



News flash

Casualty in Iraq

Staff Sgt. Erickson H. Petty, age 28, from Fort Gibson, Okla., and Baumholder's 1st Battalion, 35th Armor Regiment, died May 3 in Salman Al Habb, Iraq, from an attack by small arms fire while conducting security of a weapons cache. (See page 11 for a tribute to eight fellow Baumholder Soldiers killed in Iraq.)

Extended units website

Visit the 104th Area Support Group's home page at www.104thasg.hanau.army.mil and click on "Extended Units — A support to families of extended Soldiers" for a host of information related to the extension of units in Iraq. The site provides information on topics ranging from finance, transportation and legal issues to summer school information provided by the Department of Defense Dependents Schools in Europe. (USAREUR Public Affairs)

Commissary case lot sale May 28-30

Commissaries worldwide will hold two-day case lot sales sometime between May 28 and 30. Check with local stores for exact times. The commissaries will feature up to 132 different products at as much as 60 percent off the regular price. Sale items include grocery, household, health and beauty, diaper, chill and frozen food items, pet products and more.

Swimming pools open May 15

Many outdoor swimming pools open on May 15 in Germany. Community members are reminded to take a few precautions to have a safe and enjoyable summer. Swim only in authorized areas. Don't mix alcohol with any water sports. Always use the buddy system when swimming. Make sure non-swimmers stay out of dangerous waters and are supervised around water. Use plenty of sunscreen and stay out of the sun during the peak sun hours. For a listing of approved swimming areas in the communities of the 104th Area Support Group browse to www.104thasg.hanau.army.mil/swim.html.

SMA addresses extension issues

During visit to 104th Area Support Group

By Spc. Kristopher Joseph

V Corps Public Affairs Office

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston's visit to Wiesbaden May 4 was a homecoming of sorts. Preston served as sergeant major for both V Corps and the 1st Armored Division before moving on to the Pentagon.

During the visit the Army's senior enlisted Soldier answered questions from concerned Family Readiness Group members. Preston explained the "big picture" that has led to the extension of 1st Armored Division Soldiers in Iraq and discussed changes the Army will make in the ongoing global war on terrorism.

Several questions concerned Army policies on keeping Soldiers on deployments longer than originally planned.

"In every mission," Preston said, "success is staying the course and basically working ourselves out of a job. We don't always understand why these decisions are



Photo by Spc. Kristopher Joseph

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston discusses extension and Army transformation issues with Soldiers and Family Readiness Group leaders during a visit to Wiesbaden Army Airfield.

made, but if you look at what democracy has done in the world, you can see that what we are doing is important and we are making a difference. In light of our current military commitments, the overall goal for the near future is to give predictability and stability for Soldiers and their families.

"The fact is that these units have to be reset and ready," Preston said. "We don't know what lies down the road. It's a different war, and it's a mind-set we have to ac-

cept."

FRG member Holly Massie asked Preston how many other places the Army is going to send her deployed husband, Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Massie of 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery. "We are not the world's policemen," she said.

Preston responded by encouraging Massie and other family members to not speculate about possible future operations or give credence to rumors, but rather to stay

focused and believe that Army leadership in Washington, D.C., cares about them and is working to make changes that will benefit the military family.

Preston addressed Army transformation over the next three to five years. He said the Army plans to increase its manpower by 30 percent to give it more flexibility during this time of continued deployment. That growth, he explained, will primarily consist of adding 10-15 brigade combat teams to the 33 the Army has today. Those BCTs will be "locked down" into 36-month life cycles to give Soldiers more family stability and improve unit cohesion and effectiveness.

The role of the Army Reserve and National Guard in Operation Iraqi Freedom was discussed as well. Preston said there are untapped units in these forces that will be mobilized to assist with the workload of the active Army. Currently 40 percent of the troops in the second iteration of OIF come from the Reserve and Guard.

Another concern expressed by several FRG members was the policy of giving Soldiers a six-month break between deployments. Many enlisted Soldiers returning from their

See SMA visit on page 3

Free bowling, trips, movies and more

Support expanded to help families cope

By Karl Weisel

104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

Extended commissary hours, free bowling for families, parent night outs, complimentary tickets to host nation events, expanded summer youth activities and a host of other services are all aimed at making the extension of Soldiers' deployment to Iraq more bearable for families affected by the decision.

"We, the 104th Area Support Group and base support battalion staffs, are committed to doing everything we can to making this extension period for the families as

positive an experience as possible," said Anemone Rueger of the 104th ASG Public Affairs Office.

"Our directorates have been tasked to see how they can go the extra mile to support extended families," she said. "As Gen. Bell (U.S. Army Europe commander) said, 'You are already doing a great job, but now it's time to pull together and do everything we can.'"

Among the first initiatives local Directorate of Community Activities have introduced is free bowling for military spouses and their children from 3-6 p.m. every Thursday at 104th ASG bowling centers. Free shoe rental is also included during

Iron Family Bowling.

"We're offering a variety of free Outdoor Recreation trips," said Ron Locklar, 104th ASG's Community Recreation Division chief. "While not all of our trips are free, there will be regularly scheduled trips. Check with your local Morale, Welfare, Recreation to see which trips are available.

"The trips will be available on a first-come, first-served basis," Locklar added, saying that some will have limited space based on logistics.

"We have new operating hours in Hanau at our middle school and teen center," said Petra Rohr, Child

and Youth Services chief for the 414th Base Support Battalion. "They are now open Fridays and Saturdays until 10 p.m.

"We're also offering a Parents Night Out every Friday from 6-10 p.m. at Hanau's Fliegerhorst and

Büdingen Child Development Centers," said Rohr. "We're looking toward the summer when we'll be offering part-day preschool and Summer Camps. ... We're getting Camp Adventure staff again this summer."

Like all of the CYS facilities in the 104th ASG communities, man-

See Support on page 3

Inside

Reader feedback
Butzbach's Nina Smith said being "considerate of others and to respect their cultures and points of view" were vital lessons to teach children. See page 2 for more feedback.



Topper awards
The best in community theater is lauded at the 2004 Army Europe Tournament of Plays. See pages 14 and 15 for a look at this year's winners.



Commentary

Feedback: What are the most important lessons to teach children?



Angie Mclean
Smith Elementary School counselor

"The most important lessons to teach children would definitely be to be caring and compassionate to others and to be sensitive to the needs of others. And they definitely need to be taught how to call Grandmama's phone number. They need to know how to dial Grandmama's phone number — every child."



Command Sgt. Maj. Clyde Yarborough
16th Corps Support Command

"The most important lesson to teach children is to be responsible and to be respectful, because if they have those two attributes, they really go hand in hand, it'll teach them life lessons they can follow all through their lives."



Iris Gilbert
Giessen Post Exchange employee

"One lesson is to never give up. There is always hope, and a door will open. Respecting others is also important."



Carol Miller
222nd Base Support Battalion admin specialist

"Being honest and speaking your mind is important. Standing up for what you think is right is also a very important lesson for children."



Robin Risemas
127th Military Police Company family member

"How to respect other people. It's important because most of the problems that exist today wouldn't exist if people respected other people. You have to teach by example."

We all have a personal stake in supporting families

By Col. George A. Latham II
104th Area Support Group commander



The news that 1st Armored Division Soldiers will serve several more months in Iraq caught most people by surprise.

Families preparing to welcome home their loved ones, service members returning from block leave and others gathering in Kuwait for flights back to Germany all had one thing in common — initial shock at the news and then eventual resignation that when duty calls, homecomings must wait.

For those of us providing service and support in communities throughout the 104th Area Support Group, the news means continuing to ensure Soldiers and families are provided the best quality of life possible.

As Gen. B.B. Bell, U.S. Army Europe commander, has stated repeatedly, leaders at all levels are charged to do everything possible to ensure families' and Soldiers' needs are met during this challenging period.

Concerns about impending moves, school registration and planned trips were only a few of the issues raised at Town Hall Meetings and through other forums. While these issues are being addressed and resolved, all service and support providers should take an attitude check to make sure we, too, continue to do everything we can to ease the stress brought on by continued separation of families and fears about the dangers of duty in Iraq.

While everyone has an off day from time to time, it's up to us to make sure that when

we are serving our "customers" — community members throughout the 104th ASG — we do everything possible to make the customer service experience as rewarding and helpful as we can. It comes down to taking a personal interest in every customer who calls, emails or walks through the front door of our place of service.

Whether we are checking out books in the library, issuing driver's licenses or simply answering an email request for information, our jobs are to do whatever it takes to provide that service. That doesn't mean immediately passing the buck, saying "no, that isn't possible," or filing the email for later response. It means doing everything humanly possible to help the customer in such a way that he or she feels we have indeed helped solve the problem.

If indeed we can't provide the service, then it's up to each and every one of us to find out who can and to help put the customer in touch with that individual. If, for some reason, the customer's problem can't be solved in a single visit, then we must explain with a smile what can and will be done to ensure the customer is helped in the future.

We aren't paid merely to provide services — we're paid to provide the best service possible — every day. We've taken care of Soldiers and families since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom and we will continue to do so in the future. There is no change.

While for most of us helping our customers is already personal — we all know or are related to someone who is serving in harm's way — we must all take personal pride in helping others — every time we can.

Caring for extended families

Did you know?

The Department of Defense has expanded its internal communications efforts with two initiatives during National Military Appreciation Month in May.

An electronic version of the the *Stars and Stripes* newspaper is now available for downloading at no cost. Making the electronic version available worldwide allows service members to view exact replica copies of the newspaper's European, Pacific and Mideast editions, providing timely theater news and information, said DoD officials. Service mem-

bers in the United States also now have access to the newspaper, where the hard copy version is not printed. The online version of *Stars and Stripes* is available on the Internet at <http://estripes.osd.mil>.

DoD's Pentagon Channel, the department's news and information television service, will be made available to all U.S. military installations May 14. The Pentagon Channel will begin its expanded service with a live broadcast from the May 14 Armed Forces Day opening ceremony at Andrews Air Force Base, Md. The Pentagon Channel will now also be distributed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Information on how to receive the channel is available at <http://pentagonchannel.mil>. (Courtesy of DoD News)

Herald Union

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News and features

News flash

Phone card donations

The Department of Defense announced that any American can help service members in contingency operations call home by purchasing prepaid calling cards from the Armed Services exchanges to be given to deployed troops. The "Help Our Troops Call Home" program is designed to help service members call home from Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. Log on to the Internet at www.aafes.com, www.navy-nex.com or www.usmc-mccs.org and click on "Help Our Troops Call Home" to purchase cards which can be dedicated to an individual or "any service member" through the Red Cross, Air Force Aid Society or Fisher House Foundation. (DoDNews)

Health workshops

The eighth annual European Army Health Promotion Training Workshops, "Partnerships for Solutions," will be held May 24-26 and June 1-4 in Landstuhl. The May workshop, titled "Personal Health Behavior Coaching," is a certification program using interactive reinforcement techniques to teach effective coaching skills to patients and program participants. The June workshop, "Health Promotion Director Certification," is aimed at equipping attendees with the tools needed to design and implement effective health promotion and well-being programs. The courses are sponsored by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine Europe and the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research. Call mil 486-7099, civ (06371) 867 099 or email wellness@cpe.amedd.army.mil to register or for more information. (Europe Army Regional Medical Command Public Affairs)

German Host 2004

Spaces are available to participate in Host Nation 2004, a two-part orientation program hosted by the Rhineland-Palatinate Ministry of Education, Women and Youth, to be held July 4-18. It is especially suited for commanders, teachers, Public Affairs, host nation and international relations officers. The first week of seminars takes place in Mainz, the second in Berlin and focus on the German education system, economic challenges and trans-Atlantic cooperation, the German political scene, unification and its consequences, the European Union and international relations. For details call Michael Beldermann at mil 370-8725 or send email to beldermannm@ima-e.army.mil.

Voting assistance training

A team from the office of the Federal Voting Assistance Program will conduct voting assistance officer training at Wiesbaden's Flyers Movie Theater at Wiesbaden Army Airfield May 25. All Department of the Army units and agencies are required to have trained voting assistance officers. Commanders must ensure their designated individuals attend the training which will be held at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. that day. Voting assistance officers should call mil 337-6053/6337 to register for either the morning or afternoon session. Members of non-Department of the Army units and agencies are also welcome to register for either of the sessions.



Arabic Headstart

Learn basic information about the Middle East — the culture, people and language — at the Arabic Headstart Middle East Orientation Program May 17-18 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Pioneer Education Center. The class is free and open to all U.S. ID card holders. To enroll call the Pioneer Education Center at mil 322-8380/9600. For information about classes in Baumholder call mil 485-7557.



Photo by Spc. Katherine M. Roth

Still time to make friends during a dangerous mission

A Soldier with Baumholder's 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, gives candy to local children during a patrol just south of Baghdad on April 23. Soldiers are searching the area for unlawful weapons and gathering information from locals about Improvised Explosive Devices in the area.

Support

Continued from page 1

agers are working hard at developing programs to help make life easier for families impacted by the extension announcement, officials said. Trips to Space Camp, Camp Heritage and various other opportunities during the summer months are all aimed at keeping youths occupied and stress-free.

On-site registration, Super Saturday hourly care at CDCs and Parent Night Outs are ways CYs are helping spouses cope with continued family separation.

Regular free movies at local movie theaters are another special feature. "There are free movies coming to your local theaters. Check your local listings," said Locklar.

Celebrity visits, free concerts and more sports activities

are other programs community officials are considering to enhance the quality of life this summer.

Likewise chaplains have brainstormed to provide assistance, special sessions for extended families, tours and retreats to ease community stress (see story on page 4).

While many people have taken advantage of the many free tickets for cultural and sporting activities provided by host nation organizations, more tickets are on the way, said Rueger. The complimentary tickets for everything from swimming pool admission to excursion boat cruises, museums to sporting events are available through local Army Community Service offices.

See stories and listings throughout this issue for more information on "Caring for extended families."

SMA visit

Continued from page 1

one-year stint in OIF must immediately attend lengthy leadership development courses, they said, giving them only two



Photo by Spc. Kristopher Joseph
Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston talks with Family Readiness Group co-leader Shelby Barrett in Wiesbaden.

to three months reunion with their families.

Preston said there are already plans to merge some redundant training within leadership courses and to shorten overall course lengths to reduce time away from families.

The sergeant major also quelled rumors that 1st Armored Division would be moving back to the United States. No such decisions have been made, he said.

Preston closed his visit by praising today's military families, calling them "the next greatest generation."

"Even though these are difficult times, 20 years from now the Soldiers and families will watch the History Channel about what's going on now and look back with pride and honor at what they accomplished through their great sacrifices."

During his two-day visit to Germany, Preston also attended a memorial service in Baumholder for eight 1st Armored Division Soldiers killed in an improvised explosive device attack in Iraq last week (see related story on page 11) and met with V Corps sergeants major and FRG members from the corps' 1st Infantry Division and the 98th and 100th Area Support Groups.

Helping families now is top priority

Bell urges unit, agency leaders to act swiftly

By Jason L. Austin

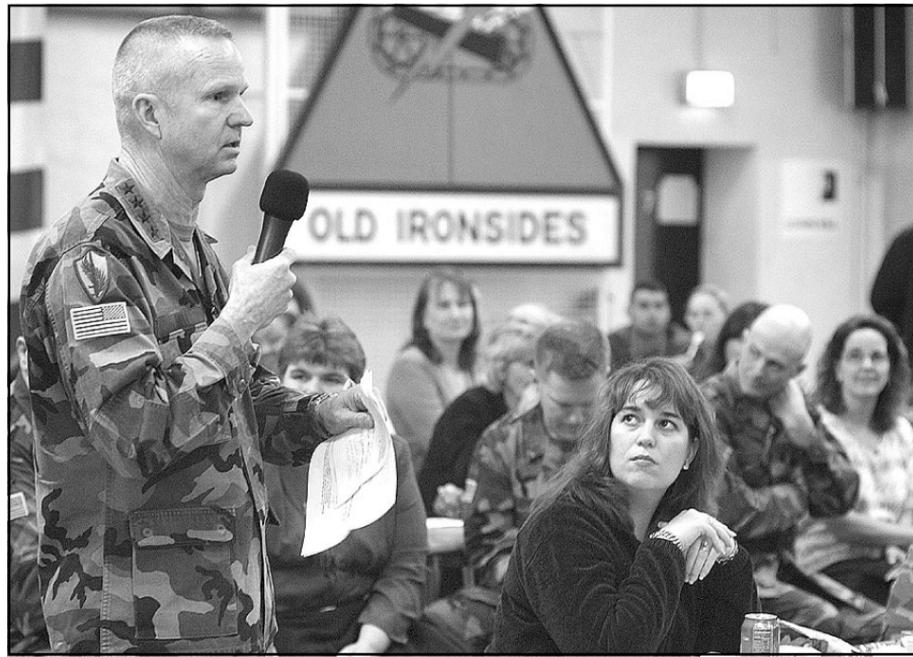
U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs Office

"We've got to fix things right now," said Gen. B.B. Bell, U.S. Army Europe commander, during visits to Baumholder and Friedberg to meet with the rear detachment commanders and Family Readiness Groups after the April 14 announcement that 1st Armored Division Soldiers will spend up to four more months in Iraq.

Bell said the community accepts the mission, but needs help. "We're not arguing the requirement, we'll do our duty. This great division has stood and delivered in the face of the enemy, and now we're going to do what's right for them back here," he said.

"This is the most wonderful thing they could have done," said Kim Hickman, a Baumholder FRG leader. "It helps the wives feel connected, and it makes them feel better all the way around. It shows somebody cares."

Hickman said spouses weren't happy about the extension, but accepted it. "This is what our husbands do though. I mean, this is their job. But it's nice to know that the ones who are left behind here are not forgotten.



Gen. B.B. Bell, U.S. Army Europe commander, addresses Family Readiness Group spouses, rear detachment commanders and base operations leaders in Friedberg.

This is one less thing for the Soldiers to worry about. They can do their job. They know their families are taken care of."

"A Soldier who knows that his family has good living conditions will go out and live in the dirt until he or she is blue in the face," said Bell. "However, if that family emails him tonight and says, 'I've had it, I want out of the

Army — if you don't come home I'm divorcing you' — if that's the message that he's getting, it's our fault. Because it's likely that spouse got that sense from a system that doesn't care.

"Who cares?" Bell asked.

"We care. If there ever was a time in your service to America where you stood and

delivered, this is the time," Bell told the Baumholder community leadership. He charged rear detachment commanders and community leaders to take action.

"You've got to be bold and aggressive. You have to be willing to take some risk with our normal procedures, and I'm telling you to do it. I'm telling you to do what's right."

"Gen. Bell has given us our marching orders," said Maj. Jeff Madison of 8th Finance Battalion. "He's empowered us to cut through the red tape and do things in a different procedure, to challenge the barriers that prevent us from doing what we need to do."

It's those barriers and those regulations that Bell wants the leaders to work around. "If we follow our rules, we're just going to frustrate people. And we're not going to serve their needs in a short amount of time," Bell said, noting that most Army rules make sense in peacetime, and some make sense in wartime, "but almost none of them make sense when you've been extended for four months and your family is now facing a series of very difficult issues.

"Do what's right. We've got to do it right now. When you're trying to do things quickly there's a little waste. There will be no abuse either, but if you end up wasting a few bucks of Uncle Sam's money in the final accounting trying to do what's right for these family members, so be it. This is an owed debt and we've got to pay it off. And I intend to do it."

Chaplains answer calls for help

By David Ruderman

104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

Chaplains across the 104th Area Support Group mobilized their resources and began looking for reinforcements in response to a sharp increase in the number of calls for help following the 1st Armored Division's extension of duty in Iraq, said officials.

"As you can well imagine, we now have a new definition for going over an emotional cliff," said Chaplain (Col.) Lawrence C. Krause, 104th ASG chaplain. Chaplains received two to three times as many calls as usual from family members requesting assistance and looking for someone to talk to, he said.

"That was particularly the case within the first couple of weeks. It's just kind of like 'I just can't take it anymore.' I think a lot of it is people were just hanging on, and then at the last minute to have this extremely sensitive thing come up... even the strong ones felt it," he said.

"It's hard to really put a finger on any one thing," said Chaplain (Capt.) Joseph Vieira, deputy community chaplain for the 222nd Base Support Battalion. "Most of what I've seen, we've already been seeing."

"It's a variety of things," said Chaplain (Maj.) Jeff Voyles, family life chaplain for the 104th ASG. "There's an increase in depression and requests for ERDs [Early Return of Dependents], and an increase in requests to work with children who are acting out."

While delivering its usual services and programs, the 104th ASG has responded by tapping into funding for the Building Strong and Ready Families program, a congressionally funded initiative that addresses Soldier reintegration and is geared toward couples. The 104th ASG received \$105,000 in funding in mid-April and will apply the money to helping spouses whose Soldiers have been extended in Iraq.

"It's a chapel-led, multidisciplinary program in coordination with Army Community Service and community health agencies," said Krause. "We're going to adapt the program

somewhat and see what we can do to support the single-parent families — I call them 'part-time single-parent families' — just give them a break and teach them some skills, give them a little bit of a respite."

"Right now we're asking for an exception to policy to offer it just to the spouses," said Voyles. "We're kind of taking a detour, but that's what we need now. It would help them cope with where they're at now. We're looking at even just helping them cope with stress, whatever tips we can give them, even if it's just basically a night out. Each BSB has a family life chaplain, and I'm working with them to coordinate how they use their funds," he said.

Baumholder chaplains will host family members in a series of overnight Families Enduring Extended Deployments sessions at Hambachtal for five straight weekends beginning June 22, said Vieira. They will be open to the entire community. Parents and children may attend whether they stay overnight or not. The emphasis will be on helping families keep it together until their Soldiers return, he said.

In addition to the FEED overnights, the chapels are organizing tours and retreats for family members within the context of their chapel worship communities, he said.

Chaplains and assistants are working overtime to meet the needs of family members and Soldiers at a time when their own resources are stretched thin, said officials.

"Right now across the board we're staffed at a little over 50 percent of what we'd usually have in terms of chaplains and assistants in our communities," said Krause, "and per guidance from U.S. Army Europe and Installation Management Agency-Europe we have cut no religious support programs."

Of the chaplains assigned to the 104th ASG, 39 are deployed with the units in Iraq, he said, and 25 are at work in local communities. "The good news is that we're getting a plus-up from normal active-duty folks, the normal summer rotation folks. We've got reinforcements on the way. We know for sure 10 are coming starting July 1," he said.

Automatic POV extension

Task Force 1st Armored Division Soldiers will receive an additional automatic six-month vehicle registration extension to help Soldiers and families affected by the Iraq deployment extension, said Gen. B.B. Bell, U.S. Army Europe commander. USAREUR Vehicle Registry will mail more than 6,000 registration extensions based on Bell's announcement.

The letters include an authorization for a free vehicle safety inspection at any Installation Management Agency-Europe Morale, Welfare and Recreation Auto Skills Center or community Privately Owned Vehicle inspection station, said IMA-E regional director Russell Hall. Community commanders should inform their staffs to honor the letters regardless of the owner's place of residence to make the offer as convenient as possible for family members.

"Most of the family members bearing these letters are already feeling the effects of this deployment extension. I ask all to smile and give them your positive support," said Hall.

Vehicle Registry staff and rear detachment commanders are working to verify Soldiers' deployed status and to distribute the extensions to family members over the next few weeks.

Officials strongly recommended that family members take their vehicles to any MWR Auto Skills or community POV inspection station for a safety inspection if one has not been done in over a year. The only POVs not covered by the extension are those that have had their registration cancelled because of failure to maintain insurance.

Family members close to their POV registration expiration date who have not received the extension through their rear detachment can go to any community vehicle registration station for assistance and resolution.

Questions and requests for assistance can be directed to Mr. Seager at mil 386-7123 or civ (0621) 718-7123. (IMA-E Public Affairs)

221st BSB – Wiesbaden, Wackernheim, Dexheim



Kinderfest highlights

By Cassandra Kardeke
*221st Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office*

Hundreds of Wiesbaden youths experienced a fun-filled day at this year's Kinderfest.

Sponsored by the 221st Base Support Battalion and Child and Youth Services, this year's festivities took place at the Wiesbaden Middle School playground.

Activities included lots of free

food, a tricycle obstacle course, face painting, cookie decorating, arts and crafts, a magic show and a tae kwon do display among others.

"The event was such a success that we plan to have an encore Kinderfest June 19," said Lt. Col. Christopher Franks, 221st BSB commander. See page 7 for details on upcoming events and activities geared especially for youth and families throughout Wiesbaden.

**Photos by
Cassandra Kardeke**