

# FORT SAM HOUSTON News Leader

"HOME OF ARMY MEDICINE"

## Center for the Intrepid opens in style

### Two Fisher Houses poised to meet family's needs

By Elaine Wilson  
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

Thanks to the generosity of 600,000 Americans, wounded warriors now have a \$50 million state-of-the-art physical rehabilitation facility.

The Center for the Intrepid, designed for service members wounded in operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, opened at Fort Sam Houston Jan. 29 along with two new Fisher Houses during a ceremony that included speeches from Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Marine Gen. Peter Pace and Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England. R. James Nicholson, secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs also spoke at the ceremony.

"There are those who speak about (wounded warriors) today — 'He lost an arm. He lost a leg. She lost her sight.' I object," Pace told the injured troops in attendance. "You gave an arm, you gave

See CFI OPENS P7



Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. D. Myles Cullen

Service members cut the ceremonial ribbon for the Center for the Intrepid, a state-of-the-art physical rehabilitation center Jan. 29. Two new Fisher Houses, a home away from home for hospitalized military members' families, also opened with a ribbon cutting.

## Breaking ground for wounded warriors

By Minnie Jones  
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

A long-awaited vision came true Sept. 15 on an empty lot located across from the Fisher Houses on George Beach Road — a groundbreaking for a new building for the Warrior and Family Support Center.

Senators, representatives, Soldiers and more than 100 citizens attended this groundbreaking event in support of the many wounded warriors who come through Fort Sam Houston's gates for rehabilitation.

The WFSC will provide a nurturing and comfortable environment where returning heroes and their Families can rest and recover. The new 12,000-square-foot building will replace the 1,200-square-foot space currently housed on the second floor of the Powless Guest House.

Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, commander, Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, welcomed the crowd, "President Theodore Roosevelt once said, 'A man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country is good

enough to be given a square deal afterwards. More than that, no man is entitled to, and less than that, no man shall have.'

"In my mind, Roosevelt would approve of what we are doing here today for our wounded Soldiers. He would be proud. Not only are we taking care of the Soldier, but we are also taking care of their entire family," Czerw said.

Since opening their doors in December 2003, the WFSC (formerly the Soldier and Family Assistance Center) has accommodated more than 180,000 visits from

See BREAKING GROUND P8

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# Army Family Covenant

## Signing reiterates Family strength is crucial for Army mission

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

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, U.S. Army Garrison Commander 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 significant contribution of the Army Family Covenant. It is important for the Army, its

See COVENANT P9



Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner, commanding general, U.S. Army North holds 5-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.

## Post employs team effort for Army Medical Action Plan

By Phil Reidinger  
Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs

"The Army Medical Action Plan at Fort Sam Houston rocks!" That is the message delivered to the Brooke Army Medical Center and the Fort Sam Houston community on a marquee located at the installation entrance located at the BAMC exit off Interstate Highway 35.

The message by Brig. Gen. James Gilman, Great Plains Regional Medical Command and BAMC commanding general, is a pledge that Soldiers returning from fighting the battles of war will not have to fight a bureaucracy to obtain health care and other services during their recovery at BAMC and transition afterwards.

Col Wendy Martinson, U.S. Army Garrison commander, also directed that this message be placed on all post information marquees.

During a July 6 meeting

with Gilman, Martinson, and post Army Medical Action Plan planners, Fort Sam Houston Installation Commander Maj. Gen. Russell J. Czerw explained the command's focus stating, "Executing the Army Medical Action Plan is a team effort on Fort Sam Houston. We are working with the Installation

Management Command and the Medical Command to provide installation resources and services to Warriors in Transition and their Families. We understand, and we are committed as a team with Brooke Army Medical Center, to a plan of action that provides each Soldier and Family Member the care, dignity,

compassion and respect they rightfully earned."

Cody also decided on two AMAP areas of responsibility: (1) Army Medical Command will maintain command and control for all Medical Hold and Medical Holdover Soldiers and (2) Army Installation Management Command will

See ACTION PLAN P12



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## Top medics

# Fort Sam Houston shines at EFMB competition

By Esther Garcia

Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs Office

One hundred and thirty-nine Soldier medics from installations around the country converged at Camp Bullis May 13 to compete for the coveted Expert Field Medical Badge. At the end of the week-long competition only 14 earned the badge. Out of the 14, eight are from Fort Sam Houston.

"It is a lot different than before. Back then we had stations only. The battlefield effect is more realistic now," said Capt. Mark Hayden, officer in charge of the competition and commander, Training Support Company, 32nd Medical Brigade.

The EFMB has changed a lot since 1965. The EFMB program has been transformed into a testing event that more closely mirrors what medics are required to do in the contemporary operational environment, according to Academy of Health Science test control officer.

The rigorous competition for the EFMB began May 13 with a written test. The Soldier medics must pass the 100-question written test

to continue in the competition. The candidates are tested on the medical and warrior skills they commonly perform during deployments.

From May 14 to May 18, the candidates were put through three grueling combat medic lanes. Each lane includes challenging Soldier skill tasks that take more than an hour to complete.

"The lanes test the candidate's warrior skills by integrating weapons use, moving under direct fire, a two person carry or drag, and load and evacuation platform," said Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie Morris, in charge of combat medic lane 1.

The EFMB competition ended with a grueling 12-mile road march.

"Earning the Expert Field Medical Badge is a physically and mentally demanding challenge that easily surpasses the efforts required by any other type of Army Medical Department testing," said Col. John Cook, commander, 32nd Medical Brigade, at the awards ceremony May 18. "The demands that have been placed on these Soldiers were incredibly complex and simulated the intensity and rigors involved in providing medical care under combat conditions."



Photo by Minnie Jones

Staff Sgt. David Vise (right) and Sgt. 1st Class Quantrell Washington (left) encourage Capt. Bridgett Washington to continue the road march. Washington completed the march within five seconds of the mandatory time of three hours.

## Soldiers compete for '2008 Best Warrior'

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

Six warriors from Fort Sam Houston spent three days competing against each other to win the title 2008 Fort Sam Houston Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier "Best Warrior" of the Year.

Held at Camp Bullis the competition consisted of a fifty question examination, a written essay, physical fitness test, day and night urban orienteering, weapons qualification, short range marksmanship, warrior tasks, a mystery event, and the administrative board.

The first day of the actual competition began Dec. 8 at 3:15 a.m. at Camp Bullis and ended at 10:30 p.m. This day included the physical fitness test, fifty question examination, a written essay, day and night urban orienteering, and zero and short range marksmanship qualification range, which made for a long day.

The day and night urban orienteering is something new that has never been tried before here at Fort Sam Houston. Loaded with more than 50 pounds of gear that included carrying their M16 rifle, the candidates were provided with a map of the cantonment area of Camp



Candidates are tested as they enter a building to rescue a hostage from enemies. Their mission was to secure the building, rescue the hostage and capture the enemy.

Bullis. Their mission was to locate four points or areas within Camp Bullis using main roads, back roads, or around buildings within three hours and fifteen minutes, then report back to the staging area. The day urban orienteering covered 7.5 miles, the night portion covered 5.5 miles.

"It is a change from other competitions, but it is how we operate in Bagdad. In cities and towns, Soldiers are maneuvering within a city to get where they need to be. We aren't fighting in the woods in Iraq or Afghanistan," said Army Medical Department Center and School Command Sgt. Major Howard Riles during a visit of the competition.

## Combatives tournament



Photo by Esther Garcia

Pfc. Jason Sigmons, 232nd Medical Battalion, pins down his opponent at the 32nd Medical Brigade Combative Tournament. The brigade held the first combative tournament between its three battalions Nov. 17 at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center. Ninety competitors representing 187th, 232nd and 264th Medical Battalions competed in six categories for first, second and third place. Sigmons placed first place in the light heavyweight category. The 264th Medical Battalion won the coveted brigade Combative Tournament trophy winning overall with the most points of 108.

# Dunlap Hall dedicated to nursing programs

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

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Oct. 23 for the new Department of Nursing Science General Instruction Facility, Dunlap Hall, just 19 months after the groundbreaking.

Dunlap Hall is a general instruction building, which houses classrooms and administrative offices for the Department of Nursing Science. Tenants of Dunlap Hall will be the U.S. Army Graduate Program in Anesthesia Nursing; Army Nurse Professional Development Branch; Practical Nurse, 68WM6 branch, and Surgical Technologist, 68D branch.

The building is dedicated to the contributions to the Army Medical Department Nursing by Brig. Gen. Lillian Dunlap during her career which began in 1942, spanning more than 30 years of service.

Opening remarks from the commanding general U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw included, "Gen. Dunlap developed a vision for her profes-

sion and focusing her energy on what the Army nurse corps is, what it should be and the strategic mission ahead.

This new general instruction building is a 55,000 square foot, \$11.1 million dollar facility. It consolidates the Department of Nursing Science which was housed in four separate buildings, and now will be in one building, with 50 personnel, whose primary platform is the instruction of nearly 15,000 nurses annually."

The new facility will have learning labs, mock operating rooms and simulated labs. Dunlap Hall will superbly benefit both student and instructor," said Czerw.

Distinguished guest, the commanding general U.S. Army Medical Command and acting Surgeon General and Chief, Army Nurse Corps, Maj. Gen. Gale Pollock remarked, "This opening is a representation of what the AMEDD is forging, to assure that we continue to deliver the absolute best training in the world.

In November 2005 we broke ground here and now we are complet-



Col. Patricia Patrician, chief, Department of Nursing Science, Academy of Health Sciences, Army Medical Department Center and School, tests the waters at the newly installed surgical sinks in the Dunlap Hall schoolhouse. A bank of 10 sinks is set up to allow instructors to view the students as they learn the proper way to wash hands for surgical sterility.

ing the cycle and beginning a new era of professional training and development of our most valuable resource, our people."

Even though General Lillian Dunlap cannot physically be here with us in today, I feel she is with us in spirit and she is smiling down

from Heaven," concluded Pollock.

Following the remarks of Czerw and Pollock the official ribbon cutting and cake cutting took place. At the end of the official ceremony, guided tours were led throughout the new facility and refreshments were served.

# Army anesthesia program ranked second in nation

Story and photo by Elaine Wilson  
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

An Army Medical Department Center and School program was ranked second in the nation by the U.S. News and World Report magazine in this year's edition of "America's Best Graduate Schools," which hit the stands in early April.

The U.S. Army Graduate Program in Anesthesia Nursing missed top spot in the Nursing-Anesthesia category by only a tenth of a point with a score of 4.0 out of 5.0. Virginia Commonwealth University earned a score of 4.1.

"We're inching our way up to a top ranking," said Lt. Col. Thomas Ceremuga, anesthesia nursing program director, referring to the increase in the program's score. The program was last ranked in 2003, when it earned second place with a score of 3.8.

The U.S. News and World Report bases its nurse specialty rankings on ratings by educators and deans at peer schools, according to the magazine. With 106 nursing anesthesia schools in the nation, Ceremuga said the high regard is a valuable compliment, although he is quick to attribute the program's success to the quality and dedication of the faculty and students. "I'm very appreciative for all the hard

work within the school, and the esteem our peers have for us in the nursing community."

The Army program at Fort Sam Houston produces more than 90 percent of the Army's certified registered nurse anesthetists, as well as Air Force and Veterans Administration CRNAs. With the CRNA career field in high demand, Ceremuga said he works to ensure the competitive program fully equips the nurses for peacetime and war.

"Most of our CRNAs will deploy soon after they graduate so we need to ensure they receive the training they need for a deployment as we teach them the basic skills they need to be a certified registered nurse anesthetist," Ceremuga said.

The anesthesia nursing program comprises a year of classroom training and another 18 months of clinical training at one of several Phase 2 sites, located in military hospitals and medical centers throughout the nation. Classes average about 40 people and are open to Army, Air Force and VA registered nurses. The students are required to have a bachelor's degree in



Capt. Thurayya Gillis and Air Force Capt. Daniel Moore practice intubation on a human patient simulator while Maj. Jeffrey Conroy, director of the simulation program, provides instruction April 6 at the Army Medical Department Center and School.

nursing science and a year or two of nursing experience under their belts to compete for a seat in the class.

See ANESTHESIA PROGRAM P9

# Case managers navigate 'medical maze' for patients

Story and photo by Elaine Wilson  
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

When service members injured in war first arrive at Brooke Army Medical Center, they not only have to face the daunting task of recovery, but also have to navigate a medical maze of treatment plans, appointments and paperwork.

But they don't have to do it alone. BAMC's staff includes 15 outpatient case managers whose sole purpose is to guide service members injured in Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom along their road to recovery.

"We coordinate medical care for service members from when they first get here to when they either return to duty or separate," said Lt. Col. Donna Rojas, BAMC chief of Case Management. "We serve as a link between the doctors and patients so the patients can focus on getting well."

It is the case managers' job to take on the mire of chal-

lenging administrative and sometimes personal details for patients from setting up medical appointments to making lodging reservations for incoming family members and everything in between.

"Each case is unique," Rojas said. "We've had service members with Family in other countries, such as Bulgaria, and helped them with their travel to the U.S. We have come across a variety of issues, many related to Family, and help in any way we can.

BAMC employs 18 inpatient and outpatient case managers for the OIF/OEF mission, each with an average of less than 35 patients assigned at one time — three are dedicated to burn patients and three to amputees. All are experienced case managers with either a social work or nursing background. The prior knowledge is put to good use on a daily basis as they guide patients through the health care process.

A case manager's myriad duties start at the first case



(From left) Maj. Denise Price, injured in Afghanistan in October 2005, meets with her case manager, Theresa Thornton, and her case manager assistant, Marilyn Jasso, at Brooke Army Medical Center.

manager-patient meeting, which is typically the next duty day after the patient arrives at the hospital.

Case managers also heavily coordinate with agencies such as the Veterans Administration, Office of Personnel Management and the Army Wounded Warrior Program. All have representatives housed in BAMC, which is a much-appreciated convenience, Rojas said.

The case managers' extensive efforts don't go unnoticed. "This place is organized," said Lt. Col. Fred Harmon, who

was injured while supporting OEF. "It's obvious people here care and want people to get the best treatment possible, in a timely manner."

The help is "above and beyond what I expected," he said.

With cases as unique and varied as the service members, case managers never have a dull moment, Rojas said. "It's a high-work tempo but we love what we do. It's a rewarding job because, bottom line, we're helping service members and their Families."

# Schoomaker new MEDCOM commander

By Jerry Harben  
U.S. Army Medical Command

Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker assumed command of the Army's largest medical organization during a ceremony at Fort Sam Houston Dec. 13.

Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Richard Cody passed the flag of U.S. Army Medical Command to Schoomaker, who replaces Maj. Gen. Gale Pollock, acting commander since March. Pollock now serves as deputy surgeon general for force management.

As MEDCOM commander, Schoomaker has command authority over Army fixed-facility medical, dental and veterinary units in the United States and Europe. Earlier in the week he was promoted and sworn in for his "second hat" as Army Surgeon General. In that capacity, he has Army staff responsibility for all Army medical, dental and veterinary missions, including those of deployable and Reserve Component units.

Medical Command is one of 11 Direct Reporting Units in the Army. It includes approximately 27,000 military personnel and 28,000 civilian employees. It provides medical care for more than five million beneficiaries — active-duty service members, retirees and their family members.

"I pledge to be tireless in my efforts to have all Soldiers and Family members live long and stay young in mind, body and spirit," Schoomaker said during his remarks.

"Through 232 years of our history, a history that

began six weeks after the Army itself was formed, and very shortly after the Declaration of Independence, courageous and gifted Soldier-medics have kept faith with those who place themselves in harm's way. The essence of our professionalism and ethos is embodied in our Warrior Medics," he said.

Cody praised Army medical personnel, calling them "the people who stare death in the face and say 'not on my watch.'"

He spoke of presenting Purple Heart medals to 1st Lt. Jabari White and Staff Sgt. Victor Dominguez, both severely injured and recovering at Brooke Army Medical Center. He described how White refused to receive his medal in bed, but dressed and stood for the ceremony despite severe burns, and of how Dominguez, with 90 percent of his body bandaged, "fought to salute me."

"When people think of 'Army Strong' it's only natural to think of Fort Benning or Fort Jackson or the front lines of Iraq and Afghanistan, where Soldier's Soldier, pushing themselves physically and mentally, weapons and platforms all about them, doing the job that Soldiers do so well. When I think of Army



Photo by Cheryl Harrison

During the Change of Command ceremony for the U.S. Army Medical Command Dec. 13 the colors are passed from Command Sgt. Maj. Althea Dixon to Maj. Gen. Gale Pollock, who passes the colors to the Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Richard Cody signifying her relinquishment of command. Cody passes the colors to Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker charging him with command of the unit. Schoomaker then passes the colors back to Dixon who returns the colors to the color bearer, signifying the trust and confidence in the Noncommissioned Officer Corps.

Strong, I think of Lt. Jabari White and Staff Sgt. Victor Dominguez. I think of them and their doctors and their nurses and their therapists and technicians," Cody said.

## CFI OPENS from P1

a leg, you gave your sight as gifts to your nation that we might live in freedom."

The \$50 million center was built entirely from private funds through the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, which provides assistance to the nation's military heroes injured in the performance of duty and their families.

"This is a red-letter day for this country and for the 600,000 Americans who have contributed a dollar, some more than a million dollars, to make sure our young men and women who have given so much to this country are aware the American people care about them," said Arnold Fisher, chairman of the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund. "They are our national treasure."

Dozens of wounded warriors joined more than 3,000 guests at the grand opening. The guest list included Sens. Hillary Clinton and John McCain, country group Big & Rich, Rosie O'Donnell, Michelle Pfeiffer, producer David E. Kelley and top mili-

tary leaders from all branches of service. Rock music star John Mellencamp performed during the ceremony.

Although the audience was packed with the top military leaders and Hollywood celebrities, the wounded warriors received the longest round of applause, along with a standing ovation.

"It's amazing, truly amazing. It really shows the American people care," said wounded warrior Staff Sgt. Daniel Barnes, a bilateral amputee.

The four-story, 60,000-square-foot center was designed for wounded warriors like Barnes. Equipped with the latest rehabilitation technology, it is a potential athlete's dream. The facility includes an indoor running track, firing range, pool, two-story climbing wall, prosthetic center and a computer assisted rehabilitation environment known as CAREN.

The environment comprises a dome with a 4-meter platform and screen, simulating everything from a city sidewalk to a day on the lake so patients can improve their gait and balancing skills. The

unit is one of nine in the world and the only one in the United States.

"What you see before you is a monument built by contributions by 600,000 Americans," Fisher said. "This is a monument to not only the men and women and their families who will come here, but a monument to the generosity of our citizens and their love for those who serve."

The center will initially cater to amputees and burn patients injured in the Global War on Terrorism, but is hoped to expand to encompass retirees, family members and veterans.

"This is my son's (Ken Fisher) and my commitment, and our mission," Fisher said.

"We'll continue this as long as it's necessary. Our only wish is that a place like this someday, it will become a garage."

The two new Fisher Houses bring the on-post total to four. Fisher Houses serve as a home away from home for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and Veterans Affairs medical centers. The

## BREAKING GROUND from P1

wounded warriors and their Families – Families members who have left their jobs and home to come to Fort Sam Houston to help with the rehabilitation of their loved ones.

The current space used by the WFSC had outgrown its space, due to the length of the war and an increase in wounded warriors. The additional influx required a permanent facility to meet all of the WFSC operations.

The new building will provide a “living room” environment, a place for social interaction and recreation between the wounded warriors and their Families. It was designed with the wounded warrior’s requirements in mind – fully wheelchair-accessible with an atmosphere that will encourage healing. The new facility will have a computer classroom, kitchen, dining room, conference room, adequate bathrooms, and storage and social-gathering areas. It also will provide opportunities in training for new job skills.



Photo by Charles Parish

U.S. senators, representatives, post and community leaders, and wounded warriors help break ground Sept. 15 for the new Warrior and Family Support Center.

Steve Huffman, president of Huffman Developments and the Returning Heroes Home Board of Directors, attended the ceremony along with U.S. Senator John Cornyn; Representatives Lamar Smith, District 21; Charles Gonzalez, District 20; and Ciro Rodriguez, District 23; and Honorable Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff.

Huffman, the president of Huffman Developments and president of the Returning Heroes Home Board of Directors, helped organize the effort to build the facility, and

the fund has raised more than \$800,000. Construction of the \$3.5 million building is scheduled for completion in 2008, and Huffman expects that the remainder of the funds will be raised by the end of the year.

This project is just one of many pledges under the new Army Medical Action Plan that Soldiers returning home from

fighting the battles of war will not have fight a bureaucracy to obtain health care and other services during the recovery at BAMC and transition afterwards.

For more information on the WFSC, visit the Returning Heroes Home Web site at <http://www.returningheroeshome.org/>.

## COVENANT from P2

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.

Maj. Gen. 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.

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, 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.

## ANESTHESIA PROGRAM from P4

“It’s competitive,” Ceremuga said. “We have some students with five to 10 years of experience here earning their second master’s degree. The students are very accomplished overall.”

With an average attrition rate of 25 percent, the experience level and maturity of a slightly older student body comes in handy although “the attrition rate due to academics is not as high as the number reflects,” Ceremuga explained. “About half of the students in that percentage leave for personal reasons as opposed to academic.”

During a rigorous training schedule, students learn to administer anesthesia in a variety of settings, from an operating room in a stateside hospital to a forward surgical team downrange. Training encompasses a variety of anesthesia agents and the administration of local, regional and general anesthesia.

Additionally, during a short break from classroom sessions, students take on a scientific research project while in Phase 1, then write up and present findings at local and national conferences during Phase 2. A recent research study examined the effectiveness of the blankets the Army uses to prevent hypothermia, and another looked at the effect herbs have on emergence from anesthesia.

The positive exposure from public appearances only helps to improve the school’s repu-

tation, said Dr. Don Johnson, research program director. “Our students are at the forefront. They represent the school very well.”

Like the students, instructors also are experienced, with Army, Air Force and VA backgrounds. One of the instructors, Dr. Doug Christi, was recently named the AMED-DC&S’ instructor of the year.

Program leaders and instructors have strived to keep the training current, particularly when applying lessons learned from the field.

“We queried Army and Air Force nurse anesthetists who have deployed and have shifted our focus so our training reflects current events,” Ceremuga said, adding that there is now more of a training emphasis on trauma rotations, central line placement, pediatric care, emergency airway management, regional anesthesia and pain management.”

# Building up Fort Sam Houston

The Center for the Intrepid, a state-of-the-art physical rehabilitation center, opened with a ribbon cutting Jan. 29. The courtyard is only steps away from the Fisher Houses III and IV. The walkway displays names of contributors and is a peaceful stroll to the two new houses. A sculpture depicting a broken circle, cracked but still intact, adorns the terrace which has an overall feel of "village."



Photos by Cheryl Harrison



(Above) Dunlap Hall opened Oct. 23 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. It is home to the Department of Nursing Science, Academy of Health Sciences for the Army Medical Department Center and School.



(Above) A \$16 million renovation on Building 2000 is under way. The building has been vacant since 1993. When the renovation is complete it will serve as the new home of Installation Management Command-West. The command is currently housed in Building 1000 with U.S. Army South.



Courtesy illustration

(Above) Pictured is an architectural rendering of the future Warrior and Family Support Center. The new 12,000-square-foot building will replace the 1,200-square-foot center currently located in the Powless Guest House.

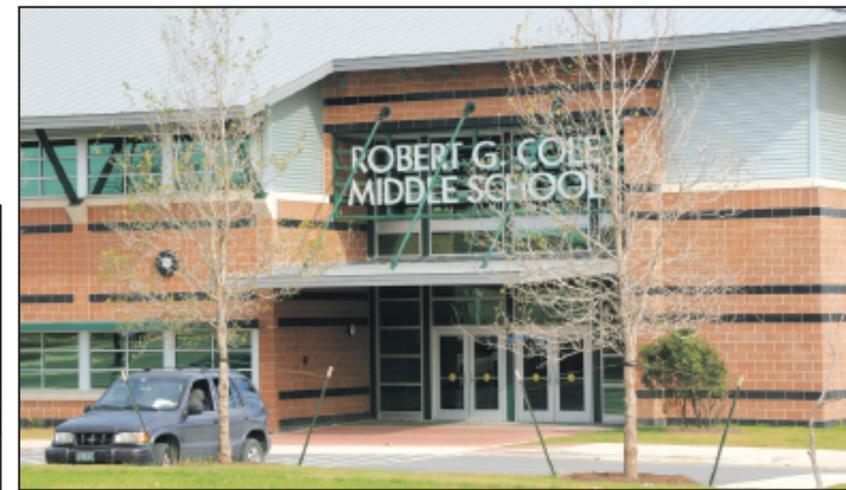
Two new Fisher Houses, a home away from home for hospitalized military members' families, opened Jan. 29 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.



Photo by Esther Garcia

Rock and roll celebrity Ted Nugent signs guitars, cross bows, laptops and other memorabilia for military personnel, wounded warriors and civilians during a visit to Fort Sam Houston Oct. 19.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Oct. 19 for a newly constructed pavilion located in the courtyard of the Okubo barracks. Ted Nugent contributed funds for the construction of the new pavilion and attended the ribbon cutting ceremony.



(Above) Fort Sam Houston Independent School District opened the new Robert G. Cole Middle School just in time for the 2007-2008 school year.



Two of three new community centers have been constructed in the Fort Sam Houston housing areas. The Harris Heights Community Center opened Oct. 15 and the Watkins Terrace Community Center opened Dec. 6. The third community center is scheduled to be completed by spring 2008.



**ACTION PLAN from P2**

maintain command and control for all Soldier and Family Assistance Centers except at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

According to Col (Dr.) Barry Sheridan, director of BAMC Healthcare Operations, "We have addressed the 'Quick Wins' at BAMC. We have cre-

ated a Warrior Transition Unit at BAMC to incorporate all the Warriors in Transition. The manning of these WTUs will be filled with Army assets. We will incorporate the triad of squad leader, case managers and primary care managers."

Sheridan also noted that monthly Town Hall meetings are conducted to identify problems and areas of needed

improvement for warriors and their Families. Commanders and staff from the medical treatment facility, the Warrior Transition Unit and the Garrison attend.

Sheridan said that a Soldier and Family Assistance Center is being established to provide administrative and financial assistance; assist with coordinating government entitlements, benefits and services; and provide information and assistance in obtaining non-governmental benefits and services. BAMC already provides facilities in the hospital for Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration liaisons.

In regard to the Army's AMAP Quick Wins, Col. David Baker, BAMC Troop Command commander, noted that visitors inspecting BAMC commented that BAMC was already setting the standard.

"BAMC was already picking up Soldiers at the airport and

taking them to their rooms. Case managers were already assigned to the wounded warriors," Baker said.

He explained, "BAMC is not coming up with new things to do; we are tweaking certain things to make them better for the wounded warriors."

Some of the adjustments Baker describes are keyless entries for the burn center patients, automatic flushers for the toilets, establishing a Family Readiness Group for the wounded warriors, continuing to evaluate patients negotiating one or more wheelchairs down a sidewalk, and adding 168 employees to the staff.

"Consolidating a Soldier and Family Assistance Center into a one-stop shop will make it easier for the wounded warrior to get around. Anything that the wounded warrior needs will be in this unit. AMAP is a good thing for BAMC and good for the Soldiers and their Families. As

Gen. Gilman says, the key to success is to never stop listening," Baker emphasized.

To further assist Soldiers in expediting the Medical Evaluation Board process, the MEDCOM is implementing new access to care standards for Warriors in Transition. The MEDCOM has trained ombudsmen to permit the identification and resolution of problems at the earliest opportunity.

The Army leadership has directed the senior commanders on Army installations to make Warrior in Transition facilities and furnishings top priorities for repairs and improvements. Fort Sam Houston Garrison Commander Col. Wendy Martinson directed the re-opening of the ID Card Office July 10 in the basement of BAMC. The office is specifically for wounded warriors and their Families. The facility is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 to 11 a.m. and 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Additionally, the Okubu Barracks has been designated specifically to house wounded warriors assigned to the BAMC Warrior in Transition unit. During the past few months, 36 rooms on the first floor of the barracks complex have been renovated to full Americans with Disabilities Act compliance. Recently, \$1.5 million was provided by IMCOM to the Garrison to convert an additional 28 rooms to ADA-complaint quarters.

IMCOM also has validated a requirement to provide \$4.83 million to add water softeners and anti-scalding devices for burn patients and installation of TV cables. Another project is in planning to install elevators in the Okubu barracks to provide expansion of Soldiers' quarters to the second floor, if required.

The Garrison staff is also investigating ways to support travel to administrative and medical appointments for the Warriors in Transition Unit by obtaining two additional ADA-compliant buses with wheelchair lifts within the next three weeks that will be operated by the WTU in coordination with Garrison to meet appointment schedules.



Photos by Esther Garcia

## Fiesta military-style

The 82nd Airborne Division's "All-American Chorus," composed of division troopers representing every unit within the division, perform songs and ballads reflecting the airborne tradition at the Fort Sam Houston Fiesta military ceremony at MacArthur Parade Field April 22. The chorus is in San Antonio celebrating Fiesta and performing at various events.



## Proud history

Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Burke, Army Medical Department Center and School, and Soldiers assigned to Brooke Army Medical Center, U.S. Army South, 470th Military Intelligence Brigade and 32nd Medical Brigade participate in the Army streamer presentation celebrating the Army's 232nd birthday June 14 at MacArthur Parade Field. The 178 colored streamers represent past battle campaigns.



## Special delivery

With the sounds of cavalry music in the background, Col. Wendy Martinson, commander, U.S. Army Garrison and her trusted steed joins Chester McDougald, Pony Express Couriers Chairman, and pony express riders as they walk across MacArthur Parade Field Dec. 1. The 19th annual Christmas Along the Corridor Pony Express Courier Run Finale delivers the governor of Texas holiday message to the San Antonio Postmaster.



A member of San Antonio's first all-female professional mariachi group, Mariachi Femenil Las Eréndiras de San Antonio, performs at the Fort Sam Houston Fiesta and Fireworks event Sunday for the sixth consecutive year. The group was founded in February 1996 by José R. Torres and consists of 10 to 12 females ranging from 18 to 22 years old. The name "Las Eréndiras" means Aztec princesses and the experience of these young women in action portrays the aura of their presence.