

FORT SAM HOUSTON News Leader

“HOME OF ARMY MEDICINE”

Army Family Covenant

Signing reiterates Family strength is crucial for Army mission

Story and photo by Cheryl Harrison
Fort Sam Houston Public Information
Office

A covenant, in its most general sense, is a solemn promise to do something specific.

A covenant, in contrast to a contract, is a one-way agreement whereby the covenanter is the only party bound by the promise.

A promise or covenant was voiced, in a heralded ceremony Nov. 8 at the Fort Sam Houston Club and Army wide to Army Families by introducing the Army Family Covenant, the heart of what the Installation Management Command does. Strengthening Soldier and Family readiness is the mission. Improving Family readiness is crucial to the success of the Army Family Covenant. It is impor-

tant for the Army, its Soldiers and its Families to know that everyone in IMCOM is committed to success.

Fort Sam Houston senior commanders attended the ceremony and command Sergeants Major, as well as their Families, representing each command all gathered together to the sign the covenant.

One of the senior leaders, Commander U.S. Army Garrison, Col. Wendy Martinson, spoke of the covenant plan as an Army strategy to reinforce the commitment and sacrifices made by Army Families and the source of strength for our Soldiers. The Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army recognized the signifi-

See COVENANT P4



Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner, commanding general, U.S. Army North holds five-year old Saul Salas Jr. on his lap as he signs the Army Family Covenant. The historic signing is a promise and commitment to build a partnership with Army Families that enhances their strength and resilience. Witnessing Turner's signature are the Salas Family, Sgt. Saul and Jessica Salas with their children, Angelika, age 8, Victoria, age 6, Saul, Rogleio, 3 years old, Command Sgt. Maj. George Nieves, his wife Mary Beth and Susan Turner.

President visits wounded warriors at Center for the Intrepid

Whenever a wounded warrior is hospitalized a major part of their recovery and rehabilitation is the people who visit and support them. Family members are usually the visitors a hospitalized Soldier will call visitor. November 8 the wounded warriors at the Center for The Intrepid found themselves visited by their commander in chief, President George W. Bush.

President Bush spent about two hours at the Center for the Intrepid, visiting with wounded Soldiers show-

ing his support of their sacrifice for their country.

Bush on his tour through the state-of-the-art facility, received first hand an intimate view of poignancy and powerful scenes one can encounter during visits at the CFI.

Bush appeared relaxed and upbeat as he toured the privately funded facility and greeted Soldiers who had lost limbs and suffered grievous burns from roadside bombs and other

See PRESIDENT P6



Photo by Jen Rodriguez

President Bush greets Army Sgt. James Kevin Downs, Kingston Springs, Tenn., who lost both legs while serving in Iraq in 2005, as he visits the physical therapy gym at the Center for the Intrepid at Brooke Army Medical Center Nov. 8.

INSIDE

MISSION SUPPORT



U.S. Army South coordinates relief in Dominican Republic

PAGE 3

HONORING TRADITION



Annual Pow Wow draws crowd

PAGE 5

VETERANS DAY CELEBRATIONS



Post salutes veterans

PAGES 2, 14

“CFC . . . Changing Lives One Gift at a Time” To donate, contact a unit representative.

News Briefs cont.

Flu vaccinations available

This year, the influenza vaccine, both the shot and nasal mist, will be offered to all beneficiaries, including all Brooke Army Medical Center staff. The flu vaccine is mandatory for all active duty members, and highly recommended for all hospital staff. For beneficiaries age 18 and older, vaccinations will be given Dec. 3 and 4 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Roadrunner, Building 2797, Stanley Road. For more information about vaccines for children under age 18, visit www.bamc.amedd.army.mil. For more information about BAMC staff-only events, check the BAMC daily bulletin. For active duty assigned to Fort Sam Houston, check with the chain of command.

Federal Benefits Open Season

The open season for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, Flexible Spending Accounts and the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program will be held government-wide through Dec. 10. Employees can make open season enrollments, changes or cancellations through the Army Benefits Center-Civilian Web site at <https://www.abc.army.mil> or by calling toll-free 877-276-9287. For more information, call the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center at 221-2526.

Social Security representatives at BAMC

Men and women serving in the U.S. Military who become disabled while on active duty are receiving 'expedited processing' of disability claims from Social Security. The expedited process is for military service members disabled on or after Oct. 1, 2001, regardless of where the disability occurs. People in the military can apply for and receive benefits even while receiving military pay. Social Security representatives are available at Brooke Army Medical Center to assist individuals in answering questions and applying for benefits. The Social Security Administration office is located in the Troop Command, Building 3642, Room 131. The office hours are Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and closed each day from noon to 1 p.m. for lunch. Warriors may visit the office or schedule an appointment at 916-9746 or 916-7651 or 857-5208. Additionally, SSA reps are available to visit wounded Warriors in wards with prior notice. For more information, visit at www.socialsecurity.gov/wounded.

COVENANT from P1

icant contributions and provided a plan and resources to improve the quality of life for Army Families Army wide.

"We want Soldiers and their Families to stay with the Army," said Martinson who gave an overview of the covenant's design, what has been accomplished so far and the future for the Army Soldier and their Families.

Major General Russell Czerw, commanding general, Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department Center and School, spoke on the Army as a Family of Army Families. He vowed to work together as a unit with the other commands on Fort Sam Houston to improve the quality of living where Families can flourish. "I believe in our Army and I believe in our Army Families. They are the cornerstone of our nation's readiness and without them we would not be Army strong. The center of our society is the Family and the center of our Army is our Army Families."

Czerw vowed to work together as a team with each senior commander and their Command Sergeants Major on Fort Sam Houston to "make this fort a better place to live."

Following the reading of the covenant, the senior commanders and their Command Sergeants Major signed the Army Family covenant. Family representatives from each command joined them to sign the covenant on display.

Signing were Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner, commanding general, U.S. Army North, Command Sgt. Maj. George Nieves, with Sgt. Saul and Jessica Salas with their children, Angelika, 8 years old, Victoria, 6 years old, Saul, Jr., 5 years old and Rogelio, 3 years old; Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, commanding general Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department Center and School, Command Sgt. Maj. Howard Riles and Staff Sgt. Isagani and Toni Maawac with

Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, commanding general, Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department Center and School was the first to sign the Army Family Covenant, Nov. 8 in a ceremony held at the Sam Houston Club. Family representative Staff Sgt. Isagani Maawac and four-year-old son Kyle watched and waited for their turn to sign the covenant.

their children, Zanita, 7 years old, Mackenzie, 6 years old and Kyle, 4 years old; Mr. J. Randall Robinson, director, Installation Management Command West, with Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Braddock and First Lt. Ricky David and Sandra Yvette Simpson, daughter Kiana Marie, 9 years old; Brig. Gen. James Gilman, commanding general, Great Plains Regional Medical Command and Brooke Army Medical Center, Command Sgt. Maj. Donna Simmons with Pvt. 1st Class Randall and Diana Taylor,

son, Caden, 2 and-a-half years old with Reighlynn, 9 months old; Brig. Gen. Manuel Ortiz, deputy commander, U.S. Army south with Sgt. Maj. James Matthews, Mrs. Wendy Strycula and children Lauren, 17 years old, Mark, 15 years old, Kathleen, 14 and Mary, age 9. Wendy is the wife of Lt. Col. John Strycula, commander, 201st Military Intelligence Battalion, (currently deployed); Col. Wendy Martinson, commander U.S. Army Garrison, Command Sgt. Maj. Pedro Class, Sgt. Francisco and wife Spec. Yaritza Rodriguez, and children Kiara, 2 years old and Folen, 2 months old.

Keynote speaker Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner, commanding general, Army North concluded the signing ceremony with a round of applause for the "great Army brats" and their great behavior in the room. He said, "For an Army of values we cherish and demand of our Soldiers loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service,



Photos by Cheryl Harrison

Brig. Gen. Manuel Ortiz, deputy commander, U.S. Army South signs his name to the Army Family Covenant, Nov. 8 in a ceremony held at the Fort Sam Houston Club. Col. Wendy Martinson, commander U.S. Army Garrison witnesses Ortiz and then signs her name.

honor, integrity and personal courage. These values remain the foundation of trust with the American people and the foundation of trust among warriors. And just as Soldiers made a commitment to each other, today the Army is making a formal commitment to Army Families."

"The Army Family Covenant means we need to resource our programs and plans properly. Caring for our warriors Families is integral to our mission today. The covenant is an obligation to our Army Families, to care for them the way they deserve. This covenant binds us to a commitment and recognition that Army Families are critically important to the Army mission," concluded Turner.

The Army Family Covenant displays will be available for viewing at various locations on Fort Sam Houston.

America's Army: The Strength of the Nation Army Family Covenant

We recognize...

The commitment and increasing sacrifices that our Families are making every day.

The strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their Families.

We are committed to...

Providing Soldiers and Families a Quality of Life that is commensurate with their service.

Providing our Families a strong, supportive environment where they can thrive.

Building a partnership with Army Families that enhances their strength and resilience.

We are committed to improving Family Readiness by:

- Standardizing and funding existing Family programs and services
- Increasing accessibility and quality of health care
- Improving Soldier and Family housing
- Ensuring excellence in schools, youth services and child care
- Expanding education and employment opportunities for Family members

Annual Pow Wow draws crowd

The annual Native American Pow Wow held Nov. 10 at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center featured food, displays, and traditional Native American dancing. The Pow Wow is an event whose purpose is to communicate and strengthen the ways of the Native American community, family life and spirituality.



Photos by Esther Garcia



Without a drum, there is no Pow Wow. The drum, consisting of the instrument and its singers, is the center of the arena and the center of attention. The drum sings songs for all occasions — from a contest song to a birthday song, the drum can provide a song for the job. The drum is made from a wooden shell covered in rawhide. Today, cowhide is usually used although buffalo hide is not unheard of. The average size drum is about twenty-six inches in diameter and can seat about eight men around it.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rosalba Chambers

The Pow Wow featured many different styles of Native American dancing from gourd dancing to traditional dancing.