

# 284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen



Students of the Az al-Arab school in the north of Baghdad receive school supplies on their first day back to school. The supplies were delivered by soldiers of the 16th Engineer Battalion. Photo right: Pfc. Ray Steigerwalt, a light wheeled-vehicle mechanic with HHC, 16th Engineer Battalion, carries school supplies to the school.



## Engineers get children back to school

### Catamount Battalion renovates badly damaged schools

Story and photos by Spc. Ryan Smith  
372nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

U.S. Army engineers are builders. Some build bridges, some build living quarters for troops. But one particular group of engineers is working to build a better future for the children of Iraq.

Soldiers of the 1st Armored Division's Company C, 16th Engineer Battalion, are working to renovate and restore schools in their area of operations to get children back

into classrooms.

The Az al-Arab School in north Baghdad, one of the schools the engineers have helped to restore, held a back-to-school party to celebrate their resumption of academic activities Aug. 28. The guests of honor were the soldiers from Company C.

### In bad shape

When the engineers first encountered the school it was in bad shape, said 1st Lt. Edwin Clarke, Company C executive officer. It had been used by Iraqi troops during the war as a defensive fighting position and was damaged during combat. The soldiers hired and worked with a local contractor, Saaddoun Hashim al-Saraji, to repair the badly damaged facility.

Al-Saraji replaced the plumbing fixtures — the toilets and sinks had been destroyed or taken by looters — and installed fans and blackboards in the classrooms as well.

Al-Saraji said he was happy to fix the school for the children in his neighborhood. "My neighbors came to me to ask for help because they like me and trust me," he said.

Workers also constructed a wall around the school to separate children from the busy street that runs by the school, Clarke said. Soldiers of Company C's first platoon painted the wall.

The engineers joined school children, school and community leaders at the newly reopened school to mark the beginning of the new academic year. Al-Saraji and his family

provided local dishes and soft drinks for the Az al-Arab community to enjoy during the party.

About 250 children greeted the engineers, who brought school supplies as presents for the children. The pencils, paper, crayons and other supplies were donated by the Rotary Club of Turlock, Calif., Clarke said.

"The real future of Iraq is its kids," said Lt. Col. John Kem, 16th Engineer Battalion commander. "This is a great day. These kids are excited to be starting school next week. In Iraq, just like other places, kids are excited about going back to school."

Kem noted that there are hundreds of schools in Baghdad. "I hope that this scene will be repeated everywhere," he said.

## HALLOWEEN CREEPY DATES

### Pumpkin run

The 284th Base Support Battalion Sports Office hosts a five-kilometer Pumpkin Run Oct. 26 at the Schiffenberg Castle. Cost is \$15 with a commemorative T-shirt or \$10 without one. Call Jon Lacy at mil 343-8208 for details.

### Harvest Fest Oct. 31

The 284th Base Support Battalion Chaplain's Office hosts its annual Harvest Fest Oct. 31 from 5-8 p.m. at the Giessen Chapel. Offered are games for all ages, prizes and candy. Bring your own

container for goodies. Volunteers are needed to help with the games and set up. Call the Chaplain's Office at mil 343-8020.

### Masquerade Ball in Friedberg

The Capri Club located in Friedberg's Ray Barracks hosts a Masquerade Ball Oct. 25 featuring a variety of music. For details call Nora at mil 343-6183.

### Kid's Halloween Party Oct. 31

The Woodland Club in Giessen has scheduled a Kid's Halloween

Party for Oct. 31 from 5-8 p.m. in the Woodland Club in Giessen.

### October bowling specials

The Friedberg Bowling Center hosts a **Scare Yourself Bonus Tournament** Oct. 19. For details call mil 324-3270. The Giessen Bowling Center has scheduled a **Howl at the Moon** night Oct. 25 from 8-11 p.m. featuring bowling and karaoke. For more information call mil 343-6172.



## ACS workshops

### Multi-Cultural Support Group

The 284th Base Support Battalion's Army Community Service hosts a multi-cultural support group every third Thursday of the month. This workshop is designed to give support and assistance to foreign-born spouses. For details call Patricia Harper at mil 343-6910.

### Tea Time in Butzbach

The Butzbach Outreach Center invites everyone to join them every morning for Tea Time starting at 8:15 a.m. for tea, coffee and conversation. For more information call Anastasia Chase at civ (06033) 925 329.

### NOW workshop

The Newcomers Orientation and Welcome workshops provide tools to get out and about in Germany. During the workshop participants will learn details about the community and then go on a surrounding area tour. Free child care is provided when registered in advance. For details call Patricia Harper at mil 343-6910.

### Market Monday

The Butzbach Outreach Center hosts Market Monday every first Monday of the month taking interested community members to the local market to experience the local cuisine. The group meets at 9 a.m. at the Outreach Center.

## Gunner earns Bronze Star, regains faith

By Alexandra Williams  
284th Base Support Battalion  
Public Affairs Office

Spc. Ray Loftis not only earned a Bronze Star during his five-month stay in Baghdad, he regained his faith in a higher power.

The Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery, soldier earned the award July 25 for his lifesaving actions rendered to fellow soldiers Sgt. Wasim Kahn and Pfc. Christopher Garza who were injured during a rocket-propelled attack June 1 near the Abu Hanifa Mosque in Baghdad (Editor's note: see related story in the Sept. 16 issue of the Herald Union).

"It was our first day on the streets, and we were on patrol with soldiers of the 3rd ID because we were supposed to take over their route. Suddenly I saw a

**"You can't just shoot because you don't want to hurt innocent people."**

flash of an explosion. Then I saw a vehicle and two fellow soldiers who needed help, so I ran over there," said Loftis, who returned to Giessen this month to prepare for his family's move to Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

"I heard Sgt. Kahn saying 'help me' and I saw that he had this very huge cut above his knee. He had already applied the battle dressing pouch on his wound, but he was still bleeding. So first I applied another dressing and put pressure on his wound so he would not bleed to

death," said Loftis.

"Since he was sitting in the total open I positioned myself in front of him so if more rounds came in I would take them for him," he said.

As they were attacked again he heard the walls beside them come down, Loftis said. "I started to return fire but I ran out of ammo. Then I noticed that the .50-caliber on the Carrier, Ammunition Tracked Vehicle was unmanned. I had shot a .50-caliber before but had never qualified on it. But at that point it didn't matter. I laid suppressive fire so we could evacuate our casualties," he said.

"I would have been just as happy not to fire a round, but over there is not a conventional war with soldiers fighting on the battlefield. It's

a suburban war and you have to be very careful. You have to stop and think while you are fighting the en-

emy. There is the enemy on one side, your buddies and allies are on the other and then there is the civilian population everywhere. So you can't just shoot because you don't want to hurt innocent civilians," Loftis said.

The injured soldiers were eventually evacuated and received treatment at Walter Reed hospital. Loftis said he tried to get regular updates on their well-being. Garza returned to the battalion and was awarded the Purple Heart. Kahn remains hos-



Photo by Alexandra Williams

Spc. Ray Loftis displays the Bronze Star he received for his lifesaving action rendered to fellow soldiers during an attack in Baghdad.

pitalized.

"I think they weren't sure if Sgt. Kahn would ever use his leg again, but I've heard he is doing all right. He probably has to learn to walk again. I am glad that both are alive," Loftis said.

Being awarded the Bronze Star for his helping his fellow soldiers left him dumbfounded, Loftis said.

"I was just doing my job. To me Garza and Kahn are the ones who deserve all the recognition. They took the initial blast but kept a cool, calm and collective head during the attack."

Training and a higher power saved their lives, said Loftis. "We were like ducks at a shooting gallery. We sat out in the open but we

took no more injuries. I am sure that some invisible force was looking over us. I lost touch with religion a long time ago, but that incident has turned my perception around."

"I also appreciate all the training my NCO, Sgt. Alan Wolfer, has given us. Even when we arrived in Camp Doha in Kuwait he wanted to use the time over there and gave us another level of first aid refresher training. I am glad he did that because during the attack it all came back to me," he said.

Being deployed for nearly five months with the gunner battalion has also changed his feelings toward his fellow soldiers, Loftis said.

"Before we deployed I hardly knew the soldiers in the other batteries. There are many you see but don't really get to know. Since our arrival in Baghdad everything has changed. We are no longer a bunch of individuals in a battery but family. Everything changes once you get pinned down by snipers.

"To be honest, I was just as sad to leave the gunners as I was when I left my wife and two daughters for the deployment, because the guys also became my family in Iraq," he said.

"I have seven years active duty and three years of active reserve and I intend to do the full 20 years if they let me stay in," said Loftis. "There is just one thing I didn't need to know but learned during this deployment and that is the way blood smells in heat. I will never forget that."



Photo by Petra Roberts

### Greetings to all

Pvt. 2 Louie Nomar of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-37th Armor, in Friedberg, his wife Melissa and their son Caleb pose Sept. 13 for the Hometown News Team that came to Friedberg to record holiday greetings of soldiers and families living in the 284th Base Support Battalion. The messages will be aired between Dec. 1 and Jan. 2 in the United States, but deployed soldiers will also be able to see them downrange.

### Supporting mothers

The Helping Hands Outreach Ministry is dedicating its services to mothers or expecting mothers in the 284th Base Support Battalion.

Knowing about the needs of women during pregnancy the group wants to help military spouses whose husbands are deployed, on TDY or in the field and also single mothers.

The Helping Hands Outreach Ministry services range from grocery shopping, watching the children while Mom is at an appointment or lifting items.

The service is free of charge because it is run on a volunteer basis.

Services include: → Assisting in grocery shopping. → Assisting in house cleaning. → Assisting in errand running. → Relieving Mom for one hour from the children. → Assisting in meal preparation if requested. → An on-call person to assist with lifting. → A check-up call to ensure Mom is doing fine (one in the morning and one at night) and to check if Mom needs service for the following day.

Any mother or expecting mother is welcome to contact the Helping Hands Outreach Ministry.

The group is also looking for volunteers who have a heart for others and would like to offer their services to a mother in their neighborhood.

For more information call Kim Smith at civ (0641) 495 5974 or Jennifer Brown at mil civ (0641) 495 5963.

## Community spotlight

### Children's afternoon in Bad Nauheim

The Bad Nauheim Commissary hosts a Children's Afternoon Oct. 7 from 3-6 p.m. The event will feature face-painting and free candy. All children are invited to attend.

### Call in suggestions

The 284th Base Support Battalion has a suggestion line for internal comment. Employees of all organizations within the 284th BSB may call mil 343-1234 and leave their suggestions on how to improve the 284th BSB business operations. Calls will be taken by an answering machine. Leaving name and phone number is optional.

### Religious education classes

Registration is ongoing for Catholic religious education classes for children in grades kindergarten to 12th. Register every Sunday in Friedberg after Mass at the chapel. Classes will be conducted every Sunday from 10-11 a.m. For more information call Bobbi McKenna at civ (06031) 169 871. In Giessen registration is also held every Sunday after Mass at the chapel and classes are from 10-11 a.m. Sunday. For more information call Mary Ann Ernst at civ (0641) 480 8762.

### BOSS trips, fund-raisers

The 284th Base Support Battalion Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers program hosts a Strassbourg Express trip Oct. 18-19. Regu-



Photo by Petra Roberts

### Celebrating Hispanic heritage

Children hit the pinada to go for the candy during this year's Hispanic Heritage Fiesta held Sept. 20 at Butzbach's Roman Way Housing. The fest included authentic Hispanic food and music but also a Chili cooking contest sponsored by the Andrews Federal Credit Union. Congratulations to first place winner Becky Rodriques, Nikki Anders second place and Javier Valdouinos for winning third place.

lar price is \$39, but single soldiers receive a 25 percent discount. Reservations can be made at the Giessen Outdoor Recreation or BOSS centers. A Car Bash Jamboree fund-raiser will be held Oct. 4 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the

Giessen Post Exchange parking lot. This event is open to the entire family. Small, medium and large hammers will be available. For more information call BOSS coordinator Frank Rojas at mil 324-3158.

### Weekend child care

Super Saturday child care will be offered Oct. 18 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Butzbach Child Development Center. Children must be 11 years or younger and CLEOS registered. For more information call Butzbach CDC at civ (06033) 67922.

### Giessen school photos

The Giessen High School hosts a photo day Oct. 6 for students in grades seven to 11 at the school. Senior portraits will be taken on Oct. 7 at the school. For more information call Rhonda Lambert at civ (0641) 4955 954.

### Outdoor Rec trips

Outdoor Recreation hosts a Polish Pottery trip Oct. 11. A North Sea Tropen Park trip is scheduled for Oct. 18. Call Outdoor Rec at mil 343-8202 for details.

### Play, auditions at Keller Theater

The Giessen Keller Theater hosts "Heartland," a comedy by Tony Dunham, Oct. 17-18 starting at 7:30 p.m. Auditions for the Christmas production and "Harvey" will be held Oct. 21-22 at 7 p.m. at the Keller Theater. For details call mil 343-6515.

### Job Search Workshop

The Army Career and Alumni Program hosts a two-day Job Search Workshop Oct. 21-22 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Participants learn about the job search process enabling them to apply those principles to their own

careers. Spouses of transitioning soldiers are encouraged to participate. For more information call Claire Sowinski at mil 343-9332.

### Town Hall Meeting

A Town Hall Meeting will be held Oct. 8 at 5:30 p.m. at Butzbach Elementary School.

### Community out-processing briefings

The In-Processing Training Center hosts out-processing briefings Oct. 14 at 2 p.m. on the Giessen Depot in Building 4 and Oct. 28 at 9 a.m. in Friedberg's Ray Barracks in Building 3635. Out-processing briefings are required 75-90 days before rotation or separation. For more information call mil 343-8077/6535/7362.

### Special events in October

Die Brücke, the local German-American Club, sponsors an Oktoberfest at Giessen's Keller Theater Oct. 5 from noon until 4 p.m. The fest will include an "all you can eat" buffet of Bavarian food and beer. Cost of the buffet is €6. Reservations are required and should be made by Sept. 30 to the 284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office at civ (0641) 402-1600/6599 or by email to [Mary.A.Ernst@104asg.army.mil](mailto:Mary.A.Ernst@104asg.army.mil).

The mayors of Giessen, Butzbach, Friedberg and Bad Nauheim sponsor an Oktoberfest Oct 10 to show their support for military families in the 284th Base Support Battalion during this time of deployment. The fest will be held at the Trinkkuranlage in the park at Bad Nauheim and feature live music to include an Elvis Presley impersonator and free German food and beverages. For more information call Public Affairs at civ (0641) 402-1600/6599 or email [Mary.A.Ernst@104asg.army.mil](mailto:Mary.A.Ernst@104asg.army.mil).

### Sign up for BSB newsletter

Get the latest information right in your home. Sign up to receive the 284th Base Support Battalion's electronic community information newsletter, "Was Ist Los." Send your subscriber request to [Mary.A.Ernst@104asg.army.mil](mailto:Mary.A.Ernst@104asg.army.mil). Include your name, APO address and rotation date.

### TEAM meets Thursdays

The newly established working group "the TEAM" meets every other Thursday at 2 p.m. at the chaplain's conference room in Building 115 on the third floor. Members of the TEAM are current or potential community leaders interested in being involved in improving BSB operations. Anyone interested in joining this commander's-tool working group to continuously improve the community can call Jane Wingate at mil 343-7568 or Barbara Horne at mil 343-6010.

### Bulk trash pickup

The next bulk trash pickup date for all housing areas in the 284th Base Support Battalion is Oct. 10.



Photo by Alexandra Williams

### Hurd named Teacher of the Year

Heide Hurd, physical education teacher for grades kindergarten to six at the Giessen and Bad Nauheim elementary schools, was nominated as Heidelberg District Teacher of the Year. "Motivating and empowering our children is my priority. I feel so privileged to be able to inspire and coach our children with valuable lessons," she said. Hurd said she puts a lot of emphasis on teaching students the power of play but also to be polite and kind to one another.

## Recognizing the signs of Domestic Violence

By Alexandra Williams  
284th Base Support Battalion  
Public Affairs Office

Everyday John calls Jane names, makes fun of her and verbally abuses her.

Because Jane has no friends, she assumes she's unlovable. Occasionally when she can't help crying in front of John, he promises not to abuse her anymore if only she'll stop making him so upset.

"Abuse does not always mean pushing, shoving, shaking, choking or even threats," said Florine King, 284th Base Support Battalion Army Community Service victim advocate coordinator. "It includes emotional, economic and verbal abuse, and some abusers have even used children as pawns to control their spouse."

Domestic violence is a slow evolving process, said King. "The

abuser waits until the relationship is settled and then the name-calling and ridiculing starts. He or she tells his or her spouse or partner that he or she is not attractive and nobody wants him or her. An abuser cuts his or her spouse off from friends, limits the access to money and instills fear.

"Very often people ask 'Why does he or she stay?' Most victims don't even realize they are victims because they are brainwashed to believe otherwise. Very often you'll hear victims say 'it was my fault' or 'I should have never made him so angry.' Victims stay because of fear, lack of resources, lack of finances, feelings of guilt about leaving the abuser and believing his or her promise to change," said King.

"Victims are wrong if they think they can change their abusive spouse or partner. He or she will not change. As a matter of fact violence

often results in severe injuries or even death," she said.

When spouses are abused and battered they may not be the only victims involved, because children can be victims as well, she said.

"It sets up a cycle, because acting out in a violent manner is a learned response. Children learn from experience. When they witness violence against their mother or father it can be very traumatic, which is why it's very important for victims to seek help," King said.

King gained in-depth knowledge about the subject while working for the Bibb County Crisis Hotline in

Macon, Ga., she said.

"Abuse respects none, and it takes many forms and can happen throughout one's lifetime. It does not discriminate—it affects people of all walks of life, every gender and race," she said.

"The murder cases in Fort Bragg, N.C., which are believed to be the result of domestic violence, showed that it also exists in the military. We as a (military) community must take a stand and show that we do not tolerate abuse," King said.

Since her arrival in the 284th BSB only one case of domestic violence has been reported, she said.

"As soon as a victim tells me about the abuse I have to report it. I will provide safe house shelter for the victims and initiate all necessary paperwork. As a victim advocate I see myself as a voice for the victim," she said.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. King said she will be handing out brochures and speak about the topic throughout the community during the month.

"An educated community can be the biggest asset in reporting domestic violence," she said, explaining that recognizing the signs of abuse, providing victim support and encouraging an individual to seek help or to report the abuser are vitally important.

For more information on Domestic Violence Prevention call King at mil 343-6040 or visit her office in Building 3 on the Giessen Depot.

**"Victims are wrong if they think they can change their abusive spouse. He or she will not change."**

## Web page serves as news provider for families

By Alexandra Williams

284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

Families of deployed soldiers in Giessen and Friedberg can get a variety of news about the Iraq deployment and exchange personal news on <http://gatorsix.blogspot.com>.

Originally dedicated to keeping one Friedberg soldier's family informed about the deployment, the web page has expanded and become a source of news for families of deployed soldiers all over the United States and Germany. The web page, which is updated weekly, includes news stories from various sources and letters from various online communities. Many of the letters portray what it's like to be deployed to Iraq.

### Explaining the heat

1st Lt. Matt VanDevender explained the heat in Iraq as follows: "Turn your oven to 500 degrees, open the oven door and sit in front of it, with a fan blowing the hot air on your face. Then sprinkle sand into the hot breeze, and you've just about got it."

Ron and Linda McCormick shared the following news about their son Lt. Kevin McCormick: "It was so hot that his

soap melted. He finally got a bed, but it's too hot to sleep inside the building. It's also hard to sleep when people are shooting rocket-propelled grenades at you. But Kevin has not lost his sense of humor. He says the terrorists just have no consideration for other people's sleeping schedules."

### From a soldier's point of view

A segment from an article originally printed in the *Cumberland Times-News* about Pfc. Aaron Clark, a soldier assigned to Giessen's 16th Engineer Battalion, reported: "Aaron left last November for basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. After completing basic, he remained there for his advanced training in combat engineering. He graduated on March 13, 2003, and was assigned to the 16th Engineer Battalion in Giessen. He was only in Germany a few weeks when his unit deployed to Iraq. The unit is part of the 1st Armored Division and is currently stationed in Baghdad. Aaron's unit is working to rebuild schools in the area. Aaron has written his family that he feels good about what they are doing there. In a recent letter home, he wrote, 'Most of the

civilians are happy to see us. The children will remember that the U.S. soldiers were there to protect them and to rebuild their schools and playgrounds.'"

Another soldier wrote an email to a friend describing her experiences with the media downrange: "It is heartbreaking when one of our soldiers is killed or loses an arm or leg or eye to an attack by these terrorists. And it is by far one of the most difficult parts of my job in dealing with media when all they care about reporting is how many soldiers have been killed or wounded. You hear that the number of attacks is rising—that simply isn't true. Attacks in our area have dropped by almost 50 percent. Be very proud of our troops over here. They are accomplishing so much. Don't let the negative headlines lead you to believe for one minute that what we're doing over here isn't right, or a waste of time, money and resources. I'll keep working on my end of it to hopefully bring the media around to showing the world the progress, continuing hard work being done by both Iraqi and Coalition forces and the hope that is alive in a country that hasn't had anything to hope for in the past 30 years."

Anyone interested in posting a letter on the web page can contact the webmaster at [cptpattiinBaghdad@yahoo.com](mailto:cptpattiinBaghdad@yahoo.com).

## Friedberg fire department hosts Fire Prevention Week

By Alexandra Williams

284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

The Friedberg Fire Department will host fire prevention information days in October in recognition of Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 5-11. Activities will take place Oct. 6 and 8 at the Friedberg Post Office, Building 4005, and Oct. 7 and 9 at the entrance of the Bad Nauheim Commissary.

Firefighters will hand out fire safety fliers and brochures, and candy for children. Fire prevention inspectors will talk about general fire safety issues,



and will also explain fire extinguisher cabinet installation procedures to residents of Alvin York and McArthur Housing.

Unattended cooking is still the primary cause of home fires, and a prime focus of safety awareness raising activities, said officials. Accidents while cooking account for 59 percent of fires in the home.

To eliminate home fire hazards here heed these safety tips:

- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Keep cooking areas clean and uncluttered.
- Never cook when drowsy.
- Keep all space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn.
- Use large, non-tip ashtrays.
- Soak cigarette butts and ashes before dumping them into wastebaskets.

- Never smoke when sleepy and never smoke in bed.
- Store matches and lighters locked away out of reach of children.
- Keep electrical cords out of traffic areas, avoid breaking them by pinching them behind furniture and stretch them tightly around corners.
- Keep clothes and other flammable materials away from candles. Put out candles when leave the room or going to sleep.
- Use stable, noncombustible candleholders.

Everyone should know what to do in case of a fire, said officials. Awareness and planning can save lives.

- Make a home fire escape plan and

hold fire drills at least twice a year so everyone in the household knows what to do in case of emergency.

- If you have to escape a fire through smoke, crawl on your hands and knees, keeping your head below potentially dangerous smoke.
- Make sure everyone in the household recognizes the sound of the fire alarm.
- Test alarms once a month. Replace batteries at least once a year or when the alarm "chirps" to indicate its battery is low.
- Replace smoke alarms that are more than 10 years old.

For information on fire safety call the Friedberg Fire Department at mil 324-2050/2294.

# 414th BSB – Büdingen, Hanau

## Around the community ... Around the community

### Büdingen Pet Jamboree

Büdingen Army Community Service sponsors a Pet Jamboree Oct. 4 starting at 11 a.m. on the parade field. Bring your pet for a three-kilometer walk.

There will be races and pet competitions including best pet trick, longest and shortest ears, funniest and prettiest, longest hair and shortest hair, shortest and tallest, fastest and slowest and a pet costume competition. Veterinarians from the clinic will provide free dental exams and offer vaccinations. Prizes will be awarded for contest winners. Also taking place will be a six-legged race, a shopping-cart race, an obstacle course and a Military Working Dog demonstration. Call Keylah Bonebrake at mil 321-4786 for details.



### Domestic Violence Prevention Month

Don't allow domestic violence to grow. Everyone in the community has a role to play in improving the quality of life for soldiers and their families. Join Army Community Service in sending the message, "Domestic violence has no place in our community, in our careers or in our lives."

**Oct. 1**— 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Visit an information booth at the Wolfgang PX. ACS will be handing out ribbons to promote awareness, and professionals will be there with domestic violence prevention information.

**Oct. 3**— Noon to 2 p.m. A chili luncheon will be held at the ACS Conference Room in Building 9 on Pioneer Kaserne. Lt. Col. Amy Ehmann, 414th Base Support Battalion commander, will sign and read a proclamation declaring October as Domestic Violence Prevention Month. Food will be served, and information on the prevention services will be provided.

Get the latest community news on the web at [www.hanau.army.mil](http://www.hanau.army.mil)

**Oct. 15**— 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Visit an information booth at the Wolfgang PX. ACS will be handing out ribbons to promote awareness, and professionals will be there with domestic violence prevention information.

For more information call Tina Greaves, victim advocate for the Family Advocacy Program, at mil 322-9526 or civ (06181) 88-9526.

### Self Service Supply Center closed

SSSC will be closed Sept. 30. It will reopen Oct. 1

### Central Texas College degrees

Central Texas College is offering courses leading to an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice, Early Childhood Education, Food Services Management and Emergency Medical Technology. Term II registration begins Oct. 14. Contact the CTC field representative at the Education Center in Building 11, Room 318 on Pioneer Kaserne at mil 322-5410 or [www.ctc-europe.com](http://www.ctc-europe.com).

### Coupon Social

Hanau Army Community Service is holding a Coupon Social Sept. 30 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Building 9 on Pioneer Kaserne. Call Princetta Wright or Adele Georges at civ (06181) 88-8963 for details.

### Guest readers

The guest reader program brings people to Argonner Elementary School every Friday afternoon to read to two classrooms of students. The school staff is now recruiting volunteers. Hopefully a guest reader will read to the same class

each week so that a rapport with the children is established. There are two sessions: from noon to 1 p.m. and from 1-2 p.m. It's important for interested individuals to make a commitment to reading on a regular basis. Guest readers will be trained on how to read to students. If you would like to volunteer, contact Gerald-dine Idzerda at civ (06181) 906 9229.

### Frankfurt Marathon

Runners and inline skaters can compete in the Frankfurt Marathon Oct. 26. For the first time, this year's event will feature a relay marathon for four runners with five, 10, 15 and 12 kilometer legs. In addition to the regular marathon the organizers offer a mini-marathon covering 4.2 kilometers for students and youths ages 10-16. Runners and skaters will compete on separate courses and perhaps, on different days. For information and registration forms visit the website—[www.frankfurt-marathon.com](http://www.frankfurt-marathon.com). The website offers German and English pages.

### Cub Scouts

The Cub Scouts are now enrolling boys from first through fifth grade. The Scouts also need adult volunteers. To join call Jolinda Flemister at civ (06181) 520 900.

### PTA Walk-a-thon

Kindergartners to fifth-graders will walk to raise money for Argonner Elementary School's Parent Teacher Association Oct. 17. Make a donation to sponsor a child; any amount is welcome. Feel free to come out and walk with the children and make a donation to the PTA. Preschoolers will walk from 8:30-9 a.m., kindergartners and first-graders from 9:05-9:55 a.m., second- and third-graders from 10-11 a.m., fourth- and fifth-graders from 11:05 a.m. to 12:05 p.m. To sponsor a walker call Debbie Curtis at civ (06181) 994 450 or email her at [deborah.curtis@us.army.mil](mailto:deborah.curtis@us.army.mil).

### PWOC event

The Hanau PWOC invite you to "Have Fun While Abiding in the Vine" with guest comedienne Carol Simpson at the Pioneer Chapel

on Oct. 2 from 9-11:15 a.m. Watch care will be provided for children under 5. For more information call Roberta Hoback at civ (06181) 520 422 or Marcia Brueggenjohann at civ (06183) 807 938.

### Polish Pottery Bingo

The Argonner Elementary School Parent Teacher Association will play Polish Pottery Bingo Oct. 9. Come at 6 p.m. to buy Bingo cards and have a hot dog. The bingo will begin after a brief PTA meeting at 6:45 p.m. For more information call Lori Brannan at civ (06181) 520 6016.

### Story hour

Preschool story hour volunteers are needed to do crafts and read books to the children every Thursday from 10-11 a.m. at Pioneer Library. Call Christi Bayha at mil 322-9657/8942 to help.

### Fiesta Oct. 4

The Hanau community celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month Oct. 4 at the Pioneer Fitness Center. Activities begin at 10 a.m. and continue all day. Enjoy food, folk dances, children's games, door prizes, displays and music. Everyone is encouraged to bring his or her favorite Spanish dish for sampling. For more information contact Sgt. first Class Gayden at mil 322-8012, [Donna.gayden@104asg.army.mil](mailto:Donna.gayden@104asg.army.mil) or Mr. Torres at mil 322-8197, [torrese@hanau.army.mil](mailto:torrese@hanau.army.mil).

### Steam train

Enjoy a historical steam train ride on Sundays or German holidays through October. The train departs from the city of Bad Orb train station at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. The travel time is about one hour. Reservations for groups can be made. For more details go to [www.bad-orb.de/dampfkleinbahn](http://www.bad-orb.de/dampfkleinbahn).

### HCSC bazaar

The Hanau Community Spouses Club reminds Hanau community members that its traditional annual bazaar will take place Oct. 24-26 in Building 1313 on Fliegerhorst Kaserne. All local Family Readiness Groups and nonprofit organizations are cordially invited to participate. There is a registration fee of \$75 of which \$50 is reimbursable after the event. For details contact HCSC president Bianca Moton at civ (0160) 9105 2378, [bianca.moton@us.army.mil](mailto:bianca.moton@us.army.mil), bazaar chairperson Heather Whetstone at civ (06183) 928 147,

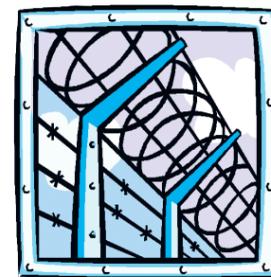
[M\\_hwhet@hotmail.com](mailto:M_hwhet@hotmail.com) or FRG chairperson Rose Mary Buckley at civ (06181) 906 3792, [Rose.mary.buckley@us.army.mil](mailto:Rose.mary.buckley@us.army.mil).

### Medieval tours of Gelnhäusen

Join a medieval tour of Gelnhäusen starting at 8:15 p.m. on Oct. 3. Tickets can be purchased that evening at 7:30 p.m. at the Obermarkt from grocers with sales trays carried around their neck. Tickets are €7 for adults and €3.50 for children ages 7-16. Participants can choose which character they want to lead their tour.

### Warn your children

Parents — warn your children not to climb any of the 414 Base Support Battalion installation fences as a shortcut. Climbing fences is a serious breach of security and very dangerous. Bundeswehr and Pond's Security Service guards are armed and trained to confront intruders.



### Frazer Coffee Shop opens

The Frazer Coffee Shop is open. Enjoy a cup of gourmet coffee while reading or surfing the Internet. The coffee shop is open Monday to Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. The coffee shop in the Community Activity Center on Fliegerhorst Kaserne.

### Thrift Savings

Learn how to invest in the Thrift Savings Plan, what it is and how it will improve your retirement income at Army Community Service, Building 9 at Pioneer Kaserne, Oct. 6 from 2-4 p.m. For information on all financial readiness classes call mil 322-9027/8965.

### CFC kicks off

Lt. Col. Amy Ehmann, 414th Base Support Battalion commander, invites everyone to the Combined Federal Campaign Overseas Kick-Off Oct. 1 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Hanau Post Exchange. Join Sue Hertling, senior adviser to the family readiness leaders, Ehmann and her staff for cake to kick off the CFC-O campaign. Donations will be accepted. For details call Ulanda Parker at mil 322-8144/8995 or Staff Sgt. Ramelat mil 322-9754/8144.

## Büdingen unit enhances Iraqi schools

Story and photo by Spc. Shauna McRoberts  
1st Armored Division Public Affairs Office

The desks were in pieces. The blackboards were broken. The windows were cracked. There were no doors, no fans and little or no lighting. Yet the children still came to school.

“That caught my attention,” said Lt. Col. Charles E. Williams, commander of 1st Armored Division’s 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment. “Even in these conditions, these kids were still eager to learn.”

After observing the deplorable conditions in more than 30 schools, the soldiers of 1-1st Cavalry knew something had to be done.

“We wanted to pick an area of responsibility and this was something soldiers could focus on,” said Williams. “At the schools, you got all the soldiers’ attention, because they saw the faces of the children. Kids are the common bond of us all.”

The schools, located on the rural outskirts of Iraq’s capital city, had not been cared for in more than 30 years, Williams said.

“Under the former regime, the schools in the city were the focus and these small ones outside of Baghdad just got what they could,” he said. “A young soldier asked me, ‘Can’t we do something to help these kids?’”

The answer was “yes” and that started the ball rolling, said Williams.

Using U.S. funds, the soldiers of the Büdingen-based 1-1st Cavalry started doing initial repairs on 25 schools in May and June before the end of the school year. The soldiers painted walls, replaced electrical wiring and plumbing systems and issued school supplies. Williams also had the squadron’s doctor perform medical examinations on many children, invited parents to come visit the schools, and set up a job program where Iraqis could apply to work as school guards and interpreters.



Lt. Col. Charles E. Williams, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment commander, poses with an Iraqi boy outside the Manazara Elementary School in Baghdad, Iraq. Williams has spearheaded a campaign to improve Iraqi schools.

As the summer progressed, Williams expanded the project. American contractors, Iraqi contractors and 1st AD engineers, working with 1st AD’s Task Force Wisdom project, also got involved. Together they worked to install ceiling fans, lights and security bars, replace broken glass and repair flooring.

“This project has been very positive for the soldiers,” said Williams. “The best way for a soldier to understand he’s making a difference is something like this, because he can see it.”

“Fixing the schools is a good start to the better future of Iraq,” said Pfc. Charles B. Howard, a scout with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-1st Cavalry. “Reaching the kids will show that Americans are here to help.”

Williams said he believes the projects have been beneficial to the Iraqi contractors, including one that was a former general in the Iraqi National Guard.

“We’re getting the Iraqis to believe in themselves,” he said.

Recently Williams took the project a step further. Working with Maj. Gregg Softy, 1-1st Cavalry’s operations officer, the squadron set up a website, *Iraqischools.com*.

Calling itself the “grassroots volunteer effort to help the children of Iraq,” the website encourages Americans to participate in the efforts to repair Iraqi schools by sending much-needed school supplies. The squadron also personally contacted several U.S. organizations, including schools, churches and Boy and Girl Scouts troops, asking for help.

“The focus behind *Iraqischools.com* was to help soldiers understand we really are making a difference,” said Williams. “We wanted to show the soldiers that the folks back home say ‘we believe in what you’re doing.’ We also wanted to let the Iraqis know that the U.S. supports them.”

Already the school supplies have started pouring in. Williams plans to distribute the supplies along with new desks by the start of the school year, Oct. 1. Williams is also hoping to set up a type of exchange program, where American organizations can adopt specific Iraqi schools.

“We want to tell a story to each child where the supplies came from,” he said. “Then we can take a picture and send it back to the organization that sent it, so they can see who they are helping.”

Though there is still work to be done in the schools, Williams said 1-1st Cavalry has made tremendous progress in the past few months.

“I have a 6-year-old child,” he said. “I asked myself, ‘Would I want my child to come to school here?’ Now I can say ‘yes.’”

## Overweight youths risk health problems

By Elizabeth Mammina  
Registered Dietician, Women, Infants and Children program

Ever increasing levels of childhood obesity have reached epidemic proportions, posing grave risks to the health and well-being of young people. Most recent studies indicate 10 percent of young children 2-5 years old can be considered overweight. The percentage of overweight children 6-19 years old living in the United States increased from 6 percent in the late 1970s to 15 percent in 1999-2000. Between 26-41 percent of these overweight preschoolers and 50 percent of overweight teens will continue to be overweight or obese throughout their lifetime. Approximately 60 percent of American adults are overweight. These statistics speak volumes considering the steep health penalties equated with overweight and obesity such as orthopedic injuries, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and type II diabetes (no longer called adult onset diabetes) which is now surfacing at ever younger ages.

In addition to the adverse physical effects, being an overweight or obese child has proven to have detrimental psychological and psychosocial effects as well. As if being a child is not hard enough, overweight children are more likely to be discriminated against, have lower self-esteem, have increased tendencies to smoke cigarettes and

try alcohol and have a lower rate of college admission which leads to lower wage earnings in adulthood.

Despite this grim news, the situation is far from hopeless. Overweight and obesity can be prevented or managed with dietary and nutrition information, family support and the adoption of a healthier lifestyle and attitude. Since eating habits develop early in childhood, and because children with two obese parents are six times more likely to become obese than children of non-obese parents (one obese parent doubles risk of obesity in children), it is fair to say that prevention is more successful if approached as a family affair.



Weight management techniques should be carefully considered. Strict parental control over a child’s diet and providing individual meals for overweight and obese children may make parents feel they’re playing an active role in the child’s weight management; however, these measures may actually be counterproductive. With constant parental control children may not learn to make their own healthy food selections and may feel ostracized from the rest of the family, further jeopardizing their self-esteem and long-term weight management success.

In place of focusing the parent’s efforts on one child, many clinicians emphasize in-

volving the entire family in the development of healthy eating and lifestyle habits. Some ideas include family meal planning, eating meals together, experimenting with new foods and recipes, limiting distractions during meal-times (turn off the TV), avoiding the use of food as a reward and creating a family fitness time. Why not take an after-dinner walk or bicycle-ride?

Parents can also become involved with school organizations such as the Parent Teacher Association to help influence the nutrition education taught to, not only their children, but to the faculty and entire student body.

Hanau community members who are eligible for the Women, Infants and Children program — pregnant or breastfeeding women and children under 5 — will receive a nutritional assessment and weight management advice as part of the WIC program. Your dietary needs will be determined by a computation of your total body mass index and a survey of your eating habits. Coupons for foods that meet your nutritional needs will be issued and this can save the average family from \$50 to \$150 a month in food costs. WIC can also advise you on family fitness, how to plan healthy meals and even offer tasty but healthy recipes. You’ll be able to learn about the special dietary needs of children too.

Another issue that the WIC program is very concerned about is a lack of iron, which can cause anemia, in many people’s diets.

The WIC staff can suggest the best iron rich foods to add to your diet.

Those community member who aren’t eligible for the WIC program and who may be concerned about their weight or the weight of a family member, can contact the Heidelberg Health Clinic and schedule an appointment with the registered dietician there. The dietician makes the rounds of the BSBs and comes to Hanau once each month.

If you’re interested in learning more about childhood obesity, approaches for weight management for children, general nutrition management or just to find some fun recipes for the family check out these websites:

United States Department of Agriculture

<http://www.usda.gov/cnpp>  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov>

Children’s Nutrition Research Center

Baylor College of Medicine  
<http://www.bcm.tmc.edu/cnrc/>

National Center for Health Statistics  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>

Dole 5-a-Day  
<http://www.dole5aday.com>

# 414th BSB – Büdingen, Hanau

## ACS helps soldiers get back on track

### Redeployment training eases transition

By Luz Medeiros

104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

Being separated during a deployment involves sacrifices. But getting soldiers and families back together can bring a lot of stress too.

Most military families find reunions are at least as stressful as separations. This seems to be true for couples with children, couples without children, single parents and single soldiers coming back to friends and family.

Soldiers coming back from different deployments attended redeployment training at the Hanau Army Community Service on Sept. 19 to learn more about the reunification process.

### Training for all

"This is redeployment reunification training required for soldiers and optional for family members; however, they are highly encouraged to attend," said Michael Hamm, Army Community Service outreach coordinator. "Units will contact me once they are ready, and I will make the arrangements."

"Informing and educating soldiers and family members about the emotional and behavioral reactions to post deployment and reunion



Photo by Dennis Johnson

Pam Belanger, 414th Base Support Battalion Army Community Service officer, talks to 71st Ordnance Company soldiers about redeployment challenges during a briefing in the Pioneer Chapel.

stress is the main purpose of this training," he said. "There are a lot of adjustments soldiers and families need to understand once they are back together."

"This training is divided in three different parts," Hamm said. "Before soldiers return to Germany they must attend a redeployment briefing downrange. Child Development Center care givers and family members would attend one before sol-

diers get back. And finally soldiers would have another one when they return."

### Refresher

"I came back from Israel. I am about to ETS (leave the service) and I was told I needed to come to this training," said Spc. Roy Dunne, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 5-7th Air Defense Artillery. "This is like a refresher course

for me; I already knew most of the information discussed in here."

"I was in Israel for two months. At that time I was not married, and I think this training is geared more toward married people because once I got to the questionnaire I could hardly answer anything. They need to concentrate more on single soldiers," said Pfc. Lynn Sinderson, 19th Maintenance Company.

"What we are going to talk about concerns everyone. Reuniting is a process that applies to all of us," said Hamm during the briefing.

"I think it is good training; I had it already. Before I left Baghdad I was required to attend one exactly like this one," said Capt. Marius Price, 69th Chemical Company.

Soldiers were asked what could be done better as regards redeployment. Providing readily available transportation from the airport upon arrival and making personal belongings available sooner were cited by soldiers attending the training.

### 'Well involved'

"I came back due to medical treatment, but I will go back once my treatment is finished. This training is very informative. A lot of information you didn't think about was covered. Single soldiers are well involved," said Pfc. Matthew Biedenbender, Company D, 1-501st Aviation.

"We offer this briefing on an ongoing basis every Friday at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. for soldiers, and every Wednesday at 9 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. for family members," said Hamm.

"We work together with family readiness groups to help families get back together. We do not want negative experiences to be repeated," said Mary Payant, Army Community Service volunteer and instructor of the training.

For more information about upcoming classes call Pam Belanger or Mike Hamm at mil 322-8965.



Photos by Dennis Johnson

### Train rolls in from Operation Iraqi Freedom

Members of the Hanau-based 71st Ordnance Company unload 13 railcars that carried their trucks, HMMWVs, wreckers, generators, fuel tanks and a mobile kitchen back to the Pioneer Kaserne railhead Sept. 19. Twenty-six pieces of equipment were unloaded in just under three hours. A few vehicles which couldn't be started had to be removed by crane. "Now begins the process of repairing and repainting; the desert sand was very tough on the vehicles," said Maj. Michael Kanney, deputy group rear detachment commander. Members of the 71st Ordnance Company, a missile maintenance company which supports the 1st Armored Division and 1-27th Field Artillery, returned to Hanau Aug. 29 after having served in Iraq and Kuwait.