

Mail call: Soldiers face challenge as mail arrives by the truckload in Iraq

By Spc. Nicole Thompson
319th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment,
3rd Corps Support Command

Boxes, boxes and more boxes. Some are huge, others downright tiny. There's one that used to hold dog food and another that

contained a kiddie pool in a former life. There are literally so many thousands of boxes that they completely fill an abandoned amphitheater.

This is the scene that greets soldiers of Task Force 90th Postal Company each day.

At their headquarters at Anaconda Army Airfield in Balad, Iraq, these troops receive and sort over 40,000 packages daily. It's a huge task, but they carry on to keep the lifeline to home open for service members deployed in northern Iraq.

For many soldiers, there are no better words to hear at the end of a hard day than, "Hey, you've got a package in." Few realize the magnitude of the job postal units do, especially in field conditions. Soldiers working at Logistical Support Area Anaconda have an even more demanding role because they run the Army's central mail terminal for the northern region of Iraq.

"We're doing everything manually," said Sgt. 1st Class Lorrie Gregory, first sergeant of the 90th Postal Company. The reality of this statement really doesn't hit until one enters the hot, dimly lit, gutted theater the group claims as its territory. Outside the building soldiers form human chains in 100-plus degree heat to unload the cargo military vans that are hauled in on a continual basis. They use their bodies in the place of conveyor belts that would normally perform such labor-intensive work.

Inside the names of the companies on each box are called out, and soldiers quickly scurry forward to carry them from giant six-foot heaps in the middle of the floor to spots along the walls designated by handmade signs. Sorting incoming packages this way is tough and time consuming, but works.

Those working in Task Force 90th aren't the only ones contributing to the postal mission. Every day soldiers living and working in various units on LSA Anaconda show up to lend a hand in keeping the mail system moving as smoothly as possible.

"I do it to see if I get any mail," said volunteer Pfc. Desiree Weaver, as she laughed and sorted envelopes. "And the mail gets done a lot faster too," the 7th Corps Support Group soldier added.

In addition to keeping incoming mail flowing, the 90th also has outgoing capability, something other camps in the Middle East had encountered problems with previously.

"The other postal units [at some camps] were much smaller and set up mostly to distribute mail coming in to soldiers," said Cpl. Brian Gardner, assistant custodian of postal effects for the 90th. "This is one of our asset missions. It was planned well in advance to have enough people here to keep outgoing mail systems working."

Operation of the big picture falls into the hands of Maj. Cape Zemp of the 18th Soldier Support Group. Zemp serves as the chief of V Corps Postal Operations.

"Balad will remain a major player in soldiers getting mail," he said. "The military postal system is a huge undertaking. Soldiers, both postal and transportation, work 24 hours a day to bring mail to every soldier in theater. But in the end it's a very rewarding job."



Photo by Spc. Nicole Thompson

Soldiers of Task Force 90th and several volunteers help unload the thousands of packages that are sent to Logistical Support Area Anaconda daily. The mail is brought in by 18-wheelers.

Community briefs . . . Community briefs

Bible School

Vacation Bible School will be held June 16-20 at the Hainerberg and Dexheim chapels for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. For more information or to volunteer for this program call mil 337-1570 or civ (0611) 705-1570.

Redeployment medical care

All soldiers returning from deployment must report to the Soldier Medical Readiness Center for redeployment medical follow-up within five days of return to Wiesbaden or Wackernheim. Call mil 337-6629 or civ (0611) 705-6629 for an appointment.

Story time

Morale, Welfare and Recreation hosts Story Time at the Hainerberg Food Court every Tuesday at 10 a.m. Participating children receive a meal for \$1.99.

Double special

Commit to fitness during the dog days of summer for the 2-for-1 Summer Fitness Fun through Aug. 31 at any 221st Sports and Fitness Center. Bring a friend and two can exer-

cise for the price of one. Check with your fitness center for times and costs.

Friday scramble

Join the Rheinblick Golf Course for a Friday Night Scramble June 13 and 27 starting at 6 p.m. Sign-ups will be taken until 5:30 p.m. the day of the scramble. Four-person teams will be paired up using both experienced and inexperienced golfers. Call mil 336-2816 or civ (0611) 420675 for more information.

Golf and win

Enter the Great Golf Escape vacation package at Rheinblick Golf Course now through June 30. Instant prizes are awarded throughout the month. The more you play, the better your chances. Call civ (0611) 420675 for more information.

Climbing Club

Team 221st Outdoor Recreation Office hosts a Climbing Club for the Wiesbaden, Wackernheim and Dexheim communities. Call Joe Harris at mil 337-5760 or civ (0611) 705-5760 for more information.

German class

Wiesbaden Army Community Service hosts a free German phrase class beginning June 12. Call mil 337-5034 or civ (0611) 705-5034 for more information.

English class

Improve your English skills in an English as a Second Language class sponsored by Army Community Service. The class begins June 19 and is free. Call mil 337-5034 or civ (0611) 705-5034.

Toddler Time openings

Join a playgroup for fun and learning with your toddler. Openings are now available for Toddler Time the first and third Tuesday of each month from 9:30-11:30 a.m.; Wednesdays from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m. For more information or to sign up call civ (0611) 5329842.

FRG training

Army Community Service hosts a Family Readiness Group networking session June 11 from 10-11 a.m. and FRG Basic Leader Training June 25 from 10 a.m. to noon. To sign up

call mil 337-5754 or civ (0611) 705-5754.

CertifiChecks offered

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service now offers CertifiChecks for deployed soldiers. Similar to gift certificates CertifiChecks are redeemable at any AAFES location. Check out www.aafes.com to find out more.

Welcome class

Army Family Team Building offers a Welcome to Wiesbaden class at the American Arms Hotel the first and third Monday of the month from 6-7:30 p.m. in Room 240. Classes are for active duty personnel, civilians, students and family members. For more information call mil 337-5034 or civ (0611) 705-5034.

Spouse Club luncheon

The Wiesbaden Community Spouses Club hosts a luncheon June 18 at the Community Activity Center at Wiesbaden Army Airfield. Social hour begins at 10:30 a.m. For reservations call civ (0611) 5657401 or (0611) 5055712.

Bowling specials

Check out what's new at the Wiesbaden Bowling Center on Wiesbaden Army Airfield. Bowl for 50 cents Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bowl a strike when the head pin is red on Wednesday or Sunday and the game is free. Family Day is Sunday — children age 11 and under bowl free. Watch out for "Bob" Day. If your name is Bob, come bowl for half price June 20 at 5 p.m. For more information on bowling specials call mil 337-5654 or civ (0611) 705-5654.

Center closure

The Newcomer's Information Center in Room 240 at the American Arms Hotel will be closed for renovations June 23 to July 4.

Sponsorship training

The Army Community Service Relocation Readiness Program offers unit sponsorship training June 11 from 2-4 p.m. at ACS. Units wishing to schedule a different day can call the relocation manager at mil 337-5034 or civ (0611) 705-5034 for assistance.

Food helps bring cultures together

By Sgt. Grant Calease
3rd Corps Support Command
Public Affairs Office

As Americans and Iraqis work together to rebuild war-torn Iraq, a relationship is formed. This relationship links two groups of people who are different but have the same goal in mind — a free and democratic Iraq.

This budding relationship was reinforced by a small but powerful gesture that took place in a small village just outside one of V Corps' newest homes in Iraq, Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

A local tribal leader, Sheikh Ahmed, treated the 3rd Corps

Support Command's commanding general, Brig. Gen. Charles W. Fletcher Jr., to dinner.

"They invited us over," said Fletcher. "It's a common way to establish a dialogue in this part of the world. Once they realized that we weren't going to kill them they offered us a meal," he said.

"[The dinner] was a way to meet with the locals and let them know that we want to be friends with them, that our fight isn't with the Iraqi people but with Saddam's regime," said Col. Robert Swisher,

civil affairs officer with the 3rd COSCOM.

A main point of the meal, according to Fletcher, was that local villagers came to the meal showing that the Army's and the sheikh's intentions are the same — to help the people.

"The general's primary message was that the war is over with the regime and that we want peace with the Iraqi people," said Swisher.

"This was to show them that we

small ones, which filled the whole table. It was more food than I expected."

"I knew they would go all out and try to impress us," said Fletcher, of the spread that covered three tables.

"They killed three lambs for the meal," said Swisher. "It's an honor toward the general that they killed three lambs. To show an abundance of food is a sign of respect."

"It was a lot better than Meals, Ready-to-Eat," said Pfc. Jonathan Brown, with the general's personal security team. "It was the first time I've had Iraqi food. I'd try it again. It was good and I was hungry so I ate a lot," said Brown.

Even after the soldiers went through and had their fill, there were large amounts of food left.

"I thought it was good, very tasty, and there was certainly enough," said Fletcher. "Nothing goes to waste; they invited in the villagers to eat."

During the meal the general and officers from the 308th Civil Affairs Brigade listened to problems the villagers would like the Army's help correcting.

"We listened to their complaints about damage to their crops. Dur-

want peace with the Iraqi people and that we need stability to achieve prosperity," said Fletcher.

The meal of rice and lamb was served to a handful of soldiers from COSCOM. Originally only 12 command representatives were scheduled to attend, but because of the large amount of food provided by the hosts, the soldiers who came along as security and drivers also were treated to the meal.

"They made enough food for 70 people," said Swisher. "They brought in five large plates and 12

"It's a common way to establish a dialogue in this part of the world. Once they realized that we weren't going to kill them they offered us a meal." — Brig. Gen. Charles W. Fletcher, 3rd Corps Support Command



Photo by Sgt. Grant Calease

Col. Robert Swisher (center) civil affairs officer for the 3rd Corps Support Command at LSA Anaconda, Iraq, digs into the pita bread, lamb and rice at a dinner hosted by a local sheikh.

ing the war we damaged 150 feet of concrete canal. We located new pipe to fix it and the engineers will replace it so they won't lose their harvest," said Swisher.

Other big concerns were with getting the police, government officials and schoolteachers back to work. The dinner's purpose was to start a dialogue with the local leaders, said Swisher.

"This is a continual process. We have to keep doing this because they have a lot of problems

and we want to help them," said Fletcher.

"We have an engineer checking on the water system to see if we can get them water every week. Saddam used water as a weapon and only gave them water every other week," said Fletcher.

As the rebuilding continues, Iraqis and Americans will work hand in hand. Hopefully this newfound friendship will usher in an era of peace and prosperity for the Iraqi people, officials said.

Three hours worth the wait at new PX

Story and photo by
Sgt. Grant Calease

3rd Corps Support Command Public Affairs
Office

When building a new military base the Army has its list of priorities. Latrines, showers and mess facilities are all near the top of the list and are required for good soldier morale. But one question always remains, "When is the PX opening?"

For the troops stationed at Logistical Support Area Anaconda that day was Sunday, May 18. Soldiers were lined up before 6 a.m. for the grand opening, which took place at 9 a.m. "The PX was one of the top priorities because it's a morale booster for the soldiers," said Maj. Robert Doyle, operations officer for the installation.

"The planning phase for this PX began four weeks ago," said Patrick McGhee, main store manager at Fort Hood, Texas, whose current mission is to open post exchanges across Iraq.

Contracted Iraqi workers from local towns worked to get the PX ready for the soldiers. According to Doyle, the facility was destroyed when the Army arrived at the base, but the workers' hard work got the facility ready for the grand opening.



"Hands down this is the best facility we have for a PX in Iraq," he said. "It has lights, it's own generator and we actually are one of the few PXs that have working coolers."

While the Iraqi workers worked on the building, Army and Air Force Exchange Services employees and volunteer soldiers spent several days readying the store for shoppers.

Legions of civilian and military volunteers filled the building for three days before the grand opening. These soldiers were helping to get the PX ready to open on time. Eighty three soldiers per day were working in the facility to get it ready for business.

Spc. Scott Sevigny, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Corps Support Command, chooses a compact disc from the selection at the new post exchange on Logistical Support Area Anaconda, Iraq. The largest post exchange in Iraq opened May 18 with the help of civilian and military volunteers.

"People were volunteering left and right. We actually had to starting refusing volunteers because we had too many people," Doyle said. The soldiers who lent their services to help get the PX ready did everything from sweeping to cutting open boxes and pricing. Volunteers were then rewarded with a special shopping session the night before the grand opening.

The contents of the new PX at LSA Anaconda are the essential hygiene products needed by soldiers to stay healthy as well as snacks such as chips and cookies.

"Our main thing right now is to take care

of the basic needs of a soldier. As we develop the store into a bigger operation we'll go into the nice-to-have stuff," said McGhee.

As well as carrying the same products that the soldiers would find at home, AAFES has the same prices as a stateside PX. The long lines were not discouraging to those who were waiting for a PX to arrive at LSA Anaconda.

"It beats having to rely on others to send you things," said Sgt. Jeff Williams, 864th Engineer Battalion, who got in line at 6 a.m. "Now I don't have to wait weeks for a package with hygiene things."

Pfc. Andrew Tinsley with the 588th Maintenance Company was in line so he could acquire some snack foods, T-shirts and personal hygiene products.

"It's pretty nice to have the comfort items that we didn't have," said Tinsley, who was at the back of a long line but was willing to wait.

Now that his mission is complete at LSA Anaconda, McGhee will head to Tikrit, Kirkuk and Mosul to open exchanges there, but he has no problems moving on.

"This is the original mission of AAFES. This is why we are here. It started 107 years ago with the cavalry out in the cowboy days. This is our true mission," he said.

Summer: Let the good times roll

Youth Services offers summer camp, trips and lots more

By Karl Weisel

104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

Young people have a host of activities to look forward to this summer. Everything from sports programs to Summer Hire employment, Vacation Bible School to theater workshops are geared toward ensuring that Team 221st family members have plenty of opportunities for fun, adventure and sharing experiences with old and new friends.

Wiesbaden teens can start planning now to decide how to find the time for the many options available through their local Youth Services Center. Activities and trips include trips to local museums, the Frankfurt Zoo, amusement parks, skating, bowling, fishing, canoeing, hiking and swimming.

Two trips a week

“We’re going to run two trips a week — Wednesdays and Saturdays,” said Carl Wallen, Hainerberg Teen Center director.

Among upcoming trips and events for sixth- through 12th-graders are: ☺ **June 18** – trip to the natural museum; ☺ **June 21** – trip to the Frankfurt Zoo; ☺ **June 25** – swimming at the ESWE Bad; ☺ **June 21** – trip to Holiday Park; ☺ **July 2** – swimming at Klein Feldchen; ☺ **July 5** – Hot Summer Jam Block



Photo by Karl Weisel

Cesarae Hoover lines up a shot while enjoying a relaxing game of pool after school at the Wiesbaden Teen Center in Hainerberg Housing. Wiesbaden teens have a wide range of trips and special events to look forward to this summer. Trips to amusement parks, swimming pools and museums are among highlights.

Party (food music, volleyball, basketball); ☺ **July 9** – Hanau skating and bowling; ☺ **July 11-12** – Euro Disney; ☺ **July 16** – trip to Miramar Water Park; ☺ **July 19** – city tour of Cologne; ☺ **July 23** – trip to Warner Brothers Amusement Park; ☺ **July 26** – fishing in Limburg with Outdoor Rec; ☺ **July 30** – hiking the Felsenmeer; ☺ **Aug. 2** – trip to Europa Park; ☺ **Aug. 6** – swimming at the ESWE Bad; ☺ **Aug. 9** – trip to Six Flags Over Belgium; ☺ **Aug. 13** – trip to Phantasia Land; ☺ **Aug. 16**

– water skiing at Langen Elbow; ☺ **Aug. 20** – Wacky Olympics; ☺ **Aug. 23** – party boat on the Rhine River; ☺ **Aug. 27** – Confidence Course; ☺ **Aug. 30** – canoe trip.

Summer camp

“We’ll have a summer camp program for sixth- to eighth-graders running from June 16 through Aug. 19, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,” said Wallen. “Youths can sign up by the week and it’ll cost \$20 a week.

“Last year we had 30 slots for summer camp and we had a waiting list,” Wallen said. “This year we’ll have 40 slots. ... We’ll also have

our normal programs for sixth- to 12th-graders, with the center opening at noon.”

Additionally Youth Services will have a mobile recreation outreach program, said Wallen. “We’ll load up the truck and hit the four housing areas — Aukamm, Crestview, Mainz-Kastel and the Wiesbaden Army Airfield. We’ll have everything from arts and crafts to sports supplies.”

“For the ones who’ll be here — we’ll be here,” said Ted Hampton, Hainerberg Youth Services direc-

tor. “We don’t close down for the holidays like the schools do — we go 365 days a year.”

Hampton added that parent and youth feedback is important to letting YS programmers know what to offer throughout the year. “We try to get the parents to come in and see what’s going on in the YS.” Comment cards at the facility provide a way for young people to express their desires about programs and activities wanted, he said.

Leadership clubs

Young people are also invited to get involved in the various leadership programs such as the Keystone and Torch clubs which play a decisive role in community projects and the direction of YS programs, Wallen said.

“In addition to the Keystone, Torch and cooking clubs, we’re trying to start a photography club,” said Wallen. “Getting involved teaches them a lot about responsibility and about leadership. It gives them a voice for everything in the community.”

“We’re going to adopt a playground in one of the housing areas,” said Michael Floyd, Keystone Club president. “We’ll make sure the trash is picked up, there’s no broken glass on the ground and we’ll put in maintenance orders where it is needed.

“We’re also planning on maybe going out to the USO at Rhein-Main

Airbase to hand out goodie bags to the troops who are coming through,” said Floyd. “We’re also planning on doing another clothing drive.”

Clothing drive

Last year the Wiesbaden club “adopted” a local Russian refugee center/orphanage to provide clothes and Christmas gifts. Anyone who would like to donate clothing for the center can bring in items to the Hainerberg Teen Center to be distributed by the Keystone members later this summer, Floyd said.

“There’s a lot going on for everyone in these age groups,” said Wallen. “It’s going to be wild and crazy and we’ll have a lot of fun this summer.”

The Hainerberg Teen Center is located between the Wiesbaden Commissary and Gen. H.H. Arnold High School in Wiesbaden’s Hainerberg Housing. Call mil 338-7701 or 7395 for more information on the many upcoming trips, summer camp and programs.

Things to do this summer



Counselors provide aid all year round

By David Ruderman
104th Area Support Group Public
Affairs Office

While students and teachers count down the days to summer break, Adolescent Substance Abuse Counseling Services professionals are scrambling to get the word out that they will be in place and open for business as usual over the summer.

"People's problems don't go away just because it's summer. We're still around and available," said Pam Weamer, ASACS clinical supervisor for Wiesbaden and a half dozen other communities in Europe. Her two Wiesbaden counselors continue to reorganize their focus as world events and their impact on community youth evolve, she said.

"There has been a lot of gearing up for the deployment. We were involved in just planning support services for kids in case of a prolonged conflict. The fighting was over in a hurry, but the deployment is just starting. What we're doing now is remaining available to the kids to deal with a long-term deployment. We're seeing kids reacting to dad being gone, feeling out the changes at home, testing the rules."

"It seemed to create a lot of stressors for the kids," said ASACS counselor Dee Catovic. "After the war ended it was a more normal mom or dad is gone thing — more acting out in general in the school and in the community."

While there has been no discerned spike in alcohol or drug abuse cases, heightened tension levels are palpable "just overall in the school and in the community," said counselor Francie Marais. "The school has seen an upswing in just more problems, kids acting out and so forth. There are more kids who need to talk about issues. It's being felt in the community."

Catovic, who works with middle school and high school students, and Marais, who works mostly with high schoolers, share office space at Gen. H.H. Arnold High School, but are not confined to meeting youths there.



Photo by David Ruderman
Wiesbaden ASACS counselors
Francie Marais (left) and Dee Catovic
discuss cases.

ASACS helps youths deal with stress, substance abuse issues

"We try to go to where they are," said Weamer. "That can mean at the Youth Services center, the local food court or anywhere else. If they're willing we'll go to the Burger King to see them. We just get more creative in the summer. The fact that they're coming to see us is confidential. If they see us in public we won't even talk to them unless they talk to us first. It's more of an issue for us. The kids are pretty comfortable. We honor their preferences."

Alcohol remains the number one drug of choice among area youths, said ASACS officials. "(It's) mostly beer and some marijuana as well," said Weamer. "I know the club drugs are out there, but it's not a major concern at this point. We watch it."

Risky behavior for teens goes well beyond alcohol or drug use. Sexual activity and its consequences are a major focus of teen interest and concern. Counselors report middle school children feeling pressured to become sexually active. "We see 14-year-olds involved in some risky behaviors," said Weamer.

"I'm always fascinated by how much more kids know today and are exposed to. They know a lot more, but don't necessarily have the emotional maturity to handle this knowledge. And they're a lot more open. It seems like they're a lot more expressive," said Marais.

"This generation of kids has a lot of information and maybe more opportunities, but are not necessarily more mature than we were at that age. So they have a lot of big choices to make," said Weamer.

Getting parents involved in ASACS and strengthening their lines of communication with their children is a major goal for the sum-

mer. "We're really interested in parents working with us. Some see it as a European experience and silently or passively condone kids drinking or going to clubs. It's only when it seems to become a problem that they react. It's really OK to say no to your kids," said Weamer.

"If we have interest from parents we can have a parent's support group. I think a lot are aware of stressors that are going on. I don't know how many are willing to reach out and attend groups," said Catovic. She is working with Army Family Team Building and Family Readiness Group leaders to make their counseling services known to the community. "We're open five days a week and we're here all day. We're out and about taking care of business, but we're here."

"For the summer I'd like to try to make more contact," said Marais. "There are lots of single moms out there, and they're somewhat used

to it, it's the military, but this is more stressful. I'd like to work out something to be available to the parents and the teens who need some counseling, problem solving, or just someone they can talk to. Our challenge is letting them know we're available and we're here."

Parents concerned about their children should call the office, said Catovic. Assessments can be made and counseling services rendered. "If it's not appropriate for our services, we know where to refer them," she said.

Counseling helps youths better define and handle complex issues, said Marais. "It's a combination really of talk therapy plus education plus drug and alcohol education, but also life coping skills. What we do a lot is problem solving, working on specific things. It's very basic, but very important."

Aiming for a kind of holistic wellness for the individual is central to her approach, she said. "How

do we keep our minds, bodies, spirits healthy? We want to help them find the good, healthy ways to have fun," said Marais.

Summer is generally considered alcohol and drug season because youngsters have more free time on their hands, a less structured routine and more opportunity to bend the rules or take risks.

"A lot of kids work summer hire, they have that structured time. Outside of that kids know we're available if they need us," said Weamer.

"Keeping busy is the key to staying out of trouble — just working or being involved in sports or taking on a hobby," said Catovic.

In addition to her regularly scheduled counseling and preventive education work, Catovic will hold a transition workshop for eighth-graders who will attend the high school in September. "We also have counseling groups going on over the summer. Our schedule doesn't change," she said.

Catovic and Marais can be reached at civ (0611) 705-6268 or mil 337-6268. Parents and youths can call the high school to reach them, they said.



Flag tribute

Air Force JROTC members raise a flag flown over the Pentagon at Gen. H.H. Arnold High School May 29. The flag, sent by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, is making the rounds of Department of Defense Dependents Schools overseas in memory of the victims of the terrorist attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001.

Photo by Donald Seltzer

222nd BSB – Baumholder, Neubrücke, Strassburg

Bank closes

The Baumholder Community Bank will be closed June 19 in observance of a legal German holiday. Automatic teller machines will be operational as usual. For more information call mil 485-7575.

SEAP funding

A financial aid workshop is scheduled for 10 a.m. June 10 at the Baumholder Education Center in Building 8332.

The workshop focuses on the Spouse Education Assistance Program, a need-based education assistance program that provides Army spouses with financial assistance so they can pursue educational goals.

In order to receive SEAP, spouses must apply for it in advance so spouses are asked to apply now before going on summer vacation so that their applications can be ready by the start of the fall semester. It is only available to spouses residing with active duty soldiers in Europe, Korea, Japan and Okinawa. Since it is need-based, financial information must be provided.

Adjustments are made to income based on number of people in the family. Once adjustments (which actually lower the income-received) are made, assistance can be provided for anyone with an adjusted gross income of \$69,000 or less. For more information, contact the Education Center at mil 485-7557.

Bookkeeper position

A bookkeeper and cashier position is available at the Baumholder Thrift Shop. Applicants must be 21 years or older, a U.S. identification card holder and have at least one year retention in the Baumholder community. If interested, drop off application or resume at the thrift shop by June 12.

The Thrift Shop is currently holding an "under new management sale" going on now. They are located next to the Service Mart in Building 8544, cross from the post exchange. Their hours of operation are:

Post notes



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

IACS is here

Eric Howard enters information into the Installation Access Control System for Staff Sgt. Shane Pope. Everyone working and living on post will soon be required to be entered in the system before being allowed onto Army installations.

Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 10-2 p.m. and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Consignment hours are:

Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2-4 p.m..

The Thrift Shop also pays cash for all transformers that are in good condition. While at the Thrift Shop, check out the new antique corner. For more information call Natasha

LaRock, Thrift Shop manager at civ (06783) 6-6653 or mil 485-6653.

ACAP services

The Baumholder Army Community Alumni Program office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ACAP is also open during lunch to assist clients. Soldiers scheduled to separate can get information about their options at ACAP. ACAP offers pre-separation

briefings, job assistance workshops and job assistance counseling that can help soldiers review their options and assess how the skills developed in the Army can be transferred into civilian life. Soldiers can make appointments for ACAP services at mil 485-6741/6330 or civ (06783) 6-6741/6330.

Pre-separation briefing

Soldiers must complete a mandatory pre-separation briefing at ACAP no later than 90 days before their estimated date of separation. Appointments are available every day at 9 a.m. and require approximately an hour and a half.

Job assistance

ACAP offers job assistance workshops and counseling to help with the transition from the military to the civilian job market. Two day workshops are offered by formal instruction every other Tuesday. The next workshops are Aug. 15-16 and 29-30 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Job assistance can also be accessed through ACAP's computer system and covers such topics as how to create a resume, find jobs, network, and interview. Clients can cover topics by computer at their own pace.

Call to schedule an appointment, or drop by any afternoon to work with ACAP's computer-based job assistance tools. For more information, call ACAP at mil 485-6741/6330 or civ (06783) 6-6741/6330.

The center is open during training holidays but customers are reminded that the center is closed one Thursday a month for training, from noon till close of business.

VA briefings in June

A Veterans Affairs representative will be available the Baumholder ACAP center at 10 a.m. June 23 for a briefing on all relevant VA benefits. All soldiers are welcome; orders are not necessary to attend. Additional briefings are scheduled for Aug. 1 and Sept. 8. Briefings in the Kaiserslautern area are scheduled for July 21, Aug. 8 and Sept. 17.

Get smart before your move; save money

Understanding the Personnel Claims Act is an important aspect of preparing for a household goods shipment. There are occasions when individuals sustain catastrophic losses.

Two important features for you to remember are:

- The maximum that can be paid for any loss or damage to personal property arising from a single incident is \$40,000. This limitation is statutory.

- Within this \$40,000 limitation, there are maximum amounts allowable for certain items. For example: if you own a stereo system worth \$5,000 and it is lost in shipment, the maximum amount that can be paid is \$4,000. Consider such limitations in deciding if you need to purchase extra coverage for your personal property.

In order to make an informed judgment on whether you are adequately covered by the Personnel

Claims Act, you need to know whether the value of any category of property you own is in excess of what the Army could pay if you sustained a total loss.

There are more than 80 categories of property from air conditioners to wigs that the Army has established a maximum allowable per claim. You should obtain a copy of the "It's Your Move" pamphlet and review the maximum amounts allowable. If the pamphlet is unavailable or you have more questions, consult your ITO outbound shipping counselor or local claims office.

Other dos and don'ts of the pre-move process include:

Do not ship your proof of ownership documents, e.g., purchase receipts, prior appraisals, pictures, etc., of your personal property with your household goods. Hand-carry these important documents.

If items are extremely valuable, you might want to obtain an ap-

praisal.

The burden will be upon you to prove ownership and value. For example, if prior to shipment, you cannot prove you own a particular comic or baseball card and that it is in mint condition, you should consider some type of professional appraisal to substantiate ownership and value. It will be extremely difficult to prove ownership and value for an item after it is lost if you do not have such proof. An appraisal made after the item is missing based on your verbal description will have very little value.

Identify items, such as expensive jewelry, which must be hand-carried with you to your next duty station.

If you own a large number of items such as expensive comic books, baseball cards, compact discs, make sure you do a separate inventory of each item prior to shipment. Such an inventory will help you account for these items if some

or all of them are lost in shipment, but the listing in itself cannot substantiate value or prove it was tendered to the carrier.

The Army will not pay any compensation for coin collections or money if lost in shipment.

Personal computers must be prepared for shipment by you in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions; put in park, key lock, etc. This is not the packer's responsibility.

Computer printers must have the toner cartridge removed by you prior to shipment in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. This is not the packers responsibility.

Take pictures of household property. This will help prove you owned and shipped the items.

If you have any questions pertaining to claim policies, contact claims personnel at the Baumholder Law Center, Building 8222 on Smith Barracks, or call mil 485-6507.

Learning opportunities abound at ACS

International spouses support group

The International Spouses Club and Support Group meets June 17 from 10:30 a.m. to noon in the Army Community Services lounge in Building 8746. The club is open to any military and Department of Defense civilian spouse interested in meeting other spouses and learning about other countries and cultures.

The topic for this session will be “German holidays — when are they, how are they celebrated, and how they can affect my travel and shopping plans.” Participants will learn about German holidays and receive a handout. There will be plenty of time for questions as well as information exchanges among attendees.

Reservations are requested but not required. Contact Frauke Battiste at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at Frauke.Battiste@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Military Life Support

The Military Life Support Group meets the first and third Tuesday of every month at the Iron Kids playground at noon and the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at the Strassburg Family Assistance office at noon.

The group is a support group for military spouses to help them network, offer or receive support and to get together so they can discuss various issues around being a military spouse. All classes are free and children are welcome. For more information contact Melissa R. Petrone at civ (06783) 6-8188 or email Melissa.Petrone@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Expectant moms

The Expectant Moms Support Group meets the third Thursday every month from noon to 1 p.m. at the Army Community Service Lounge. The support group is for mothers who are expecting to get together and offer wisdom and support to one another. All classes are free and participants are invited to bring a bag lunch or any snacks for to eat during the class. Contact Melissa Petrone at civ (06783) 6-

8188 or email at Melissa.petrone@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Successful interviews

The Employment Readiness Program at Baumholder ACS offers “Interviewing for Success” classes the first Wednesday of each month. The next class is scheduled June 18 from 9-11 a.m. in the ACS conference room. The class assists job seekers prepare for an interview, discuss frequently asked and difficult to answer questions, and how to dress.

Participants are given possible interviewing scenarios and asked to discuss appropriate responses and reactions. Research is introduced from current career assistance publications, Internet and employment experts. They are shown how to research the hiring organization and prepare for the interview. A portion of the class is set up as an open forum for participants to share any questions or problems they have experienced in past interviews. The class is open to spouses and family members. Contact Camille Jackson at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at camille.jackson@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Resume writing

The Employment Readiness Program at the Baumholder ACS offers a class in Resume Writing the last Friday of each month. The next class is scheduled June 27 from 9-11 a.m. This class assists participants in preparing a resume to give a brief history of accomplishments that can open doors to your future employment. The class is open to spouses and family members. Contact Camille Jackson at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at camille.jackson@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Employment orientation

The Employment Orientation Class meets June 17 from 9-10:30 a.m. in the ACS conference room and includes insights as to the employment opportunities in the Baumholder community and its surrounding area. Participants receive information concerning military spouse preference, defining federal and private sector opportunities and application procedures, basic Resumix start-up informa-

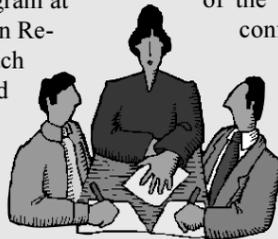
tion and volunteer opportunities. This class will equip family members with the tools and resources needed to find employment within the community. The class is open to spouses and family members. Contact Camille Jackson at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at camille.jackson@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Blended family living

Learn to understand what causes blended families to succeed or fail June 10 from 2-4 p.m. at the New Parent Support Group conference room. Put an end to the “revolving door” of marriage. Learn to deal with unexpected emotions, such as rejection, blame, rage and jealousy. Gain insight to how adults and children can process difficult transitions. The class is open to service and family members. Contact Melissa Petrone at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at melissa.petrone@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Resolving conflict

Learn why conflicts occur and about the advantages and disadvantages of conflicts June 25 from 2-4 p.m. at the New Parent Support Group conference room. Discuss how each person has a different perception of the issue at hand (hence the conflict) and ways of dealing with conflicts both positive and negative.



Learn different behaviors that a person takes on when involved in a conflict. Recognize your own type of behavior during a conflict (assertive, non-assertive and aggressive). Identify and work on communication skills and learn problem solving skills for conflicts. The class is open to service and family members. Contact Melissa Petrone at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at melissa.petrone@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Marriage is a journey

Learning the dynamics of marriage is the hardest work you will ever do during the Journey of Marriage class June 11 from 2-4 p.m. Learn how to positively resolve conflicts in a marriage, understanding that you can not change your partner, you can only change yourself. The three Rs of relation-

ship, relate, reveal, reciprocate will also be addressed. The class is open to service and family members. Contact Melissa Petrone at civ (06783) 6-8188 or email melissa.petrone@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Managing stress, time

Have a clear understanding of what stress is and how it manifests itself throughout the mind and body June 23 from 2-4 p.m. in the New Parent Support Group conference room. Each person will be able to identify their own stressor (what triggers their stress) and recognize their symptoms of stress (headache, irritability, backache, poor concentration, etc.). The class is open to service and family members. Stress reduction and relaxation techniques will be taught. Contact Melissa Petrone at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at melissa.petrone@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Anger management

The Recognizing and Controlling Your Anger Class helps you learn what anger is, how to identify and recognize anger, what happens to a person’s body, mind and spirit when they become angry. The next class is June 24 from 2-4 p.m. in the New Parent Support Group conference room. Learn techniques to keep anger under control. Learn the difference between “good” and “bad” anger. Provide techniques for managing anger. The class is open to service and family members. Contact Melissa Petrone at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at melissa.petrone@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Surviving separation

The Surviving Deployment Separation class June 26 from 2-4 p.m. in the New Parent Support Group conference room provides a variety of coping methods and time management skills to military spouses and service members. This class is designed to prevent physical, emotional abuse before, during and after deployments. Contact Melissa Petrone at civ (06783) 6-8188 or by email at melissa.petrone@104asg.mwr.army.mil.

Beware of medical pitfalls for visiting relatives

If your in-laws or parents are visiting you this summer for a European vacation you can make their stay more pleasant by informing them about the pitfalls of medical care overseas.

Relatives are not always automatically eligible for the same medical benefits as military family members so they should either have a health insurance policy that covers medical care overseas or buy temporary travel insurance.

If you have a relative who achieved dependent status, like parents, parents-in-law, or any other

household member, those dependents are only eligible for direct care in a military treatment facility. They are not eligible for Tricare.

That means if the patient is being transferred to a civilian host nation medical treatment facility, even in an emergency situation or when the Baumholder Health Clinic is closed, the government can not and will not pay for the treatment, under any circumstances. This makes the patient responsible for the entire bill.

If your relative or dependant is covered under Medicare in the

States, they should be aware that Medicare does not pay for care received outside the United States. Medical officials emphasize that there are no exceptions to this rule.

If you need more information or have questions about health care contact Gabi Martini, beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinator, atmil485-6205, civ(06783)6-6205 or visit her during duty hours at the Baumholder Health Clinic, Building 8744, Room 213, Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-4 p.m.; Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-2:30 p.m.

Girl Scouts honored for grave-tending efforts

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava
222nd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

Three Baumholder Girl Scouts have stepped in to reinforce the final link in the chain of life and death for several U.S. soldiers buried in the Baumholder Cemetery. They're helping maintain their grave sites.

About 11 former U.S. soldiers are buried in the Baumholder Cemetery, but the graves of five of these soldiers are not being maintained by family members because they have no more family or the families have long since left Baumholder.

Neglect resulted in caved in graves over-run with weeds and complaints from German families who have family members buried next to these dilapidated grave sites.

"The Germans really take care of their grave sites, so we wanted to show that the Americans there weren't forgotten," said Emily Hernandez-Goldstein, one of three cadet Girl Scouts who participated in a community project that earned the three of them the coveted Girl Scout Silver Award, the highest award that a cadet can achieve. The only other higher achievement in Girl Scouting is the Gold Award which is reserved for Senior Girl Scouts.

Ripmeister's background is somewhat of a mystery. The only records available at the Baumholder City Hall are those of his date of birth and death. Yet someone paid for his burial and there are still 18 years left in his allotted 25-year period.

Their project began more than a year ago when the girls visited the cemetery during



Photo by Bernd "Bernie" Mai

Girl Scout Erica Hill (left) and her assistant, Tiffany Guyette, plant flowers at the grave site of Master Sgt. Leon Stalker, a World War II and Vietnam War veteran buried in the city of Baumholder's cemetery. Guyette is not a Girl Scout but plans on becoming one soon.

Memorial Day to place American flags on the graves of the U.S. soldiers buried there.

"Last Memorial Day they went to the cemetery in Baumholder and noticed that the graves were in really bad shape. The only thing they did at that time was clean them up and put flags on them," said Ileana Arvelo, Girl Scout adviser and mother of Maria Arvelo, another of the three girls who participated in the project.

"When it came time to decide on what they wanted to do to earn their Silver Award

they came up with the idea to take care of those graves," said Arvelo.

"It was sort of embarrassing, almost, to see the American graves in poor condition," said Hernandez-Goldstein.

"I thought this was a great idea so I decided to participate," said the third cadet, Erica Hill. "I feel better because I've helped my community and I've helped other people besides myself. That's why I like being in Girl Scouts, to help other people."

"We are delighted that the graves of these U.S. soldiers are being maintained," said Ingrid Schwerdtner, Baumholder deputy mayor.

Baumholder residents who have family members buried next to these graves were concerned about the safety of the caved in graves.

"We are therefore pleased that the girls filled in the graves and adorned them as nicely as they did," said Schwerdtner.

Schwerdtner explained that German grave sites are purchased for a 25-year period. When that time expires, the graves are reclaimed and the site is sold to someone else. "Of course if there is a problem with a grave site before the 25-year period runs out, we can vacate the site so that it does not become a safety hazard or unsightly, but we are not allowed to sell it to anyone else before the 25-year period."

The three graves the scouts refurbished are those of Master Sgt. Karl Kohlgraf, a Vietnam War veteran; Master Sgt. Leon Stalker, a World War II and Vietnam veteran; and Buster Ripmeister. Ripmeister's background is somewhat of a mystery. The only

records available at the Baumholder City Hall are those of his date of birth and death. There are no records of family members and the 222nd Base Support Battalion adjutant's office has not been able to confirm that he was a U.S. military member. Yet someone paid for his burial and there are still 18 years left in his allotted 25-year period.

"If nobody claimed, or came forward and took care of this grave (Ripmeister's), the city was going to flatten it out," said Arvelo. She also explained that because it has not been proven that he was military the Army will not donate the frame for his grave site. Regardless, the girls fixed up his grave but left the flowers in pots in case his identity was verified and a frame is later installed.

"The entire project took about a year and a half and the goal was to complete it by the Memorial Day weekend, which they did," said Arvelo.

They took care of three graves for their project but there were still two more that needed attention.

The soldiers buried there still have family in Germany but they have not been or cannot be contacted, so as a service, the girls fixed those graves after they completed their project.

"These are soldiers who lived here. They most likely married German women and they stayed here in Baumholder. But now the families are gone and there is absolutely no one taking care of those graves. That's why the girls fixed up the three graves. But we want to make the community aware that there are more than three and that on Memorial Day and on Veterans Day they should be remembered," said Arvelo.



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Ingrid Schwerdtner, Baumholder city deputy mayor, presents Emily Hernandez-Goldstein with a Baumholder city pin in recognition of the work she did to renovate the graves of U.S. military members buried at the Baumholder cemetery. Erica Hill (center) and Maria Arvelo also participated in the project and received pins from Schwerdtner. The three Cadet Girl Scouts earned their Silver Award as a result of their efforts.

Vandalism and your POV — know your options

If you've ever had your vehicle vandalized, you know the feeling of returning to your car and finding it keyed, scratched, or the windows broken. Your first thought is "How am I going to get the *%!@#\$ one-celled character that did this?" When cooler heads prevail you start to think more rationally and scratch your head endlessly as you ponder the cost of your repair options.

There are ways to obtain compensation for these damages, but first you must meet certain criteria.

Private insurance is the most effective way to receive compensation for vandalism. It is up to you to make certain that you have adequate insurance on your vehicle. Some policies may not cover vandalism. Such policies may make compensation difficult or impossible to obtain. Your Army Claims Service may offer an alternative source of compensation. Before you can file with the Army Claims Service, however, you must exhaust all of your private insurance options. Keep in mind, the Army Claims Service is not a substitute for private insur-

ance and many vandalism claims are not payable by the government.

For both private insurance claims and Army claims, accurate compensation requires compliance with several procedures and requirements. Private insurance company requirements may vary from company to company, but AR 27-20 and DA PAM 27-162 specifically outline the Army's requirements. You must first settle with your private insurance before you can file your claim with the government.

When vandalism occurs, immediately report the incident to the local authorities, or as soon as you notice the damage. Waiting too long to report the incident may result in a denial of your claim, because there is a presumption that the incident did not occur in the manner alleged.

Keep in mind that you will be required to produce "clear and convincing" evidence of vandalism to meet the high burden of proof required by Army regulations. Do not move the vehicle until you have proven that the vandalism occurred and compiled all of the details per-



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

taining to the incident. One way to do this is to have either the police or a disinterested third party perform a complete inspection of the vehicle and of the location where the vandalism occurred. If this is not possible, you can take pictures or make a videotape of the damage and the surrounding area. Include location, condition of other vehicles in the area, statements from witnesses, how the damage was no-

ticed, and any identifying markings (such as words or designs, broken glass found on the ground, etc.) left at the scene. Your statement alone is not sufficient.

After you have gathered all of the information pertaining to the vandalism, pick up your final military police report (normally, it takes a week to be ready for pick up) and contact the Baumholder claims office so that claims personnel may

inspect your vehicle. Claims personnel will provide you with a claims packet that includes a list of garages providing estimates. Prior to having any repairs done, take pictures of the damage or let the claims office inspect your vehicle. This will assist the Army Claims Service in substantiating your claim. Keep copies of all estimates and receipts until you are ready to file your claim.

You have two years to file your claim from the date of the incident, preferably by appointment. Claims personnel may also ask questions about the condition of your vehicle prior to the vandalism, such as age and value of your vehicle, and if any modifications have been made to your vehicle since its purchase (such as a new paint job).

For more information contact the Baumholder Claims office, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, at mil 485-6507 or civ (06783) 6-6507 or stop by the Baumholder Legal Center, Building 8222 on Smith Barracks during walk-in hours, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesdays, or by appointment.