

HERALD UNION

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Dec. 17, 2020



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

U.S. Army Garrison Commander Col. Mario Washington, Santa and the Grinch after the tree-lighting ceremony Dec. 4 at Clay Kaserne.

Holiday celebrations commence despite COVID-19 lockdowns

Lisa Bishop

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

While COVID-19 event restrictions prevented USAG Wiesbaden's traditional tree-lighting ceremony, the garrison gave the community a holiday kick-off to remember, complete with Santa sightings in every neighborhood and a live-streamed program Dec. 4.

"This year's tree-lighting ceremony is not quite the same as the past," said Garrison Commander Col. Mario Washington at the opening of the live-streamed ceremony. "In 2020 I am proud of how this community has pulled together to make the best of a very challenging situation."

Operation Santa's Flight began in the Hainerberg neighborhood with Santa arriving

See 'Celebration' on Page 5

USAG Wiesbaden gets COVID-busting robots to disinfect buildings

Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden recently got two robots that will help disinfect the air and surfaces in buildings using ultraviolet light.

Staff at the Mission Command

Center and fitness center received training and programmed their robots Nov. 20. The air purifying robots can be controlled with a tablet device and move around the rooms, avoiding furniture and walls, similar to a robot vacuum cleaner.

The robot does not replace following COVID-19 protocols or cleaning and sanitizing with disinfectant solutions.

In fact, U.S. Army Europe and Africa takes a layered approach to keep personnel safe from

See 'COVID Robot' on Page 3

Fitness center staff save patron's life after collapse

Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Sports and Fitness Director Kevin Ringgold was working at the Wiesbaden Fitness Center and was the first at the scene to a man lying unconscious near a treadmill.

"I immediately started running toward the customer and called for Maria (Diaz) to assist," he said in a statement.

Diaz, installation fitness coordinator, and Ringgold secured the person's neck,

they said. Diaz said she checked for signs of breathing and determined that he needed cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

"Maria immediately started chest compressions and (staff member) James Mitchell retrieved the AED (automated external defibrillator)," Ringgold said. He then directed other staff members to call for emergency assistance and asked them to clear the building, he said.

See 'Fitness Center' on Page 5

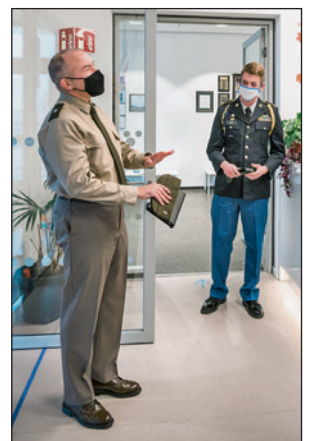
Brig. Gen. Schaertl visits Wiesbaden High School

Lisa Bishop

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Jed Schaertl, deputy commanding general for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs, U.S. Army Europe-Africa; and senior responsible officer at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden, toured Wiesbaden High School Nov. 24 in an effort to connect to the community and encourage both staff and students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Schaertl began the tour by explaining to Dr. Heather Ramaglia, principal, and Sam Houston, senior and S3 sergeant major of the JROTC, that he has an affinity for education, as both of his parents were teachers.



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Jed Schaertl begins the tour by explaining to Dr. Heather Ramaglia, principal, and Sam Houston, senior and S3 sergeant major of the JROTC, that he has an affinity for education, as both of his parents were teachers. He also spent three years teaching high school math in South Carolina when he retired from Army active duty in 2001.

See 'High School' on Page 2

CYCLING CLUB

Soldier overcomes health condition with help from Outdoor Rec challenge.

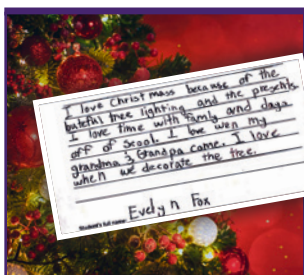
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LETTERS TO SANTA

Students write about why they love the holidays.

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NEW POST OFFICE

Customers will have 24/7 access in new location.

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U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden Command

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Newsletter

Sign up for the Herald Union newsletter and be the first to read stories that affect U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden. Get the headlines straight to your inbox by going to www.herald-union.com and entering your email address.

HIGH SCHOOL

Continued from page 1

He also spent three years teaching high school math in South Carolina when he retired from Army active duty in 2001.

Houston led the tour, describing the school's facilities and schedule, providing additional details about how COVID-19 has impacted the school's use of space.

Schaertl said, "It is a phenomenal facility." He was impressed by the neighborhood design of the school, also used in the middle school and soon-to-be-opened elementary school; the sports resources for athletes; and the extensive use of technology for student instruction. "I would have loved to have had that type of facility growing up," he added.

The tour ended in the STEM wing where Brian Barnes, teacher, and robotics students explained the school's unique space and connection to the military community. Barnes told the general, "We prepare kids for jobs."

The school, with Barnes' leadership, has partnered with U.S. contracting companies and military units to expose students to computer path-

ways, including cyber security and technical support.

The 2nd Theater Signal Brigade and 1st Battalion, 214th Aviation Regiment, are two examples of local Wiesbaden military connections. Barnes said, "214th aviation mechanics group actually send their machinist over and they work out of here." The state-of-the-art machine shop at the school offers the mechanics equipment not available in their own facilities. The mechanics offer students instruction and insight into their profession.

"Those are the types of partnerships we are trying to foster between military and the contract world," Barnes said. "If we play our cards right, we can groom students to go into job fields that the military needs to support the missions, to include both college and non-college bound students."



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs
Brig. Gen. Jed Schaertl, discusses the FIRST robotics program with students at Wiesbaden High School.

"The students were incredibly excited to highlight their hard work, especially to our garrison partners," she said. "It also gives them real world experience presenting their projects and explaining their processes, which is invaluable."

As Ramaglia and Houston concluded the tour with the general, he offered her encouragement with the care of her teachers, calling them "pacing items." A pacing item, according to Schaertl, "is an Army term for your most important piece of equipment, the most critical asset." He explained that a training unit views its drill sergeant as a pacing asset. "To keep schools open," he said, "teachers are the most critical asset."

He cited the lack of depth



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Dr. Heather Ramaglia, principal, and Sam Houston, senior, explains to the general how lunchroom seating and clean-up procedures have changed as a result of COVID-19.

"The technical things they are doing are quite impressive," Schaertl said. "It is great to make the connection between what is in the books and real world applications."

Ramaglia sees value in the general's visit for the students who prepared and presented.

in the school's substitute rosters and the teaching staff's close ties to the community as important considerations for the care of school faculty. "I want to pass on my appreciation for what teachers are doing to keep kids in school and doing it safely with all of the constraints."

Ramaglia said, "I really appreciated how invested he was with the students. He asked really great questions. He talked to staff and students alike. This is so good for morale and for people to get the opportunity to feel appreciated for the role they play in aiding the mission. The fact that he took time out of his day to be visible and invest his energy and time into the school was noticed and truly appreciated."

As Schaertl left the high school, he thanked Houston for the tour and handed him a coin. Houston said, "My dad said I should start my own collection as I follow in his footsteps to become an officer in the Army."

"Sam was chosen because he has experience leading school tours as a Student Council Representative and as someone who is heavily committed to extracurricular activities and volunteerism," Ramaglia said. "Sam is also an outstanding cadet in our JROTC program, which is another feature we wanted to highlight, and a candidate for admission to West Point." Schaertl graduated from West Point himself.

Schaertl arrived to USAG Wiesbaden in October and is serving a 730-day order as a part of his Army Reserve duty.



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Jed Schaertl, senior responsible officer at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden, and Sam Houston, senior and S3 sergeant major of the JROTC, stand outside of Wiesbaden High School.

COVID ROBOT

Continued from page 1

the virus, said David Fulton, director of U.S. Army Europe and Africa's Mission Support Element. He said keeping the building sanitized and ensuring staff follow all protocols is key to stopping the spread of COVID-19 at the facility.

The first layer is hand washing. U.S. Army Europe and Africa rents six troughs for hand washing at the garrison: at the MCC, Wiesbaden Army Health Clinic, Exchange, Clay shoppette, Commissary and the Wiesbaden Army Lodge. They are currently testing small heaters to bring hot water to all of the hand wash stations and working on getting pop-up tents and softer paper towels.

"I want people to be comfortable, with warm water and cover over them, so that in all

weather they'll stop and wash their hands," Fulton said.

Signage is in place instructing people what to do, to ensure everyone follows protocols.

After washing hands, people entering the MCC have their temperatures checked with a thermal imaging camera. Mask wear and social distancing create more layers of protection.

On top of that is sanitizing the air and surfaces. This is where the COVID-19-buster robot comes in. Air is sucked in and passes through a light that sanitizes it of bacteria and viruses, he said. "Anything within about a meter and a half of the light; it's neutralizing the pathogens."

They are also working to get mobile ultraviolet germicidal irradiation systems to sanitize the air in conference rooms.

"The first line of cleaning will always be that organization doing its own disinfecting with

the standard stuff," Fulton said. The robot just brings an added layer of cleaning to higher traffic places, like the MCC and fitness center.

"This building is a very safe place to work, and that just improves our readiness," he said. "We still have a good number of folks who are working remotely, and they're able to be effective at doing that, and because they're working remotely, we're able to spread out more. All these layers allow people who need to be here in person to do their work to come in without fear of getting sick or bringing that home to their family."

Maria Diaz, installation fitness coordinator, said the fitness center staff and patrons are grateful to Fulton for procuring the robot to continue keeping staff and customers safe. She noted that patrons must still do their part and be vigilant with cleaning, sanitizing and



Courtesy photo

One of two robots that use ultraviolet light to disinfect the air and surfaces is being used at the fitness center on Clay Kaserne Nov. 20. The other UV robot is being used at the Mission Command Center.

following protocols.

"Since we've opened, we haven't had a single case here, and that's a credit to the people

who use the gym; they are wiping things down; they are doing the social distancing; they are wearing their masks."

1,000 km biking club helps Soldier living with arthritic condition

Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

When Capt. Justin Brooks first got sick in June 2019, his

hand swelled up so big his fellow Soldiers said it looked like a Mickey Mouse glove.

"Then my hips started

hurting, then my ankles started hurting, then my knees started hurting – I could barely walk," he said. "I didn't want to get out of bed."

He ended up in the emergency room twice, where they asked about a possible accident and checked for spider bites and other diseases.

Four months later, he got in to see a rheumatologist and was diagnosed with undifferentiated seronegative spondyloarthritis, a type of rheumatoid arthritis.

After six months on medication, he was able to get his condition under control; however, running and working out was still painful and challenging.

"It took a while to get back in the gym to lift," he said. "Physical activity was just absolutely tough; it was really tough."

Meanwhile, his wife, Caitlin, was in the Clay Cycling Club and had signed up for the Installation Management Command Directorate-Europe 1,000 Kilometer Biking Club, a challenge where participants ride on any type of bicycle, log their miles and receive a jersey at the end.

The challenge has been more popular than expected. More than 323 people have completed

their 1,000 kilometers across the region, according to Aaron Jones, Outdoor Recreation specialist with Community Recreation, G-9, IMCOM-Europe.

"We initially purchased 50 jerseys for the region," Jones said. "So we have had way more success than we really dreamed of."

So far, 104 people have signed up in Wiesbaden, 71 of whom have completed, said Joe Harris, director of the Outdoor Recreation and Education Program at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden. Participants are continuing to log their kilometers and are up to a combined total of 115,240 so far in Wiesbaden as of press time.

The first person from USAG Wiesbaden to complete the 1,000 Km Club challenge was Fred Proctor, who currently has logged more than 12,300 kms ridden to date.

"The great thing about bicycling is it can be done as a group or individually," Harris said. "So with COVID, people are still able to go out hiking and biking."

He said that while some people tracked a small number of long rides, others used the

challenge to track their trips to the grocery store, bakery and work—places they would have normally driven to.

"Biking has opened up travel to people who probably wouldn't have gone those routes or those ways," Harris said. "It's slower, but they get to see more of the countryside. It's positively changing some people's habits and how they do things."

Brooks bought a road bike in May of this year and joined his wife in the challenge toward the end of that month, completing it by the beginning of November.

"From the moment I got out there on the bike, I've been hooked," he said. "Doing the challenge got me back into aerobic physical activity."

They biked to Aschaffenburg, Ruedesheim, the Frankfurt airport and Heidelberg, among other places.

"The more I move, the better I feel," Brooks said.

For more information on the 1,000 Kilometer Biking Club, go to <https://wiesbaden.armymwr.com/happenings/1000-kilometer-biking-club>



Courtesy photo

Capt. Justin Brooks overcame a painful joint condition to ride his bicycle 1,000 kilometers in the Installation Management Command Directorate-Europe 1,000 Kilometer Biking Club, a challenge where participants ride on any type of bicycle, log their miles and receive a jersey at the end.

Angel trees bring joy to children

Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Volunteers from Army Community Service, the Sergeant Morales Club and garrison chaplains have been spending their time making the holidays a little brighter for boys and girls this season.

The Angel Trees are placed at the Exchange; and Clay and Hainerberg chapels. Each tag on the trees contains a wish from a child whose family may be suffering a financial burden. To participate: take a tag, purchase the gift listed, attach the tag, and place the new, unwrapped item in any Angel Tree box or drop off at ACS.

People wishing to donate



Emily Jennings/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Volunteers from the Sergeant Morales Club, 66th Military Intelligence Brigade and Army Community Service set up an Angel Tree Nov. 24 at the Exchange on Hainerberg. Trees were also placed at the Clay and Hainerberg chapels.

a gift through one of the Angel Trees should be sure to not lose the tag, so the gifts will reach their intended recipient. ACS

recommends snapping a picture of the tag immediately. Then, if it gets misplaced, the information will be stored and can be

attached to the gift.

For more information about the Angel Trees or the Holiday Assistance Program, call (0611)143-548-9202.



Christmas services

Please note, reservations are required to attend service.

Catholic services

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Mass, 5 and 10 p.m. at Hainerberg Chapel

Dec. 25 – Christmas Day Mass, 10 and 11:30 a.m. at Hainerberg Chapel

Combined Protestant services

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve service, 7 to 9:30 p.m., multiple time slots with virtual option

Check the RSO Wiesbaden Facebook page for the latest updates.

Order of St. Maurice presented to USAG Wiesbaden Soldiers



Lena Stange/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Lt. Col. Edwin Escobar, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden provost marshal and director of emergency services, is presented with the Order of St. Maurice, Legionnaire, by Col. Howard Kirk, executive officer to the commanding general, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, Nov. 24 in front of the Keyes Building on Clay Kaserne.

Lena Stange

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Col. Howard Kirk, executive officer to the commanding general, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, presented Lt. Col. Edwin Escobar, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden provost marshal and director of emergency services, and Master Sgt.

Richard Brinkley, USAG Wiesbaden provost sergeant, with the Order of St. Maurice, Legionnaire, Nov. 24 in front of the Keyes Building on Clay Kaserne.

"I feel truly honored to be recognized by Infantrymen for this prestigious and most significant award and this type of recognition under chaotic times," said Escobar.

The Order is awarded by the National Infantry Association and the Chief of Infantry to recognize significant contributions. Infantrymen and Soldiers are eligible for the Legionnaire level.

"It is our honor to wear this medalion and join that club," Brinkley said.

The 2nd Cavalry Regiment supported USAG Wiesbaden's COVID response, Escobar said. Infantrymen from Bavaria helped DES, which turned into Task Force Protect.

"We worked hand in hand," said Escobar. "They were at the ACPs, they were around in key areas, doing screening, enforcing measures. We couldn't do it without them."

DES and the Infantrymen worked hand in hand as one team, Escobar said.

"We worked so well together so many months. The infantry first sergeant nominated us, me and (Master) Sgt. Brinkley. I am totally humbled and honored," Escobar said.



Lena Stange/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Richard Brinkley, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden provost sergeant, is presented with the Order of St. Maurice, Legionnaire, by Col. Howard Kirk, executive officer to the commanding general, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, Nov. 24 in front of the Keyes Building on Clay Kaserne.

FITNESS CENTER

Continued from page 1

With the AED connected, the machine began analyzing the heart rate and delivered a shock to the patient, Ringgold said.

"Once it delivered the shock--the most beautiful sound in the world--the man's breath," Diaz said.

Two customers assisted with lifesaving procedures and Maj. Rafal Szelagowski, G-3 Effects, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, assisted with CPR, Ringgold said.

Szelagowski had just completed his workout before the incident happened and was packing up, he said. He had been downstairs and had heard a loud thump from the second floor. He ran upstairs and saw the man on the ground and later assisted with rescue breaths.

Lifesaving efforts continued, and within about five minutes, first responders from the Directorate of Emergency Services arrived, with emergency host nation medical personnel



Courtesy photo

Clay Kaserne fitness center

arriving shortly thereafter to administer oxygen and transport the patient to hospital.

"I'm relieved that he's alive; that we were able to save a life," Diaz said. "The trainings that we do here on a regular basis allow us to do that. I know everybody says thank you and it's the right thing to do, but that's our job. We work in a gym and these things can happen, especially when you're working out."

Garrison Commander Col. Mario Washington and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Truchon showed up and helped

carry the stretcher downstairs to the emergency vehicle.

"Maria provided outstanding care in this situation," Washington said. "I personally observed her providing medical assistance and reassurance to the gentleman. The overall response was impressive. The cooperation between our staff, host nation doctors and medical professionals was top-notch. I am very proud of our MWR staff that was on-hand assisting with this effort. It was obvious they work well together, and this was not their first time responding to an incident such as this."

CELEBRATION

Continued from page 1

on a Humvee. He proceeded through Crestview and Aukamm community housing before finishing his route on a firetruck on Clay Kaserne. Most families observed Santa from their windows and porches and waved as he went by. For children who could hear him, Santa reminded them, "I'll see you in a few weeks."

Washington said, "The spirit of the season is going strong

here." He shared examples of holiday spirit from community events and read passages from two of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation's winning writing entries from students.

Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Truchon said, "Our community is really lighting up the holidays this year." He announced the winners of the neighborhood decorating contest. Pfc. Madison Conrad in Building 1206 on Clay Kaserne won for the barracks; the Donnelly family won for stand-alone housing in Newman Village;

and the winner for stairwell housing in Crestview wished to remain anonymous. Photos for the winning homes can be seen on MWR's Facebook page.

Santa arrived at the live-streamed tree-lighting ceremony on a firetruck just as the rain subsided. As he proceeded to the platform, he said, "Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas" and waved. "This has been a great year for the community," he added once on stage.

Washington invited three children on stage to help Santa turn on the tree lights. "Merry Christmas Wiesbaden," Santa said once the tree, located beside the Clay Kaserne chapel, was lit.

While holiday music closed out the ceremony, Washington reminded everyone, "Remember to wear your mask, wash your hands and watch your distance."

More than 3,000 people watched the live-stream event on MWR's Facebook page. The event and pre-event Santa tracking with the Grinch and Jane Porto-Turner, MWR sponsorship and advertising manager, remain available for viewing.



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

In the rain, Jane Porto-Turner, Family and MWR sponsorship and advertising manager, an elf and the Grinch discuss holiday cheer as a part of the pre-ceremony live stream Dec. 4 on Clay Kaserne.

Gazebo renovated for Soldiers

Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Carpenters from the U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden Directorate of Public Works install new wood paneling on a gazebo outside barracks buildings. The gazebo serves as a place for Soldiers to spend time outside and relax and is situated next to a sand volleyball court.





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Elf on a shelf



Courtesy photo
Public Health Nurse Maj. Joel Osterhout gives the elves their flu shots. Stay tuned to the Garrison Wiesbaden Facebook page for updates on flu shots.



Courtesy photo
Elves have been spotted across the garrison. USAG Wiesbaden directorates have caught elves being both naughty and nice.

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TEAM IRICK, CLAY KASERNE

*We wish everyone
a happy and safe
holiday season!*

Dear Readers,

We hope you enjoy this last edition of the Herald Union for 2020.

AdvantiPro, the publisher of your the Herald Union, will close its offices from Dec. 21 through Jan. 1. The first 2021 edition of the Herald Union will be distributed on Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021.

AdvantiPro would like to thank all of our readers & advertisers for the great support we have enjoyed in 2020!

We are very proud to serve the Wiesbaden military community!

Your AdvantiPro Team

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MCC features Thanksgiving display



Emily Jennings/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

A Thanksgiving display is presented in the foyer of the Mission Command Center on Clay Kaserne during the month of November 2020 showing how Soldiers during World War II ate in the field.

Lena Stange

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

The Mission Command Center on Clay Kaserne presents a holiday series of displays in the foyer. At the end of November, a Thanksgiving food traditions feature was displayed.

"We are putting these exhibits of the different holidays to show the Soldiers and civilians who work here USAREUR's (U.S. Army Europe and Africa) past history on these holidays," said Fred Adolphus, the museum curator. "The Army during the Thanksgiving of 1944 made it a point to provide the GIs with Thanksgiving turkey."

For the Americans, Thanksgiving is one of the most important holidays, he said. The Army wanted to provide the Soldiers at the front with

a real Thanksgiving meal, and sent thousands of turkeys to Europe. They were alive and were prepared locally.

"It was important to the troops' morale that they get their Thanksgiving turkey," Adolphus said.

In addition to the pictures of the troops with their Thanksgiving meals, the display shows pictures of Soldiers eating their normal meals at the front lines,

Saint Nicholas Day in Germany

Every year on the eve of Dec. 6, children in Germany put their boots in front of their doors to have them filled with gifts overnight.

Dec. 6 is Saint Nicholas Day, which commemorates Saint Nicholas of Myra, who had a reputation as a bringer of gifts.

If a child has been good the whole year, Saint Nicholas puts gifts into the boots, but if a child has been bad, he only leaves a piece of coal.

Even though the day is not a holiday in Germany, it is celebrated as a well-liked tradition, which encourages children to be good and help others in need.



Anuja Mary Tilj/Unsplash.com

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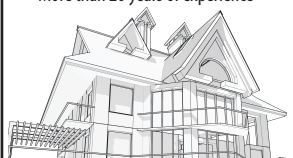
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Student letters

Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation asked USAG Wiesbaden students to tell them,

"Why I love the holidays."

I love Christ mass because of the buteful tree lighting and the presents. I love time with family and days off of school. I love wen my grandma & Granapa come. I love when we decorate the tree.

Student's full name: Evelyn Fox

I love the holidays because I spend time with my family and I like to open my presents with my family. I like to play with my new toys.

Student's full name: Lyric Ballard

I Love Love Love so fun with the is not all. Wh time with fam Now thats on to all!

Student's full name:

the holidays because...
holidays remind of Mary giving birth to Jesus.
are a lot of lights because it puts joy
to my heart.
wish is to go caroling with my family.

Student's full name: Elyse & Claire & FOX

Family time

I love to miss my
mom and dad
and mother and
father.
name: HORMON W
Baller

I love the holiday known as Christmas. It is
the glittering Christmas tree but that
I love about Christmas is spending
time with my family. Let's not forget decorating the tree.
one of my favorites. Merry Christmas.

name: Lora Williams

The Holidays are a time to be with and
show gratitude to those you love. I deeply
believe the holidays are a time to come together
to spend time with those who are close to you.
And to show gratitude to those who help you in your
life. I feel that the holiday tree lighting is a good chance
to get closer to that person who serves you and our
country, to cuddle close to them in the cold and feel the
true meaning of Christmas.

Student's full name: Ella Grace Fox

There are many reasons why I love the holidays, but the main reasons are food and family!
I'm going to be honest with you. My mom and dad are amazing cooks! On Christmas, my mom makes some incredible
cookies with just the right amount of sugar. On New Year's, my dad makes a delicious lobster for each of my four family
members while Mom is making her outstanding shrimp and grits. Family is also very important to me. I love having spec
dinners, watching holiday movies, and chatting about the things we enjoy. Even though this year is different, it is still
important to keep the holiday cheer alive. Food and family are the two main reasons why I love the holidays, and I cannot
wait for the next one.

Student's full name: Brayden Winters

Tree lighting

I love the holiday season because of the time I get to
spend with my family and celebrate the birth of Christ
our Savior. The four kids in our family pick names out of
a hat and whoever's name we pick that's who we buy a
present for. Whoever's name we don't pick that's who we
make a homemade present for. Last year, we were able to
buy something from the Christmas market. Sadly, we won't
be able to go to the Weihnachtsmarkt this year, but we
can still go to German shops that sell unique gifts.
My family also acts out the Christmas story which is fun
when we dress up. Most people think that getting things
is the best part of Christmas, but for me the best part
is giving to others like how Jesus gave.

Student's full name: Peter Smith

Customers can access mailboxes 24/7 in new post office

Lena Stange

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

What started as a roof repair, ended up being a 360-degree renovation of the entire building. The new post office on Clay Kaserne is expected to open in March 2021 featuring 24-hour mailbox access.

"Bringing up the building to a state-of-the-art technical standard was pretty much my main goal," said Klaus Hahn, chief of construction, Directorate of Public Works, with regard to the new roof, the exterior painting, the insulation, the new heating system, the ramp work and the new windows.

The new set up will use the entire first floor of the building for postal operations. The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command office, which used to be in the same building, was permanently relocated.

"We rearranged the floor plan," said Judith Rodriguez Vera, DPW division chief engineering. "The floor plan reflects operation. Now you have clear zones. The building itself functions better."

The new building will include a long conveyor belt that goes all the way across the hall and into the adjacent hall. It will make the lives of the workers easier, said Rodriguez.

A mail sorting machine is

also expected to become part of the new post office.

"The sorting machine right now is pending," said Derick Ferrer, postal operations supervisor. "That will make this facility probably state-of-the-art throughout Europe because of that and the conveyor belt system."

The letter mail boxes in the new building will be accessible 24/7 with motion-sensor lights.

"You come in late at night, just got off work at 9 o'clock, and want to check your mail, you can come over here, the lights turn on automatically all over the place," Ferrer said. "Not like before at the old post office where we closed the whole building down at 6 o'clock."

The mailboxes are also new, but in the same style as the ones at the current post office.

"All customers are going to retain their current box numbers, but they will have a different combination," Ferrer said.

The building will also be more energy-efficient. New windows and better insulation will bring down the heating cost. Within the next three to four years, photovoltaic cells will be attached to the roof to generate electricity via solar power. For now, this sub-project is in the design phase.

Security measures were also revamped.



Lena Stange/ USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Bldg. 1030 on Clay Kaserne is in the process of renovation Nov. 17. It is expected to be reopened as U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden's Postal Operations Center in March 2021.

"The fire suppression system has been redone," said Chad Adamson, construction control representative with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Europe District. "It's upgraded."

Physical security measures have been implemented such as a metal mesh above the ceiling to hinder people from obtaining unlawful access, Hahn said. There is also a mass notification system, and the exterior doors are secured.

"We also have what we call IDS, the intrusion detecting system," Adamson said. These are sensors in the ceiling to detect movement.

Floors were also redone. Inside, the floor had been partially broken and uneven. The surface was transitioned to become even and will be covered with tiles that are made of a material, which is very sturdy, but also has some cushion, which makes it soft to walk on, Rodriguez said.

"People walk a lot," she said. "This is important to them."

The tiles will not be glued to the surface, but work like a puzzle. If a piece is damaged – even though it is scratch- and stain-resistant – it can be easily replaced, Hahn said.

The ramp outside was also redone with a new anti-skid

surface, Adamson said.

"From a customer side, I like the fact that I can pick up the mail 24/7," said Adamson, when asked what he likes best about the new post office. "I might not be able to pick up packages, but I can at least come in when the post office is closed and pick up any letter parcels. That's what I like."

Once finished the construction and renovation work at the post office building, a follow-up project is planned to renovate the parking lot and the sewer system next to the building. This will be a project for 2021.



Lena Stange/ USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Chad Adamson, construction control representative with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Europe District, shows where the sign to indicate the express window will be located Nov. 17, in Bldg. 1030 on Clay Kaserne.



Lena Stange/ USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

The mailboxes in Bldg. 1030 on Clay Kaserne are new, but feature the same style as the old ones in the other building. The renovated post office building is expected to reopen in March 2021.



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Tenant satisfaction survey is now open

Lisa Bishop

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

The annual Army Family Housing tenant satisfaction survey for 2020 will be open Dec. 2 to Jan. 15, 2021, for U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden on-post residents.

"The survey is Army wide and results are seen at Department of Army level, to include individual resident comments," said Victor Dimarzo, housing manager at the Directorate of Public Works. "The data has the potential to justify project funding requests, bring about change in the way Housing Divisions operate, and affect staffing levels."

Army housing officials hope for a high participation rate, which will provide a more accurate depiction of resident satisfaction and of changes that have been implemented over the past year. "The more participation that occurs, the more valid the results in terms of trend or opinion magnitude," Dimarzo said.

According to Dimarzo, DPW acted upon the 2019 survey results in several ways.

"Garrison and Army leadership are now more acutely aware of the sensitivity



Courtesy photo

Hainerberg Housing

associated with customer service and the housing assignment processes, resulting in more attention to these areas," Dimarzo said.

"One concrete result of the survey is a Housing initiative to replace older appliances still within their respective life cycles as Families move out of housing units," he added. "We are looking at doing the same during ongoing occupancies when inventory permits."

Based on feedback in the ungated communities of Aukamm and Crestview,

"the garrison has increased military police vehicle and foot patrols in order to demonstrate a more visible presence, while also closely coordinating and communicating with the local German police," Dimarzo said.

"A housing action plan was submitted to higher headquarters which details ongoing and new initiatives to address resident comments and affect corrective actions," Dimarzo said.

In addition to areas of concern, residents also have the opportunity to

provide housing services with positive feedback. Last year, according to Dimarzo, high marks were given to DPW workers. He said such feedback serves as a pat on the back and a motivator.

The purpose of the survey is to receive firsthand accounts of what Soldiers and their families find important in Army housing and to gauge satisfaction with property management services. All surveys are confidential, and the reporting structure ensures that the Army will not see responses unless CEL & Associates Inc. is satisfied that participants' anonymity is retained. CEL & Associates is an independent third-party organization managing the survey process.

"As we get closer to the survey start date of 2 December," Dimarzo said, "any resident who has not received an email from CEL & Associates with survey instructions should contact the Housing Division."

Residents are advised to check their bulk or spam folders first. Contact the DPW Housing Office at (0611) 143-548-4409 with any questions.

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Wiesbaden's Strategic Planning Conference goes virtual

Lisa Bishop

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

USAG Wiesbaden's annual strategic planning conference was held virtually using the Teams platform Nov. 9 and 10 due to COVID-19 concerns. "We were able to leverage technology to meet the strategic goals of the conference," said Scott Mowry, deputy garrison commander.

Esther Otis, plans specialist, said the in-person conference was cancelled just one week prior. "We had contingencies," she said. "It was in the back of our minds that we'd have to do this because of COVID."

Sabine Schindler, Plans, Analysis and Integration officer, said "Before COVID, we would never have considered a virtual platform."

Modifications to the conference included reducing the number of attendees and size

of working groups. In years past, as many as 100 people participated in the annual planning conference. Including leaders, 51 garrison personnel attended the virtual gatherings over the two days.

"We scaled back the overall conference because of it being on Teams," Schindler said. Instead of nine working groups, there were six, including two that met outside the conference schedule and reported their progress during the last Teams sessions.

As with previous virtual events, participants were successful with overall goals, but missed the social engagement and team-building aspects of in-person meetings. To help mitigate the loss of in-person interaction, Schindler said, "Normally we discouraged the use of cameras; for this one we recommended them being on to interact and that worked really well."



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

USAG Wiesbaden's annual strategic planning conference was held virtually using the Teams platform Nov. 9 and 10 due to COVID-19 concerns. "We were able to leverage technology to meet the strategic goals of the conference," said Scott Mowry, deputy garrison commander.

Schindler, Otis and the command team rotated in and out of the virtual meetings. "I was able to float between the working groups on Teams; it is the role I would have held if we did it in person," Otis said.

Working groups were tasked with developing action plans for five lines of effort handed down by IMCOM, according to Otis.

"Action plans appear to be well fleshed out."

She added, "Groups were able to move at their own pace; they were able to use the days the way that fit them."

Schindler also saw the virtual conference as a success, especially the back briefs provided at the end. "All the teams came back with great goals,

objectives and action plans with milestones," she said.

"For something like a conference, face to face is preferable," Otis added. "Overall I was happy with Teams and that we made it work."

Mowry echoed Otis with praise. "Our team did an amazing job setting this up and executing in a 100% virtual setting," he said.



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Community comes together to improve COVID test center experience

Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

With increased demand and challenging weather causing a muddy situation at the U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden COVID-19 testing center tent, clinic leaders were looking for a solution to keep patients as comfortable and safe as possible.

Earlier this year, when COVID-19 reared its head in Germany, the clinic set up a testing center on Clay Kaserne. As temperatures got colder, they needed a tent to keep people out of the weather, and garrison planners coordinated with the Property Book Office and the Logistics Readiness Center and got a tent from the Directorate of Public Works to the site.



Courtesy photo

The path to the COVID testing center tent on Clay Kaserne is now lined with heavy duty plastic pallets that will keep patients out of the mud.

When the clinic again reached out to garrison planners -- this time looking for a way to place some type of flooring to deal with the walked on and rained on dirt floor on the inside of the tent -- the Logistics Readiness Center came up with the idea of using wooden pallets as a solution for now. Maj. Eduardo Serrano, Plans Officer, Plans and Operations, then contacted Army and Airforce Exchange Service General Manager Brian Smith to ask about the possibilities.

"It's valuable to have the network in place and familiarity where just a simple phone call can generate a ton of support," Serrano said. "They found a way to a solution, quick."

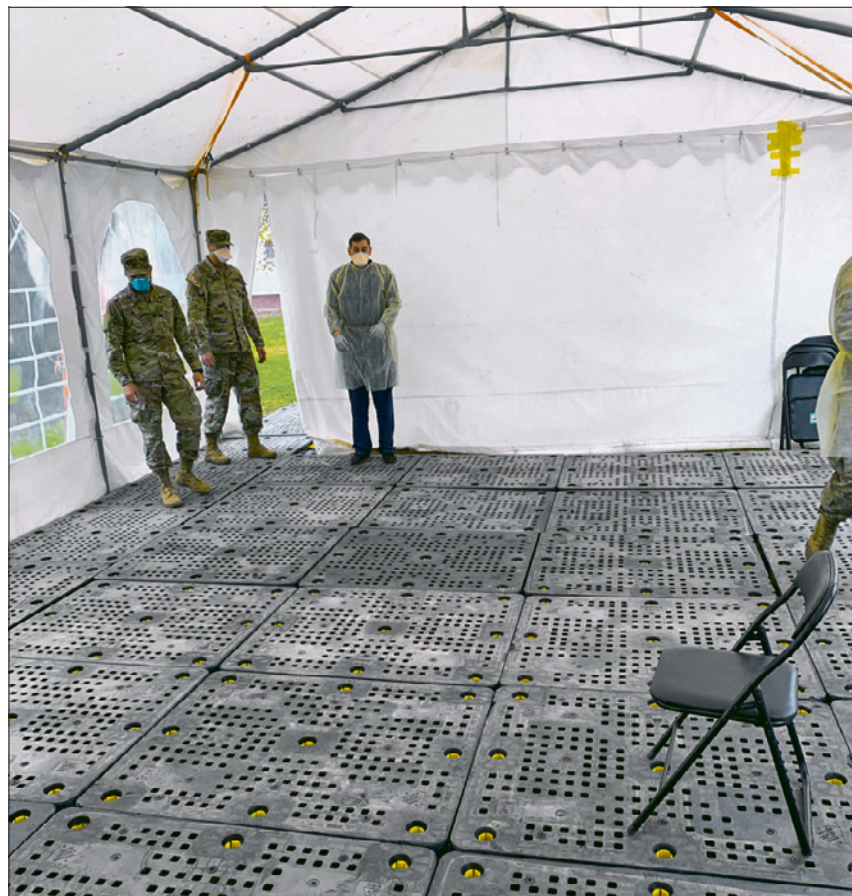
Each person who was part of the planning credited the communication and willingness to help for getting the job done.

"One of our managers had the idea to use heavy duty plastic pallets," Smith said. "They're designed to hold 1,000 kilos each (more than 2,000 pounds)."

Serrano contacted Smith on Monday, and by that Friday they were delivering pallets to Clay Kaserne from a distribution center in Gernersheim. Smith credited this swift action to the partnerships between various organizations.

"The military can make things happen quickly through partnerships," he said. "You can see what we're able to accomplish in such a short time."

The new pallet flooring will create



Courtesy photo

The inside of the COVID testing center tent on Clay Kaserne is now lined with heavy duty plastic pallets that will keep patients out of the mud.

a dry, clean and safer surface, said Maj. Cassandra Ellington, deputy commander of administration at the Wiesbaden Army Health Clinic.

"It was awesome how people thought outside the box and came up with the idea for our flooring," she said. "I really appreciate the support our community has provided us as our entire team continues to combat COVID-19."

Having the support of the garrison and community is vital to getting the job done, Ellington said.

"We've been providing the testing, but leadership throughout the community has been coming together to make the testing experience more efficient and better," she said. "It's been a huge effort to run this, and it's really great to have strong partnerships."

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