

Ready to respond in an emergency

Medical aviators train, prepare for combat, peacetime evacuations

Story and photos by
Jolly A. Sienda
221st Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

Members of the 236th Medical Evacuation Company (Air Ambulance), part of the 421st Medical Evacuation Battalion, make it their mission to save lives whether in Iraq or back home in Germany. Part of that mission is flying safely whenever called and ensuring the safe transport of their patients.

“When the red phone rings we know that something has happened and we will have to react immediately to some kind of emergency,” said Sgt. Frederick Hawkins, a member of the unit.

“Fortunately, the red phone doesn’t ring too often,” said Spc. John Lang, another crew member. “The last time we responded to a red phone call, it was to rescue a soldier who had a pelvic fracture and ankle break.”

The pilots and crew are a tight team. The company includes UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters — each with a crew of two pilots, a medic and a maintenance crew technician.

In Grafenwöhr the medical evacuation Soldiers wait on 24-hour call at their so-called “safe house.” Similar to a fire house, the medical evacuation aviators’ ready rooms include bedrooms, a kitchen, living room, television, video machine, a foosball table and a control center where missions are planned and tracked on computers.

The medics assigned to the fly-

“We are constantly training with night vision goggles, because the technology changes often.” — Chief Warrant Officer 4 Glenn Beck

ing team must maintain their skill levels in four different categories. These include advanced cardiac life support, pediatric life support, trauma life support and pre-hospital life support. The team has to be ready for any kind of situation, whether it is to respond to battle or to pull someone from a car.

“The UH-60 Blackhawk is like a flying ambulance,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Bobby Richardson. “It’s equipped with a floatable load patient gurney that can be lowered to 250 feet for a rescue. There is also a defibrillator on the aircraft for cardiac patients, burn blankets and

oxygen.”

“We try to make the patient as comfortable as possible,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Colin Kelly. “The patient lies flat on his or her back and is moved into the aircraft with his or her head facing the direction of travel.”

A 30-minute, pre-flight check is a standard safety procedure. This involves checking the equipment on the aircraft, following a step-by-step checklist and getting the latest weather conditions from the flight tower.

“The Blackhawk has a two-hour flying range, depending on burn rate,” said Kelly. “We’ve flown as far as Kosovo making six stops for refueling and safety checks. That is a full day of flying in good weather.”

“We fly a lot at Graf, a couple of hours daily, because it’s a good training opportunity. However, when we can, we train over the border in the Czech Republic. The training is different in the Czech Republic because we are able to shoot ammo off of the Blackhawk at their training areas,” said Richardson.



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Colin Kelly checks the instrument panels of a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter during a training exercise at Grafenwöhr.

“I’ve been flying for 24 years in many different situations,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Glenn Beck. “I really enjoy low-level flying at night using the night vision

goggles. We are constantly training with night vision goggles, because the technology changes often. We have to really stay on top of our game.”

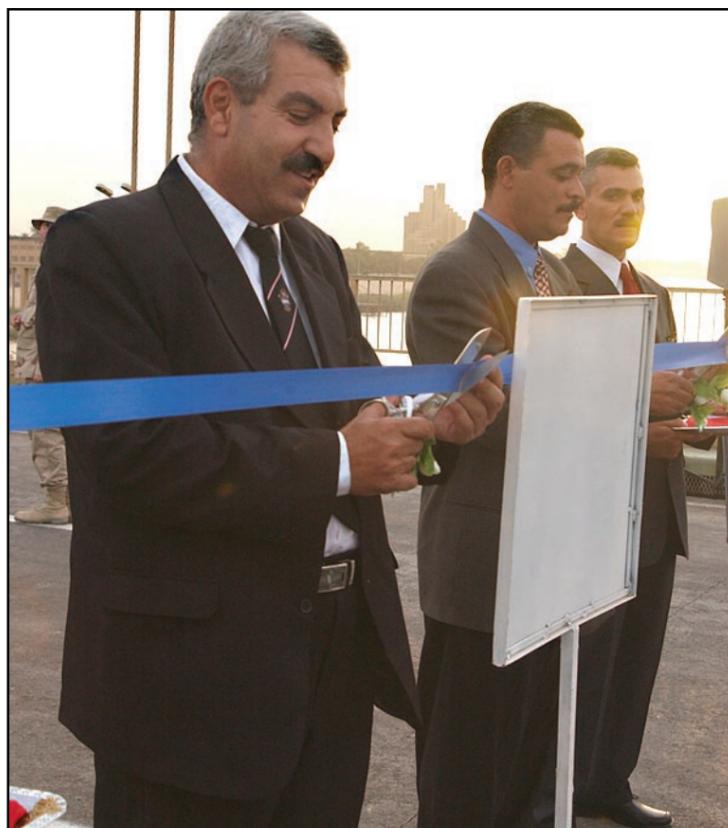


Photo by Spc. Shauna J. McRoberts

Dr. Abdul Ameer Wadi Al Saidy (left), Karadah District Advisory Council leader, and Yehia Mohammed Ali, Karkh DAC leader, cut the ribbon officially re-opening Baghdad’s 14th of July Bridge in a ceremony Oct. 25 as an interpreter looks on.

Bridge links Iraqi people

By Spc. Shauna J. McRoberts
1st Armored Division Public Affairs Office

Soldiers from the 1st Armored Division and Iraqi leaders came together Oct. 25 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the re-opening of the 14th of July Bridge.

“Today we commemorate the repair and re-opening of this beautiful bridge as further evidence of a city returning to normal,” said Brig. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, 1st AD commander. “This bridge will improve traffic flow. But more important than that, it will stand as a symbol of an Iraq crossing from its past to its future.”

The 14th of July Bridge, Baghdad’s first suspension bridge, links the Karkh and Karadah dis-

tricts on the north and south side of Baghdad. It was damaged during the first Gulf War, but was never repaired by the former regime. Realizing it was unsafe for use, coalition forces closed the bridge when they entered Baghdad in April.

Several months ago soldiers from the division’s 1457th Engineer Combat Battalion started designing a way to restore the bridge and spent three weeks replacing severed cables, fixing lights and other general maintenance.

“When I was working on the bridge, it was just another mission,” said Sgt. Caleb Johnson, a combat engineer. “I didn’t fully appreciate the effect it would have, but now it’s great to see how it will benefit the Iraqi people.”

The newly repaired bridge will

alleviate traffic build-up and allow drivers a direct route across the Tigris River.

“When the bridge was closed, people had to spend an extra 20 minutes to drive around the river,” said Maj. John Frisbie, fire support officer, 2nd Brigade Combat Team. “Now the bridge will be open for everyone to use.”

Iraqi leaders, including the Karkh and Karadah District Advisory Council leaders, and the City Advisory Council chairman expressed their appreciation during the ceremony.

“The re-opening of the 14th of July Bridge is a symbol of the union of the land and people of Baghdad,” said Dr. Abdul Ameer Wadi Al Saidy, the Karadah DAC leader, “a salute to all the people whose efforts contributed to the reconstruction.”

“Well done to all those whose hands participated,” said Adnan Abdul Sahib Hassan, CAC chairman. “Let this wonderful re-opening be the first of many good things between Iraqis and coalition forces.”

“There-opening of the 14th of July Bridge is a symbol of the union of the land and people of Baghdad.” — Dr. Abdul Ameer Wadi Al Saidy, Karadah District Advisory Council leader



Soldiers from the 421st Medical Evacuation Battalion march through the woods during land navigation training at Grafenwöhr.



Sgt. 1st Class Michael Stoddard checks his compass before starting the land navigation exercise at Grafenwöhr Training Area for the 421st Medical Evacuation Battalion.



Teams of 421st Soldiers plot out their course during a land navigation exercise.

421st medics hone soldiering skills

Story and photos by
Jolly A. Sienda
 221st Base Support Battalion Public Affairs
 Office

Even members of medical battalions, whose mission specialty is to administer medical assistance and save lives, must train in Grafenwöhr like infantry Soldiers.

Approximately 400 Soldiers of the 421st Medical Evacuation Battalion and its four divisions sharpened their infantry skills during a week long field exercise at Graf. They participated in four major training excursions leading them through a series of maneuvers to ensure their readiness.

One of those excursions included the land navigation course, a three-hour timed course by day and a two-hour timed course by night.

The clock starts ticking when a Soldier begins to plot the course using a map, protractor, azimuth compass and is then paired with two other soldiers to make a team of three.

Cpl. Grant Quesnell spent five days organizing the 20 various scenarios for the land navigation exercise.

“It was fun to come to Graf before everyone arrived, to plan the land navigation,” he said. “Hopefully the course will be challenging enough, but not too overwhelming that Soldiers can pass the course.”

“Soldiers need to know their own pace count. We lay out a 100 meter course with yellow markers. A Soldier walks the course based on the amount of steps he/she takes – this will give the Soldier a pace count. Every individual has a different pace count which is the difference between points. Some Soldiers use range bead counters, some tie knots for every 100 meters walked, others pick up rocks and throw them every 100 meters,” said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Stoddard, rear detachment first sergeant, who oversaw the operation.

Someone leading the training drives the course about every 20 minutes along the road perimeter to check on Soldiers and make sure things are going as planned. “We know exactly what time a team leaves and where it is going, so if it is late, we can find it,” said Stoddard.

The next part of the training was three qualifying shooting ranges. The first range was 25 meters where Soldiers were tasked to zero their M-16s getting within three centimeters of the target.

In one day 10,720 rounds of ammunition were shot as Soldiers qualified.

“The training has been really successful so far. We’ve qualified 13 marksmen, 14 sharpshooters and six experts, and we still have several more days of training,” said 1st Lt. Lexie Buenaventuras.

To earn marksmen, Soldiers have to score

23-29 out of 40 rounds on the target; sharpshooter requires 30 out of 40 and expert must get 36 targets out of 40.

The next range involved two different firing positions, prone supported in a foxhole and prone unsupported or lying flat on the ground with an M-16.

“Get on your marks,” is announced from a nearby watchtower as Soldiers take their positions. After a short silence the air is filled with cracks and bangs as gunfire erupts across the range. Soldiers have to remain still, alert and ready to make their shot as computerized targets pop up from the ground, stand upright for 20 seconds and then disappear back into the ground.

The last range entails qualification on the 9 mm pistol. To make marksman requires 16 targets, sharpshooter requires 21 and expert requires 26 clean targets. The medical evacuation soldiers proved themselves as sharpshooters, according to Capt. Jonathan Deeter, who oversaw the qualifications process.

A field exercise is not complete without gas chamber training.

“We don’t want to always train with the gear. Without the mask, it shows us how we might react in a real world situation.”
 — Pfc. John Collier

“The conditions here are similar to tear gas,” said Capt. John Hoffman. “The Soldiers have nine seconds to clear and seal their gas mask and eight minutes to put on their chemical

suit.” The chemical suit is made of a charcoal-like substance to retard the effects of chemical contamination. The charcoal filters out the gas. The Soldiers are then asked to perform some kind of physical exercise to get their heart rate up for a few minutes, such as jumping jacks.

After everyone is warmed up the CS gas is turned on. In less than a minute Soldiers who willingly went in without their mask run out of the building, gasping for air and coughing as they try to clear the burn from their throats and eyes.

“We don’t want to always train with the gear,” said Pfc. John Collier. “Without the mask it shows us how we might react in a real world situation.”

Being that the 421st is a medical battalion there is also a need for cardiopulmonary resuscitation classes. Lectures and practical exercises were demonstrated by several certified instructors. The CPR course follows the American Red Cross Association guidelines on CPR. Classes were held in small groups in order to give individual attention to each Soldier and for Soldiers to practice their technique.

Being a Soldier in a medical unit has many responsibilities. Not only do these soldiers need to be continuously up to date on their medical training, they must ensure their soldiering skills are up to date as well, which goes right along with the unit’s motto, “Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime.”

221st BSB – Wiesbaden, Wackernheim, Dexheim



Spcs. Jarmaine Newton (left) and Nicole Webb of Company C, 123rd Main Support Battalion, fill bags with school supplies donated by the unit and family members for Al-Baroodi Elementary School students. The unit adopted the school this summer and helped renovate and install playground equipment before school started. Photo left: Children line up outside their school and check out their goodie bags filled with school supplies delivered by 123rd MSB Soldiers Oct. 5.

123rd Soldiers deliver supplies to Iraqi school

By 1st Lt. Nicole Dieso
123rd Main Support Battalion

Life is changing in Iraq. The once omnipresent face of Saddam is being erased on everything from the new currency to school books. The latter is the reason school started Oct. 1, a month late this year.

One school in particular, the Al-Baroodi Elementary School sponsored by the 123rd Main Support Battalion, 1st Armored Division, underwent major renovation this summer and had to wait for new

books before opening. Throughout the months of August and September Soldiers built everything from swing sets to cubbyholes for the new school and were finally able to see their work enjoyed by the children they made it for Oct. 5.

At first glance the school isn't exactly aesthetically pleasing and by no means is it safe enough for American Soldiers to let their guard down, but the tiny enclave filled with children holds much promise for the future. The future of Iraq rests with these children; they will

be the first generation in over 25 years to be raised in a free country.

Everyday 123rd MSB Soldiers pass the Al-Baroodi school en route to Baghdad International Airport, their mindset is very clear: remain vigilant, remain safe and accomplish the mission. However on Oct. 5 the Soldiers' frame of mind changed when a 123rd MSB convoy stopped at the Al-Baroodi school. Instead of delivering water, fuel or repair parts to coalition forces in Baghdad they delivered bags filled with everything from pencil erasers to new shoes for over 400 eagerly awaiting children.

With weapons slung across their backs, soldiers knelt down to pass out the anticipated bags of goodies. A young child in Iraq is no different than any other child any-

where in the world. One cannot help but be mesmerized and enchanted by their youth, curiosity, and innocence despite exposure to months of fighting and rebuilding. For many Soldiers the experience solidified their purpose for fighting the war against terrorism and liberating the Iraqi people; while the children truly experienced for the first time what it felt like to be appreciated. Soldiers snapped pictures and shared a little of themselves.

The media tends to portray the bridges destroyed rather than the bridges built. Although the play equipment made or school supplies handed out should never overshadow the Soldiers who sacrifice their lives in the name of freedom, Soldiers feel obligated to contribute to the surrounding communi-

ties and should feel proud of what they are accomplishing.

Americans across the United States have also felt compelled to make a difference. The Soldiers sorted over 250 boxes of supplies while others assembled the 400 plus bags.

All Americans whether Soldiers or not, cannot overlook the obvious; the U.S. Army is making a difference in Iraq. Years from now some of the Iraqi children will remember the American soldiers who came to their school and gave them their time and affection as well as some much needed gifts. More importantly they will recall the sacrifice that many American soldiers made to provide them a chance to live free of tyranny and oppression.

Get more information and check out what's happening throughout the 221st BSB at www.wiesbaden.army.mil

Thanksgiving dinner set

Team 221st Base Support Battalion offers Thanksgiving dinner at both the Wiesbaden Army Airfield and Anderson Barracks dining facilities.

Dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 27.

Cost is \$5.25 for soldiers E-1 and above, family members of Soldiers E-5 and above, civilians and retirees and their family members; and \$4.55 for family members of Soldiers below E-4.

Free buses will transport people from all Wiesbaden area housing areas to Wiesbaden Army Airfield and from Wackernheim to Dexheim. For a complete bus schedule visit www.wiesbaden.army.mil.

Community news notes

Spouses welcome at inprocessing

Spouses of soldiers are encouraged to attend in-processing with their sponsor at the Welcome Center. In-processing is an important tool in integrating new soldiers and families into the Wiesbaden community. Classes include safety, Army Community Service and Army Family Team Building, education, force protection, beginning German and more. For more information call mil 337-5419 or civ (0611) 705-5419.

Native American dancers visit

In observance of Native American History Month, the Great Plains Indian Dancers will make an appearance at Hainerberg Elementary School Nov. 18 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. and from 1:30-2:30 p.m. at the Taunus Movie Theater in Hainerberg Shopping Center. Performances are free and open to the public. For more information call mil 336-2473 or civ (0611) 816-2473.

NFL Sundays at Victory Point

Check out the football games and bar menu, complete with made-to-order munchies, at the Victory Point Bar at the Wiesbaden Community Activity Center every Sunday from 5:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. For more information call mil 337-5750 or civ (0611) 705-5750.

Commissary holiday hours

The Wiesbaden Commissary will be open Veterans Day, Nov. 11, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Although normally closed Mondays, the commissary will also be open Nov. 24 (the Monday before Thanksgiving) from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and closed Nov. 27-28.

DA photos not available

Due to annual leave, the Training and Support Center photographer will not be available Nov. 20-26. If you are in need of DA photos make arrangements for your pho-

tos at another time. For more information call mil 337-5006 or civ (0611) 705-5006.

Mailing deadlines

It's time to prepare for the holiday mail rush. In order to ensure your packages reach their destination before Christmas, packages sent Space Available Mail must be mailed no later than Nov. 20; Priority Airlift Mail by Dec. 4; Priority parcels and first class letters and cards by Dec. 11; express mail by Dec. 18.

Saturday APO hours

Both the Community Mailroom and Army Post Office will be open Saturdays, Nov. 15, 22 and Dec. 6, 13 and 20 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Playhouse performance

The Amelia Earhart Playhouse presents "An Evening WithOUT Jennifer Lopez," a zany spoof of the American way of life in sketches and songs. Performance dates are Nov. 20-23 and Dec. 4-7. Tickets

can be purchased at the United Services Organization at Hainerberg and Wiesbaden Army Airfield or by phone at mil 336-2473 or civ (0611) 816-2473. The playhouse is located at the Amelia Earhart Complex at Konrad-Adenauer-Ring 39 in Wiesbaden.

Breastfeeding support

La Leche League is an international organization dedicated to helping mothers meet their breastfeeding goals through mother-to-mother support and information. The Rhein Main area LLL meets the fourth Friday of the month at 10 a.m. at the USO Cottage in Hainerberg Housing. Call civ (06134) 188 825 for more information.

Turkeys to go

Back by popular demand, the Rheinblick Golf Course will cater your Thanksgiving dinner, complete with turkey and all the trimmings so you can relax and enjoy time with the family. Call mil 336-2816 to place your order.

Biathlon set

Team 221st fitness centers host a biathlon Nov. 22 at the Dexheim Fitness Center. The event includes a 20K bike race and a 10K run. Call mil 334-5746 to register.

Volunteers needed

Participate in the annual 221st Base Support Battalion Army Family Action Plan Feb. 4-6. Volunteers are needed to facilitate, transcribe and record issues throughout the conference. Training for positions begins Jan. 13. Free child care will be available. For more information call mil 338-7721 or civ (0611) 380-7721.

Flu shots available

Free flu shots are available at the Immunization Clinic at Wiesbaden Health Clinic for Soldiers, civilians and family members. For more information on operating hours call the Wiesbaden Health Clinic at mil 337-6633/7413 or civ (0611) 705-6633/7413.

Wetzel students write to Iraqi peers

Support a School project elicits smiles all around

By David Ruderman
104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

What does it take to make a stranger smile? Sometimes a few well chosen words can do the trick.

That's one lesson Wetzel Elementary School fifth- and sixth-graders learned when they mailed school supplies to the Ibn Firmas elementary school in Baghdad and included letters and photographs of themselves.

"The really fun part of the project was watching the Iraqi children's faces when the interpreters translated their letters for them," said Chaplain (Maj.) Daniel E. Wackerhagen, Division Artillery, 1st Armored Division, chaplain. "They got really big smiles and you could tell they were pretty impressed that they were getting a personal letter from an American kid who wanted to know how they were doing and what was happening."

Located in Airport Village, a community adjacent to Baghdad International Airport, the Airport Village School as it is called by the American Soldiers, is attended by 175 boys and 125 girls in elementary school grades and about 75 preschoolers. When the Americans arrived it was dilapidated and lacked the most basic supplies, said Wackerhagen.

The Support a School project got going when Wackerhagen sent a letter soliciting school supplies to Debbie Brooks, Wetzel Elementary School principal, in June. Brooks in turn enlisted the help of the Wetzel

Parent Teacher Association and some of her older students when classes resumed in September.

Everyone pitched in under the leadership of Patty Britcher. Supplies were shipped downrange, and a team of Divarty Soldiers repackaged them for distribution at the school. Each fifth- and sixth-grade student received a parcel containing pens and pencils, glue, erasers, scissors, pencil sharpeners and paper, said Wackerhagen. With each package came a letter.

"I told them a bit about my family, my cat, my friends and what I like to do," said sixth-grader Katie Keziah. "I like to read a lot. I like school stuff a lot and basketball."

"I wrote about how it is here,

how the weather is — in Iraq it's very hot — also about our school and our environment here. We have a school policy on what you can wear to school," said her classmate Monique Smith.

"I wrote a little bit about how it is here, how we live and some of my hobbies, like extreme sports, BMX-biking," said Nicholas Durbaugh.

Draw me a picture

Some Wetzel fifth-graders drew pictures of themselves while writing about their interests and activities. Sixth-graders, co-taught by Beth Wackerhagen, the chaplain's wife, and Jim Gustafarro, sent their letters in hand-drawn and colored envelopes and included digital photos of themselves.

"The envelopes were actually an original piece of artwork sent by the American students," said Chaplain Wackerhagen. "The Iraqi students

who received them enjoyed and appreciated the special envelopes and took great care to open them."

The unit's interpreter, Hamood Al-Saadon, and the school principal, Henah Sadik Jaffer, delivered the letters and packages with a team of Divarty Soldiers, translating the letters for the Iraqi youngsters.

"A lot of the letters from the American kids said 'What's up' on the envelope. In Arabic that is translated as 'shaku maku.' So it won't be long before the kids at Wetzel hear about 'shaku maku' from their new friends in Iraq," said Wackerhagen.

The Wetzel students will find out "shaku maku" when their Iraqi peers respond later this year.

"We haven't received the letters yet," said Brooks. "Diana J. Ohman, director of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools in

Europe, suggested we scan the letters and send them to the DoDDS school in Bahrain. They have students who can read Arabic." The students in Bahrain will translate the letters and pass them on to the Wetzel students, she said.

"I think it'll be cool to have someone translate their letters, because a lot of us kids have never seen Iraqi writing," said Smith.

Regardless of the response, writing their own letters has already made the Wetzel pupils feel good. "They were pleased in that it had worked. They're excited about hearing back from them," said sixth-grade teacher Beth Wackerhagen. "They were a little surprised the Iraqi kids looked so Americanized, judging by their clothes. The girls thought the guys were very good-looking."

The school set up a bulletin board to display Chaplain Wackerhagen's report and the photos from Ibn Firmas, she said. "They liked being talked about; it made them feel recognized. It gives them more of a connection."

The Divarty Soldiers working the Baghdad end of the connection got a boost from the project too.

"Through all the bad things that have occurred in our tenure here, it was a breath of fresh air to see the pure joy and appreciation on the faces of the children as they discovered the contents of the packages we delivered. It was good for the soul," said Capt. Jeffery Schmidt.

"Seeing the kids light up when we handed them their supplies with a letter from the children in Germany made me feel good," said Spc. Kelly J. Woitte. (Chaplain Maj. Daniel E. Wackerhagen contributed to this article)



Photo by Chaplain (Maj.) Daniel E. Wackerhagen

Airport Village school principal Henah Sadik Jaffer translates letters from Wetzel Elementary School students.

Slagter in running for Senate Youth Program spot

By Lauren O'Gara
Special to the Herald Union

Gen. H.H. Arnold High School senior Jenna Slagter has been selected as a finalist in the annual U.S. Senate Youth Program. She will represent the Department of Defense Dependents Schools Heidelberg District and compete against other district finalists in December to be one of two Department of Defense Education Activity representatives.

Two student leaders from each state, the District of Columbia and DoDEA will travel to the nation's capital Feb.

28 to March 6 to experience the federal government in action.

"Freshman year I got involved with Model United Nations, and that truly sparked my interest in debate and current events," said Slagter. This year she serves as Student Council senator, National Honor Society vice president, tennis team captain and Model United Nations co-chair.



Jenna Slagter

Slagter said she would like to major in international relations and work for the State Department or an international relief and missions organization.

Youths selected for the program enjoy an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., and receive a \$5,000 scholarship. Participants visit the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Pentagon and the Supreme Court among other centers of government, and hear addresses by key political figures. Last year's speakers included President George W. Bush and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

School bits

Joy of reading

Children's Book Week will be marked in Department of Defense Dependents Schools Nov. 17-23. The annual celebration, sponsored by the Children's Book Council, www.cbcbooks.org, is dedicated to promoting children's literature and the joys of reading for youngsters and families. Con-

tact your school to join in scheduled events.

Coach, teachers sought

Wiesbaden American Middle School seeks a full-time physical education teacher and a substitute science teacher through the end of the year. For details see Cathy Laugesen in the office or call mil 337-6251. Gen. H. H. Arnold High School seeks a junior varsity cheerleading coach for the upcoming basketball season. Practices are held daily

from 3-5 p.m. Call mil 337-6319 or civ (0611) 705-6319 for details.

Hainerberg notes

Hainerberg Elementary School will conduct parent-teacher conferences Nov. 13-14. There will be no classroom instruction. There will be no kindergarten classes Nov. 19. The Parent Teacher Organization will hold its first general meeting Nov. 19 at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend. The PTO also seeks

a treasurer and volunteers to pitch in. Call Debby Reed at civ (06134) 280916 for information. Families who are PCSing must inform the registrar at least 10 days in advance. Anyone wishing to donate plants to the school is encouraged to do so.

Scholarship news

The 2004 Scholarships for Military Children program is under way. For details go to their website at www.militaryscholar.org.



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Baumholder Buccaneers and Ansbach Cougars mix it up during the first game of the European Super Six football championships at Minnick Field Nov. 1. The Cougars routed Baumholder 43-6.

Division III champs

Cougars beat Bucs at Super Six

The Ansbach Cougars handed Baumholder a 43-6 defeat during the Super Six European high school championship playoffs Nov. 1, making the afternoon anything but super for the Baumholder Buccaneers.

The rout started early. With 4:21 remaining in the first quarter the score stood at 21-0, Ansbach. Early in the second quarter the Cougars again crossed the goal and were good for the extra point, making the score 28-0 with 10:09 still on the

clock.

The score held until the half-time buzzer, but the Cougars came back to score yet another goal in the third quarter. Baumholder finally found the scoreboard and went in for six, but was not able to claim the extra point, making it 34-6, Ansbach.

Ansbach continued to press and with 8:48 remaining in the game the score stood at 40-6.

When it was all over the Baumholder Buccaneers found themselves runners-up to the Division III champions with a final tally of 43-6, Ansbach. The victory earned Ansbach this year's Division III championship.

The second game of the day was almost an instant replay of the first when SHAPE routed the Bitburg Barons 33-7 to claim the Division II title.

It was a close game to the end in Division I as the mighty Ramstein Royals managed to edge out Wiesbaden 7-6 to claim their division title.

When it was all over the Baumholder Buccaneers found themselves runners-up to the Division III champions with a final tally of 43-6, Ansbach. The victory earned Ansbach this year's Division III championship.

Orientation class helps future workers

Take advantage of the Employment Orientation Class offered at the Army Community Service office Dec. 2 and 16. This class includes valuable insights into the employment opportunities in the Baumholder community and its

surrounding area. Participants in this free class will receive information concerning military spouse preference, defining federal and private sector opportunities, application procedures, basic Resumix start-up information and volunteer

possibilities. This class will equip family members with the tools and resources necessary to find employment within the community. Call civ (06783) 6-8188 or mil 485-8188 to hold your space in the Employment Orientation Class.

Program provides new parent support

To nurture is the ability to care for and foster growth in yourself and others. The New Parent Support Program offers you the opportunity to learn the skills that help your family communicate more, feel closer to each other and coexist in a peaceful and loving environment. All families are welcome including two-parent, single-parent, foster, adoptive and blended families.

The Nurturing Program is a 12-week course starting Nov. 17 from

4-6 p.m. The class meets every Monday and is for parents and their infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Concurrent sessions for both parents and children cover various well-being topics. Parents will learn such techniques as establishing nurturing routines for mealtime, bedtime and chores, effective discipline skills and how to enjoy your family and have fun. You will come away from the Nurturing Program with a



renewed sense of personal power and feel good about yourself and your parenting abilities.

Children will develop greater self-esteem, learn positive attitudes, manage stress and anger better, and learn to respect other people's feelings.

Parents along with children up to age 5 are welcome to join this free class.

Contact Jean-Marie Williams at the Army Community Service New Parent Education and Support Program at civ (06783) 6-6931/6932 or mil 485-6931/6932.

ACS hosts its first holiday open house

By Julie Gowel
Army Community Service
marketing manager

The 222nd Base Support Battalion Army Community Service office welcomes the Baumholder community to its first annual holiday open house.

Come in and enjoy a relaxed atmosphere filled with holiday cheer. Meet our staff and learn about the great programs and services we have to offer.

No holiday open house would be complete without plenty of refreshments to fill the tummy and holiday music to warm the soul.

Children can enjoy a special guest appearance by Santa Claus. The ACS open house will be held Dec. 5 from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Follow the ACS staff from the holiday open house to the Baumholder tree lighting ceremony at 4:30 p.m. at the Rheinlander Club.

There will be plenty of activities for children including writing letters to Santa, making musical instruments and many more. Santa Claus will be showing off his pearly whites for photos with the children. Celebrate an entire day of holiday cheer with Army Community Service and the Community Recreation Division.

Toy and book exchange helps welcome children

By Julie Gowel
Army Community Service
marketing manager

Army Community Service is starting a new Toy and Book Exchange program for families entering the Baumholder community.

Since most families ship the majority of their children's belongings with their household goods, the toys and books they arrive with are usually ones they have been playing with or reading for quite some time.

The Toy and Book Exchange program gives families the opportunity to come to ACS and get "new-to-you" toys and books. The children's items do not need to be returned to ACS.

When families receive their household goods shipment and

they find some toys and books in good condition that their children no longer play with, ACS requests they donate those to the Toy

and Book Exchange program. ACS is trying to reduce the stress of moving for both parents and children by making the transition easier for incoming families.

The Toy and Book Exchange program is a way for members of the community to welcome new children to Baumholder and show that they care. ACS needs a lot of toys and books to get this program off the ground.

Donations of toys and books in good condition will be accepted at ACS Monday through Friday during normal business hours. For more information contact the Baumholder Army Community Service office at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188.



Air Force steps up, serves soldiers

By **Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava**

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The Reunion Reintegration Training program for soldiers returning from Iraq turned into a multi-service affair when four airmen from Air Force North stepped up and helped Army Community Service conduct its weekly program that helps Soldiers and families readjust to one another.

As part of the program ACS treats soldiers and their families to a free lunch. On this day Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Arley Wheeler, Master Sgts. Dennis Gaines and Donald Mock and Steven Mahler stepped up to help serve the meal to the Soldiers. "We're just helping out in the community. We're assigned to a NATO unit outside the back gate of Baumholder, and we're just helping our fellow Soldiers," said Arley.

"We're more than glad to help out in any way that we can since we actually live and reside in the community," he said.

Donna Finney, chief of ACS, explained that it's a little different

coming back from a war as opposed to just coming back from a training area. "We offer specialized training in post traumatic stress syndrome and reintegration with the family," said Finney.

The luncheon is just a special touch that ACS throws in to thank the soldiers.

"We try to get it (the lunch) through donations, through FRGs or other people in the community," said Finney.

"It's our way of saying thank you, Soldier. We really appreciate what you did for us and you're a hero in our eyes," she said.

Soldiers participating in the current program are coming back from Iraq in "ones and twos," explained Finney. "They won't have that big party and that big reunion so this is the least we can do and tell them that they are heroes," she said.

"It's the 'funest' thing that we do. We get together on Wednesdays and we look forward to it. We're a team, and our goal is to help take care of families and to serve these Soldiers who are serving us. It's just the greatest gift in the world. It's almost better than a paycheck," said Finney.



Photo by Sabine Klag

Master Sgt. Donald Mock serves up some sloppy joe sauce to a Soldier participating in the Reunion Reintegration Training program sponsored weekly by Army Community Service.

New phones improve health care

Baumholder Family Health Clinic is improving access to care by installing a microlog unique contact center automated call distribution server, including interactive voice response system capability. The system went online Oct. 20. Baumholder Family Health Clinic is the first European medical facility to implement this service. The first system of its kind was installed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center last year.

The clinic will be improving service by allowing callers to call one number, civ (06783) 6-8080 or mil 485-8080. Callers will not only receive timely information 24/7 about available services (including a commander's information line), but will also be routed to the appropriate personnel during duty hours, quickly and efficiently.

A number of voice messaging options will also be provided to improve responsiveness, even to requests left after hours (these inquiries will be handled the next duty day) or during busy duty hours. In addition the system will provide the command staff with detailed reporting regarding the times callers have to wait to be answered, which will allow staffing to be adjusted accordingly.

The unique server is instrumental in "front-ending" all calls to the patient appointment service and clinics.

This application off-loads many calls to automation, freeing clerks to handle calls requiring personal attention.

This may all sound like complicated cyber jargon so here's how it works in a nutshell. When the caller selects the option to schedule an appointment, the IVR requests the caller to "punch in" the sponsor's social security number and then routes the call to a clerk.

Using the hospital patient database application, CHCS, a screen pops up on the clerk's computer terminal, letting the clerk know who the caller is by putting all the pertinent information on the screen and initiating the application before the clerk answers the telephone.

Statistics from other medical centers that offer the CHCS "screen pop" capability indicate that this feature saves about 30-45 seconds per call. Using this capability Walter Reed has been able to handle more appointments faster, and with the same number of clerks.

One other feature that will be helpful to callers is called voice tag in queue. It's understandable that

there are times when it is inconvenient to wait in queue, so when all the clerks are busy callers will be given the option to leave a message and enter their telephone number. The caller hangs up and his place will be held in queue by the system. When the clerk receives the message in a "screen pop," the caller's information will be in front of them. They listen to the message and, if necessary, use the telephone number entered to return the call later in the day. Since the Baumholder Clinic is an open access clinic, patients who require a same day appointment should hold on until their call is answered by an appointment clerk.

In addition to the new unique solution, patients can make routine appointments on *tricareonline.com*. Once registered, callers can schedule routine appointments for all family members 24/7. Same day or specialty appointments cannot be scheduled via the web.

As with anything new there may be a few glitches. Patients encountering difficulties can leave a message on the new system or call the clinic commander at civ (06783) 6-7150 and leave a message. The commander will call back as soon as his schedule permits.



Photo by Sabine Klag

Senior Master Sgt. Arley Wheeler controls the dessert table during the Reunion Reintegration Training program luncheon.

EPC desperately needs volunteers

By Julie Gowel
Army Community Service
marketing manager

In the United States, when a child is removed from his or her home due to maltreatment they are placed with a foster family until the parent or legal guardian is found to be capable of assuming the responsibilities of parenting. Here in Baumholder, there is no federally mandated foster care program so where do our children go?

The Army Community Service office offers a program similar to that of the foster care systems in the States to ensure the children of the Baumholder Army community are cared for in emergency situations.

The Emergency Placement Care program is a voluntary, short-term program designed to give children a safe haven when their family is suffering hardships. An EPC provider is someone who volunteers to provide an environment filled with nurturing, attention and structure in their home for children who have been removed from their family's care. Children are either voluntarily or court-mandated to be placed with EPC providers in emergency situations usually involving child neglect and abuse, but placement can involve other reasons such as parental illness, injury or general inability to care for the child.

Emergency Placement Care is short-term. Placements generally range from two days to two weeks and do not usually exceed 90 days. The program is designed to give families in emergency situations time to work on the problems or conditions that made emergency placement necessary. EPC is not foster care and does not result in the possibility of adopting a child.

The EPC program needs your help. The Baumholder community at this time has only one certified EPC provider who will be leaving our community within the next few months to return to the United States. If no volunteer home is available to children in the Baumholder area who must be placed outside of their parent or legal guardian's care, they could be transferred to other military installations such as those in the Kaiserslautern area.

"People are usually so over-

whelmed at the thought of foster care, they think 'I can't do this.' There is a lot of support. Whenever I needed anything I was able to call right up to ACS and I was able to talk with the Emergency Placement Care program and I never had any problems," said Baumholder's lone EPC provider. Her name cannot be revealed for security purposes, but she had a great deal to say about the program.

"I could see a change in the children's faces and attitudes from the time they got here and left, they were very happy. I just made it as comfortable and loving as possible for them. Some advice I would give is just be ready to be patient, loving and be very understanding. These children are going through a hard time. You have to be understanding that they are not going to come into your home 100 percent happy, perfect, no problems. You have to be there for that child no matter what. Know that you are making a difference for that child in the time you are there."

The Baumholder community is lucky to have such a wonderful Emergency Placement Care provider but we need more. As our sole EPC provider said, "We need to have more people involved. Luckily there was never another case while I was doing one because I am the only one."

What does it take to be an EPC provider? For starters it takes a loving and patient person willing to take the time to make a difference in the lives of children in difficult situations.

Secondly it takes some training. Requirements for EPC providers include:

- ☐ Volunteer orientation
- ☐ Basic foster care provider training
- ☐ First aid and CPR
- ☐ In-service training including topics such as child development, stress management, cultural awareness and communication skills.

For more information on becoming an Emergency Placement Care provider contact Jenny Gerber, the EPC coordinator in the Army Community Service office, at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188.



Halloween brings out the spooks

The winners of the 222nd Base Support Battalion Halloween costume contest show off their costumes. Above left — Bianca Bowen and Bill Kalavsky, second and first place winners, respectively. Bowen's costume was titled "Hell-Air 666" and Kalavsky billed himself as a "Mysterious Woman." At left is Gene Winfree, fourth place winner who weighed in as "Ton-bolina" and above is Dennis Peterson, your basic run of the mill "Armor Dragon Guy" and third place winner.

Photos by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava