



Bliss garrison welcomes  
new commander ■ 3A



Former Bliss Soldier  
publishes first novel ■ 1B

Thursday, July 18, 2019

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## >> CHANGE OF COMMAND

David Poe / USAG Fort Bliss

Spc. Joceyln Hourself, a Soldier from the 93rd Military Police Battalion, performs honors as part of the colors detail during the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Bliss change of command ceremony at the Centennial Banquet and Conference Center on East Fort Bliss July 9. Col. Stu James assumed command of the garrison from Col. Steve Murphy after two years in command. USAG Bliss is a subordinate command of U.S. Army Installation Management Command-Readiness. The garrison Soldier-civilian workforce at Bliss supports installation operations in Texas and New Mexico, covering almost 1.12 million acres. For more on this event, turn to 3A.



Capt. Roxana Thompson / 1st AD CAB

A 1st Armored Division Combat Aviation Brigade UH-60 Black-hawk, in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel, flies across Afghanistan executing aviation operations in support of our Afghan and coalition partners in May.

## DoD Releases Report on Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan

By Department of Defense

Friday the Department of Defense provided to Congress the semiannual report "Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan" covering events during the period from Dec. 1, 2018, to May 31, 2019. The report was submitted in accordance with requirements in Section 1225 of the fiscal 2015 National Defense Authorization Act as amended by Sections 1231 and 1531 of the fiscal 2016 and fiscal 2017 NDAA.

The principal goal of the South Asia Strategy is to conclude the war in Afghanistan on terms favorable to Afghanistan and the United States. During this reporting period, the U.S. and its partners used military force to drive the Taliban towards a durable and inclusive political settlement. There have been some notable developments – the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces emerged from the most hard-fought winter campaign since 2002, the U.S. continues to engage in "fight and talk" approach with the Taliban, and despite atypical levels of violence and heavy losses, ANDSF recruitment and retention outpaced attrition for the first time in several reporting periods.

Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad remains engaged in exploratory talks with the Taliban aimed at a settlement that reduces U.S. cost in Afghanistan while safeguarding U.S. counterterrorism interests. Increased military pressure on the Taliban, international calls for peace, and Khalilzad's engagements appear to be driving the Taliban to negotiations. Any durable peace settlement must include guarantees and mechanisms that protect U.S. counterterrorism interests, a reduction in levels of violence, and an intra-Afghan dialogue that leads to an inclusive political settlement and an understanding that the future development relationship between the international community and the future Afghan government, and a drawdown of foreign forces in Afghanistan.

The ANDSF remain in control of most of Afghanistan's population centers and all of the provincial capitals, while the Taliban continue to control large portions of Afghanistan's rural areas, and continue

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# From Murphy to Mazar-i-Sharif

### Deployed 1st AD CAB pilots mark 45th anniversary of the first female Army helicopter pilot

By Sgt. Ashton Hofmeister | 1st AD CAB

When Col. Sally Murphy graduated from flight school at Fort Rucker, Alabama, on June 4, 1974, she was the first woman to do so. Murphy became a helicopter pilot in the United States Army and led the way for all women in the now growing force of female aviators.

In the 1st Armored Division Combat Aviation Brigade, female aviators, like Capt. Chloe Flores and 1st Lt. Danielle Failor, are proud to fly in today's Army.

Flores graduated flight school in July 2012 and now flies the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter.

"I have always been fascinated with flying, and always wanted to be in the military," Flores said. "My grandfather and father are both pilots on the civilian side."

Along with flying, Flores took

command of Delta Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment in early 2018.

"It's the coolest thing I've ever done," said Flores. "And it's what I've always wanted to do."

Failor graduated flight school in November of 2018 and flies the CH-47 Chinook helicopter. Like Flores, she

was inspired, but in a different way. She changed her career path after she flew as a passenger in a Black Hawk while attending West Point.

"Ever since that first flight, it confirmed everything my grandpa told me, and ended up altering my goals and dreams," Failor said. "I worked hard to be at the top of my class in hopes that I would get an Aviation branch slot."

While the flight in the Black

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U.S. Army photo

Then-2nd Lt. Sally D. Murphy in the cockpit of a UH-1 Huey in 1974.

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conclude ■ 8B

#### FORT BLISS

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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# Guard deployed to help after California rocked by quakes

By Gary Sheftick | Army News Service

TRONA, Calif. – Two major earthquakes that hit towns in the Mojave Desert of California July 4 and 5 left behind cracked and burning buildings, a closed highway and burst water lines that prompted call-up of the National Guard to help distribute water and food.

The 143rd Military Police Battalion set up an emergency supply distribution point in Trona High School over the holiday weekend after 30 miles of damaged Route 178 closed, temporarily isolating the town. Broken water lines had shut off water to the residents and the only food store in Trona had been damaged by the quakes and closed.

A 6.4 magnitude earthquake hit the towns of Trona and Ridgecrest July 4, along with China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station. Another 7.1 magnitude earthquake hit the same area July 5, prompting an evacuation of non-essential personnel from China Lake.

The 143rd MPs in Lancaster, California, were activated by the governor and deployed to Trona. At the high school, they at one point were distributing 500 cases of drinking water per day to residents, said Sgt. Robert Madrigal, NCO in charge of the task force.

About 200 Red Cross snack packs were distributed daily, Madrigal said, along with about 100 Meals Ready to Eat. Another 200 gallons of water were given out per day for pets and other purposes, he said.

In the 100-degree heat, residents lined their



Courtesy photo

Members of the California National Guard's 143rd Military Police Battalion distribute food and water to residents of Trona, Calif., July 7, following a 7.1 magnitude earthquake that burst water lines and closed stores.

vehicles up at the high school to receive the water and food packets. Madrigal said Soldiers handing out the supplies noticed how tired the residents looked.

“We try to comfort them as much as possible,” he said.

Some of the residents told Soldiers about walls that collapsed in their homes, but thankfully no one was killed or seriously injured, said a California Guard spokesman. He attributed the low injury rate to the remoteness of the area.

About 200 National Guard Soldiers were initially activated for the humanitarian assistance and Madrigal said about 50 remain on active duty. The water and food supplies were brought in by emergency management agencies, he explained.

Another California National Guard unit, the 95th Air Wing, is providing damage assessments for the area, a spokesman said, partly through satellite imagery and unmanned aircraft systems.

# Soldiers to operate armed robotic vehicles from upgraded Bradleys

By Sean Kimmons | Army News Service

Soldiers are slated to fire at targets next year using a platoon of robotic combat vehicles they will control from the back of modified Bradley Fighting Vehicles.

The monthlong operational test is scheduled to begin in March at Fort Carson, Colorado, and will provide input to the Combat Capabilities Development Command's Ground Vehicle Systems Center on where to go next with autonomous vehicles.

The upgraded Bradleys, called Mission Enabler Technologies-Demonstrators, or MET-Ds, have cutting-edge features such as a remote turret for the 25 mm main gun, 360-degree situational awareness cameras and enhanced crew stations with touchscreens.

Initial testing will include two MET-Ds and four robotic combat vehicles on M113 surrogate platforms. Each MET-D will have a driver and gunner as well as four Soldiers in its rear, who will conduct platoon-level maneuvers with two surrogate vehicles that fire 7.62 mm machine guns.

“We’ve never had Soldiers operate MET-

Ds before,” said David Centeno Jr., chief of the center’s Emerging Capabilities Office. “We’re asking them to utilize the vehicles in a way that’s never been done before.”

After the tests, the center and Next-Generation Combat Vehicle Cross-Functional Team, both part of Army Futures Command, will then use Soldier feedback to improve the vehicles for future test phases.

“You learn a lot,” Centeno said at the International Armored Vehicles USA conference June 26. “You learn how they use it. They may end up using it in ways we never even thought of.”

The vehicles are experimental prototypes and are not meant to be fielded, but could influence other programs of record by demonstrating technology derived from ongoing development efforts.

“This technology is not only to remain in the RCV portfolio, but also legacy efforts as well,” said Maj. Cory Wallace, robotic combat vehicle lead for the NGCV CFT.

One goal for the autonomous vehicles is to discover how to penetrate an adversary’s anti-access/aerial denial capabilities without

putting Soldiers in danger.

The vehicles, Centeno said, will eventually have third-generation forward-looking infrared kits with a target range of at least 14 kilometers.

“You’re exposing forces to enemy fire, whether that be artillery, direct fire,” he said. “So, we have to find ways to penetrate that bubble, attrit their systems and allow for freedom of air and ground maneuver. These platforms buy us some of that, by giving us standoff.”

## Phase II, III

In late fiscal year 2021, Soldiers will again play a role in Phase II testing as the vehicles conduct company-level maneuvers.

This time, experiments are slated to incorporate six MET-Ds and the same four M113 surrogates, in addition to four light and four medium surrogate robotic combat vehicles, which industry will provide.

Before these tests, a light infantry unit plans to experiment with the RCV light surrogate vehicles in Eastern Europe next May.

## PILOTS Continued from Page 1A

Hawk inspired Failor to become a pilot, she chose to fly the CH-47 as her knowledge increased.

“I was completely sold for the CH-47E,” said Failor. “It is such a unique aircraft in how it functions and operates compared to other Army helicopters.”

Both pilots are proud of where they are now, and they understand that female aviators have come a long way.

“In my West Point class (2011), we had just less than 100 females graduate,” Flores said. “Now, eight years later, we are pushing 200 female graduates per class.”

Looking back at the progress women have made in aviation, Failor feels they have much farther to go.

“We are a growing force in aviation units across the military,” Failor said. “Every female aviator I meet, I am extremely impressed with, rotary-wing and fixed-wing alike.”

While the journey has been hard for each of these aviators, they encourage other women to follow their dreams of becoming pilots.

“You can attain anything through dedication, commitment, and sacrifice,” Flores said. “Get out there and know you have a spotlight on you, so represent well.”

“It won’t be an easy road,” added Failor. “But from my short experience thus far, it has been worthwhile.”



Photos by Sgt. Ashton Hofmeister / 1st AD CAB PA

First Lt. Danielle Failor and her CH-47 Chinook helicopter on deployment recently. Forty-five years after retired Col. Sally Murphy became the first female Army aviator, Failor reflected on flying. “We are a growing force in aviation units across the military,” she said. “Every female aviator I meet, I am extremely impressed with, rotary-wing and fixed-wing alike.”



Capt. Chloe Flores and her UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter on deployment recently. “In my West Point class (2011), we had just less than 100 females graduate,” Flores said. “Now, eight years later, we are pushing 200 female graduates per class.”

## SECURITY Continued from Page 1A

to attack poorly-defended government checkpoints and rural district centers. Terrorist and insurgent groups continue to challenge Afghan, U.S. and coalition forces.

During the reporting period, the ANDSF increased operational tempo and reduced or consolidated checkpoints. The Afghan Special Security Forces curbed misuse, met growth milestones and increased the number of independent operations it conducted.

Finally, the Afghan government instituted a number of leadership changes that are helping them move the ANDSF towards becoming a more professional force. However, the Afghan security forces will continue to require sustained train, advise and assist efforts and financial support to overcome shortfalls.

\*\*\*\*\*

To read the report, visit <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/12/2002156816/-1/-1/1/enhancing-security-and-stability-in-afghanistan.pdf>



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The *Fort Bliss Bugle* has a circulation of 13,000 copies. Editorial content is prepared, edited and provided by the Public Affairs Office of Fort Bliss, Bldg. 15, 568-4088 or fax 568-2995.

Items submitted for publication in the *Fort Bliss Bugle* should be sent to [fortblissbugle@gmail.com](mailto:fortblissbugle@gmail.com), or sent to Fort Bliss, Texas 79916, by noon on Friday before issue. All submissions become Army property and should be typed, double-spaced with the author's name, signature and mailing address. Photos should have information attached describing the photo and have the photographer's full name. The editor reserves the right to reject or edit all editorial submissions that do not conform to the *Fort Bliss Bugle's* journalistic standards.

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<b>Publisher/Commanding General 1st AD and Ft. Bliss</b> Maj. Gen. Patrick Matlock	<b>Garrison Commander</b> Col. Steve Murphy
<b>1st AD and Fort Bliss CSM</b> CSM Robert Cobb	<b>Garrison CSM</b> CSM Brian Holschbach
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The *Fort Bliss Bugle* is published by the commanding general of Fort Bliss through The Laven Group, LLC, 7717 Lockheed Dr., Ste. A, El Paso, Tx. 79925, 915-772-0934, fax 915-772-1594, email [susan@lavenpublishing.com](mailto:susan@lavenpublishing.com).

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# UNIT NEWS

Training is the oil that keeps the engine of our Army running



Bliss MSF ROC drill tests  
MFGI capabilities ■ 7A



Connecticut National Guard  
strengthens alliance with Uruguay ■ 14A



## Home team

### Bliss garrison welcomes new commander, thanks Murphy for service

By David Poe | USAG Fort Bliss PA

Almost two years ago, Col. Steve Murphy, then the incoming Fort Bliss garrison commander, said he knew success in command would be a team effort. According to his remarks July 9, he couldn't have been more correct.

Murphy, a career helicopter pilot, relinquished command of U.S. Army Garrison Fort Bliss to Col. Stuart James during a change of command ceremony at the Centennial Banquet and Conference Center on East Fort Bliss July 9.

Murphy, James, and their families were joined by Brenda Lee McCullough, the Army Installation Management Command-Readiness director; and Command Sgt. Maj. Ray Rocco, IMCOM Readiness Directorate's senior noncommissioned officer; as well as Soldiers, government civilians, and friends for the morning ceremony.

The mission of the garrison workforce is rapid and efficient deployment operations, as well as providing facilities and services to promote readiness and a safe and secure installation. Bliss is home to almost 33,000 Soldiers, and including family members and civilians, approximately 100,000 live and work on the installation, comparing it to the population of Odessa, Texas. The garrison has an annual operating budget of approximately \$300 million.

"It's been a great, but very challenging two years in command," said Murphy during his remarks. "We had three government shutdowns to plan for and execute, turnover in leadership in every directorate, expanding requirements as a Mobilization and

Force Generation Installation, and it seemed like countless requests from outside agencies and organizations to use the Fort Bliss platform -- all of this in an era of decreasing resources in terms of budget and personnel."

After growing up in the Army and making it a career, Murphy said his time as a garrison commander was especially eye-opening for him.

"I am an Army brat who has been to nearly every Army post over my 46 years," he said. "Up until taking this job, I didn't know about the professionalism and dedication we have in the garrison workforce. Two years into this gig, I can't tell you how impressed I am with what they do on a daily basis and how privileged I have been to be a part of this team."

Murphy received the Legion of Merit from McCullough for his work in command, while spouse Stephanie Murphy was recognized for her leadership as the garrison command spouse in support of families and quality of life at Bliss.

"Whenever you leave an organization, you want to leave it better than when you joined it -- I think we've done that," Murphy said. "But you also want to transition it to a successor who you know will continue to push it forward. I know Stu James will be a great successor."

During the ceremony, Soldiers from the 653rd Regional Support Group and troops and civilians from across the Fort Bliss community supported the indoor military ceremony.

James, his wife Kristin, and their family return to El Paso and Fort Bliss for this assignment. He is a former plans chief for

**"Whenever you leave an organization, you want to leave it better than when you joined it -- I think we've done that."**

>> Col. Steve Murphy



Photos by David Poe / USAG Fort Bliss PA

Col. Stu James receives a congratulatory handshake after formally assuming command of U.S. Army Garrison Fort Bliss at the Centennial Banquet and Conference Center July 9. The garrison command is home to 15 directorates and supports the training, security, and quality of life for approximately 100,000 Soldiers, family members, and other employees at Fort Bliss.

the 1st Armored Division, the largest tenant command at Bliss, and the Armor officer has also served as a battalion commander under the 1st AD flag.

"It's great to see so many familiar faces out there; old friends and wingmen -- in some ways it feels like we never left," said James.

He said continued success from the garrison command will come with positive precedence.

"Steve [Murphy] and Bob [Burns, the Bliss deputy garrison commander], I am incredibly impressed with the team you have built here at Fort Bliss," James said. "I am profoundly aware of the exceptional, long-lasting support our community partners provide Fort Bliss [and] our Soldiers, veterans, civilians, and their families. I'm looking forward to meeting every one of you and continuing to build on this great relationship. I'm so grateful for the opportunity to serve Fort Bliss and the many communities it supports."

For more on USAG Fort Bliss, visit <https://home.army.mil/bliss/index.php/about/Garrison>.



The Army Materiel Command patch is worn during the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Bliss change of command ceremony on East Fort Bliss July 9. Last March, Installation management Command-Readiness, which oversees USAG Fort Bliss, became a major subordinate command of AMC.

## 1st CAV's 3rd ABCT 'Greywolf' assumes Korea mission



Capt. Scott Kuhn / U.S. Army

Col. Kevin Capra, left, commander of the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and Command Sgt. Maj. Ryan McLane, the 3rd ABCT, 1st Cav. CSM, uncased the colors during the transfer of authority ceremony on Camp Humphreys, South Korea, June 11. Greywolf assumed the nine-month rotational brigade mission from the 3rd ABCT, 1st Armored Division.

By Capt. Scott Kuhn | U.S. Army

The 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division (Rotational), uncased its colors during an official transfer of authority ceremony, June 7, at Robertson Field at Camp Humphreys, South Korea.

The ceremony marked the official assumption of the rotational mission for the brigade and the completion of mission for the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division from Fort Bliss.

According to Col. Kevin Capra, Greywolf commander, the Soldiers of the brigade have spent the past year training and increasing their readiness.

"Over the next nine months, alongside our Korean allies, we will

continue to build upon that effort and stand ready to conduct any mission asked of us," said Capra. "We stand shoulder to shoulder with our allies building readiness through partnership."

The Greywolf brigade, stationed at Fort Hood, is returning to the peninsula for the first time for an extended period since 1963. They will assume the rotational brigade duties from the "Bulldog" brigade who have spent the past nine months continuing to build relationships with the Republic of Korea Army and providing for the defense of the peninsula.

"Our Soldiers have been integrated into the social and operational fabric of the Korean civil and military culture throughout our de-

ployment," said Col. Marc Cloutier, the brigade commander of the 3rd ABCT, 1AD. "During our rotation, Bulldog brigade has conducted more than 230 training and cultural events in terms of combined training exercises to increase interoperability as well as community partnership activities to further strengthen the ROK-US Alliance."

The Greywolf brigade has spent the spring deploying their Soldiers and equipment to the peninsula while the Bulldogs have been re-deploying their equipment to Fort Bliss. The Soldiers of Greywolf will spend the next nine months continuing to train alongside their Korean allies while building relationships with the Soldiers and citizens of South Korea.





# Bliss MSF ROC drill tests MFGI capabilities

**By Capt. Joselyn Sydnor** | 653rd Regional Support Group

Units from across the U.S. Army Reserve who make up the Mobilization Support Force conducted their annual training at Fort Bliss June 17 through 30. These units were selected to augment Fort Bliss’s ability to sustain an increased number of warfighters who would be trained and validated during a Mobilization Force Generation Installation expansion.

The MSF is an answer to augment sustainment capability of the Bliss MFGI during expansion until long-term sustainment solutions are put in place.

Many shortfalls in sustainment capabilities across the mobilization enterprise platforms were identified during the first rapid mobilizations of Reserve components to Iraq. It took time to procure contracts to sustain and support the increased number of personnel and equipment. Many of these contracts had limitations.

“In Army logistics, we are able to flex,” said Col. Chandra Roberts, commander of the Fort Bliss Mobilization Brigade and the 653rd Regional Support Group. “Good Army logistics units make it happen. We know how to be agile and flexible and anticipate. We work long hours and we can shift priorities as needed.”

Of the nine MFGIs, only two are active, Fort Bliss and Fort Hood. Currently, these MFGIs have the capacity, land mass, and training grounds to hold an increased number of mobilizing and deploying personnel, but they do not have the capability to immediately sustain them while the units conduct

post-mobilization training.

“The MSF units mobilize to the MFGI, so in our case, they come here to Fort Bliss, they set up shop and they plus-up our sustainment and our SRPC (Soldier Readiness Processing Center),” explained Maj. Dang Nguyen, planner for the FBMB MSF mission, “and all the other elements involved to be able to handle the increased throughput of the Focus Ready Units and Ready Force X units that will be deploying overseas.”

In the event of a rapid mobilization, the FBMB would continue to conduct the Reception, Staging, and Onward-movement portion of the mobilization and deployment process, with the addition of the MSF. The MSF augments the installation and directly supports 5th Armored Brigade, First Army Division West, who validates units for deployment.

“In a no-notice contingency operation, unity of effort is paramount,” said Roberts.

The FBMB hosted a Rehearsal of Concept drill, chaired by Brig. Gen. David Elwell, the deputy commanding general for Mobilization – Fort Bliss. The ROC drill fostered a shared understanding of capabilities, requirements, planning factors, decision points, and potential friction points during reception, staging, and onward movement of Focus Ready Units and Ready Force X units.

“A lot of the MFGI expansion planning had been rather stove-piped,” said Roberts. “While the FBMB, Fifth Armored (Brigade), the MSF units and our enterprise partners may have assumptions or not delved deeply into how operations would be executed, but



**Capt. Joselyn Sydnor** / 653rd RSG

Second Lt. Hannah Stremmel, commander of the 531st Movement Control Team, briefs her unit's mission during a Rehearsal of Concept drill recently. The 531st MCT participated in Mobilization Support Force Annual Training and Rehearsal of Concept drill at the end of June.

this had been done separately. Coordination, planning, and research, before and during the ROC drill focused all of us to work together to better define and support logistic requirements.”

Roberts explained that the ROC drill started the discussions needed to synchronize efforts and gain fidelity of the requirements. It created a uniform platform from which all the organizations can use as a starting point and highlighted the importance of cooperative planning.

“It wasn’t at the detailed tactical level, just yet,” said Roberts. “But we opened up a lot of conversations enabling the teams to delve deeper.”

It is understood that the results, despite all efforts, will not be perfect.

“We’re going to have thousands of issues in this type of scenario, that’s okay,” Elwell said during his closing remarks at the ROC drill. “We can solve the issues, but let’s identify as many of those up front as we can and start working on those contingencies.”

Further planning events are on the horizon.

“If the balloon does go up and we have to execute, then we’ll be more prepared,” said Roberts. “But, we all have to work hard to have patience and have good discussions. Codify what we learned and keep capturing those lessons-learned and keep pounding.”

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# 653rd RSG junior NCOs certify as Reserve leaders



**Capt. Joselyn Sydnor** / Bliss MaD Bde./653rd RSG  
Sgt. Ivanska Carrillo, a 653rd Regional Support Group Soldier, notes deficiencies of a 2kW Military Tactical Generator Set as her group completes a block of instruction on Preventative Maintenance checks and services during training at Fort Bliss June 29.

**By Capt. Joselyn Sydnor** | Bliss MaD Brigade/653rd RSG

Twenty-one junior noncommissioned officers from the 653rd Regional Support Group graduated from the new Army Reserve Junior Leader Certification Program while serving at Fort Bliss June 29.

“In recent years our junior leaders have not felt empowered to lead. We’re so busy during battle assemblies, that as seniors, we have a tendency to do everything ourselves so that we can get it done. We need to start mentoring and training our junior leaders so that they can take charge,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Denise Lagana, the 653rd RSG senior enlisted adviser.

The certification program was created in an effort to promote and enhance Soldier and unit readiness by reinforcing communication and trust within the units and with leaders.

The emphasis of the course is to strengthen future leaders of the NCO Corps, the backbone of the Army, ensuring NCOs have the basic Soldiering building blocks inside and outside of the classroom, and can pass it on.

“Knowing how to perform Preventative Maintenance checks and services, Drill and Ceremony, and Physical Readiness Training are key stepping stones of being a Soldier,” said Sgt. Travis Ly.

The program also covered NCO duties and responsibilities, performance counseling, leader books, land navigation, the 8-Step Training Model, and junior promotion material. The senior NCOs who taught the classes provided a mix of theoretical and practical blocks of instruction.

“I’m a person who learns more hands-on,” said Ly, “I understand that PowerPoints are involved and are helpful in a way, but more hands-on is a lot better.”

The program is an enduring one. The NCOs certified this round can anticipate training the next set of junior leaders.

“I believe we are headed in the right direction, I was excited to see our young Soldiers refreshing their basic skills and preparing to teach and mentor the next generation of Soldiers,” said Lagana

The 653rd RSG is currently mobilized as the Fort Bliss Mobilization brigade and, in collaboration with enterprise partners, provides life-support and sustainment services to mobilizing and demobilizing Army Reserve and National Guard units and civilians.

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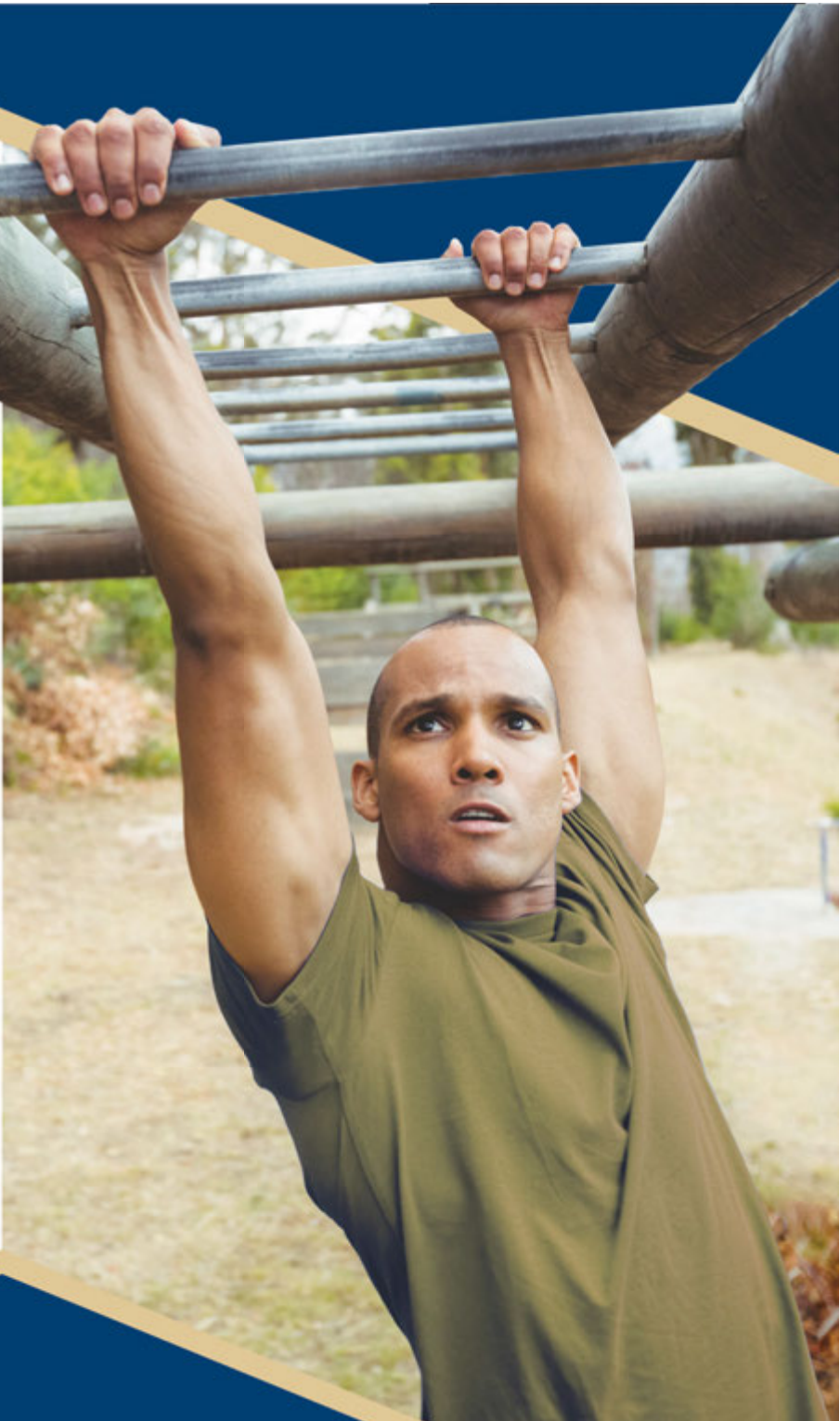


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# Milley talks modernization at confirmation hearing

**By C. Todd Lopez | Defense.gov**

WASHINGTON – The effects of delayed defense budgets, the dearth of confirmed civilian leadership in the Pentagon, modernization, Afghanistan, and great power competition were all topics the president’s nominee to be the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff faced from the Senate Armed Services Committee at his confirmation hearing.

If confirmed, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley would be the 20th military officer to fill the role, succeeding Marine Corps Gen. Joe Dunford, whose term expires Sept. 30.

The general opened last week’s hearing by acknowledging to lawmakers that the international order, in place now for over 70 years, is under threat.

“From East Asia to the Middle East to Eastern Europe, authoritarian actors are

testing the limits of the international system and seeking regional dominance while challenging international norms and undermining U.S. interests,” Milley said. “Our goal should be to sustain great power peace that has existed since World War II, and deal firmly with all those who might challenge us.”

Also what has changed is warfare itself, Milley told the senators. New characteristics of warfare include space, cyberspace, and new technology that’s not been seen before. Competing in the new environment, he said, will require great adaptation by the U.S. military.

If confirmed, he said, his priorities are to “provide the best military advice, to maintain steady continuity of military leadership, implement the National Defense Strategy with emphasis on increasing the readiness and modernization of the joint force, maintain and grow our network of allies and partners, sustain great power peace in an era of great power competition and provide unwavering support, care and leadership to our troops and their families.”

Of interest to many lawmakers was Milley’s insight into how delayed defense funding, continuing resolutions, and even the possibility of a yearlong continuing resolution, might affect military readiness.

“I think the impact would be significant,” he told the Senate panel. “I think a CR [would be], in the words of the National Defense Strategy commission, they said the word ‘reckless.’ I think a CR has a very significant negative impact on the training, equipping, readiness and modernization of the U.S. military.”

Modernization of the joint force has been a buzzword of the Defense Department for years now, and it’s been a focus of Milley’s since he took the helm at the Army in August 2015. If confirmed as the top military leader in the Pentagon, Milley said, his No. 1 mod-



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Chuck Burden / U.S. Army  
Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley receives an operations update from leaders working in the Tactical Operations Center for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division during their training at the National Training Center, at Fort Irwin, Calif., May 9, 2017.



Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley addresses the audience at the promotion ceremony for Army Brig. Gen. Randy A. George in the Pentagon, Jan. 12, 2017.

ernization priority for the department would be the nuclear triad.

The nuclear triad: submarine-based, land-based, and air-delivered weapons – provide deterrence that has kept war from breaking out again since World War II, Milley said. Redundancy within the triad is not an issue, he told lawmakers – it’s critical.

“Each leg of the triad gives you a different capability. ... All three present different problem sets to any adversary or enemy,” he said. “I think it’s important to keep all three.”

Milley also said that non-nuclear conventional weapons are no substitute for the deterrence provided by the nuclear triad.

Milley told lawmakers he’s grateful for

being nominated to the position of chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and he pledged to work with Congress in the role to keep the country safe.

“I’d like to thank the president of the United States for the trust and confidence he has placed in me,” Milley said. “If confirmed, I pledge to you and to the American people and to the president that I will always provide my best military advice to him, the secretary of defense, the National Security Council and the Congress to ensure America’s global national security interests are assured.”





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Photos by Sgt. Mariah Jones / 11th ADA Bde.  
Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade leaders pose for a photo with Romanian Military Police officers during a three-day convoy from Greece to Romania May 31.

# 11th ADA HHB run three-country convoy during Saber Guardian 19

By Sgt. Mariah Jones | 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade completed an 850-kilometer tactical road march in three days across three European countries recently. The convoy was a part of the biannual exercise Saber Guardian, testing the capabilities of combined NATO forces. Many units participating in this exercise conducted the same objectives but utilized different routes to reach their destination.

For the “Hellhound” battery, the road march started at the port of Alexandroupolis, Greece, with a briefing conducted by Greek police, border control and customs, May 30.

“At the port of Alexandroupolis, we got ready for the convoy. We verified our equipment was in great condition and ready to go through the mountainous and difficult terrain. This was a route that no unit has ever used before,” said Capt. Rony Thakkar, the HHB commander.

Not only was this a first for the unit, so was utilizing newer software. The unit recently was fielded with a Joint Battle Command-Platform in March and was able to utilize and communicate with it throughout their three-day TRM.

As the Hellhound battery maneuvered over three days, they interacted with Greek, Bulgarian and Romanian militaries, who assisted with mobility operations including fueling their 12 tactical vehicles and providing a military police escort that leads the convoy to each border.

“The tactical road march allowed our unit to build interoperability and enhance our



Sgt. Sean Spragley installs a Joint Battle Command-Platform into a High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle at the port of Alexandroupolis, Greece, May 29.

readiness with other NATO countries. It was a great opportunity to interact with Customs, border control along with military entities on this mission,” explained Thakkar.

Soldiers of the Hellhound battery operated seamlessly with host nation support while overcoming cultural differences like language, road signs, terrain features and more. Some Soldiers experienced a convoy for the very first time away from home.

“Everyone sees us in America, so to be able to be in a ‘U-S’ labeled vehicle and see the civilian nationals wave was very welcoming. Everyone was friendly; it was a great feeling driving through each country,” said Sgt. Delilah Chapa.

The unit arrived at their final destination point of MK Air Base, Romania, June 1, safely without any vehicular maintenance issues. Saber Guardian kicked off June 11 and ended June 21 as one of United States European Command’s summer exercises.

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# Reception Day marks beginning for USMA Class of 2023

By Brandon O'Connor | U.S. Army

WEST POINT, N.Y. — “Step up to my line. Not on my line. Not over my line,” echoes the yell of the cadet in the red sash throughout the central area.

Nail the about-face, recite the correct lines and don’t forget to salute when introducing yourself, all while the cadet with the red sash stands inches away from your face. Mess up any part and you’ll have to turn back around and start the process over.

Within hours of arriving at the U.S. Military Academy for Reception Day, the members of the Class of 2023 started getting a crash course in what life is like for a plebe at the academy. Head straight, eyes forward. Those hands better be cupped and don’t even think about speaking without first being spoken to.

After going through in-processing, where they take a pull-up test, sign the oath and receive their first uniforms, the new cadets are taught the basics such as saluting, standing at attention and how to march. Then, after passing the cadet in the red sash’s test, the new cadets in the Class of 2023 are ready to join their companies for Cadet Basic Training.

The Class of 2023 includes 1,211 new cadets who began their 47-month West Point experience on R-Day July 1. Their transition from civilian life to being in the military started early and will continue through CBT until they officially become a West Point cadet on Acceptance Day.

“I wanted to be a part of something bigger than myself and I knew West Point is the best leadership academy you can possibly go to,” New Cadet Michael Dwerlkotte said. “The combination of those two factors led me to choose West Point.”

After their initial introduction to the academy, new cadets were given a minute to say goodbye to their families, whom they won’t see again until Acceptance Day in August. They then filed off after receiving their first command from a senior cadet.

“When she was little, she either wanted to be an elf or a sniper. How do you parent that?” USMA Class of 1986 graduate Terri Boylan Bell said of her daughter, New Cadet Mary Bell. “This isn’t totally unexpected. She’s always been a protector by nature, so this is a very natural thing for her ... I am so proud that she has chosen to serve. That is where I think I get the most emotional. I am so proud of her.”

The new cadets in the Class of 2023 come from throughout the country and also 16 foreign cadets. For New Cadet Mackenzie Arns, the inspiration to serve and attend West Point came not from family members in the military, but from time spent reenacting historic battles.

“I’m a Civil War re-enactor so a lot of people I have met through that have been in the military themselves,” Arns said. “It inspired me to follow the same path they did. I also want to be a chemical engineer, and this is an excellent engineering school.”

Throughout the summer, the new cadets will learn the basics of being in the military including marksmanship and teamwork, all with plenty of rucking and running in the mix.

“I’m actually looking forward to the (training) a lot,” New Cadet Zenon Stepien said. “I think it is going to be fun. Hopefully I’m right. People keep telling me that I’m not right, but hopefully I am.”

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CULTURE Continued from Page 10A

precision fires, next-generation combat vehicle, future vertical lift, network, air and missile defense, and Soldier lethality -- all of which have since been allocated \$30 billion over the next five years.

The next step was to place its headquarters in an innovative city, where it could tap into industry and academic talent to develop new technologies that give Soldiers an edge against near-peer threats.

After an exhaustive search of over 150 cities, the Army chose Austin. The move marked the start of the Army's largest reorganization effort since 1973, when both the Forces Command and Training and Doctrine Command were established.

The location away from a military post was intentional. Rather than surrounded by a security fence, the command is surrounded by corporate America.

"We're part of the ecosystem of entrepreneurs, startups, academia," Crosby said. "We're in that flow of where ideas are presented."

As it nears full operational capability this summer, Futures Command has already borne fruit since it activated last August.

Its collaborative efforts have cut the time it takes project requirements to be approved from five or seven years to just three months or less.

Once prototypes are developed, Soldiers are also more involved in testing the equipment before it begins rolling off an assembly line.

By doing this, the Army hopes to learn from past projects that failed to meet Soldier expectations.

The Main Battle Tank-70 project in the 1960s, for instance, went well over budget before it was finally canceled. New efforts then led to the M1 Abrams tank.

Until the Army got the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, it spent significant funding on the Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicle in the 1960s, which never entered service.

"So we're trying to avoid that," Crosby said. "We're trying to let Soldiers touch it. Those Soldier touchpoints are a big success story."

Culture change

Futures Command is not a traditional mili-



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Crosby, left, Army Futures Command's senior enlisted leader, participates in the command's activation ceremony in Austin, Aug. 24, 2018, along with Gen. Mark Milley, chief of staff of the Army; Army Secretary Mark Esper; and its commander, Gen. John Murray. The establishment of the command marked the Army's largest reorganization effort since 1973, when it created the Army Forces Command and Army Training and Doctrine Command.

tary command. Its headquarters personnel, which will eventually number about 100 Soldiers and 400 civilians, are encouraged to think differently.

A new type of culture has spread across the command, pushing many Soldiers and federal employees out of their comfort zone to learn how to work in a more corporate environment.

"The culture we really look to embrace is to have some elasticity; be able to stretch," Crosby said. "Don't get in the box, don't even use a box -- get rid of the box."

Crosby and other leaders will often elicit ideas from younger personnel, who may think of another approach to remedy a problem.

"I'm not going to somebody who has been in the uniform for 20-to-30 years, because they're pretty much locked on their ideas," he said. "They don't want to change."

A young staff sergeant once told the sergeant

major the command could save thousands if they just removed the printers from the office.

The move, which is still being mulled over, would force people to rely more on technology while also saving money in paper, ink, and electricity.

While it may annoy some, Crosby likens the idea to when a GPS device reroutes a driver because of traffic on a road. The driver may be upset at first, not knowing where the device is pointing, but the new route ends up being quicker.

"You have to reprogram what you think," he said. "I'm not used to this road, why are they taking me here? Then you come to find out, it's not a bad route."

For Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Robinson, his role as a human resources specialist is vastly different from his previous job as a mailroom supervisor with the 4th Infantry Division.

As the headquarters' youngest Soldier, Robinson, 31, often handles the administrative actions of organizations that continue to realign under the budding command.

Among them are the Army Capabilities Integration Center that transitioned over to be the command's Futures and Concepts Center. The Research, Development and Engineering Command then realigned to be its Combat Capabilities Development Command.

Research elements at the Army Medical Research and Materiel Command have also realigned to the Army's new major command.

"The processes and actions are already in place," Robinson said of his old position, "but here you're trying to recreate and change pretty much everything."

Since he started in November, he said he now has a wider view of the Army. Being immersed in a corporate setting, he added, may also help him in a career after the military.

"The job itself and working with different organizations opens up a [broader perspective]," he said, "and helps you not just generalize but operationalize a different train of thought."

While chaotic at times, Julia McDonald, a federal employee who handles technology and futures analysis for the commander's action group, has grabbed ahold of the whirlwind ride.


"It moves fast around here," she said of when quick decisions are made and need to be implemented at a moment's notice. "Fifteen minutes seems like an hour or two."

Building up a major command is not without its growing pains. Even its commander, Gen. John Murray, has referred to his command as a "startup trying to manage a merger."

"Everybody is just trying to stand up their staff sections and understand that this is your lane and this is my lane," McDonald said. "And how do we all work together now that we're in the same command?"


The current challenges could pay off once the seeds planted today grow into new capabilities that help Soldiers.

For Crosby, that's a personal mission. In his last deployment, nearly 20 coalition members, including U.S. Soldiers, died in combat or in accidents and many more were wounded as they fought against ISIS.




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Staff Sgt. Garrett Dipuma / LANG

>> **READY**

LANG authorizes activation of 3,000 troops for TS Barry

The Louisiana National Guard, as directed by Governor John Bel Edwards, was authorized to activate up to 3,000 Soldiers and airmen, not to include full-time Guard troops, ahead of Tropical Storm Barry, July 11. “The Louisiana National Guard is taking a proactive and aggressive approach in dealing with the preparations ahead of Tropical Storm Barry,” said Maj. Gen. Glenn H. Curtis, adjutant general of the LANG. “This will allow our Guardsmen to be more successful in their priority missions immediately following the storm – search and rescue operations and commodities distribution.” In addition to high-water vehicles and boats staged in over 20 communities across the state in possible affected areas, the LANG has helicopters ready to support search and rescue, evacuation and recon missions as needed. The LANG is also moving and staging additional assets to the New Orleans area in order to provide a quick response as needed. Large quantities of drinking water, blankets and sandbags have been moved, delivered or positioned by the LANG to areas for distribution following the storm.

**1** LANG Soldiers conduct training on 10 newly-fielded, surface-driven boats in New Iberia, La., July 11. The new boats can run in shallow water, better than those with conventional outboard motors, and are designed to allow wheelchair access.

**2** Curtis addresses the media on the support that LANG will provide to the city of New Orleans at the direction of Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards.

**3** Guard Soldiers receive their operational briefing on TS Barry at the LANG Joint Operations Center, July 10, at Camp Beauregard, in Pineville, La.

**4** Soldiers with the 769th Brigade Engineer Battalion conduct inspections and test high-water vehicles, flat bottom boats and boating equipment in preparation for the state activation.



Master Sgt. Toby Valadie / LANG



Sgt. Noshoba Davis / LANG



Master Sgt. Toby Valadie / LANG

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# Resilience experts aim to boost performance at ROTC camp

By Antonieta Rico | SR2 Strategic Communications

FORT KNOX, Ky. – Performance psychologists have long been a staple in the rosters of professional sports teams, and now the military is treating its future leaders like elite athletes.

The Army embedded performance enhancement experts with military cadets during this year's Cadet Summer Training at Fort Knox.

Although a limited number of experts have previously worked with cadets, this year's contingent is the largest ever, with 55 Master Resilience Trainers-Performance Experts from installations across the Army, descending on Fort Knox and embedding with CST Advanced Camp units at the company level.

CST is the culminating military training event for thousands of Reserve Officers' Training Corps cadets across the country. Cadets who are college juniors and seniors must attend and pass the CST Advanced Camp in order to be commissioned into the Army.

"Regardless of how much we modernize, or new technology we bring into the Army, it is always going to come down to the human dimension and the performance of our individual Soldiers," said Brig. Gen. Antonio Munera, the deputy commanding general for U.S. Army Cadet Command.

"The bottom line for me is that we have [to treat] our Soldiers just like professional athletes and [give] them the same access to the same capabilities that professional athletes have," he said.

Employment of sports psychology has a precedent in the military, but has traditionally been used for special operations forces. However, since 2008 the Army has stood up 29 R2 Performance Centers across installations Army-wide, including two opening this year in Vincenza, Italy and Camp Zama, Japan.

The R2 Centers are staffed with the MRT-PEs, who hold degrees in psychology, coun-

seling, or kinesiology, with an emphasis in sport or performance psychology. The centers teach performance enhancement and mental resilience to Soldiers, families, Army civilians and individual units who request training.

The move is part of the Army's overall strategy to enhance the personal readiness and lethality of its troops, taking a holistic approach that includes a focus not just on the physical component, but also on mental performance and resilience skills.

This year, the CST Advanced Camp increased from 31 days to 37 days, a move based on the push by Gen. Stephen J. Townsend, commander of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, to give Army officers more experience with basic Soldier tasks, including additional time with basic rifle marksmanship (BRM), buddy-team live fire, and hand grenade training.

During BRM qualification, a must-pass event for cadets at Advanced Camp, Joe Rodriguez, an MRT-PE from the R2 Performance Center at Fort Stewart, Georgia, who is currently embedded with B Company, 7th Regiment at CST, focused on touching base with the cadets who were struggling to qualify.

Rodriguez, who has a degree in Applied Physiology and Kinesiology-Human Performance, worked on creating mental imagery scripts, often used by Olympic athletes, to reinforce the four fundamentals of marksmanship.

"When we use a mental imagery script, we are talking about doing a mental rehearsal of the event that is going to happen," Rodriguez said. "Mental imagery is going to activate the same neural pathways within the brain as if the cadets were physically doing it... this is a science-based (technique) that can give you an edge."

Maj. Robert Parker, a 7th Regiment cad-



Photos by Antonieta Rico / SR2 Strategic Communications

A Reserve Officers' Training Corps cadet at Fort Knox, Ky., gets an encouraging fist bump from Ross Simonson, an MRT-PE with the SHARP, Ready and Resilient Directorate, during the cadet's rappel tower training July 3. The Army has embedded 55 performance experts with ROTC cadets at the camp to enhance their physical and mental performance during the yearly training that is a prerequisite for ROTC cadets in order to be commissioned as officers in the Army.

training program cadets are getting now, to include the increased focus on infantry skills as well as the training provided by all the enablers, like the MRT-PEs, when he went through Advanced Camp years ago.

"My leadership would have developed exponentially quicker in the Army," Parker said. "We're setting them up for [success as] future leaders."

(Right) Nicole Foster, a Reserve Officers' Training Corps cadet and student at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, talks to Joe Rodriguez, an MRT-PE with the SHARP, Ready and Resilient Directorate, at Fort Knox, Ky., July 3. Rodriguez is embedded with B Company, 7th Regiment, during cadet summer training to teach mental skills to cadets and push their performance to the next level.



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# Connecticut National Guard strengthens alliance with Uruguay

By 1st Lt. Jennifer Pierce | National Guard Bureau

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay – Members of the Connecticut National Guard met and fomented critical discussion with Uruguayan service leads from the Army, Navy, and Air Force June 24-29 in Montevideo, Uruguay during a State Partnership Program visit. One of the United States’ key policy goals in Uruguay is to enhance U.S., Uruguayan, and global security by working with our military counterparts in Uruguay.

The SPP is a program the National Guard began in 1993 to promote enduring and mutually beneficial security relationships with allied nations. There are currently 83 countries across all six geographic combatant commands that participate in the program. The Connecticut National Guard is partnered with Uruguay and has been working with the South American nation for the last 20 years.

“The goal of the SPP is to establish on-going relationships with these countries that each state has been assigned to,” said Maj. David Ferrer, the Connecticut National Guard SPP director, who also served as the interpreter for this visit. “These partnerships include varying levels of participation all the way from the lower enlisted ranks to higher-ranking senior leaders to exchange ideas. Overall, the U.S. uses this program to have a strategic advantage and it’s one of the security cooperation tools available.”

SPP visits to partner nations include senior leader and familiarization visits, cooperative training and exercises, co-deployments, and assessments, which can focus on a variety of topics.

“The purpose of this specific visit was threefold,” said Lt. Col. Guy Marino, from the 103rd Air Control Squadron. “We are here to provide a technical assessment of the Uruguayan military’s ability to combine ground and air radars into the air operations center, observe joint policies and procedures within the three services, and assess their ability to use a common operational picture.”

Col. Esteban F. Gonzalez, the director of international relations for the Estado Mayor de la Defensa, was one of the key leaders Connecticut National Guard members met with during their visit. ESMAD is the joint military headquarters that falls directly under the Uruguayan Ministry of Defense. Gonzalez believes in the importance of the state partnership with the Connecticut National Guard.

“It is very important to have this exchange because of the experience and capabilities of the Connecticut National Guard,” said Gonzalez. “The joint operating center experience Connecticut has, especially, at my level, is very important. The established emergency plans the Connecticut National Guard has will help us greatly in our operations, peace-keeping deployments, and civil protection.”

Gonzalez provided an example where a joint operations policy would have augment-

“What I hope to gain from this visit is to obtain feedback from the Connecticut Air National Guard so we know that we are on the right track.”

>> Uruguayan Air Force Maj. Esteban Poiso

ed mission efficiency following a natural disaster.

“There was a tornado in [the city of] Dolores a few years ago that went right through the middle of the city,” said Gonzalez. “The Army was the first to deploy to the city to control looting. I went to visit Dolores while working in the Ministry of Defense as a staff officer to assess the Army’s support of the mission. After this experience, I determined that establishing a joint operating center at ESMAD would enhance our abilities to make decisions in real time.”

Uruguayan Air Force Maj. Esteban Poiso, the Air Operation Center chief, has seen the benefit provided by the partnership with Connecticut first-hand.

“The AOC (Air Operations Center) has worked with the Connecticut Air National Guard since around 2009,” said Poiso. “Our AOC has grown as a result of this relationship; from starting with basic maintenance and learning how to fix systems, we are now at the level where we are working with ESMAD and developing policies and guidance to have joint operability with our systems. We’ve evolved to having a more complex exchange during our visits now with the Connecticut National Guard.

“What I hope to gain from this visit,” said Poiso, “is to obtain feedback from the Connecticut Air National Guard so we know that we are on the right track. Our unit is still growing and they bring a lot of experience we can benefit from. We will know how to further improve our capabilities and continue moving forward.”

Ferrer agreed that the partnership between the U.S. and Uruguay has grown significantly from its beginnings 20 years ago.

“The program is expanding,” said Ferrer. “We’ve conducted our first cyber defense engagement earlier this year, providing an assessment of their status with a focus on cyber security. Having grown to include complex specialties like cyber defense or our current engagement for radar integration and doctrine demonstrates the Uruguayan military finds significant merit with the State Partnership Program.”

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The Mongolian mobile training team from the 1st Special Forces Group conducts long-range marksmanship training.

## Relationship with allies key to maintaining competitive edge, says SF commander

**By Joe Lacdan** | Army News Service

WASHINGTON – The Army’s Special Forces or “Green Berets” are strengthening the Mongolian military through \$23 million of funding to a mobile training team, a special operations commander said July 10.

As the threat of Russia and China continues to grow, relationships with partner nations like Mongolia take increased importance as the Army looks to consolidate its competitive advantage in the Asia-Pacific region, explained Col. Owen Ray, the 1st Special Forces Group commander.

“The threats that we do face, everything from counterterrorism to active competition with a near-peer competitor, are growing,” said Ray during a media roundtable at the Pentagon. “The value is our enduring relationships that strengthen and assure our allies and partners.”

The Mongolian army requested the training unit to better support their U.N. peace-keeping deployments. This training team can travel throughout Mongolia’s countryside and remote regions to train Mongolian soldiers on small-unit tactics, medical tasks, communications, platoon-level mission planning, base security and convoy operations.

Ray said the Army has increased its engagement with the Asian nation over the past two years, as Mongolia has been a key partner after providing support to NATO and U.S. Soldiers during operations in Afghanistan.

Operating in the Indo-Pacific region poses numerous travel and logistics challenges for special operations Soldiers, said Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Lake, who recently returned from a six-month tour to Mongolia.

Lake said special ops Soldiers must weather those hurdles to maintain relationships with partner nations like Mongolia. Peer relationships can be crucial to maintaining a competitive edge over potential adversaries, he said.

“These relationships that we’re building ... will continue on in the future and they will be a good partner in the region,” Lake said of the Mongolian military.

The 1st SFG, consisting of about 2,500 Green Berets, combat support and combat service support Soldiers, have limited resources but small, specialized units can make a big difference, said Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Curran, of the 4th Battalion, 1st SFG.

“We can’t be everywhere,” said Ray. “We’re a limited sized force and we have to work through our partners for them to be able to solve some of their own issues.”

The successes of the Special Forces’ participation in joint combined exchange training programs help make partner nations self-reliant and give U.S. forces a greater strategic advantage, Ray said. He cited the Philippine Army’s success in the city of Marawi where Filipino forces successfully defeated ISIS with limited U.S. assistance. The 60-year relationship and U.S. enduring partnership with the Philippines has improved the effectiveness of their forces, he said.

“We’re not training them to shoot anymore,” said Curran, who advised in the creation of the Philippine Light Reaction Company 19 years ago and has maintained relationships with them since. “We’re training them how to command and control to the degree of mission command.”

Ray said exercises like Cobra Gold and the recent Balikatan exercise in the Philippines helps build resilience against peer competitors and potential adversaries. Ray noted one change in this year’s exercise: Filipino forces requested a “forced-entry taking back sovereign terrain” training resembling a possible threat by Russia or China.

“Our approach is to work multilaterally,” Ray said, “to bring in different partner nations to focus on their ability to defend their own sovereignty, to build their resilience to coercion.”



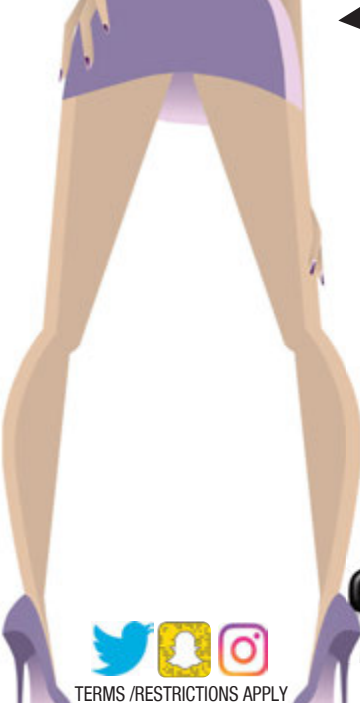
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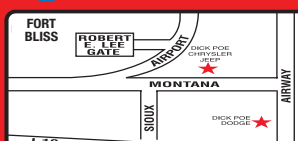


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**Viva! El Paso:** El Paso Community Foundation and El Paso Live present the 42nd season of the summertime outdoor musical extravaganza with performances at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, through July 27, at McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre. July 19-20 performances will be in Spanish. Cost: \$24 (\$16 ages 2-12, seniors 65 and older and military with valid ID). [ElPasoLive.com](http://ElPasoLive.com)

**Placita Madrid Sidewalk Art/Artisan sale:** Placita Madrid building at 1445 Main in San Elizario (Escamilla's Fine Art Gallery, Robert Dozal Fine Art Gallery, and Romy Hawkins Studio and Gallery), hosts its new monthly sidewalk event 4-9 p.m. July 27, and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. July 28, with vendors and artist demonstrations. Free. 777-5241

**Apollo Moon Landing Celebration:** A celebration of the 50th Anniversary Apollo Moon Landing is 7:30-10 p.m. Friday, at UTEP's Centennial Museum, with free fun space activities, a star party with Sun City astronomers, constellation tour by Austin Campbell, NASA Apollo documentary in Centennial's theater, earth and space activities and more. Hosted by Insights and the Centennial Museum. Free; RSVP encouraged at Facebook "50th Anniversary Apollo Moon Landing Celebration." [insightseelpaso.org](http://insightseelpaso.org) or [utep.edu/centennial-museum/](http://utep.edu/centennial-museum/)

**Alfresco! Fridays:** The 17th season of free outdoor summer concerts are 6 p.m. Fridays, Convention Center Plaza. Presented by ElPasoLive. No outside food, beverages, or pets allowed. 534-0600, [alfrescofridays.com](http://alfrescofridays.com) or on Facebook.

**Downtown Artist/Farmers Market:** The City of El Paso Museums and Cultural Affairs Department's market for area artists and regionally grown agricultural products is 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays in the Union Plaza District along Anthony Street. 212-1780 or [elpasoartsandculture.org](http://elpasoartsandculture.org)

**Bluegrass Festival:** The 24th annual all-day festival is this weekend at the Weed Community Center in Weed, N.M. Continuous live music, food, arts, and crafts, plus entertainment for kids. Call for admission price: (575) 687-3316, (575) 687-4189, [WeedBluegrass-Festival.com](http://WeedBluegrass-Festival.com) or on Facebook.

**Cool Canyon Nights:** The 9th annual series of free outdoor summer concerts are 6 to 9 p.m. Thursdays at McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre, sponsored by WestStar Bank. Patio performance begins at 6 p.m. with headliner at 7 p.m. on the main stage. Free. VIP tickets are \$10. [elpasolive.com](http://elpasolive.com)

**Summer Reading Program:** If you participated in the Summer Reading Program, then you're in for a great treat! Join Mickelsen Community Library July 27 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for a huge party! Enjoy food, inflatables, crafts and more as the library celebrates the end of the Summer Program. 568-6156

**Kansas:** The legendary band Kansas whose career spans more than four decades with hits like "Dust in the Wind," "Carry On My Wayward Son," and "Point of No Return," performs 7:30 p.m. Sunday, at the Plaza Theatre. Cost: \$44.50-\$74.50 at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

**Music Under the Stars:** The 36th summer concert series sponsored presented by the City of El Paso Museums and Cultural Affairs Department is 7:30-9:30 p.m. Sundays. 800 S. San Marcial. Free. [elpasolive.com](http://elpasolive.com) or on Facebook at Music Under the Stars

**Upper Valley Artists/Farmers Market:** The artist and farmers market is 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Sundays at the Substation on Doniphan at Sunset. Free.

## Former Bliss Soldier publishes first novel

By David Burge | Special to the Fort Bliss Bugle

A former Fort Bliss Soldier's debut novel details the challenges and difficulties, including a potential family tragedy, as a man transitions out of the military.

Former Sgt. A.K. Neely's self-published novel "Our Father" came out in April.

Neely, 33, said it is a way to shine the spotlight on the hardships that a veteran often goes through while transitioning to civilian life. The story is not biographical, but based on some stories he picked up along the way, he said.

Neely calls the story of John Rockford and his family a "psychological thriller" that can often be uncomfortable to read.

It follows Rockford as he transitions out of the military and his family moves to a new town. In the new town, his daughter goes missing, Neely said.

"I feel like there was a need to put the spotlight on the otherwise hidden, sometimes forcibly hidden, uncomfortable disturbing realities that veterans face post-war," said Neely, who now resides in Northern New Jersey, where he grew up.

"If it is an uncomfortable experience reading it, it was meant to be," he added.

Neely served in the Army from 2011 to 2016 as a public affairs specialist. He spent all but one year of his Army career at Fort Bliss, where he served in the 1st Armored Division Combat Aviation Brigade and then in the former 24th Press Camp. He was a frequent contributor to the Fort Bliss Bugle during that time.

He deployed twice to the Middle East.

Serving in the Army gave him "an absolutely greater understanding of myself and greater appreciation for people in general, greater appreciation for other cultures," Neely said.

It also helped him gain a "greater appreciation for people's stories, who they are, what they go through, their backgrounds, their cultures, and their perspectives," he said.

Since leaving the military, he has been working in the communications and public affairs



Courtesy photo

Former Sgt. A.K. Neely, who served at Fort Bliss, has written his debut novel called "Our Father."

field. He spent the past couple of years writing his novel in his spare time.

He credits his wife, Alejandra, whom he met while stationed at Fort Bliss and living in El Paso, for making the book a reality. She drew and created the book cover and provided a ton of support, he said.

"She was the reason I was able to complete it," he said.

Neely said serving at Fort Bliss was an incredibly positive experience.



"I loved Fort Bliss," Neely said. "I thought it afforded a great opportunity not just on post, but off. I was exposed to culture, experiences, interesting people, interesting locations I will never forget."

Neely said his novel is "not in any way an attempt to quote-unquote help veterans going through a difficult time," he said.

He is not an expert on veterans or the resources they need, he said. "If it is entertaining, that's great. It will [be] discomfoting at points and uncomfortable and disturbing, the way that reality is for many people."



## >> THE ABCS OF ACFTS

Bliss FMWR, Bliss Soldiers ready for the test

Natalie Hinojos / Bliss FMWR marketing

FMWR Sports, Fitness and Aquatics employees and contract instructors tested for the ACFT with Fort Bliss Soldiers, who attended to receive their diagnostic scores, June 28 on East Fort Bliss. The events consisted of maximum deadlifts, standing power throws, hand-release push-ups, a sprint-drag-carry shuttle run, a leg tuck, and a two-mile run. "Our goal, as a team, is to get certifications, so we can set up a diagnostic once a month at Stout Track for the Soldiers to get them ready for the test. It will always be only a diagnostic, and not an official test," said Julia Petersen, MWR group fitness director. "We are doing what we can as MWR to play our part and make sure that our physical training classes are serving the Soldiers for the ACFT."





>> **GENEROSITY**  
Volunteers raise \$5,000 for Soldier, family support

Courtesy photo  
El Paso Bridge Club's Kay White and Ashley Erwin present \$5,000 Grant to Soldiers Art Workshop chair retired Lt. Col. John Robbins, and artist Krystyna Robbins for the El Paso ACBL Bridge Club's Soldiers' Art Workshops recently. SAW is a program that provides support to military families and is a 501(c)(3), handled by all volunteers. For more information on SAW, contact Robbins at jrronyucca@sbcglobal.net or 309-1891.

WBAMC Labor and Delivery teams join forces to cover summer PCS season, maintain quality care for patients

By **Amabilia Payen** | William Beaumont Army Medical Center  
At military installations across the globe, the moving season has arrived where military families arrive at a new duty station for their next assignment. The WBAMC active duty medical personnel who provide care to Fort Bliss and El Paso beneficiaries are no different.  
The permanent change of station season affects military treatment facilities every year and access to care decreases a little bit as leaders and staff wait for replacements to arrive or new hires to be orientated. WBAMC's Women's Health and Pediatric services have come up with an approach to provide the same access to high-quality care in the labor and delivery department, one of the most active departments for the hospital.

Dr. Stacey Frazier, chief of inpatient pediatrics, has reinforced her service with family practice physicians to improve coverage of the newborn nursery and neonatal service.  
Over time, newborn data in the department has shown that the summer season is the busiest time of the year for births at WBAMC. Adding the family physicians to the neonatal care team will ensure the continuation of care for parents and their newborns.  
"It's a traditional family medicine practice that is done in smaller communities," said Frazier. "Our family practice physicians are fully qualified and have gone through neonatal resuscitation certification."  
As of right now, WBAMC has three pediatricians who will be working with five family medicine doctors that will cover night

shifts. This new model began in early June and Frazier hopes that by the fall, when PCS season slows down, there will be even more pediatricians and family physicians available to cover every shift.  
"It's a win-win because not only are we continuing care, the family physician doctors are refreshing their family practice skills by applying them in the inpatient setting," said Frazier. "They will be able to continue these skills which are critical for them throughout their Army career."  
Ultimately, patients should not notice a difference in the level of care as WBAMC will continue to provide patient-friendly access to high-quality care.

**To: The fine folks at Fort Bliss**  
It is with heavy heart that I announce I've turned over care of your visual system to Dr. Daniel Washburn, recent Chief of Ophthalmology at Beaumont.  
For some, we go back to 1992 at Beaumont. Others found me along the way at 8815 Dyer. I consider each of you to be special: former Defenders of the Peace and your families. You deserve the best and I know Dr. Washburn will deliver for years to come. Same place, same phone number.  
With sincere appreciation,  
*Dr. Bill Davitt, MD*



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“As parents, we could tell that one of their priorities was safety,” Abbey Sprinkle, a mom of five, said. “The VBS staff made drop off, pick up and feeding my kids everyday so easy and it gave me some needed relief. My children are so excited about their continued participation in the Chapel Children’s programs now...we all have had a very positive experience this week.”



Courtesy photos  
Military kids, ranging from pre-K to fifth-graders, attended the 2019 Fort Bliss Vacation Bible School at the 1st Armored Division Chapel on East Fort Bliss July 8 through last Friday.

# Thanks to high volunteer turnout, VBS welcomed more than 300 kids

By Fort Bliss Office of the Installation Chaplain

The U.S. Army Garrison Fort Bliss Religious Support Office hosted the Fort Bliss Vacation Bible School at 1st Armored Division Chapel July 8-12. This year’s theme took kids on an adventure “In the Wild”-with elephants and egrets, polar bears and penguins, cockatoos and crocodiles. As each child sought out exotic animals, they also found “snapshots” of real-life encounters with Jesus in Scripture that helped them go from “bewildered to believing” in their walk of faith.

More than 300 children and adult volunteers from the Bliss military community participated this year in a fun-filled week of Vacation Bible School.

“VBS teaches and inspires children through positive scripture-based lessons that will provide them with a strong foundation of faith and support in an ever-changing military environment,” said Dr. Rick Mendoza, the senior director of religious education at

Bliss. “With our families busy with moves and deployments, this was a great opportunity help the children deal with change and instill in them that God is good, even though they go through difficult times.”

Vacation Bible School is a week-long program for children from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, which includes games, snacks, worship and songs, crafts, skits, and, of course, Bible lessons. This year’s theme was: “In the Wild, Encounter with Jesus”

“This year’s VBS was much larger than last year, as it doubled in size. This was made possible by the larger number of adult volunteers that we had this year. We had over 63 volunteers helping this year, all well-trained and with proper child safety protocols,” Mendoza said.

“For most military posts, VBS is the number one opportunity to reach out to our military kids and introduce them to the chapel.” Chaplain (Maj.) Matthew Hebebrand commented. “Research reveals the incredible

impact VBS has on kids, adults, and Families,” said Chaplain (Maj.) Matthew Hebebrand from the 204th Military Intelligence Battalion

“It’s a lot of work,” said Jovana Stancliff, leader of worship and decorations. “There are months-and-months of planning and lots of volunteer recruitment efforts. It’s an ‘all-hands-on-deck’ project. But it is worth it, because the result is that kids are actively engaged in all the activities of the week. Plus there is a relational connection between all the kids and the adults as they point them to the love of God.”

Liz Albertson, a parent of two children who participated in this year’s Vacation Bible School said her “kinder-and-third-grade kids sang the songs all day long, they even memorized the incredible Bible Stories that were taught. As I was growing up, VBS made a great impact in my life, and the VBS here on Fort Bliss is one of the best that we have experienced in all the travels that the

Army has sent us on. The preparation, the decorations, the effort and the love that the teachers have shown my kids is immeasurable.”

Abbey Sprinkle, who has five kids, said this year’s VBS was “off the charts.”

“As parents, we could tell that one of their priorities was safety,” Sprinkle said. “The VBS staff made drop off, pick up and feeding my kids everyday so easy and it gave me some needed relief. My children are so excited about their continued participation in the chapel children’s programs now...we all have had a very positive experience this week”

The next large scale event that the Garrison Religious Support Office will be doing for the children is “AWANA” which starts Aug. 28.

For more information visit [www.ftblissawana.com](http://www.ftblissawana.com) or call 568-4334.

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# A tribute to summer soft serve joints

By Lisa Smith Molinari | [www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.com](http://www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.com)

A few months ago, I was cursing my place in the world. I mean literally, the actual spot where we live here in “Rhode Iceland.” After my husband retired from the Navy, I thought I could handle the harsh, bitter, seemingly endless New England winters, but every time it snows in April (and it does every year) I curse the ground it falls upon.

But somehow, without fail, summer comes to this temperamental part of the planet, and it has the same effect that the birth of each of my three babies had on me after long hours of labor – I am so happy to see it, I completely forget about the excruciating pain I just endured.

As soon as the flowers begin to bloom, the lawn turns green, and mild coastal breezes waft over the bay – POOF! I have selective amnesia. I suddenly can’t recall the chunks of gritty snow hanging from my car’s wheel wells, the salt stains on my leather boots, the Nor’easters that cut me to the quick, the chapped lips, the flakey skin, and our shocking fuel oil bills.

I never know the exact date that the mercy of selective amnesia will thaw my frozen psyche, but it usually coincides with another much-anticipated yearly event – the opening of our local summer soft serve ice cream joint.

Those who are stationed in California, Hawaii, Arizona, Florida, or Texas might not understand this, but living in climates with harsh winters does come with certain benefits. And one of those is the privilege of experiencing summer soft serve joints. They are generally dumpy, privately-owned, small businesses run out of shacks with walk-up windows, neon signs and outdoor picnic tables. They only operate in summer, and local folks line up on opening day. Their soft serve cones are always huge, but the napkins are inevitably too small to catch the drips. They have names that often include cutesy misspelled derivations of “freeze,” “cone,”

“treat,” “dairy,” and “cream.”

Where I grew up in Western Pennsylvania, there’s one such joint called “Stern’s” in the former coal mining borough of Creekside. On any given night in summer, locals line up for humongous swirled soft serve cones that look like they’ll topple over they’re so tall, and home-made hot apple dumpings smothered in vanilla frozen custard.

After marriage, the Navy took my family to tours of duty in warmer climates where our ice cream cravings could only be satisfied at year-round chain restaurants. And while stationed overseas, we took the mandatory culinary detour away from American cuisine to experience the delights of European gelato parlors.

But soon after being stationed in Rhode Island six years ago, our family learned about “Frosty Freez,” a tiny walk-up shack in a parking lot in front a strip joint off of East Main Street, between an insurance agency and Glam Nail Salon. That first summer, we heard the hub-bub about opening day, and wondered, “What’s the big deal? Why is everyone lining up for basic soft-serve and rainbow sprinkles?” But it didn’t take us long to catch the aura of this iconic little gem. Now, we fight the line with everyone else, swatting bugs attracted to the neon lights, to get our rightful taste of the season.

My order is usually vanilla and coffee custard swirled on a cone, and dipped in chocolate, because I love the process of systematically nibbling off the chocolatey shell and licking the ice cream drips. Francis typically opts for a strawberry shake. The kids’ orders vary, but they mostly go for the candy-packed “Flurries.”

Local joints like Frosty Freez thrive despite stiff competition from year-round establishments because they represent something more than the cheap frozen custard they express out of stainless steel machines into flimsy cones and dip in waxy imitation chocolate. To the people who flock to them,



they represent sunshine and swimming pools, green grass and garden hoses, flip-flops and fireflies, baseball games and bathing suits, sunburns and screened doors, fire pits and Frisbees, bug bites and beach chairs.

Simply put, soft serve ice cream joints are American symbols of summer joy.



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U.S. Army graphic  
U.S. Army installations across Europe will migrate to a new emergency messaging system this summer. Alert! Mass Warning Notification System, or MWNS, will replace the current AtHoc system.

# Army garrisons in Europe migrating to new mass warning system

By U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz PA

U.S. Army installations across Europe will migrate to a new emergency messaging system this summer.

Alert! Mass Warning Notification System, or MWNS, will replace the current AtHoc system.

The Army’s MWNS notifies service members, Army civilians, and their families during a crisis. MWNS operators, for example, can issue alerts in the event of an active shooter, inclement weather or any other event requiring immediate notification.

“In the event of an area-wide incident, we will use Alert! to inform the community about safe havens, family assistance centers, shelter locations, and numerous other things,” said U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz emergency management specialist Jeremy Watson. “Alert! allows us to get information out to the community in a timely manner - information you may need to help you survive.”

The migration will affect all U.S. Army personnel stationed at or on assignment in Europe.

Installation Management Command-Europe – the agency overseeing Army garrisons in Europe – joins the Army-wide effort to migrate to the new mass warning system. The Army published an order Dec. 13, 2018, directing the migration.

The Army currently has two systems deployed across 100 installations. The migration to a single MWNS reduces costs and

redundant investments. Migration across the Army will be complete no later than Feb. 29, 2020, according to EXORD 033-19.

The Alert! MWNS provides similar service to the AtHoc system, capable of sending emergency notifications to worldwide users via desktop pop-up, mobile phone, SMS text, email, and public distribution. There will be no difference between AtHoc and Alert! with the exception of the way messages look and sound, Watson said.

Alert!, however, is a government off-the-shelf system, meaning it was created and owned by the U.S. federal government. So unlike AtHoc, Alert! doesn’t have license fees and is cheaper to operate. It also means that your Alert! account will follow your Army career – both as a civilian and service member overseas and in the U.S.

Additionally, Alert! allows registered users to add up to 10 different phone numbers to include more family members and dependents.

Current AtHoc user accounts in Europe will automatically be migrated to the Alert! system, so there’s no need to register. However, once the migration is complete at the end of July, users should update their profiles by clicking on the blue globe from their workstations, Watson said.

European-based personnel not covered by the AtHoc system will be afforded the opportunity to register for the Alert! after the migration is complete.

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### Sports Briefs

**3-on-3 hoops:** It's a 3 on 3 Basketball tournament July 27 from 4 to 10 p.m. at the Monti Warrior Zone! Cost: \$15 per person, per tournament. Open to all, ages 18+. 741-3000

**Lucha Libre wrestling:** It will be a Night of Champions 6 p.m. Friday at Stout PFC. The RWA Cruiserweight Championship Triple Threat will have Flamarion vs. Skydee vs. Crazy Star. There will be high-flying action from Black Fish, Rey Arturo, Yuri Star, Silver Hawk, Titanik and La Gata. Free. Open to the public. 588-8247

**El Paso Roller Derby:** The doubleheader El Paso Roller Derby bout is Saturday at Nations Tobin Recreation Center, 8831 Railroad, featuring Beast Mode vs. Derby Bliss Brigade and Crash Test Dollies vs. Hooligans. First bout begins at 6 p.m., second at 7:30 p.m. Cost: \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door; \$5 for military (active and vet only); free for age 10 and younger with paying adult. (623) 285-4670, eprollerderby.com, or Facebook at eprollerderby

**El Paso Locomotives:** El Paso's professional soccer team, the Locomotives, will face Real Monarchs SLC Saturday, 7:30 p.m. Home games are at Southwest University Park. Cost: \$5 to \$49. 235-GOAL, eplocomotivefc.com, or tickets@eplocomotivefc.com

**El Paso Chihuahuas:** The city's AAA baseball team, the Chihuahuas, hosts the Las Vegas 51s at 7 p.m. July 26-28, and 6 p.m. at Southwest University Park on Santa Fe Street in Downtown El Paso. Cost: \$11-\$30. 533-BASE or EPChihuahuas.com. Bark at the Park take your dog to the park day is July 26.

**UFC Fight Night:** Catch UFC Fight 240, 6 p.m., July 27 at Monti Warrior Zone! Free.741-3000

**Road to TwitchCon Street Fighter V tourney:** Army Entertainment and the Army National Guard present the Road to TwitchCon Street Fighter V Tournament. The tournament consists of a series of 12 competitions at National Guard and Army garrisons across the country this spring and summer. Overall winners will move on to compete in the finals at TwitchCon in San Diego in late September. Must be active duty. Registration is July 26 from 12-3 p.m. and July 27 from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Monti Warrior Zone. Free. Open to ages 18-older. 588-8247

**Ruidoso Grindstone Trail Runs:** Ski Run Road Challenge hosts the 4-mile, 8.5-mile and half-marathon runs on the multiple use trail system at Grindstone Lake, two miles from Downtown Ruidoso at 7:30 to 11 a.m. July 27, starting and finishing at Wingfield Park's Grindstone Lake Trails. Half-Marathon and 8.5K wave starts at 7:30 and 4-mile wave at 7:45 a.m. Cost: \$45 half marathon, \$35 8.5 mile run and \$25 4 mile run July 12-26. Race day registration: \$50 half marathon and 8.5 mile run, and \$40 4 mile run. Carry your own water container. One refill station on the 8.5-mile and half-marathon routes. raceadventure-sunlimited.com or words0250@gmail.com

**Kids golf for \$5:** Join Underwood Golf Complex as children get to play golf for \$5 Monday-Friday. It's open to children 16-younger, they must walk, can only ride in a cart with a paying adult. Children ages 12-younger must be accompanied by an adult. 568-1059

**Indoor cycling:** Get back on the bike and push your endurance at Indoor Cycling. Classes are held at Soto and Stout PFC. Cost: \$3 or \$35 unlimited monthly pass. 744-5800

**Iron Divas:** This well-rounded class is designed to improve muscular strength and endurance. With no choreography to learn, you can focus on strength and cardio splits effectively. Classes are held at Soto PFC. Cost: \$3 or \$35 unlimited monthly pass. 744-5800

**Body Pump:** The original Les Mills barbell class will sculpt, tone and strengthen your entire body fast. Focusing on low weight loads and high repetition movements, you'll burn fat, gain strength and quickly produce lean body muscle. Class are held at Soto PFC. Cost: \$3 or \$35 unlimited monthly pass. 744-5790

**SPRINT:** Get your metabolism working long after your workout! This 30-minute High-Intensity Interval Training uses an indoor bike to achieve fast results. Classes are held at Soto PFC. Cost: \$3 or \$35 unlimited monthly pass. 744-5790

**Yoga:** A class consisting of poses and following transitions with a focus on core strength cardiovascular fitness flexibility and an overall sense of well-being we build upon basic yoga poses to target specific muscle groups while maintaining safe alignment to reduce the risk of injuries. All levels welcome. Classes are at Milam PFC. 744-5800

**Bodyflow:** During Bodyflow you'll stretch through a series of simple yoga moves and embrace elements of Tai Chi, and Pilates. Classes held at Soto PFC. Cost: \$3 or \$35 unlimited monthly pass. 744-5800

**Texas Concealed Handgun License classes:** The Fort Bliss Rod and Gun Club offers Texas license to carry classes from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. the first and third Saturday of every month. This course fulfills the legal requirements for training to carry a handgun either openly or concealed for self-defense. Cost: \$45-\$80 depending upon membership status Active-duty military license fees are free. Rod and Gun Club rents guns for classes for \$10. Open to the public. bliss.armymwr.com or call 861-4789

**Early Bird Golf:** Swing by Underwood Golf Complex for Early Bird Golf. Play nine holes Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. for \$15, price includes cart rental. 568-1059

# BLOOD SWEAT GLOVES

## Soldier punches way to success in Golden Gloves competition

By Staff Sgt. Neysa Canfield | U.S. Army

FORT CARSON, Colo. — Puddles of sweat begin to form as the sound of 50-ounce gloves hitting a punching bag echo throughout the gym.

A buzzer goes off. That's the signal to the drenched-in-sweat Sgt. Larry Mays that the warmup has ended and the real workout is about to begin.

The unit supply noncommissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 704th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division used that warmup routine to help earn first place in the Colorado Golden Gloves heavyweight division in April.

"It's a prestigious tournament that the state of Colorado holds on a yearly basis," explained Mays. "I've been training since October of last year and it's exciting to see that all my hard work paid off."

Even though he began his training for the Colorado tournament in October, his journey with the sport started much earlier.

**"He is a great example of what not quitting, putting in hard work and staying dedicated to your goals looks like."**

>> 1st Lt. Wilbert Paige

"I started fighting (when) I was in elementary school. I started with (mixed martial arts), taekwondo and Jiu-Jitsu," said Mays. "I kept fighting as a way to stay in shape and relieve stress."

While training in those combat sports, Mays' coach recommended he try boxing as a way to help him with his MMA skills.

"I pretty much fell in love with [boxing] after that and never went back to MMA," he explained. "It's not an easy sport, but I love that there is always a challenge and something new to learn."

Although boxing was a big part of his life, Mays said he found himself working odd jobs and bringing little income into his household.

With encouragement from his coaches, friends and Family members, Mays enlisted in the Army in 2012.

"I wanted to get out of Mississippi and I always wanted to join the military, so it was the perfect time to make that change," said Mays.

He learned to adapt quickly to the military lifestyle.

"To me, my mindset with boxing and my military career are very similar," he said. "You have to stay disciplined, have a clear and strong mind, and never back down from a fight."

His ability to stay committed to his passion of boxing and effectively balance his career and family life began to

Photos by Staff Sgt. Neysa Canfield / U.S. Army

Sgt. Larry Mays, a unit supply noncommissioned officer assigned to the 704th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, hits a speed bag May 11, at a local boxing gym in Colorado Springs, Colo. Mays, originally from Mississippi, recently earned first place during the Colorado Golden Gloves heavyweight tournament.

Mays hits a speed bag at a local boxing gym in Colorado Springs, Colo.

inspire other Soldiers in his unit.

"I would see him working long hours, helping his Soldiers and then still see him going to the gym after work to train - that's dedication," said 1st Lt. Wilbert Paige, a platoon leader with HHC, 704th BSB, 2nd IBCT. "He is a great example, not only to the junior Soldiers in the company but to everyone, from top to bottom."

Paige added that he hopes to see Mays in the "big leagues" in the future.

"He is a great example of what not quitting, putting in hard work and staying dedicated to your goals looks like," said Paige. "He is the type of person who can do whatever he puts his mind to, and I can't wait to see what the future holds for him."

With the support of his family and

now his unit, Mays said he hopes to continue boxing and to ultimately do it professionally.

"This road of life I am on is kind of falling into place, I have come a long way," said Mays. "I just want to be the guy who made it from nothing. I want to be the best Soldier, best NCO and best boxer I can be."

He hopes others see his journey as a way to encourage themselves to follow their dreams, Mays added.

"I want to be an inspiration to not only Soldiers but to everyone," he said. "You have to look at every day like a fight. Keep pushing even when you might be falling down because you can't expect good things to happen if you don't even try."



**By Joseph Jones | U.S. Army**

“As I watch you all together, the camaraderie, the teamwork, the family that you form, it inspires me and it reminds me of my friend Lou Alvarez, and my friend Ray Pfeifer and what they fought for, and I will always have your back, and I will always have their backs, because I



**E.J. Hersom** / U.S. Army

"I believe not only has Warrior Games saved our warriors lives, but it has saved families and strengthened our families. To all of our families, thank you very much.

The coveted “Heart of the Team” Award went to one member on each team whose teammates collectively felt best embodied the

Members of Team Army also collected 2 of 3 coveted “Ultimate

The 2019 DoD Warrior Games were held from June 21-30 in Tampa, Florida. The athletes who participated in the competition are comprised of wounded, ill and injured service members and veterans representing the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Special Operations Command. Athletes from the United Kingdom Armed Forces, Australian Defence Force, Canadian Armed Forces, Armed Forces of the Netherlands, and the Danish Armed Forces also competed in this year's DoD Warrior Games.

A full-page advertisement for Supercuts. On the left, large teal text reads "\$8" with "military haircut" in dark blue below it. On the right, a young man with a short, spiky haircut is shown in profile, wearing a green bomber jacket, red shirt, grey jeans, and white sneakers. At the bottom center, the "SUPERCUTS" logo is displayed in bold blue letters, with "5 El Paso locations" underneath. In the bottom right corner, small text says "with valid military id".



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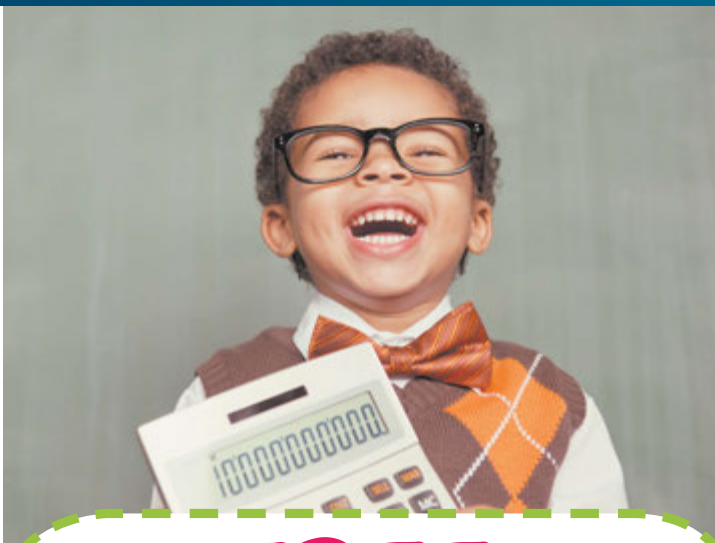


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## OFF DUTY

*Off Duty is a compilation of military-affiliated information and events focused on the Soldier, their family members and veterans. Information should be 100 words or fewer and contain no editorializing. An informational brief that is not time-specific will not run for more than four weeks. Submissions are due no later than Friday for publication in the following week's paper. To learn more, call 568-4088.*

### Bliss Briefs

**Bliss legal to close for DONSA:** The Fort Bliss Legal Assistance and Claims Offices, located on the first floor of Bldg. 113 on Pershing Road, will be closed Aug. 2 and Aug. 5 during the DONSA.

**Attention FBWSC customers:** Fort Bliss Water Services Company announces an amendment to our recently published "2018 Consumer Confidence Report." This is a correction to our notification sent by mail, which contained an incorrect website address. The corrected address is [http://www.asusinc.org/images/uploads/bases\\_we\\_serve/\\_Ft\\_Bliss\\_CCR\\_2018.pdf](http://www.asusinc.org/images/uploads/bases_we_serve/_Ft_Bliss_CCR_2018.pdf). Printed versions of this report are also available by calling FBWSC at 564-1332.

**Eye exams:** Optometry Services at Mendoza and SFMC Clinics are open for routine eye exams for dependents and retirees enrolled in TRICARE Prime and Tricare For Life. If you have had a routine eye exam on the economy through TRICARE or other health insurance in the past year, please do not book an appointment until it is time for your next exam. To schedule an eye exam, call the Mendoza Optometry clinic at 742-2229 or SFMC at 742-2390.

**Lower Beaumont traffic disruptions:** Trucks may cause traffic disruptions in Lower Beaumont until late November, according to the Fort Bliss Department of Public Works. Road closures are not expected, but the work could include noise and dust. The work will be scheduled Mondays-Saturdays, 6:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Only five trucks a day will be used for the first few weeks with a gradual increase to 10 trucks a day.

**TARP training:** Fort Bliss offers Threat Awareness Reporting Program training at two locations monthly. Get your learn on at the Soldier Activity Center on East Fort Bliss on the second Tuesday of the month, or at Statton Theater on West Fort Bliss on every third Thursday of the month. This training will be offered in these locations through September. 568-4604

### FMWR

**Free books for deploying troops:** Deploying soon? Come to the Mickelsen Community Library and pick up a unit book kit. The book kits contain a selection of popular fiction and non-fiction paperback items. 2 Sheridan Rd (Under the NCOA). Free. 568-1902

**Wilderness First Aid:** Join Outdoor Recreation Saturday-Sunday for Wilderness First Aid certification class starting at 8 a.m. at the SAC. You will learn specialized desert climate

response and early warning signs. This class is ideal for any avid hiker or climber. This class is also a requirement for anyone looking to be a commercial guide at Hueco Tanks State Park. Cost: \$250 for the Wilderness First Aid portion. The class does require you to have CPR certificate and there will be a class Friday, for those who do not have one. Cost: \$299 with the CPR and AED portion along with Wilderness First Aid class. Open to the public. Registration required, deadline is Friday. 744-1532

**Auto Crafts facility-use orientation:** The Auto Craft Center offers mandatory safety orientations for their customers Wednesdays and Thursdays at 6 p.m. Orientation is required before use of the facility for automotive do-it-yourself projects. DoD ID card holders only. 820 Marshall Rd. Free. 568-7280

### Go Youth

**Family Day at the Wall:** The SAC holds "Family Day at the Wall" Thursday-Saturday, 12-6 p.m. On Family Day, the wall is open to all climbers age 6 and older. 20732 Constitution Ave. 744-1532

**In-home Child Care:** Family Child Care offers in-home providers for CYS-registered kids. Cost: \$5/hr. with \$10 deposit. Reservations required. 744-7879, 568-4198 or visit 3503 Story Rd.

**School Age Book Club:** The School Age Book Club is designated for children ages 7-12. A staff member will read for part of the time and the children will read aloud as well from 4-5 p.m. every Wednesday at Mickelsen Library. Activities and projects are completed at home, returned and shared at subsequent meetings. 568-6156

**Story Time:** It's Story Time! Stop by the Mickelsen Library every Tuesday from 10:15-11 a.m. or 11-11:45 a.m. as children ages 2 to 5 listen to stories read aloud. There will also be crafts, activities and refreshments available. 568-6156

**SKIESUnlimited:** SkiesUnlimited offers a variety of fun and educational programs geared for children of all ages and talent levels. Music classes like piano, voice, guitar and drums are available. SKIES also has a variety of art, sports, driver's training and babysitting courses. 568-5544 or 568-4374

### Community

**Bluegrass Festival:** The 24th annual all-day Bluegrass Festival is Saturday-Sunday, at the Weed Community Center in Weed, N.M. Continuous live music, food, arts and crafts, plus entertainment for kids. Bands begin at 9 a.m. Featured bands include Blue Sky Country, Vintage, Kitty Joe Creek, Higher Ground, Simple Gifts, Mickey Morgan and Tucumcari Crossroads. To get there: take Hwy 130, turn right at Cloudcroft, and follow the signs to Weed, 23 miles southeast of Cloudcroft. (575) 687-3316, (575) 687-4189, or [WeedBluegrassFestival.com](http://WeedBluegrassFestival.com)

**Ruidoso Art and Wine Festival:** The 48th annual Ruidoso Art and Wine Festival is July 26-28, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., at the Ruidoso Convention Center, 111 Sierra Blanca, with more than 100



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artists, and New Mexico wineries. Cost: \$6; \$4 for military; \$1 ages 10 and younger. Two-day passes are \$10; three-day passes are \$15. Military discount of \$4. (575) 257-7395, 1-877-RUI-DOSO (784-3676) or RuidosoNow.com

**El Paso Sky Lantern Festival:** The Sky Lantern Festival will be held July 27-28, 5-10 p.m. at their newly acquired 100 acre land in El Paso. Attend one day or camp out with us overnight and enjoy another day full of good food, merchandise vendors, Beer Pong without the beer, corn hole, archery, face painting, meet and photo session with the princess, Beer Tents, and an awesome music session. Tickets: \$10-\$180. Location to be emailed with registration.

**Free concerts in the parks:** The City of El Paso Parks and Recreation invites you to their free concerts in the parks in locations across the Sun City this summer. See Borderline Band at Argal Park Sunday. Free. 212-0092 or [www.elpasotexas.gov/parks](http://www.elpasotexas.gov/parks)

**El Paso Public Library book club:** The City of El Paso public library system's Summer Reading Club is underway now through July 27. Club members are asked to read eight books or eight hours, depending on their reading level. Once the club requirements are met, members will become eligible to win great prizes and get a certificate of recognition. People of any age can register for free by visiting any neighborhood library branch and filling out a registration form or by going online at [www.elpasolibrary.org](http://www.elpasolibrary.org).

**Purple Heart recipients sought:** The Military Order of the Purple Heart El Paso Chapter 393 meets the first Saturday of every month at 1 p.m. at the 82nd Airborne Memorabilia Museum, 2608 Fort Blvd. Stand with the MOPH Chapter 393 and honor the sacrifice of American veterans by continued commitment. Facebook at MOPHChapter393

**2ID vets group seeks members:** The Second (Indianhead) Division Association is searching for anyone who served in the Army's 2nd Infantry Division at any time. [2idahq@comcast.net](mailto:2idahq@comcast.net)

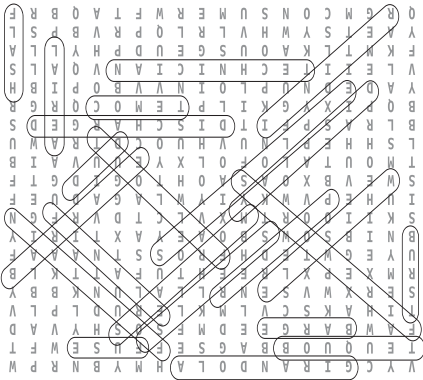
**Downtown Artist/Farmers Market:** The City of El Paso Museums and Cultural Affairs

Department's market for area artists and regionally grown agricultural products is 9 a.m.-1 p.m. each Saturday in the Union Plaza District along Anthony Street. 212-1780 or [elpasoartsandculture.org](mailto:elpasoartsandculture.org)

**Sea Cadets need mentors:** Calling adult volunteers to lead in the newly forming Navy Sea Cadets program, El Paso Unit. Must be a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, free of felony convictions, possess good moral character, a sound mind, and be capable of communicating USNSCC values to our cadets. [epnavyseacads@outlook.com](mailto:epnavyseacads@outlook.com) or on Facebook

**Silver City Clay Festival:** The annual Silver City Clay Festival is this week in Silver City, N.M. Workshops held each day; cost varies. Youth workshops are also planned. A Maker's Market is 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, with artists, music, storytelling, mud pie contest and dancing. Clay-mation films featured that day at the Silco Theater. A clay rodeo is Sunday, at the HUB on Bullard Street. A mud fun for grades pre-K through 6 is also Saturday. [clayfestival.com](http://clayfestival.com)

**Kansas:** The legendary band whose career spans more than four decades with hits like "Dust in the Wind," "Carry On My Wayward Son," and "Point of No Return," performs 7:30 p.m. Sunday, at the Plaza Theatre. Cost: \$44.50-\$74.50; VIP packages \$184-\$285] at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).



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### EL PASO CARES!

By: Livia Sappington



Who are the needy? Who needs food to feed their kids?

It is not the scruffy looking man on the side of the road with a sign "Will work for food". It is the single mother with two jobs living paycheck-to-paycheck running out of bread and milk for her child a few days before payday.

It is your neighbor; it is the nice caring mom down the street from you. Most of the needy are working class families having to make choices that usually involve less food so they can pay utilities or buy gas for the car and get to work.

These are the people that El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank takes care of. The organization also serves veterans and senior citizens.

According to compassionate El Paso businessman Tanny Berg, one of the founders of the organization, there are 170,000 thousand people in our city who are food insecure and at times simply don't have the resources to sustain themselves.

This past Friday, July 12<sup>th</sup> I had the pleasure of participating in the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new 5,500 square foot refrigerator with capacity to store 35 semi-truckloads of food and 9,500 square foot freezer that will store up to 47 semi-truckloads of frozen food, one of the largest commercial freezers of the region.

This will significantly increase the capacity of the food bank and it was made possible because of the generosity of donors.

My employer, Ceci Miles Mulvihill, CEO of RMPersonnel is such supporter and is most pleased by the organization's effort to combat hunger in our community.

If you know someone who needs help or if you are in a position to give even modestly, please visit <https://elpasoansfightinghunger.org/about-us> and be part of the solution!

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