# Missie Ranger'

Volume 72, No. 4 April 2019 www.wsmr.army.mil/Ranger

### **WSMR** community comes out for Color Run



White Sands Missile Range community members take off during the annual Color Run April 5.

# Bataan Memorial Death March



Marchers leave the starting gate at the 2019 Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range March 17. A record 8,639 enthusiastic military and civilian marchers watched the ceremony from a long serpentine start line on a cold, clear morning with temperatures hovering just above freezing. The marchers, and a few hundred runners, had traveled from all 50 states and 12 countries to participate in the march honoring U.S. and Filipino Soldiers defending the Philippines from an attack by Japan that began the day following the attack on Pearl Harbor. See story on Page 3.

U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY CHUCK ROBERTS

wsmissilerange

white sands missile range

### **GEMS** summer camp accepting applications



A GEMS I student participates in a trajectory exercise during a GEMS Summer Camp in 2017. The students were asked to aim a rice ball into a trash a few yards ahead.

#### **By Chuck Roberts** Staff Writer

Do you have a child in middle or high school who would enjoy a fun and challenging week of lasers, robotics, rocketry and computer science and more at White Sands Missile Range?

If so, the Gains in the Education of Mathematics

and Science (GEMS) program is now accepting applications for GEMS Middle School students for June 17-21 and July 22-26, and for High School students July 22-26. The application window for the Middle School program is open until May 15, and High School applications can be submitted until April 30. The

GEMS program is available for students in the lo-

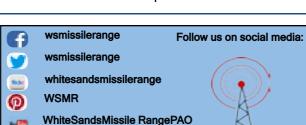
During their week of inquiry-based, hands-on lab experiments and activities in world-class military labs and facilities not open to the public, students will be under the tutelage of research scientists and engineers from

SEE GEMS ON PAGE 4



Movies and Community Calendar

Back Page





April is alcohol awareness month

Page 7

## **Announcements**





**Community Event** 

#### **EDITORIAL POLICY**

"This newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Missile Ranger are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of Army, or White Sands Missile Range. It is published monthly in digital format and posted Online.

"All Editorial Content of the Missile Ranger is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Public Affairs Office of White Sands Missile Range.

#### ADVERTISING POLICY

"The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Army.

# WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE N.M.





E-mail us - usarmy.wsmr.atec.list.ranger@mail.mil

# Bataan Memorial Death March begins with emotional ceremony

**By Chuck Roberts** Staff Writer

It was an emotional start to the 2019 Bataan Memorial Death March as Valdemar De Herrera, Paul Kerchum and Ben Skardon - three survivors from the actual Bataan Death March sounded off during a symbolic roll call March 17 at White Sands Missile Range, followed by a moment of silence after calling the name of 12 fellow survivors who have died since the last memorial march.

"While you are out on the course today, I want you to remember why we conduct this event every year," said Col. Chris Ward, White Sands Missile Range Garrison Commander, during the opening ceremony. "It is to honor heroes of the greatest generation the heroes of the Bataan Death March, to honor these five men right here and their comrades who are no longer with us," Ward said. In addition to Herrera. Kerchum and Skardon, survivors attending included Harold Bergbower and James Bollich.

"As you walk through the desert terrain here, and you find yourself struggling today to get to the next water point or to overcome the pain in your body, remember what these great American and Philippine allies endured, knowing that



Soldiers march towards the start line during the 2019 Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range March 17. Over 8,600 registered for the memorial march.

when they reached the end of that march there would be more pain, suffering and possibly death. Tap into their courage to keep marching and to finish." Ward said.

Ward was addressing a record 8,639 enthusiastic military and civilian marchers watching the ceremony from a long serpentine starting line on a cold, clear morning with temperatures hovering just above freezing.

The marchers, and a few hundred runners. had traveled from all 50 states and 12 countries to participate in the march honoring U.S. and Filipino Soldiers defending the Philippines from an attack by Japan that began the day following the

attack on Pearl Harbor.

After Gen. Douglas MacArthur ordered the defenders to withdraw to the Bataan peninsula. they held out more than four months in a malaria-infested region with scarce supplies and virtually no air or naval support until they were surrendered to Japanese forces on April 9, 1942.

Approximately 75,000 U.S. and Filipino servicemembers marched for days in the scorching heat through the Philippine jungles. Thousands died. Those who survived the forced march faced years of hardship in prisoner-of-war camps.

Joining Ward in honoring the five survivors and their fallen comrades during the ceremony was U.S. Rep. Xochitl Torres Small (D-N.M.).

"We are here today. from all over the world. to honor the incredible heroes and survivors of Bataan." Torres Small said

"What the Soldiers of the Bataan Death March endured must never be forgotten. And by being here today, you are helping keep their memory and spirit alive. We stand stronger as a nation because of their sacrifice. and I am honored and humbled to be with you today," Torres Small said.

One of those keeping the memory alive was Warren Beard, a retired Army master sergeant who had traveled from The Village, Fla., to honor his uncle Joseph Beard, who survived the Bataan Death March, but was killed afterward by a Japanese soldier during a work detail.

Beard never knew about the Bataan Memorial Death March until he began researching his uncle's military unit. Both Beard and his uncle served as infantrymen.

"And all of a sudden I came across this, the Bataan Memorial Death March," said Beard while waiting for the march to get underway. "I just had to do it."

Katie Monday also had a special person in mind as she waited nearby to begin. Her husband, Staff Sgt. Joshua Monday, is currently deployed. Monday said she was marching her first Bataan "for myself and for him since he can't be here, but we'll do it together after he returns," Monday said. "I'm scoping it out for

Monday was also marching to honor those who died and survived the Bataan Death March. "That is a cause that shouldn't be forgotten," Monday said.

Marching her fourth Bataan Memorial Death March was Melissa Judkins, the Command Sgt. Major for Installation Management Command, who said it was "awesome" to be back.

"I'm looking forward to the camaraderie and being around people that enjoy the same things I do, and who want to give back to those who have served before." Judkins said.

Beside her was fellow marcher Shervl Lvon, the Command Sgt. Major for U.S. Army Cyber Command, who was making the march with her daughter.

"I am terribly excited and nervous as well. It is going to be a great day," Lyon said. "I have great battle buddies with me, so we are going to have a great time. I look forward to watching people face their challenges and making it to the finish line."

Note: Miriam Rodriguez contributed to this article.

# **GEMS**

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

WSMR and Holloman Air Force Base. Students receive a \$100 stipend upon completion of the week-long activities.

This summer marks the fifth year for the GEMS I Middle School Program at WSMR.

"The GEMS program offers an incredible opportunity for students to see why we do what we do and how we do it," said Mariette Mealor, WSMR Leadership and Professional Development Office. "The excitement and wonder on the faces of kids when they work hands-on with our servicemembers, engineers and scientist is amazing, and they have so much fun exploring and learning. By having this program we hope to foster an increased interest in STEM related studies"

GEMS I Middle School program provides students in grades 6 to 8 with a wide variety of hands-on modules, demonstrations, experiments and tours. Students selected for the program will experience exciting STEM-related activities on one of the largest, most dynamic military test ranges in the world. This is a great opportunity for students interested in exploring science and engineering. Various topics include: Soldier Day, Robotics, Electronics, Rocketry, 3-D Printing, Micro controllers, FM Transmitters, Cyber, Weather, and more!

GEMS II is the High School program consisting of a series of hands-on modules. Students selected for the GEMS High School program will experience a week of interesting STEM-related activities (robotics, rocketry, computer science, lasers, and more) inside a world class military laboratory. This is an excellent opportunity for high school students as they prepare to make important career and college plans and decisions. Various topics include Soldier Day, Robotics, Electronics, Rocketry, 3-D Printing, Micro controllers, FM Transmitters, Cyber, Weather, and more!

Applicants for GEMS I will be placed in the week of their choice, or, if their first choice is no longer available, will be offered a spot in the alternate week (if available). Each week will host 32 students. GEMS II can accommodate 40 high school students.

The GEMS programs at WSMR is a joint/collaborative effort between the Combat Capabilities Development Command (CCDC)/Data and Analysis Center (D&AC) and the U.S. Army Test & Evaluation Command (ATEC).

The CCDC/D&AC mission is to ensure that U.S. military personnel and equipment survive and function effectively in hostile circumstances. ATEC's mission is to provide the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Department of Defense, and other customers with high-quality resources and services for experimentation, test, research, assessment, development, and training in support of the nation at war. CCDC, D&AC and ATEC both employ numerous engineers, scientists, physicists and military personnel to accomplish their missions. These same employees coordinate and conduct our GEMS programs.

To apply, go the application link at https://www.usaeop.com/program/wsmr/

GEMS is a competitive application process and students will be notified by May 31of their selection.

#### **GEMS Seeks Near Peer Mentors:**

GEMS is looking for Near-Peer Mentors ages 16 or older. Local college and high school students, spend your summer mentoring the next generation of innovators.

GEMS relies on local college and high school students to work alongside teachers and Army research scientists to provide inquiry-based, hands-on lab experiments and activities. GEMS Near-Peer Mentors receive a stipend based on experience and education level.

This is not just a summer work opportunity, but a way to give back to your local community, mentor other students with hands-on experiments in Army Laboratories, and share your passion for STEM with other students.

For more information, email the program point of contact at usarmy.wsmr. atec.mbx.gems@mail.mil or call Mr. Cruz at (575) 678-9077, Dr. Melendez at (575) 678-4570, or Dr. Perez at (575) 678-0047.





# Lieutenant lends her voice to Bataan family legacy

**By Chuck Roberts** Staff Writer

First Lt. Sally Myers became part of a legacy honoring Ben Skardon and the thousands of servicemembers of the Bataan Death March on a cold, dark Sunday morning March 7 when she sang the national anthem during the opening ceremony for the Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range.

It didn't go as planned, but it turned out perfect. The family planned to keep it a secret that his grandniece would be singing "The Star Spangled Banner", but Myers hadn't planned on coming down with a really bad cold the week of the march.

Skardon prompted letting the cat out of the bag during a family dinner the night before the opening ceremony. The 101-yearold Bataan Death March survivor began talking about Myers' recent deployment to Afghanistan and her track record of singing the national anthem as a cadet at West Point, at her duty station at Fort Bragg, N.C., and while deployed as an Army engineer in Afghanistan.

"We were going to keep it a secret, but after that I told him, 'I'm actually going to be singing the national anthem tomorrow, too.' He was really, really excited when I told him, and he was so funny. He raised his fists and said, "Hooah!"

But early next morning, though, event organizers weren't sure if Myers would be able to sing, and were searching for an alternate. However, a sniffling Myers soon showed up with tissue in tow, determined to give it a go.

She faltered on the first few notes, but quickly found her voice and finished with a strong and clear voice heard before a record 8,639 military and civilian marchers from all 50 states and 12 countries.

"It was nerve-wracking because I've had a really bad cold, but it was very humbling to sing in front of Uncle Ben," Myers said a few hours later while escorting Skardon on his annual trek to Mile Marker 8 on the Bataan Memorial Death March. Myers made a point to deflect attention away from her to her granduncle.

"I really don't want it to be about me. I want it to be about him, because he is an amazing man," Myers said.

"It's amazing what he went through. It's nothing that anybody in the Army today can really compare with or comprehend. He is a legend to so many," Myers said. "It's such an honor to be a part of his family and carry on this legacy of the Army and service."

"I love being able to serve, knowing that he and the rest of my family have served. It's very humbling," she said. "This is all for Uncle Ben, and I'm very proud to be his grandniece."

When asked about his grandniece's performance as he neared Mile Marker 8, Skardon, who is known for his quick wit, replied: "I was singing along with her. I thought she jazzed it up a little bit. But, you know, she's my grandniece," he said with a smile.

Ben Skardon is a Clemson, S.C., native who served with the 92nd Infantry Regiment while stationed in the Philippines in 1942 with a battalion of Filipino Army recruits.

When Skardon was surrendered to the Japanese, he was able to sneak a can of sweetened condensed milk into his pocket before the Bataan Death March began. He said that can of milk helped save his life along the 70-mile march to a prisoner of war camp.

At his "lowest point," Skardon suffered from beriberi, malaria, diarrhea and his eyes were sealed shut with discharge from an eye infection. He could barely swallow. Two of his fellow prisoners of war spoon-fed him, cleansed his eyes, carried him to an open latrine and bathed him before he was returned to their shack in the POW camp.

One of his buddies spoke some Japanese and made it known that a ring was available in exchange for food. That ring was Skardon's Clemson University class ring that he had managed to hide during imprisonment.



COURTESY PHOTO BY KEN SCAF

First Lt. Sally Myers sings the national anthem during the opening ceremony for the Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range.

The food acquired helped improve his health.

Approximately 75,000 U.S. and Filipino servicemembers marched for days in the scorching heat through the Philippine jungles. Thousands died. Those who survived the forced march faced years of hardship in prisoner-of-war camps.

After the war, Skardon returned to his alma mater where he taught English courses until his retirement in 1982.

Every year Skardon looks forward to the 8-mile march during the Bataan Memorial Death March. He marches with a group of friends and family known as Ben's Brigade. During the march, a member of his brigade carries a can of milk and his "new" Clemson class ring.

Note: Cammy Montoya contributed to this article.

### **Debt Collection Notice**

This is a debt collection notice for SPC Vanzant J. Ronald. All services under Vanzant's name should be put on hold. All those with debts to be collected under the name of Ronald J. Vanzant or for information regarding collection, call 2LT Fitzgerald Cody at (910) 639-2664.

Respectfully, Fitzgerald, Cody 2LT, AD 3-6 AMDTD (575) 678-2801 or (910) 639-2664

### **Missile Ranger Submission Policy**

Submissions to the Missile Ranger are accepted anytime for publication in the following issue, space permitting.

All submissions will be edited for style, content and propriety. Submissions must include a point of contact identified by first and last name and a telephone number for that point of contact.

Submissions can be made by e-mail to the following usarmy.wsmr.atec.list.ranger@mail. mil; also in person at the Public Affairs Office, Building 1782; or call (575) 678-2716.

### Snowy Saturday doesn't hurt Bataan spirit



U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY CHUCK ROBERTS

Johnny Bryant (right) packs on a few more handfuls to a snowman at his campsite under the watchful eyes of Nick Cox (left) and Justin Petersen. It came down fast and hard, but by late afternoon much of the Saturday snow was gone from makeshift campgrounds for the Bataan Memorial Death March.

### **By Chuck Roberts** Staff Writer

Snowboarding has become a tradition for the Trapp family as part of their Bataan Memorial Death March weekend the past three years.

The tradition changed somewhat, however, with an unexpected snowfall March 16 that dropped a blanket of snow on campers at White Sands Missile Range.

Instead of heading to nearby White Sands National Monument, where 12-year-old Michael normally sleds down dunes of brilliant white gypsum, he was able to put his orange plastic sled to use on the gentle slope of a nearby former golf course.

But keeping with family tradition, his father Kevin said they still planned to make their annual sojourn to the dunes.

"It's kind of fun to sled both in the snow and the sand," said Michael, who had traveled with his parents from Tucson, Ariz., to march his third Bataan Memorial Death March.

"It snowed two weeks ago in Tucson, but this is not normal for us," said his father Kevin. "Not normal, but not bad, either," said his wife Kristin.

"It's wonderful. We don't get to see this very often," she said. And her thoughts for the following day when sunshine was scheduled to replace snow in the forecast?

"I think it's going to be a muddy mess, but that's better than hot and dusty. I think it would be kind of cool if it was like this tomorrow."

Across the street in a makeshift tent city, Mike

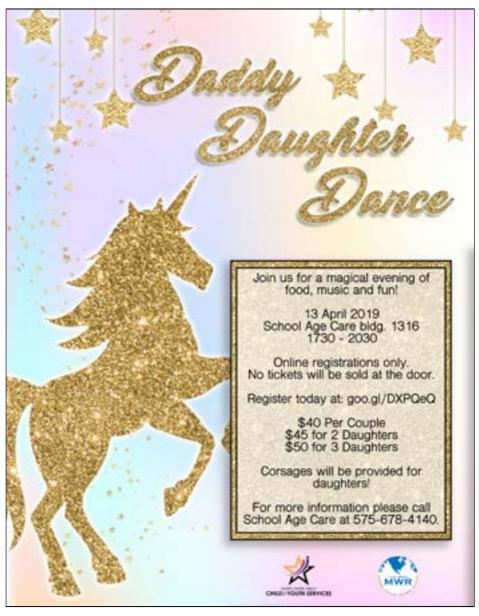
Bailey and his wife Jennifer were like most campers and took the surprise weather in stride as they jogged, threw footballs and gathered around the barbeque grills (perhaps a bit closer than usual) for lunch.

"This is probably the farthest thing from what we expected," said Mike, but noted that after three trips to participate in the march, they're ready for anything.

Two years ago, he said they dealt with insane heat, and last year they were one of the many whose tent collapsed due to extreme winds.

So were they equipped for the unexpected snow the day before Bataan?

"We had equipment and we dealt with it – a lot of adapting and overcoming on this one," he said laughing. ♣





# Plan to remedy housing issues

WASHINGTON --Army senior leaders introduced an action plan to lawmakers last monththat outlines steps to remedy military housing issues.

The plan includes a draft tenant bill of rights, which is a joint effort by all military services expected to be finalized in the coming weeks.

In it, there are 12 rights intended to protect residents of privatized military housing.

"The recent reports of substandard conditions in some of our military housing units are deeply troubling," said Secretary of the Army Mark T. Esper. "It is unacceptable for our families who sacrifice so much for our country to endure these hardships in their homes."

Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Capitol Hill. Esper said garrison leaders will soon be given more oversight to ensure housing companies on installations are held accountable.

Current proposals are for garrison staffs to conduct quality control checks on all life, health and safety work orders performed by contractors. They will also be present every time a resident moves in or out of a home.

To better empower them, members of garrison staffs will even be trained on contracting and housing management, he added.



Soldiers ask a military family to respond to a survey as part of an ongoing Army-wide effort to resolve inadequate housing on

A reporting system is being developed as well that will allow residents to rate the timeliness, quality of work and customer service of contractors that will be relayed to garrison teams.

"Many Army families are concerned that they lack the ability to hold the privatized housing companies accountable for poorly performed services," Esper said, "and are inadequately protected from retaliation."

The Army has 111.000 housing units, of which 87,000 were privatized under the Residential Communities Initiative in 1998.

Seven private companies now manage the properties across 49 installations, he noted.

While the initiative helped tackle inadequate housing at the time, Esper said the Army eventually lost sufficient oversight of the program.

"In too many cases, it is clear that privatized housing companies failed to uphold their end of the bargain, a failure that was enabled by the Army's insufficient oversight," he said.

Within hours of the first Congressional hearing to address housing concerns last month, the Army took actions to fully understand the scope and scale of the problems, he said.

Senior leaders have since visited families in homes affected by lead paint, mold and other toxic hazards at Fort Meade, Maryland; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Campbell, Tennessee: Fort Jackson. South Carolina; Fort Belvoir, Virginia; and the U.S. Military Academy in New York.

Garrison commanders were ordered to complete a 100 percent screening of installation housing by March 18 and several Town halls have also taken place across the Army, 💎

# April is alcohol awareness month

WSMR EAP

Employees at White Sands Missile Range are invited to participate in activities that are part of the Alcohol Awareness Campaign at the Professional Development Center April 23.

"Alcohol use and abuse causes many destructive physical, emotional, relational, and social is-

sues in our communities", said Prevention and EAP Coordinator Lawrence Banegas with the Army Substance Abuse Program.

ASAP will be hosting an outdoor event regarding alcohol awareness and prevention from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Several organizations and resources will be in

attendance including The MADD Truck, an obstacle course provided by the New Mexico Army National Guard.

This collaborative event will cover all employee ASAP training for FY19. The site for this occasion will be in the parking lot of Building 464 behind the PDC in Building 465. \*

### The forgotten Missions: Apollo IX and X

**Space Museum** 

Alamogordo, New Mexico – When it comes to the Apollo Program, most everyone knows about Apollo I, Apollo VIII and Apollo XI. But what about those missions that were critical to the success of the lunar landings even though they never touched down on the moon? And why did we have spacecraft named Gumdrop and Spider?

To learn why these missions were vitally important and exactly what they accomplished, join Museum Executive Director Chris Orwoll on Friday, April 5 for the free monthly Launch Pad Lecture at 9 a.m. on the Museum's first floor.

The Launch Pad Lecture is free to the public and is held at 9 a.m. on the Museum's first floor on the first Friday of each month.

Coffee and donuts are compliments of the International Space Hall of Fame Foundation. The next Launch Pad Lecture



Apollo IX astronaut David Scott performs a standup Extra Vehicular Activity from Command Module Gumdrop, seen from docked Lunar Module Spider.

will be on May 3, 2019, and the topic will be Able and Baker: Monkeys on a Mission with Museum **Education Specialist Mi**chael Shinabery.

The Launch Pad Lectures are streamed live on Periscope and are available after the lecture on the museum's YouTube channel: https://www. youtube.com/channel/ UC2SirhgX3NsxcREfOVLjHeA.

The New Mexico Mu-

seum of Space History, a Smithsonian Affiliate, is a division of the NM Department of Cultural Affairs. For more information, call 575-437-2840 or toll free 1-877-333-6589 or visit the website at www.nmspacemuseum.org. Like us at: www.facebook.com/ NMSpaceMuseum/

About the New Mexico Museum of Space History: www.nmspacemuseum.org. \*

# Community Calendar

Community Calendar submissions are compiled by the Public Affairs Office. Any WSMR organization wishing to publicize an event on this calendar should submit information to usarmy.wsmr.atec.list.ranger@mail.mil.

### Frontier Club Lunch Specials

Wednesday, April 10

Frontier Club - Spaghetti and meatballs

Thursday, April 11

Frontier Club - Chicken fried steak

Friday, April 12

Frontier Club - Specials from the grill

Monday, April 15

Frontier Club - Teriyaki chicken

Tuesday, April 16

Frontier Club - Tostada carnitas

Wednesday, April 17

Frontier Club - Green chile chicken Alfredo

Thursday, April 18

Frontier Club - Hot roast beef

Friday, April 19

Frontier Club - Blackened tilapia

Monday, April 22

Frontier Club - Kung Pao chicken

Tuesday, April 23

Frontier Club - Red chile enchilada

Wednesday, April 24

Frontier Club - Pork Madeira

Thursday, April 25

Frontier Club - Barbeque

Friday, April 26

Frontier Club - Specials from the grill

Monday, April 29

Frontier Club - Ginger pepper beef

Tuesday, April 30

Frontier Club - Carne adovada

Closed Saturday and Sunday

# April

- April 21 Easter Sunday
- April 23 Alcohol Awareness Campaign 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. PDC Parking Lot



### Frequently Called Numbers

Aquatic Center 678-1068

Army Community Service 678-6767

Arts and Crafts Center 678-5321

Auto Crafts Center 678-5800

Bell Gym 678-3374

Bowling Center 678-3465

CDS 678-2059

Community Center 678-4134

Commissary 678-2313

Frontier Club 678-2055

Library 678-5820

McAfee Army Health Clinic 674-3500

Museum 678-2250

Post Chapel 678-2615

Post Office 541-7429

Outdoor Recreation 678-1713

White Sands Schools 674-1241

Youth Services/SAS 678-4140

IHG Army Hotel, WSMR 678-1838/4559