYS. The annual registration costs \$15 per child. Cost of participating in the youth sports baseball program is \$30 for the first child and \$27 for each additional child. The baseball program offers five divisions of play for youth, ages 5 through high school: T-ball for ages 5-6; coach pitch, ages 7-9; bantam, ages 10-12; junior, ages 13-15 and; senior, ages 16-high school seniors. Mandatory parent meetings take place April 6 and 8 at 6 p.m. in the Alpine Catering Center in Giessen. Practices are tentatively scheduled to start April 13 at locations in Friedberg, Butzbach and Giessen. Opening day of baseball season will be May 1 at 9 a.m. at the Giessen Chapel Field. Volunteer coaches are needed. A coach's clinic will be held April



7 and 9 at 6 p.m. in the YS gym in Giessen. Fees are reduced or waived for children of coaches. For more information or to volunteer as a coach call mil 343-7028 or civ (0641) 402-7028.

Weekend child care

The 284th Base Support Battalion Child and Youth Services provides a **Super Saturday morning child care** service Feb. 28 at the Giessen Child Development Center from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and March 13 at the Butzbach CDC from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Respite cards for E-4s and below will be accepted. A **Parent's Night Out** will be hosted Feb. 20 from 6:30-10:30 p.m. at the Butzbach CDC. Both child care services are available to children age six weeks to 11. To make reservations call the Central Registration Office at mil 343-7028/8216.

CDC on site enrollment

The Central Registration office offers onsite enrollment March 2 at the Butzbach CDC, March 3 at the Bad Nauheim CDC and March 4 at the Friedberg CDC. Registration is open from 9 a.m. to noon. Making advance appointments is encouraged. For details call mil 343-7028/8216.

New teams help identify needs of the community

By Jane Wingate
Special to the Herald Union

Identifying the needs of community members is a priority for Lt. Col. Bart Shreve, 284th Base Support Battalion commander, and his staff.

Shreve discussed how more focus can be put on the customer and ways to find out how customers feel about BSB programs and services during a meeting with the executive steering committee and mission driver teams.

Five teams were established to visit customer service sites within the community and gather feedback from customers including Soldiers, family members, civilians and contractors. Teams visited the Giessen Depot, Giessen housing areas, post exchange and commissary, as well as the Friedberg, Bad Nauheim and Butzbach housing areas.

The feedback identified the priority focus areas for the commu-

nity as: Management of processes and the environment of family housing and facilities; BSB customer service and operating hours; Building and roads maintenance and repair; Transportation needs; and Work force morale and suggestions.

The issues are being worked on, and the BSB leadership will use this column in upcoming issues of the *Herald Union* to keep the community informed about progress being made to accomplish the mission customers have identified. Future issues will include information about completed actions and/or the status of actions for each priority area.

Shreve reminded leaders of the importance of recognizing the needs of customers and meeting them, especially during challenging times.

For that reason every quarter five teams will go to the five loca-

tions to gather customer input. The visits, called Customer Contact WalkABOUTs, are aimed at ensuring service providers best serve their customers' needs.

The next Customer Contact WalkABOUT will take place in April with team members asking for suggestions on ways to improve services.

Other ways 284th BSB customers can provide feedback are:

Commander's Hotline at civ (0641) 402-9999; Monthly Town Hall Meetings (once a quarter in each BSB location); Employee Town Hall Meetings (coming up in March in Giessen and Friedberg); Commander's Open Door; The Interactive Customer Evaluation comment card program. ICE boxes are placed throughout the community. Put a card in the ICE box or you can access ICE online through the 284th BSB home page.

Hulse new CYS health nurse

Frank Hulse is the new 284th Base Support Battalion Child and Youth Services health nurse.

washing," he said.

"I am currently working on a redeployment brief for parents and care givers.

Hulse and his wife Martina and daughter Pia arrived in the 284th BSB in December.

His education includes a bachelor's degree in social work and nursing. Hulse looks back on nine years of experience in nursing

and also practiced social work as a child protective worker for the Tennessee Human Services.

"My responsibilities are ensuring that all health standard operating procedures are met and I am a resource for staff regarding those SOPs. My work also includes teaching staff and parents about diseases, how to prevent infections from spreading or hand



The Hulse family.

This briefing is designed to help parents preparing their children for the redeployment and will include talking about stress levels, children's experience, their change in behavior and

many other issues. As soon as the dates for those briefings are determined we will announce them," he said.

"Parents can call me or come to my office if they seek advice," he said.

Hulse's office is located in Building 7, Room 216 on the Giessen Depot. He can be reached at mil 343-8078.

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen

Community spotlights

Thank you for support of training program

The commander and first sergeant of the 284th Base Support Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment thank everyone who participated in the U.S. Army Europe Training Evaluation Program Jan. 23.

Community briefing

The next Community Information Briefing takes place Feb. 25 at 10:30 a.m. at the Alpine Club on the Giessen Depot. The CIB is open to the entire community. Representatives of various directorates will be present to give out firsthand information about activities and classes offered.

Skiing, shopping trips

The 284th BSB Outdoor Recreation sponsors a **skiing trip to Schotten** Feb. 21. The cost is \$49 for adults. A **crystal-shopping trip to Weiden and Neustadt** is scheduled for Feb. 28. The cost is \$39 for adults. A trip to the **Wächtersbach ceramic factory and the Chicken Farm restaurant** takes place March 6. The cost is \$20 for adults. For more information call mil 343-8202.

American Heart Month at clinic

In honor of American Heart Month the Butzbach Health Clinic invites ID card holders for a cardiovascular risk assessment including blood pressure check and a cholesterol screening. The check is available every Tuesday from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in February. For more information call mil 345-4040 or civ (06033) 983 240.

National Prayer Breakfast Feb. 24 at Alpine Club

The 284th Base Support Battalion Chaplains Office hosts a National Prayer Breakfast Feb. 24 at 7 a.m. at the Alpine Club on the Giessen Depot and at 11:30 a.m. at the Villa Calabria on Ray Barracks in Friedberg. Tickets can be obtained from rear detachment commanders or the Chaplains Office located in Building 115 on the Giessen Depot. For details call mil 343-8020.

Black History Month celebration

In recognition of Black History Month the 284th BSB hosts an "American Mosaic" dinner and show evening Feb. 28 at the Alpine Catering Center on the Giessen

Depot. The soul food buffet opens at 6:30 p.m. and the show begins at 7:30 p.m. The evening features an extravaganza of song, dance, drama and poetry all performed by local community members.

Bowling center to close for renovation

The Friedberg Bowling Center will close for renovation from Feb. 23 to mid-March. For more information call 324-3270.

Tax center hours

The Friedberg Tax Center is located in Building 3635, Room 100, on Ray Barracks and opens Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The last client will be accepted at 4:30 p.m. For more information call mil 343-2275/46/77. The Giessen Tax Center will open March 2. The center is located in Building 7, Room 254, and will open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call mil 343-8261.

Family Fun Fitness Day

Giessen's Miller Hall Fitness Center holds a Family Fun Fitness Day Feb. 24 from 10 a.m. to noon. The program includes family exercises and information on lifestyle changes to promote better health, fitness and nutrition for families. For details call mil 343-7201 or civ (0641) 402-7201.

Butzbach ES update

The Butzbach Parent Teacher Association kicks off its ticket sales for the March 17 Chili Night on Feb. 23. Contact a PTA member for your tickets. The BES Student Recognition program hosts its knights luncheon Feb. 25 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the school. The PTA meets March 3 at 2:30 pm. in the school cafeteria. A Sure Start parent meeting is scheduled for Feb. 19 at 2:30 p.m. at the school.

WIC-O grand opening, cooking class

The Butzbach Women, Infants and Children-Overseas program hosts a grand opening of a new office in Butzbach Feb. 18 at 11 a.m. with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, special guests, refreshments and prizes. Everyone is invited. A Cook for Your Health class will be held March 4 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The class features Hispanic dishes and offers tips on preparing healthy food. For details call WIC-O at civ (06033) 925 736.

Bulk trash pickup

The next bulk trash pickup day

is March 5. Pickup includes furniture, appliances, mattresses, and the like. Items should be placed next to the regular trash container the night before the pickup.

Annual aerobathon

The Giessen Miller Hall Fitness Center hosts its fourth annual aerobathon March 6 from 9:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the fitness center. Participants can enjoy a challenging day of aerobics, health assessments, camaraderie and door prizes. This event is free. For details call Miller Hall Fitness Center at mil 343-7201.

BOSS council meeting

The next Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers council meeting takes place Feb. 23 at 2 p.m. in Building 115 in the conference room on the Giessen Depot. For more information call Frank Rojas at mil 324-3158.

Keller Theater concert

Irish singer-songwriter Neil McBride will perform traditional Irish folk music at the Keller Theater in Giessen March 20 from 7-9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10. For more information call mil 343-8515.

Fasching parades

Fasching is the equivalent of Mardi Gras in the United States. Celebrations and parades will take place all over Germany. In Giessen the Fasching parade takes place Feb. 22 at 1:11 p.m. Friedberg's Fasching celebration takes place Feb. 24 at 1:11 p.m.

Ash Wednesday services

The Catholic community in

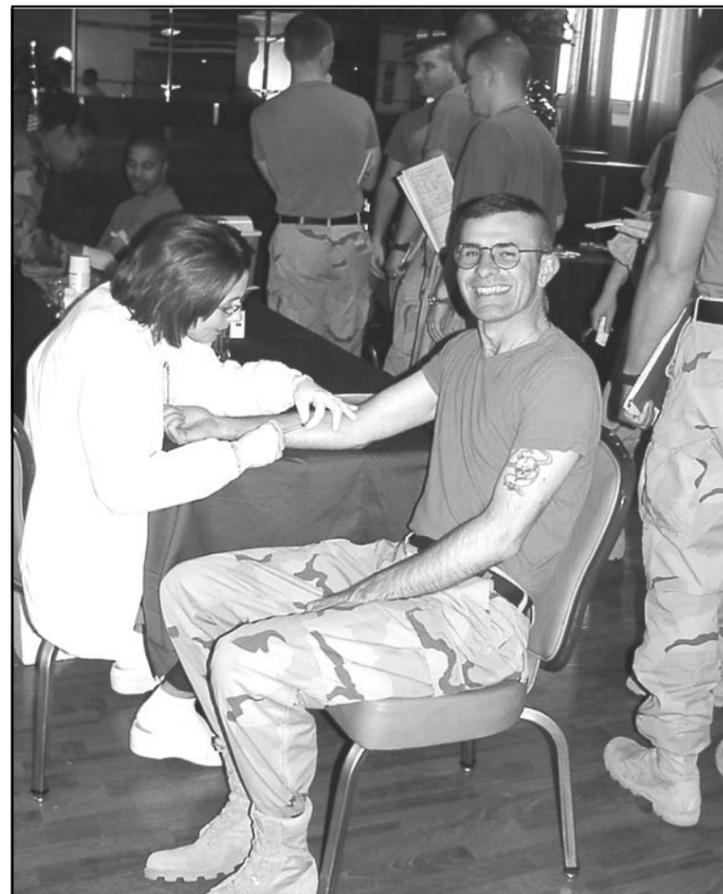


Photo by Alexandra Williams

Welcome home 527th MPs

Heather Lazos of the Butzbach Health Clinic gives Sgt. 1st Class Russell North of the 527th Military Police Company a tuberculosis test during a reintegration training session held at Giessen's Woodland Club. North and 26 other Soldiers of the 527th MP Company are part of an advance party and the first group of Soldiers who redeployed after a yearlong tour in Iraq. The rest of the company is expected to return shortly.

Giessen will celebrate Mass and distribute ashes Feb. 25 at noon. Catholic Ash Wednesday services in Friedberg will take place Feb. 25 at 6 p.m. During the Lenten season the Giessen Catholic community

will pray the Stations of the Cross followed by a bread and soup supper at 5:30 p.m. at the chapel. For more information call the 284th BSB Chaplains Office at mil 343-8020.

414th BSB – Büdingen, Hanau

Community notes ... Community notes ... Community notes

Touch of Home reopens

The Touch of Home Cafe Dining Facility on Hutier Kaserne opens for dinner Feb. 17. Breakfast is served Monday to Wednesday and Friday from 7-8:30 a.m., Thursday from 5:30-7 a.m. Lunch is served Monday to Wednesday and Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Thursday from noon to 1:30 p.m. Dinner will be served Monday to Wednesday and Friday from 4:30-6 p.m., Thursday from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

'The Difficulties of Love'

The Hanau Middle School Shakespearean Actors Troupe presents "The Difficulties of Love," two plays by William Shakespeare, "Twelfth Night" and "Love's Labours Lost." Performance dates are Feb. 20 and 27 for "Twelfth Night." Performance dates are Feb. 21 and 28 for "Love's Labours Lost." Tickets are \$4 for the performance or \$10 for the performance and dinner. Dinner times are 5:30-6:30 p.m. and the curtain rises at 7 p.m. For information or tickets contact Chris Swanson at Hanau Middle School at civ (06181) 906-9737.

Hanau Book Club

Everyone is invited to join readers who meet at the Hanau Bookmark (at the Wolfgang Shopping Center) every third Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. to discuss books. The next get-togethers are slated for Feb. 18, March 17 and April 21. Call Capt. Hartigan at mil 322-1450 for details.

Girl Scouts seek leaders

Hanau Girl Scouts seek bright new faces to help girls develop to their full potential, contribute to society and learn to relate to others with increasing understanding, skill and respect. Call Lisa Wenke at civ (06181) 906-2899 or email lisawenke@yahoo.com.

Hot topics in nutrition

Join the Women, Infants and Children-Overseas staff every third Tuesday of the month from 12-12:30 p.m. at the Wolfgang Outreach Center, Building 514, at the Wolfgang Shopping Center for discussions on hot topics in nutrition. Bring your lunch and a friend. Registration is not necessary and participation is free. The theme of the Feb. 17 session is "Label reading; what does the fine print on those labels really mean?"

Awana Club meets Tuesdays

The Awana Children's Club, sponsored by the 414th Base Support Battalion Protestant chapels, meets every Tuesday from 6-7:45 p.m. at Argonner Elementary School on Old Argonner Kaserne for games, songs, puppets, Scripture and fun. The club is open to children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Call Vickie Horton at civ (06181) 569 0670 for more information.

Play audition

Auditions for "I Ought to Be in Pictures" will be held Feb. 23-24 at 7 p.m. at Hanau's Five Pfennig Playhouse. Actors and technicians are needed. The Five Pfennig Playhouse is in Building 405 on Old Argonner Kaserne. Call mil 322-8031.



Photo by Dennis Johnson

A touch of home in Baghdad

Soldiers stop by a Burger King fast food restaurant on Baghdad International Airport following a rain storm. Living conditions have improved considerably for many Soldiers over the past year while serving with Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Comedy After Dark

Performers from America's top stand-up comedy shows, such as BET Comic View and Showtime at the Apollo, are coming to Club i on Fliegerhorst Kaserne Feb. 21 at 10 p.m. for a night of non-stop laughs. Tickets are \$15 at the door or \$10 in advance. This show is for adults only.

Basic Car Care

Learn about basic car maintenance at Hanau Auto Skills every Saturday at 10 a.m. Topics include changing your oil, fixing flat tires, checking fluid levels and brake pads for wear. Class size is limited to 20 people. Call Hanau Auto Skills at mil 322-8247 or mil 322-8625 to register.

Tax Center now open

The Hanau Tax Center offers free tax assistance and electronic filing. The center is open Monday to Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Thursday from noon to 8 p.m. and Friday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It's located in Room 14, Building 2 on Pioneer Kaserne. For more information call Capt. Brian Adams or Spc. Jim Wallner at mil 322-8993/9577.

Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy Baby course

A Red Cross Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy Baby course consists of four sessions on the first four Wednesdays of the month from 5:30-7:30 p.m. For more information contact Kristi Kolthoff at mil 322-1760.

Community CPR, First Aid

This two session Red Cross course offers CPR on the first day and First Aid on the second day. Class dates are Feb. 21 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Feb. 22 from 1-4 p.m., May 15 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and May 16 from 1-4 p.m. Call Kristi Kolthoff at mil 322-1760 or civ (06181) 88-1760.

Community CPR Challenge

This is an opportunity to take the written and skills tests to become CPR certified. If

you fail the challenge you must take the class. CPR Challenge dates are March 25 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., sometime in April and June 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call Kristi Kolthoff at mil 322-1760 or civ (06181) 88-1760.

Protestant Men of the Chapel

The Protestant Men of the Chapel meet from 8-10 a.m. in the basement of Fliegerhorst Chapel on the second Saturday of each month, except February, which will be Feb. 21 since the second Saturday is Valentine's Day. They serve breakfast and then have a group Bible study. Call Tim Bowers at civ (01511) 425 0338.

National Prayer Luncheon

There will be a National Prayer Luncheon at the Fliegerhorst Kaserne's Community Activities Center Feb. 18 at noon. The speaker will be Lawrence Krause, 104th Area Support Group chaplain. Tickets are available from unit sergeants major or the 414th BSB Chaplains Office at mil 322-1570. Suggested donation is \$6 for officers, \$4.50 for E-6s and above, \$3 for E-5 and below. The lunch includes a buffet, drink and dessert.

Protestant Women of the Chapel

Protestant Women of the Chapel meet every Thursday from 9-11:15 a.m. at Hanau's Pioneer Chapel. Make new friends and join the Bible study. Watch care is provided for children age 5 and under. Call Roberta Hoback at civ (06181) 520 422.

Black History Month celebration

The 104th Area Support Group and 414th Base Support Battalion Equal Opportunity Offices host a Black History Month celebration Feb. 21 from 4-7 p.m. at the Fliegerhorst Community Activities Center. The guest speaker will be Dr. Shirley A. Sheck, Gelnhausen Elementary

School principal. Enjoy family entertainment, an African clown show, free food, prizes, a fashion show, music and more. For information call Sgt. 1st Class Gayden at mil 323-2012 or send an email to donna.gayden@104asg.army.mil.

School jobs at Argonner

Argonner Elementary School has vacancies for educational technicians, educational aids, substitute teachers and lunch room monitors. Applications are available at the school.

Sunrise Grill new hours

The Sunrise Grill is now open Tuesday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Enjoy homemade foods, hamburgers, salads and American-style breakfasts made to order. The Sunrise Grill is located in Building 405 on Old Argonner Kaserne. Call mil 322-9149 or mil 322-9380.

Send a recorded CD message to loved one in Iraq

Send a recorded compact disk message to your loved one downrange. Call the USO to schedule an appointment to record your message. This program will continue until troops return to the Hanau area. Call the USO at mil 322-8725 or civ (06181) 56119.

Bowling Center closes for renovation through March 15

The Hessen Bowling Center on Wolfgang Kaserne will close for renovation. The bowling lanes will be closed from Feb. 17 to March 15. The snack bar will be closed from Feb. 23 to March 15. The slots room will remain open during the renovation.

Family Literacy Night

Learn strategies to use at home when reading with your children at Sportfield Elementary School Feb. 19 at 5 p.m. Experience being a "student" at Sportfield, see examples of student reading and writing, and show your children that you're interested in what they're doing at school. Enjoy pizza with other families. The PTA will sell pizza and beverages at 6 p.m. in the gym. Child care will be provided from 5:15-6 p.m.

Civilian fitness program

All civilians employed by the Army are encouraged to engage in a regular exercise program. Commanders may approve up to three hours excused absence per week to allow employees to exercise. The time is limited to six months and is a one-time deal. Open enrollment is Feb. 28 and March 3-4. Enrollment and participant packets are available from the 104th Area Support Group health promotions coordinator. Call mil 322-9509, civ (06181) 88-9509. Information is also available online at www.104thasg.army.mil or by sending an email to karen.harris@104asgexch.hanau.army.mil.



414th BSB – Büdingen, Hanau

Families welcome 709th MP Battalion home

Many joyful reunions at Fliegerhorst Fitness Center

By Dennis Johnson

414th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

The Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 709th Military Police Battalion, returned home Feb. 3. Based on Fliegerhorst Kaserne, the unit was deployed for the most part of the last two years; first in Kosovo for six months and back to Hanau in November 2002 to prepare for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On March 3 the battalion deployed to Kuwait where they waited for the war to begin. On the second day of battle the 709th crossed the Iraqi border headed for An Nasariyah where they took charge of enemy prisoners of war captured by the 3rd Infantry Division.

They established a prison camp on Tallil Air Base about three kilometers outside of An Nasariyah. The unit stayed at Tallil for the next five weeks operating the camp and providing road security.

At the end of April they moved to Tikrit with the 4th Infantry Division for two weeks before continuing on to establish security at the recently captured Balad air base now known as LSA Anaconda. Here the MPs encountered their first serious resistance when several "technicals" attacked the base on the night of April 29. A "technical" is a civilian truck equipped with a mounted automatic weapon.

In May the unit was sent to Baghdad to take charge of all the law enforcement on the west side of the Tigris River which bisects the city. The unit was stationed at the former vice president's compound not far from the famous crossed

sabres monument. In Baghdad they established 27 Iraqi police stations and "started training Iraqis in western-style law enforcement," said Sgt. Major David DeWitt, operations sergeant major for HHD. "We worked one of the roughest neighborhoods, Abu Ghraib, on the road between Baghdad and Falluja. Mortars were coming in nightly, improvised explosive devices were placed on the roadsides and we had drive-by shootings. Our police station was shot at every night."

After an attack that killed one 709th Soldier, the 1st Armored Division concentrated on Abu Ghraib and "with a lot of good intelligence from citizens we made a significant difference." The 709th left Baghdad Feb. 1 when 30 Soldiers flew home from Balad. Another 20 remained to convoy their vehicles to Kuwait and should return by March 30.

Pam Garrity, wife of battalion commander, Lt. Col. John Garrity, described her experience during the deployment. "It was busy on the home front, we moved here while the battalion was deployed. My husband, who's coming home tonight, has never been to his home here in Germany. But he'll be glad to be home," said Garrity. "This is our first overseas tour, we had to get used to everything at once, the battalion and the country."

As the Soldiers marched into the gym families were allowed to welcome them immediately. When asked about his flight from Iraq, Maj. James Wilson said, "When you're coming home after 11 months, you could do a five and half hour flight standing on your head."



Photo by Dennis Johnson

Hunter Wilson welcomes home his dad, Maj. James Wilson, after an 11-month deployment.

414th BSB – Büdingen, Hanau

55th PSB in Baghdad gets ahead of curve

Personnel Soldiers get drop on report flow before redeploying

By David Ruderman

104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

Like jockeys rounding the final post and heading into the stretch, 55th Personnel Service Battalion Soldiers were holding on tight in Baghdad in late January. Excited about redeploying to Germany after a year away from family and home, Soldiers were trying to stay focused on their mission till it was all over.

“We’re transitioning for redeployment right now,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Andre Douglas. “We’re still supporting the 1st Armored Division like it’s been our mission from the beginning, but our main mission now is getting our Soldiers ready for redeployment.”

The end of their Iraq deployment and anticipation of reintegration and reconstitution posed particular problems for the personnel Soldiers. A wave of evaluation reports will be due for processing just as 55th PSB returns to Germany and Soldiers go on block leave.

“That’s going to be a tough one because the units are going to need them, and it’s a time consuming process,” said Douglas. “If we do it here it won’t be such a burden on the people up there. Our workload is heavier right now because we’re trying to get ahead so we don’t put so much of a heavy load on the folks back home.”

“We’re projecting the reports that will be due to process during the next 90 days,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Enrique Aguirre of Detachment A, 55th PSB. “We’re informing the units. Each chain of command will have to prepare their evaluation reports. We’re talking about approximately 1,300 reports. So far we’ve processed 5,000 reports and 500-600 OERs [Officer Evaluation Reports] since we got here in June — at least.”

A wave of change of rater reports tied to the upcoming Permanent Change of Station season will likely bump the number of reports to be filed up to about 2,000, he said. “We’re anticipating that by letting the units know so they do it ahead of time because everybody’s going to be on leave.”

Never a dull day on duty

“There’s always something. It’s either the electricity or the connectivity,” said Sgt. 1st Class Siu Mapu. “It’s rough, but we’ll manage.”

“We’re kind of a filtering system for all sorts of paperwork,” said Capt. Breck Tarr, who took command of Detachment A Jan. 27. “Some people try to do things they can’t. We make sure it’s legal and check it against the regs. We also make sure the Soldiers have their redeployment briefings and reintegration training.”

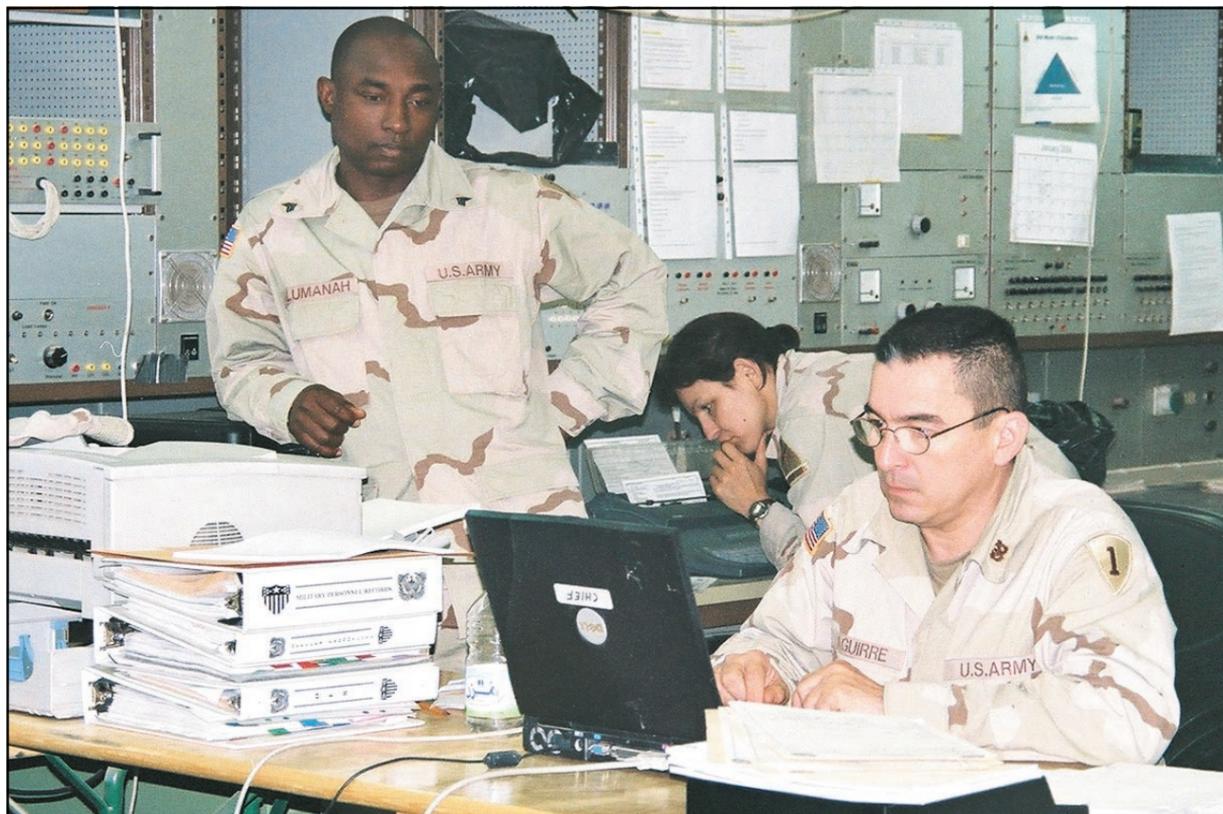


Photo by David Ruderman

Sgt. Ikechukwu Alumanah (left) and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Enrique Aguirre of Detachment A, 55th Personnel Service Battalion, work on Soldiers’ reports in the unit’s Baghdad International Airport office.

The day-to-day paperwork sometimes brings battalion Soldiers face to face with tragedy. Every emergency leave has a personal story behind it.

One evening a Soldier stationed at Baghdad International Airport was notified her husband had been killed. She needed to fly immediately to Kuwait City to escort the body home. Two Soldiers from her unit brought her to Tarr’s office, where she was understandably too distraught to deal with the emergency leave paperwork.

While one Soldier consoled her, a 55th PSB sergeant in full battle gear got the job done. He’d already completed this form and that one, with three copies of this and a stamp and two signatures on that. Tarr gave the documents a quick review and signed them, getting the job done in just under five minutes. He called the passenger terminal to notify them of the emergency, and the Soldier was on a flight to Kuwait in 25 minutes.

As the tour in Iraq winds down the battalion is focused on getting its Soldiers home and moving on to the next mission. “Reintegration is going to be a tough process because

we’re responsible for it and we’re going through it at the same time,” said Douglas. “It’ll be a process. I know the 104th Area Support Group is going to make sure it happens and ease the process.”

The 55th PSB will hand over responsibility for operations in Iraq to units of the 1st Cavalry Division when they redeploy. “What’s started now is communication,” said Douglas, “just walking through the process.” He expected 1st Cav to arrive in late March and April, and for 55th PSB to return to Germany in late April and May.

“Like everybody else I’m looking forward to reuniting,” said Aguirre, noting this was no time to lose concentration. “We need to be safe for the redeployment. We shouldn’t put the guard down. Let’s not take it for granted just because we’re done here.”

“A year is a long time to be away from your family,” said Douglas, a father of three. “Just tell them we’re ready. We’re all excited. Germany has never looked so good.” (Dennis Johnson, 414th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office, contributed to this report)



‘So, how much does an M-1 Abrams tank weigh anyway?’

An Abrams tank weighs about 65 tons — so those unloading them must make sure to lift carefully. The first 12 M-1 Abrams tanks of Büdingen’s 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, returned to the Pioneer railhead Feb. 4. It was the first train of many that will arrive over the next three-to-four months as the 1st Armored Division redeploy. The tanks were loaded onto multi-wheeled trucks by dual heavy lifting cranes and driven in a convoy of three trucks to Büdingen with a German Polizei and Military Police escort.

Photo by Dennis Johnson