



Fort Sam Houston News Leader



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Fort Sam Houston – Home of Army Medicine

Dec. 21, 2006

Briefs . . .

'Holidays at the Hacienda'

The Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers will present "Holidays at the Hacienda" Friday from 8 to 11 p.m. The event includes food, karaoke, games, prizes and much more. All single Soldiers are welcome to attend.

News Leader hiatus

The Fort Sam Houston News Leader will not be published Dec. 28 or Jan. 4. Submissions for the Jan. 11 issue should be e-mailed to news.leader@samhouston.army.mil or faxed to 295-0512 no later than Jan. 5. For more information, call 221-0615 or 221-1031.

Reopening, groundbreaking

Join the Fort Sam Houston Golf Club staff Jan. 2 at 7:30 a.m. to celebrate the reopening of Salado Del Rio course and groundbreaking at La Loma Grande course. Ceremonial activities begin with a groundbreaking ceremony at the La Loma course that will mark the start of renovations to its 18 tees and greens. Attendees will then proceed to the Salado course for a reopening ceremony, and watch as special guests hit the first tees on the course. Immediately following the conclusion of the reopening ceremony, there will be a reception in the golf clubhouse. For more information, call 221-5863.

Dr. King commemoration

Fort Sam Houston will commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Jan. 11 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797. The guest speaker will be Joel Williams, director, Army Medical Department Battle Simulation Center. The event also includes a dance performance by the Cole Jr./Sr. High School Praise Team and readings by Fort Sam Houston Elementary School students. For more information, call Master Sgt. Ricky Evans at 295-0561 or Eunice Polk at 295-0552. To request reasonable accommodation for a disability, call 221-0218.

Catering extended to Roadrunner

People can make reservations to use the Roadrunner Community Center facility for special events and unit functions through the Sam Houston Club's catering office. Reservations will be accepted for the facility's main auditorium and two adjacent meeting rooms. Catering service fees may apply. For more information, call 224-2721.

Harris Heights homes available

Three and four bedroom homes for senior NCOs are available for immediate occupancy in Harris Heights. For more information, call 270-7638.



Photo by Cheryl Harrison

Fourteen-year-old Austin Lamberson enjoys a visit with Santa as much as his little brother, 2-year-old Alex Williams, during the "Operation Christmas" celebration Dec. 13 at the Texas National Guard Armory in San Antonio.

Operation Christmas brightens holidays for military families

By Elaine Wilson
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

Christmas came a few weeks early this year for military families in San Antonio.

Nearly 300 people, many dressed in their holiday best, flocked to the Texas National Guard Armory early Dec. 13 for "Operation Christmas," a campaign aimed at brightening the holidays for military families.

The San Antonio event was the fifth in a series of six celebrations that have taken place in military communities throughout the nation, thanks to a joint effort between America Supports You partner Operation

Homefront and Wal-Mart.

"Operation Christmas is a way to say thank you to military members for their service and thank you to the family members who are sacrificing," said Amy Palmer, of Operation Homefront.

The early-morning festivities, held in a colorfully decked-out tent, included holiday arts and crafts, a visit with Santa Claus, food, music, and satellite and Web links with deployed loved ones. Even San Antonio Spurs legend, George "Iceman" Gervin, was on hand to sign basketballs and autograph pictures for young and old fans alike.

"We realize many military families

here are sacrificing, as well as the military overseas," said the San Antonio Hall of Famer. "We wanted to show how much we appreciate them and will do whatever we can to support them."

No one walked away empty-handed. Each child received a sizeable toy from Santa and parents and older siblings were treated to a Wal-Mart gift card so they could buy a toy of their own. While Santa will most likely garner the glory, the credit for the early Christmas gifts was due to Wal-Mart, which donated \$500,000 to Operation Homefront for the Operation Christmas events.

See OPERATION CHRISTMAS on Page 14

Breast cancer vaccine shows promising results

By Elaine Wilson
Fort Sam Houston News Leader

An Army-led breast cancer vaccination study is offering hope to breast cancer survivors. Early study results suggest a 50 percent reduction in disease recurrence for vaccinated women.

Col. (Dr.) George Peoples, Brooke Army Medical Center surgeon, released the results of the six-year study Dec. 14 at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium in San Antonio.

While still in the early stages of testing, the results of the study, the doctor said, are "intriguing."

The vaccine targets HER2/neu, a protein that plays a role in cell growth. In larger amounts, the protein accelerates tumor growth and, as a result, can lead to a poorer prognosis for women with breast cancer.

The researchers' goal was to create a vaccine that boosted the body's immune system so it could recognize and battle the protein before it stimulates growth. "We took the HER2/neu

protein, broke it down into basic pieces so we could find the piece, called a peptide, which the immune system could recognize," Peoples said.

"If the body can recognize the protein bit, which is potentially dangerous, then the immune system has a chance to rev up before an intact tumor cell is present," Peoples explained. "It's much tougher for the immune system to fight when overwhelmed with an established cancer, which expresses a multitude of proteins."

The use of a single peptide is a simplistic one to scientists, who believe more sophisticated vaccines are the answer, Peoples said. "No one believed that a simple peptide vaccine like this would work, including me."

To achieve the desired results, researchers took a revolutionary approach to their study by administering the vaccine containing the peptide to healthy women, rather than to women with late-stage disease. "This is one of the first times we've

See CANCER VACCINE on Page 4



Commander wishes post community safe, joyful holiday season

By Maj. Gen. Russell J. Czerw
Commander, Fort Sam Houston and AMEDDC&S

As we cross into 2007, we can take pride in the accomplishments and achievements of the past year and prepare for the missions that lie ahead. This holiday season, take the opportunity to relax and enjoy the company of your family and friends.

I also need you to make smart, informed decisions with regards to safety. My major concerns are winter and holiday driving, impaired driving and increased fire potential.

We as leaders must ensure that all members of the organization receive a thorough safety briefing prior to

the holiday season. We must personally review the travel plans of our Soldiers and civilians, emphasizing the main causes of traffic-related deaths: driving too fast for conditions, not using seatbelts, falling asleep at the wheel, inattention while driving and failure to use child-restraint devices. Reinforce the hazards of driving while impaired or riding with someone who is impaired. It is simply not worth the risk. Those that plan to travel long distances in their privately owned vehicles must complete the Army Safety Management Information System 2 program. This program can be accessed from the Combat Readiness Center Web site at <https://crc.army.mil/home/>.

We must also emphasize sexual assault risks, preven-

tion and response in our holiday safety briefings; guidance is available at www.sexualassault.army.mil.

Accident potential also exists in our homes. As a reminder, ensure holiday decorations do not present a fire risk. Do not overload electrical circuits or leave lighted candles unattended. Live trees should be watered regularly and check your smoke detectors.

For more information on winter and holiday safety, call the Installation Safety Office at 295-SAFE (7233).

Thanks again for your great work and sacrifices this year. I'm proud of all we've accomplished together. I wish you and your families a very joyful holiday season. Be safe!

Fort Sam Houston News Leader

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**Army Medical Department
Center and School and
Fort Sam Houston Commander**
Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw
Garrison Commander
Col. Wendy Martinson
Public Affairs Officer
Phillip Reidinger
Public Information Officer
Yolanda Hagberg
Editor/Writer
Elaine Wilson
Staff Writer
Cheryl Harrison
Layout Artist
Lori Newman

NSPS conversion to benefit many employees

(This is the second in a series of articles about the National Security Personnel System, the new federal personnel system. *Spiral 1.3*, which includes applicable U.S. Army Garrison employees, will launch April 15.)

When an organization is moved into the National Security Personnel System, employees will be initially converted to the appropriate career group, occupational code, pay schedule and pay band based on the occupational series, grade and supervisory status of their permanent position of record. The conversion will occur primarily via an automated process (conversion of some supervisory positions will require a manual review to determine the appropriate pay band).

Salary conversion

Full salary is preserved — the employee will convert with no loss of pay. In fact, pay may increase for an employee who is eligible for a one-time, prorated Within-Grade-Increase buy-in. The prorated WGI buy-in is based on the length of time (calendar days) accumulated toward the next WGI. The WGI buy-in is added to the employee's base salary and along with the local market supplement is considered the "NSPS-adjusted base salary."

The WGI buy-in applies to General Manager as well as General Schedule employees.

To receive the one-time, prorated WGI buy-in at conversion:

- Performance must be acceptable; and
- The employee must be below step 10 of his or her current grade. An employee at step 10 is not eligible for a WGI buy-in because he or she has already received all 10 step increases under the GS system. The WGI buy-in is a process used during conversion to NSPS to pay the employee for the time spent working towards the next step increase.

Employees can estimate the WGI buy-in using the conversion tool located in the NSPS 101 course on the NSPS Web page at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps>.

Conversion issues

Salary rates

Special salary rates are paid in lieu of GS locality rates. The NSPS compensation architecture, with its broad pay band salary ranges and local market supplements, eliminates the need to use special salary rates. An employee with a special salary rate under the GS system will be converted into NSPS without a reduction in pay. The NSPS adjusted salary (base salary plus the applicable local market supplement) will equal the employee's total GS salary prior to conversion.

Grade retention

NSPS does not provide for grade retention. When an

employee receiving grade retention is converted to NSPS, the grade of the employee's position of record (not the grade being retained) is used to place the employee in the appropriate NSPS career group, pay schedule and pay band. If the employee's base salary exceeds the maximum of the assigned NSPS pay band, the employee will receive pay retention.

Pay retention

An employee on pay retention at the time of conversion to NSPS will be converted to a career group, pay schedule and pay band based on permanent position of record. However, the employee is not eligible for the WGI buy-in described above. If the employee's base salary exceeds the maximum salary range of the pay band, the employee will continue under pay retention. Under NSPS, an employee is eligible for two years of pay retention starting at the date of conversion. An employee on pay retention is not eligible for a base salary increase due to an adjustment in the minimum/maximum of the rate ranges. However, the employee would be eligible for any increase in the local market supplement percentage. Recognition of performance contributions of employees on retained pay is limited to lump sum bonuses.

Temporary promotion

An employee on temporary promotion at the time of the conversion to NSPS will be converted on the basis of the permanent position (not the grade and series of the temporary position). Immediately after conversion, management may temporarily reassign or promote the employee under NSPS with an increase in pay up to the rate the employee was receiving during the temporary promotion.

Detail

An employee on detail at the time of conversion will be converted to NSPS on the basis of his or her permanent position of record. It is possible that an official personnel action documenting the temporary assignment will no longer be necessary under NSPS because the duties are part of the pay band to which the employee is being assigned. However, immediately after conversion, management may detail the employee again if the detail crosses component or agency lines or is need to temporarily assign an employee from NSPS to another pay system.

Career conditional appointments

At the time of conversion, career condition employees will become career employees.

Probationary periods

An employee serving an initial or supervisory probationary period at the time of conversion will continue the probation after conversion.

(Source: NSPS Web site)

Message from the U.S. Army Garrison commander

Transitioning to the National Security Personnel System

On April 15, 2007, the U.S. Army Garrison's supervisors and non-bargaining employees will join other already transitioned commands on Fort Sam Houston by converting to the new federal personnel system called the National Security Personnel System.

Our nation's ever-changing security environment requires a comprehensive transformation throughout the Department of Defense to a more responsive and agile personnel process. To this end, Congress authorized the NSPS as part of the fiscal 2004 National Defense Authorization Act. This new personnel system accelerates the DoD's efforts to create a total workforce operating as one cohesive unit. It increases effectiveness through a simplified personnel management system that streamlines the way it hires, assigns work and rewards employees while preserving employees' rights and benefits.

The Garrison NSPS Team is working hard to ensure a successful transition for its employees who are converting in April 2007. In January and February, we will be conducting training sessions for supervisors and employees and will be setting up an NSPS Web page on the Fort Sam Houston Intranet in the near future. The Web page will contain valuable information, briefings, Web links, frequently asked questions, etc. We hope to make this process as easy as possible with your help. You are a vital part of this transformation so I encourage you to visit the NSPS Web page as well as the Civilian Personnel On-Line Web page to learn as much as you can about this new personnel management system. If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to take the NSPS 101 course which will give you an excellent overview of the new process.

We will be publishing an NSPS-related article in each News Leader from now until NSPS is implemented and operating in full swing. The NSPS is a system that is good for all of us. It will strengthen our operations and make us more responsive to our nation's needs. It will also enhance your personal growth and professional development. The culture change will be significant, but this is an opportunity for all of us to grow stronger. My staff and I stand ready to support you during this exciting new change. Stand by — there's more to follow.

Sincerely,
Wendy L. Martinson
Colonel, U.S. Army
Garrison Commander

For more information, please visit the following Web sites:
<http://www.cpol.army.mil/> (Civilian Personnel On-Line)
<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html> (NSPS)
<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/nsps101/nsps/index.htm> (NSPS 101 Course)

Points of contact:
Floyd D. Williams, Plans, Analysis and Integration Office, U.S. Army Garrison, 221-2546
Charles Weeks, PAIO, 221-9527
Carol Bann, PAIO, 221-2732
Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, 221-1425

Soldier's heroic actions recognized

Story and photo by Esther Garcia
Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs Office

Sgt. Shane Salter, D Company, 187th Medical Battalion, from Walawala, Wash., would have been just like everyone else, graduating and leaving Fort Sam Houston quietly to his next assignment. But a rumor was heard that Salter had received a Bronze Star Medal and certificate in the mail for actions when previously deployed to Iraq.

Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Paskos of the 187th Medical Battalion heard the rumor, verified it and quickly decided that an official ceremony was in order to recognize the Soldier's heroic combat actions.

Col. John Cook, commander, 32nd Medical Brigade, presented the Bronze Star with V Device to Salter Dec. 8 at Wood Auditorium in front of his classmates graduating from the Physical Therapy Specialist Course.

"I am honored to have the privilege to recognize a true warrior, Soldier and a bona fide hero," said Cook. "We talk about and hear a lot of talk about heroes. Today, we recognize someone who meets my definition of a hero."

Jan. 21, 2005, in the town of Ad Duluiyah, Iraq, then Spc. Salter was serving in the number two position of an eight-man assault team where he was assigned. The other team was the breach, command and

control team. Salter's four-member team was tasked to kill or capture known enemy personnel located in three separate buildings.

Once Salter's platoon arrived at the target area the platoon established mounted blocking positions and thermal observation posts, while Salter and his team quickly dismantled their vehicles and moved to their first target.

When the door to the building was kicked open by the breach, command and control team, Salter's team entered the building and enemy fire erupted. One team member was wounded and fell face down in the center of the room. As Salter entered the room he was struck in the left hand and the door swung closed behind him. Without realizing he was momentarily separated from his team, Salter cleared the breach point by taking three steps into the room, staggered to his knee, and returned fire with only his firing hand.

Salter moved to cover his assigned sector of fire and alerted the rest of the team that a member of the assault team was down and that he was hit himself.

As team members evacuated the mortally wounded Soldier out of the building, Salter continued to clear an additional room before he was ordered to receive medical treatment outside. However, once outside Salter provided security for the Soldiers as they treated one of their comrades for an

open chest wound. Salter reassured his fallen comrade and refused medical treatment for his own wounds. Salter and his fallen comrade were finally medically evacuated by helicopter.

One Soldier died and Salter lost two fingers on his left hand during this combat operation. However, as a result of Salter's actions his team was successful in capturing two of the three targeted individuals in neighboring buildings and was critical in turning a disaster into mission success and saving the lives of his remaining six teammates.

"I am pleased and honored that this ceremony was put together for proper awarding," said Salter.

Salter will be attending Phase II of the Physical Therapy Specialist Course at Fort Sill, Okla. After graduation in March, Salter will return to Fort Sam Houston to work at Brooke Army Medical Center and hopes to eventually be assigned at the Center for the Intrepid and work with amputees. Salter also received the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Cook read a portion of the Soldiers Creed that best describes Salter's actions on that day in January 2005. "I am an American Soldier, I am a warrior and a



Col. John Cook (left), commander, 32nd Medical Brigade, presents the Bronze Star with V Device to Sgt. Shane Salter Dec. 8 at Wood Auditorium for heroic achievement Jan. 21, 2005, while serving as an assault team member conducting raid operations in Ad Duluiyah, Iraq.

member of a team, I will always place the mission first, I will never accept defeat, I will never leave a fallen comrade, and I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat." Salter certainly applied the Soldiers Creed on that day.

Bystander, firefighters save life at Fort Sam

By Elaine Wilson

Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

When Pablo Frausto clocked into work Dec. 15, he expected a hard day's work at the construction site at Fort Sam Houston. What he never expected was to clock back out a hero.

The day started out as normal. He and a crew of workers from San Antonio Control Systems arrived early to continue air conditioning duct work in the new nursing school, which is being constructed in the field adjacent to the Sam Houston Club.

That day, Frausto was working in the same vicinity as two other men. One of the workers, William Slawinski, a pipefitter from International Mechanic Service, smiled and greeted Frausto as he passed by. Primarily Spanish speaking, Frausto just smiled back.

A short while later, Frausto saw Slawinski in the hallway carrying a pipe with the help of a co-worker. He looked up when he heard a pipe fall, and "then I heard a cry for help," he said.

Frausto rushed over to Slawinski, along with another co-worker.

His first thought was, "I hope he doesn't die." Instinct kicked in; Frausto felt for a pulse and checked for signs of breathing. The man started convulsing and Frausto frantically tried to dredge up memories of high school CPR, a class he had taken more than 30 years ago. "He needed oxygen. I knew if he didn't get oxygen he would have brain damage."

He silently prayed as he performed the lifesaving technique.

Jesus – breathe 1...2— Don't let this man die — Frausto saw Slawinski's eyes quiver and his mouth open.

In the meantime, a crew of firefighters and a paramedic had just been dispatched on a call for shortness of

"I believe God put me there just to give this man another chance at life."

Pablo Frausto

breath. They got the call that a man had collapsed and diverted to Building 1395.

When the firefighters arrived, Slawinski was not breathing.

"We immediately hooked up the (automatic external defibrillator)," said Capt. Adam Martinez, paramedic from the Fort Sam Houston Fire Department. The AED is standard equipment on a fire truck and is a portable device used to "shock" a heart back into its regular rhythm.

They shocked Slawinski, performed CPR, then shocked him again. With a faint pulse restored, Slawinski was rushed to Brooke Army Medical Center.

Thanks to the quick-thinking efforts of Frausto and the firefighters, Slawinski is now on the road to recovery after a massive heart attack.

"I don't remember much from the incident," said Slawinski, who was transported Wednesday to University Hospital in San Antonio. "But I know I owe a lot to Pablo. I never thought someone would do that, especially for someone he hardly knew. If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be here."

"I'm just happy to know that he's doing well," said Frausto. "I believe God put me there just to give this man another chance at life."

Slawinski said he also owes a debt of gratitude to the Fort Sam Houston firefighters. "They got me here, Pablo and the firefighters."

The crew said they were just doing their job.

"This is our job; it's what we do," said firefighter Aaron Passmore

"But to save a life ... that brings me hope, motivation," said Lt. Omar Perez.

From the early 911 call to early CPR, "everything was done right," said Martinez, who has visited Slawinski in the hospital every day since the incident.

Martinez identified the proper sequence of events as the "Chain of Survival," which is early access, early CPR, early defibrillation and early advanced care. The key word being "early," he said.

"We've responded to calls where a person is down and out and people are just standing around," he said. "That's an uphill battle. There's a better chance for survival if someone intervenes before we get there rather than waiting until we arrive. Every minute counts."

In the event of an emergency, people should always call for help first, then administer CPR, if needed. Martinez recommends a basic provider course, a sacrifice of time that can later make the difference between life and death.

On post, people can dial 911 from any office phone to reach the Fort Sam Houston Fire Department. If calling from a cell phone, 911 calls will be sent downtown. In that case, Martinez said it's important for people to identify they're calling from Fort Sam Houston. "Make sure you identify you are on post and you will be transferred to our department."

Once the call is received, Chief Curtis Williams said the department will do everything in its power to help.

"I have a group of outstanding men and women in this department," said Williams. "My goal is to provide a standard level of service to the FSH community that's positive and expected, and one that's equal to and competitive with departments outside our gates."

Cancer vaccine

Continued from Page 1

used a breast cancer vaccine in women who are free of the disease and with an intact immune system," Peoples said.

Previous trials have involved patients in late-stage disease, mainly because those patients were the most willing to undergo high-risk type treatments. However, "it's not fair to test vaccines in that setting," Peoples said. "It's analogous to getting your flu shot when you already have the flu."

"We want to use the vaccine for what it's meant to do; we want to prevent disease."

The study was limited to women who previously had breast cancer, but were disease-free, having completed all primary therapies, such as chemotherapy and radiation.

Researchers accepted 186 patients into the study, which took place at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and the Joyce Murtha Breast Cancer Center in Pennsylvania.

Once they met the initial criteria for study participation, the women were test-

ed to see if they were Human Leukocyte Antigens-A2 positive or HLA-A2 negative. HLA are proteins located on the surface of white blood cells and tissues in the body and are responsible for presenting peptides to the immune system for recognition.

The vaccine was designed to target the HLA-A2 molecule simply because it is the most common, encompassing about 50 percent of the population, Peoples said. "We chose it because if we were going to spend five or six years researching the vaccine, we wanted it to benefit the most people."

Out of the 186 study participants, 101 were A2 positive women and were vaccinated. The other 85, who were A2 negative, were followed as a control group and were able to continue whatever therapy they were on or start new therapy.

The vaccination regimen was one shot per month for six months with variations for testing purposes. In the early phase of the trial, doses were small to ensure safe-

ty; therefore, the results of this trial are "even more interesting since not all women got the optimal dose of the vaccine," Peoples said.

"Nearly every woman formed some type of immune response to the vaccine," Peoples said. "But the most important question is, 'does that immunity mean anything?'"

Early research suggests it does. Out of the 186 patients, the recurrence rate as of last month was 16 percent in the control group and 8 percent for the vaccinated group – a 50 percent reduction in recurrence.

However, the study includes a low number of patients so even a single recurrence can cause the results to vacillate, he said. "We were at a statistically significant level three months ago, but because of a late recurrence in the vaccinated group, we currently are not," Peoples said. "We will have to continue to follow the patients' clinical course in order to demonstrate a statistically different recurrence rate."

However, "the results are intriguing,

intriguing enough to go to the next step, especially since only one of the vaccinated patients that occurred actually received the optimal dose of the vaccine."

If the Food and Drug Administration agrees with Peoples, the next step will be Phase 3 testing, which includes multiple sites and a much larger pool of participants. But rather than the Army, the next phase will be conducted by a commercial company called Apthera.

As for the Army, the study has launched numerous other vaccine trials, including a breast cancer vaccine for HLA-A2 negative women and vaccines comprising various other peptides. The ultimate goal, Peoples said, is to reach the point where the vaccine is used as a preventive for recurrences as well as for women who never had the disease but are at increased risk for breast cancer.

"But we have to test in a systematic way," he said. "It's a lengthy process for safety reasons, but initial results are promising, and we're pressing on."

Holiday hours

Sam Houston Club, Ticket Office

The Sam Houston Club and the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Ticket Office will be closed through Jan. 1, except for special events reserved through the catering office. For more information, call 224-2721.

Installation Safety Office

The Installation Safety Office will close Friday and Dec. 29. For more information or to report safety hazards, call 295-7233.

Garrison Command Suite

The Fort Sam Houston Garrison Command Suite will be minimally manned during the exodus through Jan. 1.

Welcome Center at Personnel Processing

The Welcome Center at the Personnel Processing

Section and the ID Card Section, both located in Building 367, and the Student Personnel Center, Building 1290, will be closed to the public Friday. All sections will resume service Tuesday at 7:30 a.m.

Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, Building 144, will be closed Friday and Dec. 29 from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call Rudy Garza at 221-1425.

Commissary

The Fort Sam Houston Commissary will be open Sunday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will be closed Monday.

Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Section

The Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Section of the

Directorate of Human Resources, Building 2263, Room 200, will be open Friday and Dec. 29. For more information, call Grady Peavy at 221-1752

Army Continuing Education Services

Army Continuing Education Services, Building 2248, will be open Friday and Dec. 29. For more information, call Belinda Robinson at 221-9884

Army Career and Alumni Program

The Army Career and Alumni Program, Building 2263, Room B-099, will be open Friday and Dec. 29. For more information, call Russ Lane at 221-1213

Garrison Internal Review office

The Garrison Internal Review office will be closed Monday and Jan. 1. For more information, call 221-3866.

\$3.6 million golf course renovation project wraps up

Story and photo by Minnie Jones
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

The Salado Del Rio course will reopen Jan. 2 after a yearlong, \$3.6 million renovation project. The official grand reopening will be held Jan. 2 from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the No. 1 tee, with a reception to follow.

The Salado Del Rio ceremony will include the unveiling of a dedication plaque, prepared by the Fort Sam Houston Golf Club, to recognize the renovation project. Special guests at the ceremony will include Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, installation commander, and Col. Wendy Martinson, garrison commander. The event is free and open to the public, and the course will be open for play following the event.

Prior to the reopening ceremony, a groundbreaking ceremony will be held on the La Loma Grande course, signaling the second phase of renovations to the Fort Sam Houston championship 18-hole golf courses. The course will be closed for complete reconstruction of the greens, tee boxes and green side bunkers, with a projected reopening in October 2007. The La Loma course, developed in 1932, is the only military golf course that has hosted a PGA event, and also hosted the Texas Open twice.

The newly renovated Salado Del Rio course measures more than 6,500 yards and features upgraded putting surfaces of a hybrid Tiff-2 Bermuda grass, providing surfaces that result in slightly faster, smoother greens.

The Salado renovation included nine holes of concrete cart paths and new steel bridges. The par threes were lengthened, making the course more challenging.



A golfer improves his swing at the Fort Sam Houston Golf Club's driving range. The golf club features two 18-hole championship golf courses, the La Loma Grande and the newly renovated Salado Del Rio, which opens for play Jan. 2.

Additional mounds were added around the greens, and the sandboxes were upgraded.

"The drainage was also enhanced to improve the overall playing experience. Another unique feature of the Salado Del Rio is the redesigning of the eighth hole, which used to be a straight fairway, has been moved and redesigned with a left dog-legged fairway, making it in my opinion, the ideal and more challenging hole on the course," said James Benites, Fort Sam Houston Golf

Club assistant business manager and PGA instructor.

The Kevin Tucker Design Group of Nashville, Tenn., and Landscape Unlimited Inc. of Lincoln Neb., were chosen to design and implement the project. The Army's Installation Management Command is funding the golf renovation initiative with non-appropriated dollars, generated by business operations at installations across the Southwest Region.

"The redesign will be very rewarding and exciting to play, the course will rival anything within the city in the way of competitiveness and appearance," said Col. Bradley Freeman, president of the Golf Advisory Board.

"The course boasts a distinctive design feature of a double green: the two courses, Salado Del Rio and the La Loma, will finish on the same green," said Freeman. "This type of design is not original — one of the oldest and prestigious golf courses in the world, St. Andrews in Scotland, has a double green, and the only other golf course in San Antonio with a double green is the Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort. This makes this unique feature historical, and something that other upscale resorts feature in their course design."

The Fort Sam Houston Golf Club is open to the public and offers private lessons, specialty clinics and a junior golfers program. On-premise features include a Pro Shop and full-scale catering. Mulligan's Snack Bar and Grill is also located on the site.

The Fort Sam Houston Golf Club is located at 1384 Harry Wurzbach Road. For more information, call 222-9386 or visit fortsamhoustonmwr.com.

SPORTS BRIEFS . . .

Intramural ping pong

Letters of intent for intramural ping pong are due Jan. 3. Letters should be mailed to Earl Young at 1212 Stanley Road, Suite 20, Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234-5020 or e-mail earl.young@samhouston.army.mil. A coaches meeting will be held Jan. 8 at 1

p.m. at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center. The season begins Jan. 17. For more information, call 221-1180 or 221-1234.

Intramural billiards

Letters of intent for intramural billiards are due Jan. 3. Send letters to Earl Young at 1212 Stanley Road, Suite 20, Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234-5020 or e-mail earl.young@samhouston.army.mil.

A coaches meeting will be held Jan. 9 at 1 p.m. at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center. The season begins Jan. 18. For more information, call 221-1180 or 221-1234.

Basketball invitational

The Fort Sam Houston Ranger Jam IX will be held Jan. 27 and 28 at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center. Sign-up by Jan. 22

to participate. This double elimination tournament will follow National Collegiate Athletic Association rules. There is a 12-player limit, and participation is restricted to eight men's and six women's teams. Awards will be given to the top two individual and team winners. The entry fee is \$225 per team. For more information, call Earl Young at 221-1180 or e-mail earl.young@samhouston.army.mil.

Lonestar to dedicate All-American Bowl show to troops

Country music's Lonestar will perform a 45-minute concert in honor of Soldiers and their families after the U.S. Army All-American Bowl game Jan. 6 at the Alamodome in San Antonio.

The "Army All-American Tribute to the Troops Concert" will later be broadcast on primetime by American Forces Radio and Television.

Committed to honoring troops for their service to the nation, Lonestar members said they believe there's a powerful link between country music and America's Soldier heroes.

"Soldiers gravitate toward country music because it's about life. Messages in our music resonate with military members because they are real; they tell a story," said Dean Sams, group founder. "We pay tribute to our Soldiers during every performance because we appreciate our military folks, and we want to do our little part to remind everyone of their sacrifice."

The All-American Bowl is one of the Army's highest-profile public-relations events. Some 80 high school football players across the country have been selected to participate.

"To me football is such a great sport because of the whole team concept. I'm excited to be a part of a game that recognizes team ethics by uniting Soldiers and young players," said Sams. "It's going to be over-the-top cool."

San Antonio's Alamodome has been home to the Army All-American Bowl since 2002. The game gives fans the chance to see tomorrow's college and NFL stars as the nation's top 80 high school stars go head-to-head in a classic



Courtesy photo

Country music's Lonestar will perform a 45-minute concert in honor of Soldiers and their families after the U.S. Army All-American Bowl game Jan. 6 at the Alamodome.

East vs. West battle.

Prior to the game, children of all ages will have the chance to attend a free Fan Fiesta Interactive area from 9 to 11:30 a.m. at Sunset Station. The event includes the U.S. Army musical entertainers, Army Drill Team performances, live music, food and games. At 11 a.m., the U.S. Army All-American Bowl will feature a special pre-game ceremony honoring America's Soldiers. The game begins at 12 p.m.

Discounted vouchers for tickets are available at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Ticket Office at the Sam Houston Club. Tickets are also available at the Alamodome ticket office, online at www.ticketmaster.com or call Ticketmaster at 224-9600. All Army Bowl tickets include the post-game concert by Lonestar.

(Source: 5th Recruiting Brigade)

Honoring Martin Luther King

Fort Sam to honor MLK legacy

By Staff Sgt. Ruth Felix
Special to the News Leader

Known as an activist, the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., stood up for civil rights. King was the main leader of the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1950s and 60s. He wanted to make a difference in the treatment of black Americans. King's position forced others to notice and hear of the injustice toward different races, and he took advantage of his position to bring about change.

King paved the way with the help of other civil rights activists, such as Rosa Parks who refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. He wanted people to stand up for what they believed and King set the example.

Dr. King attended Morehouse College in Atlanta, earning a bachelor's degree in sociology and a divinity degree from Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pa. King then earned his doctorate in theology from Boston University.

In 1955, King was elected into a new association called the Montgomery Improvement Association. Under his leadership, the MIA was instrumental in guiding the Montgomery bus boycott, a successful campaign that focused national attention on racial segregation in the South, catapulting King into the national spotlight. The civil rights movement won wide support among whites, and laws that once barred integration in the Southern states were abolished.

In 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court declared Alabama's segregation laws unlawful. Montgomery buses were no

longer segregated, due to the role King played in the boycott campaign for the arrest of Rosa Parks.

In August 1963, at Washington, D.C., King led the largest civil rights demonstration in history with about 250,000 people. During this march, King made his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

In 1964, at the age of 35, King was the youngest man awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work as a peacemaker and leading nonviolent civil rights demonstrations. Upon receipt of the \$54,123 monetary prize, King donated the money to agencies to further support the civil rights movement.

On April 4, 1968, 39 year-old King, while leading a protest in Memphis, Tenn., was shot and killed by an assassin's bullet.

King became the second American whose birthday is observed as a national holiday, the first being George Washington.

Etched on King's tombstone are the words: "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, I'm free at last."

The Fort Sam Houston community will honor King with a commemoration to celebrate his life and contributions. The event will be held Jan. 11 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797. The guest speaker will be Joel Williams, director, Army Medical Department Center and School Battle Simulation Center. The Cole Jr./Sr. High School Praise Team will perform and readings will be by Fort Sam Houston Elementary School students.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Evans at 295-0561 or Eunice Polk at 295-0552.

End of year tax tips

By Brian J. Novak

Director, Military Tax Assistance Center

The most common question people ask at this time of year about taxes is what they can do now to save money on 2006 taxes. The following are a few tips for taxpayers:

- Put away money for retirement. People can put up to \$4,000 (\$4,500 if over age 50) in a traditional IRA. Every dollar put in will reduce taxable income by the same amount. There is no deduction available for people who contribute to a Roth IRA. See a financial professional for advice before contributing to an IRA. Tax deductible IRA contributions must be made by April 15. Also, employees who have a 401K or Thrift Savings Plan at work should put in the maximum amount they can afford and are allowed to contribute. Any amount put into these types of plans will reduce taxable income by the same amount.
- For tax purposes, make donations to charity. However, donations to charities are only deductible if itemizing deductions. Charitable contributions will reduce taxable income for taxpayers who itemize. Most taxpayers will itemize their deductions if they owned a home in 2006 or if they incurred a very large amount of tax deductible expenses in 2006. For people who do not fall into these two categories, donating money to charity will not save money on taxes, even if the contribution is to the Combined Federal Campaign.
- For taxpayers who have tax deductible

expenses paid in 2006, begin to collect documentation to support those deductions. Many taxpayers will have deductions they can take even if they are not itemizing their deductions, but must be able to document that they incurred and paid those expenses in 2006. Not having documentation for expenses paid may result in not being able to take the deduction.

While this list is not exhaustive, it does give people a starting point for the upcoming tax season. Newspapers, magazines and multiple Web sites contain a wealth of information to help taxpayers prepare for the tax season.

Tax preparers can assist people with more specific questions during tax preparation.

This year, the Fort Sam Houston Military Tax Assistance Center is tentatively scheduled to provide income tax preparation services to Brooke Army Medical Center, the Fisher House, the Powless Hall and at the training battalions on Fort Sam Houston. While a vast majority of tax preparers are Soldiers helping fellow Soldiers, volunteers are needed to assist where military manpower falls short due to mission requirements.

Volunteers need to be available at least two days a week for a minimum of six hours a day. Training will be provided in early January and must be completed prior to preparing tax returns. To volunteer, call the Legal Assistance Office at 221-2282 or 221-2353.

Tax center to open Jan. 23

By Brian J. Novak

Director, Military Tax Assistance Center

First comes the holiday season with gifts, candies and holiday parties. Then it's time for bowl season with 32 football games and all their pageantry. And then, once again, it's time for tax season.

As the end of the year approaches, the 2007 Fort Sam Houston Military Tax Assistance Center is preparing to open. MTAC has provided invaluable tax assistance in previous years to Soldiers, their family members and retirees in and around the Fort Sam Houston community.

Last year, MTAC prepared 4,340 income tax returns, resulting in \$4.5 million in tax refunds. By using MTAC, the Fort Sam

Houston community saved more than \$544,000 in tax preparation and electronic filing fees. It is easy to see why MTAC is one of the greatest benefits of military service.

This year, MTAC is scheduled to open Jan. 23, and will be open Tuesdays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. These hours of operation are tentative based on the availability of tax preparers due to mission requirements. MTAC is located directly behind 1306 Stanley Road, Building 134, in the building that houses the 1st Legal Support Organization.

Income tax returns will be prepared on an appointment-only basis. Future News Leader articles will explain the appointment procedure and documents people need to bring to an appointment.

Garrison welcomes first sergeant



Photo by Phil Reidinger

U.S. Army Garrison Headquarters Company Commander Capt. Clayton Curtis presents the company guidon to incoming 1st Sgt. Wendy Carter following relinquishment of responsibilities as the senior NCO by 1st Sgt. George Gunder. The change of responsibility ceremony was held Friday at the post flag-pole.



Photo by Gloria Davila

VIP visit

Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, commander, Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, assists elementary kindergarten students in the completion of a Christmas banner. Czerw and his wife, Michelle, visited with students, staff and administrators during a recent tour of Fort Sam Houston Independent School District.

Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, commander, Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, posed tough questions to Cole Jr./Sr. High School seventh graders about their ecological community projects. He and Michelle Czerw visited Theresa Hoggard's science class and other classrooms to view new construction currently under way at Cole Jr./Sr. High School.



Photo by Janet Bolin

Winter holiday performances showcase student musical talent

By Dr. Kathy Maxwell
Fort Sam Houston Elementary School

Before heading home for winter break, Fort Sam Houston Independent School District music and art students performed in musical concerts for student colleagues, parents, school staff and community members.

Both Fort Sam Houston schools showcased instrumental and vocal talent performances Dec. 11 at Evans Auditorium. Starting off was the Fort Sam Houston Elementary School's sixth grade band under the direction of Dan Vasquez. The 27-member band played "Beethoven's Ninth," "Up on the Housetop" and a special arrangement of "Sweeney's Jingle Bells."

The 42-member Robert G. Cole intermediate band performed musical selections including "The Festive Season" and "Christmas Proclamation," as well as a lighter selection, "Frosty's Caribbean Holiday." The band was directed by Jon Philippus, Cole band director.

The combined Robert G. Cole Junior High and varsity choirs, under the direction of Dan Vasquez, performed a wide range of vocal selections including "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Do You Hear What I Hear?" and the complex piece, "Hallelujah Chorus." The choir received a standing ovation for their beautiful performance. The female students performed "Santa Baby," a Javits/Springer and Springer selection. Betty Phillips, a parent, accompanied the band and choir on the piano.

Robert G. Cole Varsity Band, under the direction of Philippus, performed moving medleys and rousing renditions of holiday favorites including "A Christmas Celebration," "The First Noel," selections from "The Polar Express" and "Anderson's Sleigh Ride." Featured instrumentals were performed by Michael Sees on trumpet, Andre Hamilton on saxophone and Alexander Dochnal on percussion. Philippus recognized clarinet player Quinton Crabb, who qualified as a member of the Association of Texas Small School Band Region XII Band.

"This is an amazing group of young people. This group is really dedicated because the varsity band performs an average of 39 times during the 36 weeks of the school year," said Philippus. "These young people are able to multi-task by learning Christmas music during football season play-offs."

Gail Siller, superintendent of FSHISD schools, commented, "The students have shown amazing growth this year. The musical skills they are building will carry them through all their lives. I am especially pleased that we have 157 students in these programs."

The next evening, the entire second grade student population performed their version of a story about superhero reindeer that save Earth, Christmas and Santa Claus called "The Incredible Reindeer."

Dances, songs and lines were performed under the direction of Sandra Fergins, music teacher, and Connie Beck, theater arts teacher. Scenery props were made by Andrea Garcia, visual arts teacher, and Carolyn Absher and her fifth grade Gifted and Talented Education students. Costumes were created by parents, Carolyn Absher, GATE students and Connie Beck.

"It is always a joy to see the students blossom into singers, dancers, actors and actresses each year," said Fergins.

"I am so impressed with all the second graders and excited to see their performances," Beck said. "I want to thank our second grade teachers for their help and support throughout the preparation and rehearsal of the production."

Also performing were the exemplary music students from fifth and sixth grades. The exemplary music students earned positions on the performance team through self-nomination and a series of performance try-outs. Garcia commented, "The Incredible Reindeer' presents Fort Sam Houston Elementary second graders at their best in a colorful and highly energetic performance."

"The elementary student performance was performed in front of a standing-room-only audience.

Cole seniors prevail in powder puff

After a lengthy hiatus, the annual powder puff game has returned for a third year. The entire student body looks forward to the game with much anticipation.

This year the senior class females of Robert G. Cole High School took their yearlong frustration of a play loss to last year's seniors out on the junior class ladies Dec. 14 at Cougar Stadium. Led by the inspired play of Brittany Maas, Michelle McClendon, Allison Erickson and Kenah Fisher, the class of 2007 was never fully challenged, and cruised to an easy 20-0 rout of the class of 2008.

"I thought I should have had two touchdowns," said senior McClendon. "They said I stepped out of bounds on the first one. I don't know, I thought I was in. We had so much fun out there. I'll miss it next year when I'm in college."

Cole wins in UIL district contest

The Cole Jr./Sr. High School seventh and eighth graders earned third place in the University Scholastic League's Academic District contest last week in Jourdanon. Nine academic tests were administered during the competition and six tests and an art exhibit were completed in November. Cole participates with only seventh and eighth graders, while other schools compete with sixth, seventh and eighth graders. Cole Jr./Sr. High School teachers serve as coaches to the students and are listed below.

The following students placed in the listed academic categories.

Junior High UIL District Academic results

	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade
Art exhibit black and white Rita Hansen (coach)	First – Naomi Squires Second – Karen Garay Third – Teasha Reed	First – Carlton Hogan Fifth – Justine Dintelmann Sixth – Donhvan Vallejos
Color	First – Savannah Wessies Second – Karen Garay Fifth – Megan Ahearne	Third – Tesla Jones Fourth – Donhvan Vallejos
Computer		Fifth – Donhvan Vallejos
Art Recognition Rita Hansen (coach)	Fifth – Teasha Reed	Third – Gretchen Newcomer
Calculator Applications Jan Monroe (coach)	First – Wesley Ford Third – Francesca Mercado Fifth – Savannah Weisses	Fourth – Jordan Bell Fifth – Brian Flythe
Dictionary Skills Ron Tullius (coach)		First – Brian Flythe
Editorial Writing Jennifer Parovel	Fifth – Kayla Larvis	
Impromptu Speaking Jo Chacon (coach)	Second – Sean Deaton Third – Ethan Fleming	Third – Sheyondra Evans
Listening Skills Jennifer Parovel	Third – Molly Gresenz	
Maps, Graphs and Charts Kim Chandio (coach)	Fifth – Cody Robison	Sixth – Brian Flythe Best Alt. – James Hasewinkle
Mathematics Jan Monroe (coach)	Fourth – Teasha Reed	Fourth – Brian Flythe Sixth – Gretchen Newcomer
Modern Oratory Jo Chacon (coach)	Third – Gabriel Perez	
Number Sense Stephanie Goble (coach)	Fourth – Konrad Kelson	
Oral Reading Nancy Hildenburg (coach)		Sixth – Rebecca Lavender
Ready Writing Pat Feola (coach)	Third – Molly Gresenz	First – Megan Renz Best Alt. – Megan Rush
Science Theresa Hoggard (coach) Eric Boehme (coach)	First – Megan Ahearne Fourth – Mason Starnes Best Alternate – Kayla Larvin	Second – Connor Kelly
Social Studies Kim Chandio (coach)	Third – Alexandra Herel Fifth – James Hasewinkle	First – Brian Flythe Best Alt. – Alex Garcia
Spelling Rita Hansen (coach)	Third – Darius Price Fifth – Kayla Larvins	Third – Brian Flythe Fifth – Sammie Mickett Sixth – Shaquilla Newby
		Best Alt. – Joseph Cavazos

Dental activity prepares for BRAC

The Fort Sam Houston Dental Activity will redistribute its customers in preparation for an influx of troops due to upcoming Base Realignment and Closure changes.

"Our customer numbers will be increasing due to BRAC. We are taking a proactive role and disbursing the number of customers seen at each clinic so we can decrease wait times and better accommodate our customers," said Capt. Carl Shaw, DENTAC detachment commander.

Additionally, the Brooke Army Medical Center Dental Clinic will be available for routine dental treatment. In the past, only customers needing a surgical procedure were seen there.

The redistribution will start Jan. 3 with a records transfer Dec. 29. For more information, call Shaw or Master Sgt. Claudio Carrasco at 295-2743.

See redistribution chart at right:
(Source: DENTAC)

BAMC DC 916-2549
Institute for Surgical Research
Brooke Army Medical Center

Rhoades DC 295-8740
187th Medical Battalion
U.S. Army Medical Information Systems Support Agency
U.S. Army South Veterinary Command
Dental Command
Medical Command
5th Army Recruiting/Headquarters
Great Plains
Military Entrance Processing Station
2/75 Brigade
South Texas Branch (Veterinary Services)
San Antonio Recruiting Garrison

Budge DC 295-4156
Advanced NCO Course
Basic NCO Course
440th Blood
470th Military Intelligence
264th Medical Battalion
232nd Medical Battalion
Staff Judge Advocate
79th Ordnance Detachment
797th Explosive Ordnance Detachment
418th
43rd Medical Detachment
591st
Criminal Investigation Division
Medical Command Band
DENTAC
DFAS
HQ 32nd Medical Brigade
Camp Bullis
Army Medical Department Center and School
228th Combat Support Hospital

RELIGIOUS HAPPENINGS . . .***Christmas Eve service***

The Protestant Christmas Eve service will be held Sunday at 7 p.m. at the Main Post Chapel. Chaplain (Col.) Gilley Richardson, installation chaplain, will preach.

Catholic Mass holiday schedule

Sunday	5:30 p.m.	Children's Vigil Mass	Dodd Field Chapel
Sunday	11 p.m.	Midnight Mass	Main Post Chapel
Sunday Center	11:30 p.m.	Midnight Mass	Brooke Army Medical
Monday	9:30 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass	Main Post Chapel
	11 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass	BAMC
Jan. 1	12 p.m.	Mass of Thanksgiving for Solemnity of Mary Mother of God	Main Post Chapel

Catholic Women of the Chapel

The Catholic Women of the Chapel meet Fridays at 9 a.m. for fellowship and enrichment studies. Childcare is provided. For more information, call Kate Schupbach at 212-7842.

Protestant Women of the Chapel

The Protestant Women of the Chapel meet Wednesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and Thursdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Dodd Field Chapel. Childcare is provided for up to age 5. Visitors are welcome. For more information, call Lois Griffith at 226-1295 or visit www.samhouston.army.mil/chaplain/pwoc.

Musician, choir director needed

The U.S. Army Contracting Agency, Southern Region Contracting Center-West is soliciting a musician and choir director for the 8 a.m. Catholic service at the Army Medical Department Regimental Chapel. For more information or to obtain a copy of the solicitation, call Christina Sylvester at 221-5367.

**For the chapel services schedule,
visit
www.samhouston.army.mil/chaplain.**

**Spotlight your unit**

The Public Information Office welcomes articles, photos or story idea submissions for the Fort Sam Houston News Leader.

To submit a story or idea or for more information, call 221-0615, e-mail news.leader@samhouston.army.mil or stop by the office in Building 124 (second floor).

COMMUNITY RECREATION

Red Cross lifeguard training

A Red Cross lifeguard class will be held Tuesday through Dec. 29 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center pool. The training consists of four sessions. This certification is a minimum requirement for employment as a lifeguard. Participants must be at least 15 years old and pass a pre-test that consists of a 500-meter swim and a 20-yard swim holding a 10-pound object. The cost is \$180 and includes all books, first-aid instruction, cardiopulmonary resuscitation mask and CPR automated external defibrillators for infant, child and adults. Payment will be required after passing the pre-test. For more information, call 221-1234.

Winter Swim Improvement Program

A Winter Swim Improvement Program will be held at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center from Jan. 13 to March 3. Registration will be held Jan. 6 and 7 from 9:30 to 11:45 a.m. Students must be present during registration and be prepared to take a swimming test. The classes are held Saturdays or Sundays for eight weeks. The program is for swimmers with levels two through six skills. Its purpose is to increase students' current swimming ability. Sessions are limited to 10 students per class chosen on a first-come, first-served basis. The cost is \$35 per student per session. For more information, call Amanda Ballew at 221-1234 or 295-4887.

Post garage sale

The next post garage sale will be held Feb. 3 from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Macarthur Pavilion parking lot. There is no cost to participate, but individuals selling items must pre-register by calling 221-2601 or 221-2523. A valid Department of Defense ID card is required to participate. Participants must bring their own tables to the event or may rent them from the Outdoor Equipment Center by calling 221-5225.

DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT

Sam Houston Club, 224-2721

Holiday closure

The Sam Houston Club and the MWR ticket office will be closed for normal operations through Jan. 1 except for special events reserved through the catering office. For more information, call 224-2721.

CHILD AND YOUTH SERVICES

Youth Center closure

The Youth Center will close Saturday and Monday for the holidays. Youth camp will start Tuesday at 6 a.m. with open recreation at 1 p.m. The center will be closed Jan. 1 and will reopen Jan. 23 for camp and open recreation. The Youth Center gym will be closed during the holidays for repairs.

Holiday lights tour

The youth center will take a tour of holiday lights Friday from 7 to 9 p.m. The tour will highlight Christmas lights across the city. Sign up ahead of time for the free tour.

Cooking classes

The youth center will host a series of cooking classes for middle school and high school students. The Friday class will make layered brownies; and Dec. 29, caramel cinnamon apples.

Hail, farewell, birthday party

The monthly hail, farewell and birthday party will be held Dec. 30 at 7 p.m. All new middle school and teens, departing youth and those with December birthdays are invited to attend. The party will be held at the Youth Center, Building 1630. For more information, call 221-3502.

Bingo ends Saturday

Bingo events for 2006 will conclude Saturday and resume activities Jan. 4. Bingo is held every Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Doors open at 5 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays and 11 a.m. Saturdays. For more information, call 224-2721.

Super TGIF

The Sam Houston Club will offer a Super TGIF Jan. 19 at 5 p.m. in the Seguin room. Free hors d'oeuvres, popular music by Triple Nickel and drink specials will be provided. For more information, call 224-2721.

Golf Club, 221-4388

Reopening, groundbreaking
Join the Fort Sam Houston Golf Club staff Jan. 2 at 7:30 a.m. to celebrate the reopening of Salado Del Rio course and groundbreaking at La Loma Grande course. Ceremonial activities begin with a groundbreaking ceremony at the La Loma course that will mark the start of renovations to its 18 tees and greens. Attendees will then proceed to the Salado course for a reopening ceremony, and watch as special guests hit the first tees on the course. Immediately following the conclusion of the reopening ceremony, there will be a reception in the golf clubhouse. For more information, call 221-5863.

Golf Pro Shop holiday sale

Visit the Fort Sam Houston Golf Club through Sunday for the annual Pro Shop holiday sale. Get up to 15 percent discounts on select items and a 5 percent discount on all special orders. For more information, call 222-9386.

Warriors Scramble golf tournament

The Warriors Monthly Scramble is held the first Wednesday of each month at the Fort Sam Houston Golf Club. The next tournament is Jan. 3. Shotgun start time is at 12:30 p.m. Entry fee is \$20 per person and includes cart rental, prizes and social following the scramble. Up to four players need to be registered to participate, and they must be on an authorized pass or leave status. Register at the Golf Club's Pro Shop. For more information, call 222-9386.

Harlequin Dinner Theatre, 222-9694

The Harlequin Dinner Theatre will present the Agatha Christie mystery, "The Mousetrap," Jan. 10. For more information, call 222-9694.

Christmas camp

A Christmas camp will be held for youth grades six through 12 Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. The fee is income based. Breakfast, lunch and a snack will be served. The camp will begin at the School Ages Services, Building 1705, and will move to the Youth Center, Building 1630, at 9 a.m. Parents will pick up from the Youth Center daily. The Youth Center will be open from 1 to 9 p.m. during the same time. For more information, call 221-3502.

Sesame Workshop

With more than 700,000 children of military families under age 5 separated from their mother or father this holiday season, Sesame Workshop, the non-profit educational organization behind Sesame Street, has responded with a program geared to address the challenges military families face with deployment. The half-hour TV special, "When Parents are Deployed," will be hosted by Academy Award-winning actor Cuba Gooding Jr., premiering Wednesday at 9 p.m. on Public Broadcasting Service.

'Start Smart'

Parents with children enrolled in the Fort Sam Houston Child Development Center

Coushatta Casino Resort trip

The MWR Ticket Office and the Sam Houston Club will sponsor a trip to the Coushatta Casino Resort in Kinder, La. The bus will depart from the Sam Houston Club Feb. 13 at 7 a.m. and return Feb. 14 at 10 p.m. The cost is \$49 per person and includes roundtrip motor coach transportation, overnight hotel accommodations, continental breakfast at hotel and one \$23 coupon from the casino. Participants be at least 21 years old and possess valid photo ID at all times. Make reservations at the ticket office by Feb. 7. For more information, call 226-1663 or 224-2721.

MWR Holiday Schedule

Army Community Service

Friday Closed
Monday Closed
Dec. 29 Closed
Jan. 1 Closed

Auto Craft Shop

Friday and Tuesday Closed
Dec. 29 to Jan. 2 Closed

Bowling Center

Friday to Wednesday Closed
Dec. 28 Open 4 to 9 p.m.
Dec. 29 Open 4:30 p.m. to 12 a.m.
Dec. 30 and 31 Closed
Jan. 1 and 2 Closed

Brigade Gym

Today to Jan. 1 Closed
Jan. 2 Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Camp Bullis

Sunday to Tuesday Closed
Dec. 31 to Jan. 1 Closed

Canyon Lake

Saturday Open 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Sunday and Monday Closed
Dec. 30 Open 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 Closed

Central Post Gym

Through Jan. 2 Closed

Equestrian Center

Today Open 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Sunday and Monday Closed

Golf Club

Sunday Open 6:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Monday Closed
Dec. 31 Open 6:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Jan. 1 Closed

Hacienda Recreation Center

Through Jan. 1 Closed

Harlequin Dinner Theatre

Saturday to Jan. 2 Closed

Jimmy Brought Fitness Center

Friday and Saturday Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday Open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday Closed
Tuesday to Dec. 28 Open 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Dec. 29 and 30 Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Dec. 31 Open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Jan. 1 Closed

Jimmy Brought Fitness Center pool

Friday and Saturday Open 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sunday Open 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Monday Closed
Dec. 31 Open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Jan. 1 Closed

Keith A. Campbell Library

Sunday to Tuesday Closed
Dec. 31 Closed
Jan. 1 Closed
Jan. 2 Closed

Lodging Administrative Offices

Friday Closed
Tuesday Closed
Dec. 31 Closed
Jan. 2 Closed
*Front desk will continue to operate 24 hours daily.

Outdoor Equipment Center

Today Open 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Friday to Monday Closed
Dec. 29 to Jan. 1 Closed

Recreational Vehicle Park

Friday and Monday Closed
Dec. 29 to Jan. 1 Closed

Sam Houston Club

Through Jan. 2 Closed

Child and Youth Services:

Administrative Offices

Friday Closed
Monday Closed
Dec. 29 Closed
Jan. 1 Closed

Child Development Center

Friday Closed
Monday Closed
Dec. 29 Closed
Jan. 1 Closed

School Age Services

Friday Closed
Monday Closed
Dec. 29 Closed
Jan. 1 Closed

Youth Services

Monday Closed
Jan. 1 Closed

have an opportunity to help their children develop sports skills through a program called "Start Smart." Parents learn how to properly teach their children basic motor skills, such as throwing, catching, kicking and batting; skills needed to participate in sports. Sessions are six weeks and are held Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. year round. For more information or class dates, call Jill Marcott, Lisa Schott or Yolanda Crowley at 221-5013 or 221-5002.

Before- and after-school program

Register youth for the before- and after-school program for middle school and open recreation. Participants must have a Child and Youth Services membership. To register for membership, patrons will need to provide a leave and earnings statement or W-2 form, two local emergency designees, \$18 registration fee and youth's Social Security number.

Hourly childcare

Child and Youth Services provides hourly care for patrons seeking intermittent childcare. Patrons must be registered with CYS. Care is based on availability and must be reserved in advance. School Age Services provides 10 free hours of open recreation to registered SAS users Monday through Friday from 3 to 6 p.m. for first through fifth grade

children. Must not exceed two days per week. For more information, call Central Registration at 221-4871 or 221-1723.

Headstart seeks applicants

Parent Child Incorporated is seeking applicants for the Headstart program. This is a free childcare program designed to help Soldiers, E-5 and below, and low income Department of Defense civilian employees. Applicants must meet federal guidelines, and entry is based on annual income. For more information, call 221-3788.

Pre-k before- and after-school care

The Child Development Center offers before- and after-school care for the Fort Sam Houston Elementary pre-kindergarten program. Children must be enrolled in the elementary pre-k program. Patrons must be registered with Child and Youth Services. Spaces are limited. For more information, call Central Registration at 221-4871 or 221-1723.

Basketball coaches needed

The sports program is seeking volunteers to coach basketball. Those interested must consent and clear a background check. For more information, call Central Registration at 221-4871 or 221-5513.

Events

Holiday Coffee

The Officer and Civilian Spouses' Club Board will host a Holiday Coffee Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Stillwell House. The event is free and open to all members; reservations are not required. For more information, call 475-9973.

VFW Christmas dinner

The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 8541, will host a Christmas dinner Dec. 25 from 2 to 4 p.m. The VFW Post is located at 2222 Austin Highway. Veterans, active duty, family members and guests are welcome. A \$3 donation is requested. For more information, call 655-2944.

Fredericksburg TVA walks

The Texas Volkssport Association will host two 5K and 10K walks and a wine and cheese social Dec. 31 at 12 p.m. and midnight starting at St. Joseph Halle, 212 W. San Antonio St., Fredericksburg, Texas. For more information, call Phyllis Eagan at 496-1402, e-mail papre1947@yahoo.com or visit www.walktexas.org/.

VFW New Year's Eve party

The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 8541, will host a New Year's Eve party from 8 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. at 2222 Austin Highway. There will be live music, food, champagne and party favors. The cost is \$15 per person and \$25 per couple. Make reservations early. For more information, call Lebertha Newbery at 653-8071 or e-mail lebertha@sbcglobal.net.

Trinity University walks

The Randolph Roadrunners Volksmarch Club will host two 5K and 10K walks Jan. 6, beginning at the Chapman Graduate Center, 715 Stadium Drive; Trinity University. For more information, call Larry Cook at 723-7711, e-mail larcoo@texas.net or visit www.geocities.com/randolphroadrunners/.

'The Mousetrap' at Harlequin

The Harlequin dinner theatre presents "The Mousetrap," a mystery by Agatha Christie, Jan. 10 to Feb. 17 Wednesday through Saturday evenings. Prices are \$27.95 on Fridays and Saturdays and \$24.95 on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Military and students discounts are available. The house opens at 6:15 p.m., with shows beginning at

8 p.m. The box office is open from 12 to 5 p.m. weekdays and 1 to 5 p.m. on Saturdays. For more information, or reservations, call 222-9694.

Meetings

OCSC January outing

The Officer and Civilian Spouses' Club January outing will be Jan. 19 at the Artisans Alley, located at 555 W. Bitters Road. The outing will include lunch at Apple Annie's at 11:30 a.m. and a choice of shopping or attending a 90-minute pottery lesson. The cost of the pottery lesson is \$20, due the day of the class. Class size is limited. Participants should bring an old towel, plastic bag and an apron (optional). The pottery class will begin at 1 p.m. For more information or reservations, e-mail Alicia Utz at a-to-z@earthlink.net before Jan. 16.

Training

ASMC annual awards

The Alamo City Chapter of the American Society of Military Comptrollers seeks nominations for the 2006 ASMC annual awards. The deadline for award submission is Jan. 10. For submission forms and guidelines, visit www.asmc.online.org/national/nationalawards.shtml. Submit applications to Master Sgt. Wanda Mathew, awards committee chairman, via e-mail to wanda.matthew@randolph.af.mil. For more information, call 652-3654 or DSN 487-3654.

FRG Mobilization training

Army Community Service Mobilization/Deployment and Stabilization training will be held Jan. 11 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Building 2797, Stanley Road. This training is required for Family Readiness Group leaders and unit liaisons. Training will cover revised regulations and policies, and will provide an opportunity to exchange "best practices."

FRG Basic Leadership training

The Family Readiness Group Basic Leadership training and workshop will be held Jan. 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Building 2797, Stanley Road. This training is required for FRG leaders and unit liaisons. The workshop will cover the basics for establishing a FRG; attendees will

receive additional tools for continued success. For more information or to make reservations for future training, call the Army Community Service at 221-0946.

OLLU offering scholarships

Scholarships are available to active duty military personnel interested in earning a master of science degree in information systems and security at Our Lady of the Lake

University. Scholarship recipients, who couple the funds with military tuition assistance, pay no tuition costs during the first year of the two-year degree program. All active-duty military degree applicants will be considered for a scholarship. The deadline to apply for a scholarship is Dec. 31. For more information, call 431-3995 or visit cybersecurity.ollusa.edu.

PostPulse: What would you like for Christmas this year?



"I'd like a PlayStation 3 and football jerseys. That's about it."

Mason Starnes – 12 years old



"I don't really care. I just want it to be a good Christmas."

Riley Gruppo – 9 years old



"H-m-m-m, an X-box 360!"

Damian Torres – 9 years old
Dominick Torres – 7 years old



"I'd like some cute teddy bears. I collect them and the Littlest Pet Shop."

MacKenzie Corcoran – 7 years old

Wounded warrior steals spotlight at BAMC ball

Story and photo by Michael Dulevitz
Brooke Army Medical Center Public Affairs

Glamour, glitz and pulled heartstrings all combined for a memorable evening Dec. 8 for the 1,000 wounded warriors, staff and family members who attended the Brooke Army Medical Center holiday ball at the Marriott Rivercenter.

BAMC hosts its holiday ball each year to thank its staff for the hard work they perform every day.

Marine Cpl. Merlin German, a wounded warrior, stole the ball spotlight when he danced with his mother, Yvonne, for the first time since being wounded.

German suffered burns over 97 percent of his body as a result of a bomb blast while serving in Iraq about 18 months ago.

"I wanted to surprise my Mom with this dance and I did," German said. German had set the goal to dance with his mother at the ball six months ago and with a lot of practice he made that goal a reality.

When the mother and son couple ended their dance there was not a dry eye in the house.

Providing some glamour to the ball were actress Elizabeth Rohm, best known for her portrayal as the assistant district attorney on the hit series "Law and Order," and Len Cariou, Broadway actor and singer.

At the ball's outset, Cariou performed "The Star Spangled Banner," and later sang two Broadway hits during dessert.

"It is an honor to be able to perform for these wonderful people this evening," Cariou said. "We owe so much to the men and women in our armed forces for the work they have done and continue to do."

Rohm took the stage to extend her thanks to the troops as well. "It seemed to me that I, as an actress, live in fantasy portraying heroic people while you stand firmly facing the reality of profoundly challenging experiences and are actual heroes," said Rohm.

Additionally, 12 Soldiers were recognized at the ball as recipients of the Order of Military Medical Merit. The O2M3 recognizes individuals from the Army Medical Department who have demonstrated the highest standards of integrity and moral character, displayed an outstanding degree of professional competence and made sustained contributions to the betterment of Army medicine.

The recipients were Col. Karen Nauschuetz and Forrest Oliverson; Lt. Col. Edwin Alberto, Lawrence Crozier, James Furgerson, Curtis Hunter, Anthony Johnson, Maureen Koops, Alfred Montalvo and Gwendolyn Thompson; Maj. Clinton Murray; and Master Sgt. Pedro Perez.

BAMC Commander Brig. Gen. James K. Gilman told the gathering he was "proud to serve with you and for the work that you do each and everyday."



Marine Cpl. Merlin German, injured in the Global War on Terrorism, dances with his mother, Yvonne, in full dress uniform Dec. 8 at Brooke Army Medical Center's Holiday Ball.



Photo by Phil Reidinger

The Order of Military Medical Merit was awarded to 10 members of the command by Maj. Gen. Russell J. Czerw during the installation holiday ball Dec. 8 at the Sam Houston Club.



Photo by Michael Dulevitz

Christina Bertran reads "Frosty the Snowman" to her audience (from left) Jasmine Rose Gonzalez, Alyssa and Kierra Martinez and Thomas Healy Dec. 16 at the Brooke Army Medical Center Family Readiness Group's holiday children's party. Storytelling was just one of the many activities for families at the party. The FRG supports the families of deployed Soldiers.

Operation Christmas

Continued from Page 1

"This is wonderful," said Wendy Hansen, who traveled about 130 miles from Fort Hood, Texas, with her 8-year-old son, Dawson, to attend the event. Her husband deployed to Iraq in October. "It means a lot to me, makes me realize that people care."

Along with military families, about 45 wounded warriors recovering at Brooke Army Medical Center took part in the festivities. While too old for Santa's lap, the service members still scored an early Christmas present.

"This is a great thing to do for military families," said wounded warrior Staff Sgt. David Barnette, who was waiting in line to greet Santa with his wife, Ruby, and 5-year-old daughter, Jordan.

"Doing something like this is a blessing," Ruby said.

A few of the recovering Soldiers appeared on "Good Morning America," which sent a crew to broadcast live from the Operation Christmas site. The morning show has covered two of the events, and plans to cover the final one in Savannah, Ga., next week.

"You can never show enough support of troops," said Morgan Zalkin, GMA producer. "We wanted to let them know that were weren't just thinking of the troops in the field, but also their families back home."

"I don't know how you can't support the troops," said GMA correspondent Mike Barz, an Army "brat" whose

grandfather fought in three wars. "Regardless of how you feel about the war, you should support the service members."

BAMC Commander Brig. Gen. James Gilman thanked everyone for their efforts in support of military members and their family and emphasized the importance of America's continued support.

"Organizations like Operation Homefront and Operation Comfort and businesses that help do this type of an event are indicators that Americans understand how hard it is to be a warrior or the family of one," he said. "Our wounded warriors work really hard. I'm not sure people understand how hard it is to get up, endure pain and fatigue, and stay motivated."

"Support like this keeps them going, keeps them carrying on."

Chris Hansen, a wounded warrior injured a year ago by two roadside bombs in Iraq, said the support was much appreciated, particularly as he transitions to civilian life.



Photo by Cheryl Harrison

Willow Smith, age 6, and brother Daniel, age 3, accept candy canes from Mike Barz, "Good Morning America" correspondent. The morning show broadcasted live Dec. 13 at the Operation Christmas celebration at the National Guard Armory.

"I didn't expect this; it's a surprise," said the father of five children, all under age 8. "I wasn't able to afford much for my kids this year, so this means a lot."



Photo by Esther Garcia

Maj. Gen. Russell J. Czerw, commander, Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, debuts his singing abilities with his rendition of "Silver Bells" accompanied by the Army Medical Command Band Sunday at the holiday concert at Blesse Auditorium.



Photo by Esther Garcia

(From left) Staff Sgt. Ricardo Vega, Staff Sgt. Nathan Curie and Sgt. 1st Class Santos Godineaux, Army Medical Command Band, opened the holiday concert with "O, Come All Ye Faithful" Sunday at Blesse Auditorium.



Photo by Esther Garcia

Chief Warrant Officer William Brazier takes a bow following the holiday concert for the public Sunday at Blesse Auditorium. The band also presented a special holiday concert for 32nd Medical Brigade Soldiers Monday at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center.



Photo by Esther Garcia

(From left) Spc. Ruben Lopez-Felix, Army Ground Forces Band, Fort MacPherson, Ga.; and Sgt. 1st Class James Kruczek, II and Sgt. Jay Hoffman, Army Medical Command, rock the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center Sunday with their rendition of "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas." Band members from the 389th Army, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., and 4th Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas, were on hand to support the holiday concerts the year.



(Right) "The Grinch," played by Army Medical Command Band Sgt. Maj. Leander Singletary, throws candy canes to the audience during the band's rendition of "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch."



Photo by Esther Garcia



Photo by Phil Reiding

Randolph-Brooks Federal Credit Union volunteers greet Soldiers during the annual 32nd Medical Brigade Exodus Operation at the San Antonio Airport United Services Organization Center. Volunteers provided drinks and snacks for Soldiers as well as a quiet place to relax while waiting at the airport for their flights home.



Photo by Cheryl Harrison

Pfc. Jesus Santiago had to decide from many delicious lunch choices Dec. 14 at the Slagle Dining Facility. The Slagle Dining Facility held a special holiday meal for the Soldiers with entrees that included turkey, Cornish game hens, duck, ham and all the trimmings. The facility was decorated with all the glitz and glitter of the Christmas season. A cake, decorated by baker Sabina McLaughlin, was one of the special desserts featured. Eldridge Guillory, manager for the Slagle, said they serve about 6,000 meals a day.