

1st AD Soldiers help reopen Iraqi school

By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Armored Division, the 425th and 478th Civil Affairs Battalions, and members of the Abu Ghraib Municipal Council celebrated the reopening of the Al Anef primary school in Abu Ghraib March 25.

Renovations initiated by the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion four months ago are completed and classes are in session.

The ribbon cutting ceremony signified the accomplishments made through American-Iraqi cooperation in the Abu Ghraib school district.

The renovations made to Al Anef school included fixing leaking roofs, installing a water source and providing new school supplies. The 1st Armored Division's Commanders' Emergency Response Program provided funds for the renovations, and Iraqi contractors carried out the work.

The 414th, 425th and 478th Civil Affairs Battalions made periodic visits to the school to monitor the progress of the renovations.

"I think these (events) are great," said Staff Sgt. William Smith, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion team leader. "Everybody says that Civil Affairs is supposed to win hearts and minds. I think that you have to start with the kids. They are the ones who are going to be the future of Iraq."

Students gathered in the school's courtyard to welcome the Soldiers to their newly renovated school. A group of boys marched out and raised the Iraqi flag while other children sang the new Iraqi national anthem.

Following speeches by Smith and a representative from the school, everyone was invited inside for refreshments.

The school was badly damaged and in poor condition before the renovations began, said Ali

Mohammed Kareem, Al Anef's principal. "(Renovations) to such a school are very difficult," he said. "But it is very different now. It is very nice."

With the help of programs such as the renovation project at Al Anef, Iraqi children are assured of the possibility of a better future for themselves, he said. At the same time, cooperation between local Iraqi authorities and American Soldiers can help foster relationships that will ensure a better future for Iraq.

"I am very pleased," said Sheik Saad Abaidkadum, chairman of the advisory council in Abu Ghraib and the Abu Ghraib municipal council. "Many schools have already been renovated by the Coalition Provisional Authority."

"Our relationship is based upon friendship," he said. "I hope the Iraqi people can be good friends to the Americans, allowing both peoples to cooperate for a democratic Iraq."



Photo by Spc. Andy Miller

Schoolchildren raise the Iraqi flag while their classmates sing the new Iraqi national anthem during a grand opening celebration at the Al Anef primary school in Abu Ghraib March 25.



Photo by Cassandra Kardeke

Springtime gardening

Michelle Norwood takes advantage of the warm weather to plant flowers in her yard in Aukamm Housing. As temperatures reached into the mid '60s the last week of March, residents throughout housing areas enjoyed the warmer weather.

News notes

Train ride

Join the German-American friendship club, Kontakt, for a steam train ride into May. This German May Day event takes participants on an historic steam train ride into the Taunus mountains April 30 from the Dotzheim train station at 7 p.m. and returns approximately at midnight. Reservations are required by April 22. Tickets are €14 for adults, and €7 for children. To reserve a seat on the train call civ (0160) 655 5976 or send an email to Cassandra.kardeke@104asg.army.mil.

Bus schedule change

A new shuttle bus schedule for communities in the 221st Base Support Battalion goes into effect April 19. For a complete schedule visit the 221st BSB webpage at www.wiesbaden.army.mil after April 16.

Outdoor Rec tours

Join Wiesbaden and Dexheim's adventure experts at Outdoor Recreation for ice skating, skiing and bicycling throughout the month of April. They also have weekly rock climbing, bouldering and swimming trips. For more information or to sign up for a trip call mil 337-5760 or civ (0611) 705-5760.

Girls' night out

Team 221st Family Advocacy Program hosts a Girls' Night Out April 16 from 7:30-11:30 p.m. at Army Community Service. Let down your hair and talk about body image,

self-esteem, personal safety, beauty secrets, friendship and more. To sign up call mil 337-5034 or civ (0611) 705-5034.

Frankfurt trip

Join the Wiesbaden Kontakt Club for a day out in Frankfurt April 25. Learn how to use public transportation, visit the Senckenberg Museum, see the famous Römerberg Square and enjoy Sachsenhausen known for its traditional apple wine locales. To sign up for this trip call the 221st Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office at mil 337-5772, civ (0611) 705-5772 or Evelyn Zierer at civ (0160) 65 55976.

Comedy returns

Comedy After Dark returns to Wiesbaden April 25. The laughing begins at 8 p.m. at the Community Activity Center. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. For more information or to purchase tickets call mil 337-5750 or civ (0611) 705-5750.

Spring cleanup slated

As the weather starts getting warmer, don't forget Spring Cleanup is right around the corner.

Spring Cleanup will be held April 26-30 in Dexheim and May 24-27 in Wiesbaden. Flowers have been ordered and will be available at your local Self-Help store, free of charge, as well as lawn and gardening equipment.

Fun in store at Kinderfest April 24

By Cassandra Kardeke
221st Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

The Month of the Military Child is here and so is Kinderfest.

“We’re going to have plenty of food, fun and games for the entire family,” said Denise Faison, Child and Youth Services director.

Kicking off Kinderfest, April 24, families and youth can register for the 5-K Fun Run/Walk at the General H.H. Arnold High School parking lot at 8 a.m. “The run isn’t just for people, we have included a ‘Pets with Paws’ category for people wishing to bring their pets to enjoy the time together,” Faison said. Faison added that younger children are welcome to ride tri-cycles alongside their parents during the run.

Following the run, information booths, the Whopper Hopper, games, face painting and displays will open up at 10 a.m. throughout the Youth Services complex.

“We will have a petting zoo, cake walk, food vendors, games and special shows throughout the day,” said Steve Huebener, Youth Services program manager. Besides a traveling magic show there will also be demonstrations of youth services programs to include Tae Kwon Do and a ballet recital. Other activities include a Mad Hatter booth, cheesecake bake-off, military and fire static displays, sword demonstration, karaoke and disk jockey. Anyone wishing to enter the cheesecake bake-off should call CYS in advance at mil 338-7610 or civ (0611) 380-7610.

“Expect this to be a big event. We hold Kinderfest every year, and the fest itself just keeps getting bigger and bigger,” Faison said. Although sponsored by CYS, Kinderfest

Activities start at 10 a.m. and include a petting zoo, face painting, magic show and more

“We’re going to have plenty of food, fun and games for the entire family.” – Denise Faison, Child and Youth Services director

could not be possible without the help and coordination of several units, organizations and agencies throughout the Wiesbaden community.

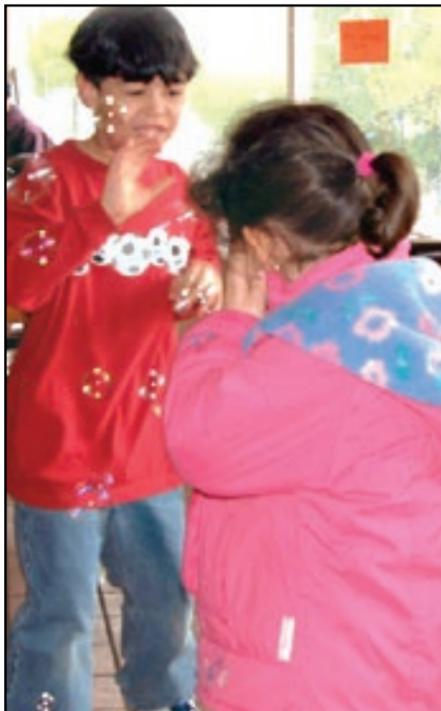
Children and providers from the Hainerberg Child Development Center will be accepting book and toy donations throughout the day to add to their toy/book drive program that has been under way for several months.

“Just because many of our Soldiers are returning doesn’t mean we stop sending things downrange,” Faison said. Over the past year the children have been collecting books and magazines to send to Soldiers in Iraq. Recently the children began a toy workshop in which they collect broken toys that can be repaired and then sent to Iraqi schools. “Both programs have been a great success, and we have every intention of keeping the programs going,” Faison said.

Don’t miss out — enjoy the warmer weather, longer days and plenty of family-fun activities at this year’s Kinderfest.



Photos by Torsten H. Kardeke



Children dance amongst bubbles in front of a bubble machine at last year’s Kinderfest.



A balloonist creates balloon animals by request during last year’s Kinderfest. Above right: A mother stands by as her son makes a bird seed feeder at one of the many booth activities available for children during Kinderfest. Bottom right: Children get a chance to burn off extra energy in the Whopper Hopper. This year’s Kinderfest begins at 8 a.m. April 24 at the General H.H. Arnold High School parking lot with a 5K Fun Run for the entire family (pets included).



Tax Center makes filing less taxing for all

The deadline for those who owe taxes to file their returns and pay taxes owed is rapidly approaching. April 15 is the deadline for payment of taxes owed.

"It's important that our community members not get confused about this deadline given that people have been hearing about combat zone related extensions and overseas extensions," says 1st Lt. Robert Diaz, of the Wiesbaden Tax Center.

The IRS automatically extends the deadline for filing tax returns, paying taxes, filing claims for refund and taking other actions related to federal income tax for U.S. armed forces personnel serving in a combat zone. The deadline for filing returns, making payments or taking any other action with the IRS is extended for at least 180 days after the last day of qualifying combat zone service or the last day of any continuous qualified hospitalization for injury from the combat zone.

The IRS also affords U.S. citizens residing abroad for employment-related purposes a two month extension to file their returns. However this extension is not an extension to pay. "This means that if you did not serve in a combat zone during 2003 and you will owe

taxes instead getting a refund, you must file and pay by April 15," said Diaz. Failure to do so will result in interest and penalties being assessed against taxpayers.

To accommodate community members who have yet to file their taxes, the Wiesbaden Tax Center will have extended hours through April 15. The Tax Center will be open Tuesday and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday. The Tax Center will be closed Friday, April 16.

Another bit of tax information that is helpful for home-owning-service members has to do with the Military Family Tax Relief Act. For homes sold after May 6, 1997, a taxpayer on qualified official extended duty in the U.S. armed forces may suspend, for up to 10 years of such duty time, the running of the five-year ownership-and-use period before the sale of a residence. This applies when the duty station is at least 50 miles from the residence or while the person is residing under orders in government housing for a period of more than 90 days or for an indefinite period. Although taxpayers normally have only three years to file an amended return, qualifying taxpayers who sold a residence before 2001



Photo by Spc. Shauna McRoberts

Spc. Michael Hartman, a signal service support specialist assigned to Company C, 141st Signal Battalion, helps 1st Lt. Luis Garri, executive officer of Company B, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, file his taxes at Baghdad International Airport's Iron Tax Center.

have until Nov. 10, 2004, to amend their returns for this purpose.

The IRS has also created a new section on its website containing important information to help ensure members of the U.S. armed

forces serving in a combat zone get all of the tax benefits available to them. The sites address is www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=97273,00.html. (Courtesy of the Wiesbaden Tax Center)



Children sew ribbons and pom-poms on hats during a workshop with Child and Youth Services for sick children.

Project gives area youths chance to help others

Story and photos by
Cassandra Kardeke
221st Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

It's not every day one gets to make a difference in another's life, but that's exactly what Wiesbaden area youth were able to do.

With the help of Glories Happy Hats, a charity organization that provides hats to sick children, hundreds of youth spent two days making hats. Kicking off the Month of the Military Child, Wiesbaden's Child and Youth Services and the Association of the U.S. Army sponsored four Glories Happy Hats workshops April 6-7.

"This initiative is designed for youth, through the process of working together, to help a child with cancer, a child who has sustained burns or who has lost hair due to a long term hospital stay to feel good about themselves when they look in the mirror," said Denise Faison, Wiesbaden CYS director.

"I think it's bad that they have cancer, but it's good that we have the ability to help them," said 12-year-old Darrell Douriso.

Glories Happy Hats are jester-like hats made of soft cotton and designed to respond to the needs of critically ill children. The material is specially approved, fully lined with chemically treated fabric and



Asya Miller pins material together to build a Glories Happy Hat.

are latex-free so that they can be worn by cancer patients, burn victims and children in pediatric intensive care units. The hats are made for children who have lost their hair to make them smile and not be troubled about their outward appearance.

"The best thing about this program is that it gets the kids active and involved. They aren't sitting here watching us make the hats, they're doing it themselves," said Ali Khorsand, co-founder of Glories Happy Hats.

"The wonderful thing about this project is that it is done by youth for youth. And best of all they leave the workshop understanding that they can make a difference in another child's life," said Faison. Hav-

ing conducted previous workshops at installations in the United States, Faison has seen the life-changing aspects of producing the hats. "One time I only had 16 youths involved over a weekend and they produced over 1,000 hats. As they got more involved they began to include personal messages inside the hats with words of encouragement," she said.

With the goal of 1,000 hats, coordination has already been made for them to be delivered to Landstuhl European Regional Medical Center, Walter Reed Medical Center and other military facilities as well as the Mainz University Hospital.

"The kids really love knowing that they will be bringing smiles to other children's faces," Faison said.

221st BSB – Wiesbaden, Wackernheim, Dexheim

Community news notes

Reunion workshops

Army Community Service hosts several reunion workshops for families and Soldiers returning from deployment. Scheduled workshops will be held at ACS in Hainerberg Housing April 17, 19, 21, 26 and 28 and at Dexheim April 13. Reservations for the workshop must be made by noon the day before the workshop. Call mil 337-5034/5754 or civ (0611) 705-5034/5754 for more information.

FRG networking session

Take a relaxing break from homecoming activities with a reunion stress mini-spa at the next Family Readiness Group networking session April 24. For more information call mil 337-5754 or civ (0611) 705-5754.

ATM service unavailable

During installation of a second Community Bank ATM machine at Mainz-Kastel Storage Station, Building 4019, no ATM service will be available from April 19-23. Both machines should be in full operation by April 24.

Troops to Teachers

The Wiesbaden Education Center hosts a Troops to Teachers seminar April 23 from 9-11 a.m. This seminar will help answer questions about the teaching profession, steps to certification and employment opportunities. The seminar will be held at the Education Center, Building 1023E at Wiesbaden Army Airfield. For more information call mil 337-5559 or civ (0611) 705-5559.

Call for volunteers

Everyone is invited to the annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony April 28 at the Community Activity Center at 6 p.m. Reservations for the ceremony must be made by April 14 by calling mil 337-5034/5754 or civ (0611) 705-5034/5754. Onsite child care will be provided if reserved in advance. All volunteers within the community should ensure they are registered with the Volunteer Office at Army Community Service. Volunteers are currently needed at the USO and Educational and Developmental Intervention Services.

AFTB for youth

The Army Family Team Building program offers classes and workshops for young people. Upcoming classes include Stress Management and Adapting to Change, Personality Types and Self-Esteem and Life Skills. Classes are limited to 15

students and are offered at Army Community Service, Room 22 after school. To sign up or for more information call mil 337-5754 or civ (0611) 705-5754.

Trainers available

Personal trainers are available at the Tony Bass and Dexheim Fitness Centers to help customize a personalized fitness program. Cost is \$35 per session. For more information call mil 337-5943 or civ (0611) 705-5943.

Couples communication

Learn skills for effective talking, listening, conflict resolution and anger management to help you and your partner build a more satisfying relationship. Couples Communication workshops will be held at Army Community Service, Building 7790, Room 23, in Hainerberg Housing. For more information call mil 337-5297 or civ (0611) 705-5297.

Spouse/family inprocessing

As soon as the jet lag is over, sign up for Spouse and Family Member inprocessing training with the 221st Base Support Battalion. Learn about services and activities available throughout the commu-

nity and life while in Germany every Friday from 9 a.m. to noon. Call mil 337-5034/5754 or civ (0611) 705-5034/5754 to sign up.

Children's summer theater workshop

Wiesbaden's Amelia Earhart Playhouse will hold sign-ups for its Summer Theater Workshop April 26 from 3:30-8:30 p.m. The workshop is open to youths age 8-14 and will run from June 14 to July 25. Cost is \$120. For more information call mil 336-2473 or civ (0611) 816-2473.

Housekeeping service available

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service offers housekeeping services for Hainerberg, Crestview, Aukamm, Dexheim, Mainz-Kastel, Wiesbaden Army Airfield and Finthen housing areas. People living off post may also be eligible for this service. Call civ (0171) 751 2762, (06732) 933 326 or email squeakyclean@t-online.de.

BOSS meetings

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers meets the first and third Thursday of each month at 2 p.m. at the BOSS Center, Building 1052 at Wiesbaden Army Airfield.

Family room available

The Tony Bass Fitness Center offers a family fitness room fully equipped with treadmills, elliptical trainers and stationary bikes as well as a television, DVD player, tables, chairs and mats for children. Bring your own movies and fun activities for your children while you do your workout. Movie donations are also welcome.

Massages available

Massages by a certified massage therapist are available at the Community Activities Center and Tony Bass Fitness Center at Wiesbaden Army Airfield. To schedule an appointment call mil 337-5943 or civ (0611) 705-5943. Massages are also available at Dexheim Fitness Center. For an appointment call civ (06133) 925 558.

Aerobics classes available

A wide variety of aerobics classes is offered at the Tony Bass Fitness Center every day. Learn how to do pilates, yoga, kickboxing and much more. Classes are \$2 each and held at the Tony Bass Fitness Center and Aukamm El-

ementary School.

Bridge players wanted

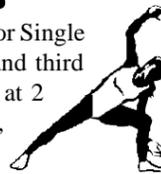
Duplicate bridge players are invited to compete with the American Contract Bridge League every Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Wiesbaden bridge club house located at Marktplatz 13. The club is located across the street from the Marktplatz church. For more information call mil 337-5190 or civ (0611) 307834.

Stress management

Wiesbaden's Social Work Services hosts stress management workshops at Army Community Service, Building 7790 in Hainerberg Housing April 14 and 28 from 3-4:30 p.m. in Room 22. For more information call mil 337-5297 or civ (0611) 705-5297.

Welcome briefing

Newcomers to Wiesbaden are encouraged to attend Army Family Team Building's Welcome to Wiesbaden classes held the first and third Monday of each month at the Newcomers Information Center in Room 240 at the American Arms Hotel. Call mil 337-5754 or civ (0611) 705-5754 for more information and to register.



222nd BSB – Baumholder, Neubrücke, Strassburg

ACS support

Army Community Service offers support groups for teens, single Soldiers and married Soldiers and their spouses as well as a monthly newcomers orientation to the Baumholder military and local community.

Support groups

Parenting your Parents is offered every Saturday for teens from 1-3:30 p.m. at Army Community Service in Building 8746, second floor. This is an open class to discuss conflicts encountered by teens and to provide coping tools. Teens can come when they can because the content is not serialized. Call ACS for more information or to sign up at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188.

A Redeployment Support Group for single Soldiers meets everyday, seven days a week from 3:30-5 p.m. at ACS, Building 8746, second floor. The session is moderated by a social worker. Call ACS at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188 for more information. Or just show up.

A Redeployment Support Group for married Soldiers and their spouses meets everyday, seven days a week from 6-7:30 p.m. at ACS, Building 8746, second floor. The session is moderated by a social worker. Call ACS at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188 for more information. Or just show up, with or without your husband or wife.

Get with it NOW

A Newcomers Orientation and Welcome is scheduled May 10, 11 and 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Army Community Service in Building 8746, second floor. Free child care is provided on a limited basis for this three day class. NOW offers an introduction to agencies in the Baumholder military community that are of interest to spouses, such as

Post notes



Photo by Bianca Bowen

New identification cards

Returning Soldiers from Operation Iraqi Freedom receive new identification cards and are registered into the new Installation Access Control System. Almost all support agencies on post have set up an office at the reintegration facility to serve returning soldiers and to expedite the reintegration process.

volunteering, furthering your education, and finding employment. A cultural adaptation session includes information about the German language and customs, riding the public bus and train. There are also field trips to restaurants and Idar-Oberstein. Army Family Team Building Level I, Introduction to the Military Lifestyle, is also included in this program. Call ACS to register at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188.

Sports shorts

Players are needed for flag foot-

ball. Signups are now being accepted for the 2004 intramural and community level flag football leagues. For more information call the Baumholder Sports Office at mil 485-6671/7176.

Officials are needed for all sports programs in the 222nd Base Support Battalion.

Players are also needed for men's and women's community level softball as well as men's and women's intramural level softball.

The registration deadline for the

intramural softball league tournament is May 7.

An organizational meeting for the intramural level softball tournament is scheduled for May 17.

An officials clinic will be held May 18-21 at the Hall of Champions.

A community league softball game is scheduled for May 23 at Iron Soldier Field.

The 222nd Base Support Battalion softball tournament is May 24.

For additional information call the Sports Office at mil 485-6671.

April luncheon

The next Baumholder Community Spouses Club luncheon will be held April 21 at 11:30 a.m. at the Rheinlander Club. The club will be voting for new board officers.

Reservations must be sent by email to cher.lim@us.army.mil.

Youth Services

May 1, lock-in for Torch Club members at the Underground, 7 p.m. to 8 a.m.

May 7, Keystone sponsored dance at the Teen Cafe, no cost, 7-11 p.m.

May 14, family spaghetti dinner at Neubrücke YS, no cost, 6-7.30 p.m.

Participants must be registered with Child and Youth Services.

Volunteers

Youth Services is looking for volunteers, youths and adults, to assist with special interest clubs and sporting/recreational events. For more information contact your local youth center or visit Baumholder's youth website at www.baumholder.army.mil/youthsite/html/ys.htm.

Help needed

Youth Services is always looking for qualified instructors to contract in instructional areas such as martial arts, gymnastics, music and tennis. For more information call mil 485-7276.

Traffic advisory

Road construction begins April 13 on L-176 at the Hammerstein exit in the direction of Baumholder and is expected to last throughout the month or longer, depending on the weather. L-176 is the main road connecting Idar-Oberstein and Baumholder. Only one lane will be open and a light will be in place to control traffic flow.

Buccaneer Night provides high school graduates with scholarships

Buccaneer Night, the annual college scholarship fundraiser for Baumholder American High School's graduating seniors, is April 23 beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Rheinlander Convention Center.

All proceeds from the pirate-themed evening go into a

scholarship fund to be distributed among this year's seniors who will be continuing their education after graduation.

All members of the Baumholder community, from young children to adults, will find something to do at Buccaneer Night. Live entertainment, children's games, the Whopper

Hopper, cake walk, theme basket auction, silent auction, food sales and raffle giveaways are just some of the activities taking place. Throughout the evening dozens of items contributed by local merchants, organizations and professional sports teams will be raffled or sold in the silent auction. Two prints to be raffled are "Rolling Start-Iraqi Freedom" by Bobbi Wages and "The Prayer at Valley Forge" by Arnold Friberg.

Some of the teams donating sports memorabilia include the Chicago Bulls, Green Bay Packers, Baltimore Orioles, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, New Orleans Saints, Florida Marlins, Washington Wizards, Cleveland Browns and the L.A. Raiders, just to name a few. Raffle tickets are on sale throughout the community and will be available for purchase at Buccaneer Night for \$1 each.

One of Buccaneer Night's most popular events is the auction, during which elaborate theme gift baskets donated by community organizations and groups will go to the highest bidder. Baskets with themes such as Americana, Vacation, Polish Pottery and Re-Integration are just a few to be featured. The auction begins at 8:30 p.m.

Admission to Buccaneer Night is free. For more information contact Pam Adams at civ (06783) 990 728 or Tina Olsen at civ (06783) 900 654.

Army Community Service has new finance czar

Army Community Service welcomed new financial readiness manager Rich Zimmelman March 21. Zimmelman comes to Baumholder from Florida where he worked as the financial readiness manager and Army Emergency Relief officer at Headquarters, U.S. Southern Command.

Rich, who has a masters degree in business administration and Accredited Financial Counselor certification from the Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education, will provide group education, one-on-one and family counseling in personal finance subjects such as debt liquidation, credit management, checkbook skills, insurance and financial planning.

If you know you can do better than passbook savings but aren't sure how;

If debts are weighing you down and you want to find a way out;

If you want to invest for your future and want to avoid costly mistakes;

If you want to make sure that baby has the best education that money can buy;

If you just want to learn better ways to stay within your budget;

Give ACS a call and make an appointment with Zimmelman today.

Look for classes after the redeployment or schedule one-on-one counseling sessions now.

Call ACS for more information or to make an appointment at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188.

Community honors its volunteers

Baumholder honored its volunteer force during its annual volunteer reception March 26 at the Rheinlander Convention Center.

The first Senior Tactical Commander's Award for Exceptional Service was awarded to Kimberly McHugh. The second went to Sabine Hall and the third was presented to Tina Olson.

McHugh serves the 1-6th Infantry Regiment as the Family Readiness Group leader and company adviser. She also has served as the coffee group leader in the absence of the battalion commander's wife. McHugh is actively involved in schools and has organized several events including Buddy Night, a coffee group for families of deployed soldiers.

In addition to holding three volunteer positions with the Baumholder Community Spouses Club, McHugh also writes a monthly educational column titled "The Lifelong Learner" which addresses relevant educational topics for BCSC

members. McHugh also volunteers as a Cub Scout den leader, in St. Michael's Catholic Church hospitality committee and is the president of the Military Council of Catholic Women.

Hall has served as the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade, FRG leader since September.

Before then she served as the substitute leader in addition to various other volunteer activities. Hall serves in any capacity needed to ensure spouses and Soldiers of HHC are well informed. She regularly attends meetings such as LINKS and 2nd Brigade Steering Committees to receive and disseminate information.

Since taking the FRG leader position, Hall has increased the average monthly attendance twofold. In addition to volunteering at the brigade and unit level, Hall is an active member of the BCSC. She serves as the Thrift Store coordinator, assuring that the store is man-

aged and operated in accordance with BCSB bylaws and U.S. Army Europe regulations and policies, and she serves on the Angel Tree committee, which collects and distributes gifts to needy children. Hall is an exceptionally dedicated, responsive and proactive volunteer who tries to anticipate needs and meet problems with solutions, officials said.

Olson served as the company leader for 2-6th Infantry from January 2003 until October 2003. During this time she organized boxing parties in order to ship needed items to single Soldiers downrange.

She also helped organize donations received from the German community for care packages to be sent downrange.

Olson serves as a classroom volunteer at the Wetzel Elementary School and volunteers her time at Baumholder American High School.

She is currently organizing and coordinating Buccaneer Night which benefits graduating seniors.

Olson is also an Army Family Team Building instructor qualified to teach all levels of training.

In addition to the many hats Olson wears she serves as a senior enlisted spouse with the BCSC and volunteers as a team mom for Child and Youth Services sports.

She is an integral part of the Baumholder military community, officials said.

Seven individuals received the Baumholder Community Distinguished Volunteer Award. They are Lisa Box, Renee Redfield, Lisa Proctor, Lisa Jordan, Carla Federovich, John Dye and Sandy Ewers.

The Outstanding Youth Volunteers for 2003 for the Baumholder Community are Megan Madison, James Dickerson, Austin Buchs and Jessica Madison.

In addition to the individual volunteers the volunteering efforts of the community's families were also noted.

The Outstanding Volunteer Family Award went to the Schaffner-

Morton family. They are well known in the community for their involvement in the Protestant Chapel where Scott Morton is an usher and is starting a Protestant Men of the Chapel group. He is also involved with the Family Readiness Group for his unit and was an active participant in the Army Family Action Plan.

Melissa Schaffner is the president of the Baumholder Community Spouse Club, president of the School Advisory Council, an AFTB instructor, chaperone for school trips, and finance chairperson for Buccaneer Night. She also works part time. Ryan Morton, their son, is on the Praise Team of the chapel, active in the chapel youth group and volunteers as a coach with Youth Services.

This past year in addition to volunteering he was one of Baumholder High School's star football players. He is the senior class president and speaks on their behalf at a number of forums.



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Honoring Mom and Dad

Zacchea Small (left), a second-grade student at Wetzel Elementary School, and Jacqui Gustafarro, second-grade teacher, show off decorations on their classroom door honoring returning Soldiers. Several other classroom doors at Wetzel were also decorated by the students in honor of the Soldiers' return.



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Baumholder's volunteer force cues up for a noon meal after the annual volunteer appreciation ceremony where community members were recognized for their volunteer efforts this past year.

Wetzel celebrates spring with artwork

The talents of Wetzel Elementary School students and teachers will be on display during a Spring Celebration of the Arts April 28 from 5-7 p.m. in the school multipurpose room.

Student art projects from all grades in a number of media including painted masks will present visitors with a colorful visual experience. Also featured will be Young Author original published books and other works in various genres from all grades.

A dramatic presentation based on Shel Silverstein's work will be

presented by the Wetzel Elementary drama club

There will be a talent show featuring a second-grade square-dancing routine coached by Wetzel's physical education teacher, Lydia Johnson. A tumbling act is also on the bill. Wetzel's own author-in-residence, first-grade teacher, Loretta Hooks, will present some of her original work.

Cake and punch will be served by student council members before the talent show.

For more information call Jackye Wilder at mil485-6416.

Community keeps mail moving despite deluge

Story and photos by
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Soldiers downrange are preparing to come home. But there's one thing making it to Baumholder sooner than they are — mail, and a lot of it.

For about a month and a half, mail clerks at the community mail room have been inundated with mail from downrange. Two warehouses are now brimming with rows and rows of footlockers and packages. "We have two new locations, two motor pools, where we store the mail," said Idalia Leza, community mail room supervisor.

One is for holding mail for the single Soldiers until they return. "These are Soldiers who have nobody else to pick up their mail here

so they have sent it to themselves. The other warehouse is used to store packages that Soldiers have sent to family members.

"They are mailing an average of three footlockers and about six parcels per Soldier," said Leza. The average mail shipment from downrange is about 20 to 30 footlockers and about 50 boxes per day. "When we have a big delivery, about once a week, we get about 400 or 500 footlockers and probably 700 boxes, like last Friday (March 26). We had three trailers come in then. Usually we only get one trailer a day," she said.

The footlockers alone from that shipment were 180. "Those are just the ones we gave out to family members, not counting the ones that we held back for Soldiers who sent lockers to themselves," said

Leza. There were also 360 parcels in that shipment. "That's just one day's worth of mail," she said. There were also 119 pieces of accountable mail in that shipment. "That's mail that they pay for and it's insured. That's probably their TVs or their DVDs, stuff that they really want to make sure they get because it's expensive," she said.

Help needed

All this influx of mail equals more work for the mail room crew, which also means that additional help was needed. "We had to add about four or five more full-time people. Right now I have 15 civilian employees and about five detailed Soldiers," she said.

At the head of the warehouse operation is Cliff Brewer. "He's the one pretty much who is running the warehouse area. Steve Miller and I

are also helping with the warehouse. The rest of the people stay in the mail room. When they have 'day one' at the reintegration facility I also have to have one or two people there. That's why we have the extra people.

"We get about six to 10 Soldiers detailed to us Monday through Saturday. They are the ones helping us unload and load the truck because I have to keep the clerks who are trained to put the mail out in the mail room. I still have the mail room to run," said Leza.

When a big load arrives Leza tries to get about 10 Soldiers to help because once the mail is unloaded it must be separated between the hold and the issue areas.

The numerous packages and footlockers are then further separated by company and by unit. "It's not like we get it and just throw it in the warehouse. It has to be separated because there's no way that we're going to find it later," said Leza.

The packages that are going to be given out are separated by numbers and then labeled so they can be found when the family members arrive to pick them up. Cards are also pitched in the family members' mailboxes so they know they have packages to pick up.

Although the mail operation is working fine and family members are receiving their mail, sometimes they receive more than they care to receive.

"Some of the Soldiers are sending stuff that is really heavy, and the spouses, especially those who are pregnant, cannot pick the stuff up," said Leza.

Another glitch is that some Soldiers downrange are telling other Soldiers who have no one to collect their mail to send mail to their address and his spouse will pick it up and store it. "When the spouses come over and they have about six

footlockers and 10 boxes waiting for them, they don't want to pick them all up. They say if it's not from my husband I'm not picking it up. That means that we have to take that back into the hold area...and that's really double work for us because when we get it, we separate it, we make a list and we pitch cards in their mailboxes. So when they come over and they don't want it we have to take that back to another area," said Leza.

Many Soldiers, however, are already helping to ease the workload by sending packages from downrange addressed to themselves.

"There was a word out there that if they sent packages to themselves, we were going to return it to them and that's not right. If they send it from them to them we'll hold it here until they come back," said Leza.

"So they don't really have to send it to somebody else. They can send it to themselves and we'll hold it. When they get back we'll distribute everything as a unit and as a company because I cannot handle so many Soldiers coming over to the mail room at one time to get their packages, it's just too much.

"For example, when Charlie 2-6th came back, we were in the tent with a list of Soldiers who had packages to pick up and we took them as a company to the warehouse so they could pick up their packages," said Leza.

It's hard to imagine just what the Soldiers are mailing back, but Leza said that because the mail service is free for the Soldiers, they are mailing everything under the sun. Because many of the packages are not wrapped well, they often break open and the mail clerks have to try to reassemble the packages.

"I'm getting carpets, paintings, parts of blown up vehicles, pieces of soap, used shampoo bottles, you name it," she said.



Sacks stuffed with packages and mail are unloaded from the mail truck.



Detailed Soldiers assist with the sorting and storage of packages at one of the temporary warehouses.



Postal employees and Soldiers team up to unload a semitruck that arrived full of packages and footlockers.

222nd BSB – Baumholder, Neubrücke, Strassburg



Kelly Nofzinger, a student teacher from Ball State University, assists Wetzel Elementary School second-grade students with a classroom exercise.



Stephen Gardner, a Ball State University student teacher, introduces a science project to kindergarten students at Wetzel Elementary School.

Teaching partnership benefits students, interns

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Students from Ball State University are now performing their final 16-week internship as student teachers at Baumholder schools before becoming eligible to receive a teaching license from the state of Indiana.

A partnership program between Ball State University and Baumholder schools provides new student teachers for Baumholder every semester. The partnership is reaping educational benefits for Baumholder students as well as preparing Ball State students for a future in education.

The program started in August 2003 when the first group of five students from Ball State began their 16-week internship at Wetzel Elementary School. Currently seven Ball State students are finishing their 16-week internship, four are working at Wetzel Elementary School and three at Baumholder American High School. With each group, Ball State sends a supervisor who monitors their progress.

"The purpose of it is to improve student achievement. It was an initiative from the National Education Association, which is the teacher's union at the national level," said Dorrie Meckes, president of the

Baumholder area education association and a teacher at Wetzel Elementary School. "We went to Washington D.C., met with Sylvia Cydel and the NEA. She's the one who directs the program from Washington. We got together with different universities and different people who were already involved in professional development schools and learned about what it was and how it operated and then got together with Ball State. They came several times and visited and we liked what they had to offer and they agreed to be our partner," said Meckes. "It's working out really well. The student teachers are well prepared and the kids are benefiting."

"In the first two to three weeks they do a lot of observation, get used to the rules of the school, get used to the students and get used to the teaching style of the individual classroom teachers. After about the second or third week they're teaching all of the classes that the regular teacher would be teaching," said Barbara Graham, a professor in the department of educational studies at Ball State University who's role this semester is to supervise the student teachers at Baumholder.

No one could be more pleased to have a helping hand than the Baumholder teachers and princi-

pals. "They are pleased with their preparation before they come here. They're very pleased with the students' (student teachers) willingness to participate in all the activities in the school," said Graham. "They're helping with the art club for example. They're staying after school for a sure start play group. They're involved with student council activities. One of them is coaching soccer. They are involved with the life of the school and the teachers and principals seem happy with that. They are performing a service for the community."

Carol Osman, art teacher at Wetzel Elementary School, is one of several teachers who are pleased with the results of the program because the program has its benefits for the students, the interns and herself. "I'm always delighted to have a student teacher come in because it gives me a chance to reflect on my own practices and I do learn new things from the interns... regarding teaching methods, their ideas, their take on things and their approach. I have a chance to look at that, reassess my own teaching and then collaborate to create a really strong teaching program," she said.

Serving as student teachers in a community such as Baumholder is a unique experience for the student teachers. The nature of the community with its unique challenges are

different than most stateside communities, the interns said.

"Student teaching in itself is kind of a different experience to begin with," said Kelly Nofzinger, one of the student teachers from Ball State University working at Wetzel Elementary School.

"The kids are different over here. It's kind of a whole different environment to deal with. There are family issues to deal with — their dads being gone and things like that. There are just different problems that you have to deal with here that you wouldn't have back in the States," Nofzinger said.

"You get a whole new perspective on how to work with children, especially with the emotional problems they're going through. They need more support systems, I feel, at least in my class. So it's something else that you have to work with," said Nofzinger.

"The obvious difference," added

Graham, "is that this is a community where a large number of people are living in single parent homes under sort of unusual circumstances.

"The community students themselves are under stress and right now they're very excited because either their mom or dad is coming home soon. So I don't think that experience is possible for interns in the United States. They don't have this kind of community feeling of pulling together in a crisis situation," he said.

"This is my first experience with the military," said Graham. "I have supervised student teachers now for five years and I'm finding that the teachers in this community are very professional. They've taken their responsibilities as sort of a mentor very seriously and have offered extremely constructive support for the Ball State students. It has been a very good experience for all parties."