

News Briefs

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187th Medical Battalion Change of Command

The 32nd Medical Brigade will host the 187th Medical Battalion change of command ceremony at 8 a.m. Thursday at the MacArthur Parade Field. Lt. Col. Soo Lee Davis will relinquish command to Lt. Col. Rachel Smith.

JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Technology Exposition

The Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Technology Exposition will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 26 at the Sam Houston Community Center, Building 1395. The free event is hosted by the Network Enterprise Center and open to all military, civilian, and contractor personnel. For more information, call 443-561-2412.

USAF Band of the West Independence Day Concerts

The U.S. Air Force Band of the West's concert band will be performing several Independence Day tribute concerts in the local area. These include at 7 p.m. June 28 at the New Braunfels Civic/Convention Center (doors open at 6 p.m.); 3 p.m. June 30 at the Kerrville Cailloux Theater (tickets available at all six Bank of the Hills walk-in locations); 7 p.m. July 2 the Schertz Civic Center and 7 p.m. July 4 and 5 SeaWorld San Antonio (free with admission to the park). Concerts are free and open to the public. For more information, call 671-3934.

IDEA, PECCI Programs Suspended

Effective immediately, the Air Force Innovative Development Through Employee Awareness (IDEA) and Productivity Enhancing Capital Investment (PECI) programs have been suspended and submissions will no longer be accepted. These programs are being suspended to support the current Air Force vice chief of staff's "Airmen Powered by Innovative" initiative. A new process to capture innovative ideas should be operational July 1. For those who submitted ideas utilizing the IDEA Program Data System prior to June 1, those ideas will continue to be processed. For more information, call 652-8954 or 4332.

There's strong ... and then there's 90 and Army Strong

By Jessica R. Payne
Network Enterprise Center

In 2006, the Army unveiled its new slogan "Army Strong" with the words, "There is nothing on this green earth stronger than the U.S. Army, because there is nothing on this green earth stronger than a U.S. Army Soldier."

One Joint Base San Antonio civil servant has been a living example of "Army Strong" for 70 years. Fred Chapal, a Department of the Army civilian serving with the United States Army Signal Network Enterprise Center turns 90 years old Monday.

Chapal entered the Army June 12, 1943 and is a World War II veteran. He served as a gunner with Company A, 87th Chemical Mortar Battalion and experienced combat duties in five major campaigns, including Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe.

The 87th Chemical Mortar Battalion served 326 days in combat, during which 11 Soldiers were killed and dozens were wounded. During his time overseas, Chapal vividly recalls when Winston Churchill told the British people, "Never Give Up!"

Chapal is recognized as the

oldest civil servant with the Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Signal Command (Army) as well as Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston. In addition, he is among the six oldest federal employees serving in the Army. Chapal has been a civil servant for 30 years and today serves as a logistics technician.

"People ask me all the time...why don't you retire," Chapal said. "I have got to be doing something and since I don't play golf, I would rather be working. As long as I can get out of bed, I just come to work."

A Texas native, Chapal was born June 17, 1923. He is a direct descendent of the Macedonio Vela family, who in 1867 purchased and founded the 80,000-acre Laguna Seca Ranch in south Texas.

"I am proud of my family heritage. My mother's name was Raquel Vela and her grandfather founded the Laguna Seca Ranch which is a famous ranch located in Edinburg, Texas," Chapal said.

"There is a historical marker at the ranch stating that my aunt, Tia Carlota, took a bag of oranges from a traveling priest and started the whole citrus industry in



Courtesy photo

(Above) Fred Chapal served as a gunner with Company A, 87th Chemical Mortar Battalion and experienced combat duties during World War II in five major campaigns, including Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe.

the Rio Grande Valley."

Chapal married his wife Dorothy in 1948, and together they have raised two children and nine grandchildren.

This year, the Chapals will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary. The NEC, in partnership with Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, is celebrating Chapal's birthday



Photo by Cecil J. Johnson

Fred Chapal, an Army civilian serving with the Network Enterprise Center, turns 90 years old Monday. He goes to the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center four times a week during his lunch break to swim and work out.

from 1 to 3 p.m. Monday at the Warfighter and Family Readiness, Building 2797. The community is invited to participate.

Last Army military policeman on JBSA-Fort Sam Houston retires

A chapter of Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston history closed out June 7 with the retirement of Sgt. 1st Class John C. McGlocklin Sr., the last Army military policeman assigned to the 502nd Security Forces Squadron.

With his active duty and Individual Ready Reserve time, McGlocklin has 35 years of service as a military

policeman, 20 of which were on active duty.

Entering the Army on June 19, 1979, he completed basic training and advanced individual training for military occupational specialty 95B military police.

He was then assigned to the 52nd Military Police Company at Fort Sam Houston, which later became Company A, U.S. Army Gar-

ison Law Enforcement Activity, from September 1979 to October 1982.

"Most of my time was as a patrolman and I also did a stint attached to the Brooke Army Medical Center Provost Marshal Office," McGlocklin said. "This involved monitoring the BAMC facilities for safety and security and also writing approximately 60 parking citations a day,"

McGlocklin said.

He then left for Germany, where he was assigned to the 529th Military Police Company and was in the security platoon for the commander in chief of U.S. Army Europe.

McGlocklin also attended Military Police Investigators School and worked covert