



ABOVE: Fireworks go off in front of a crowd of 349 vehicles on Wiesbaden Army Airfield for the drive-in event July 4.

Photo by Robert Bishop

RIGHT: While waiting for the fireworks to commence, a family plays card games in the back of their pickup truck.

BELOW: Grace Lauer, center operations manager for the USO, distributes food and goodie bags to spectators on the airfield July 4. The USO staff distributed 1,000 food and goodie bags to families at the event. Larger bags were given as prizes to the first 75 cars set up with patriotic decorations.

Photos by Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs



## Feedback improves housing

### USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Over the past year, the Directorate of Public Works has been gathering information on housing and resident satisfaction and on what residents would like to see in the future.

In November and December 2019, almost 23% of residents provided feedback in an online housing survey, which was an increase of more than 5% over the same survey sent last spring. After a high-level focus on housing and initiatives being implemented Armywide, the survey was sent again in the winter to measure any changes.

While many of the survey questions focused on privatized housing found in

**See 'Housing' on Page 2**

## Volunteers recognized for 60K hours

### Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Volunteers were recognized for 60,241 hours of their time and contributions during a virtual awards ceremony June 30 at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden.

Soldiers, civilians, organizations and families were presented with plaques during a Facebook Live Volunteer

**See 'Volunteers' on Page 4**

# The show must go on

## Garrison celebrates July 4 with drive-in fireworks event



### Lisa Bishop

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

While most cities in the United States cancelled their Fourth of July celebrations over COVID-19 concerns, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden hosted a drive-in style fireworks event on the airfield July 4.

According to Mark Smith, chief of business operations for Family, Morale,

Welfare and Recreation, 349 vehicles were tallied on the airfield as the 30-minute firework display took place. The display was 10 minutes longer than the normal garrison fireworks.

Included in the audience was the lord mayor of Mainz, Michael Ebling. According to Nadine Bower, USAG Wiesbaden community relations specialist, the mayor and his partner

wanted to enjoy fireworks too, as most host-nation fireworks have been cancelled this year.

Grace Lauer, center operations manager for the USO, said their organization was happy to give away 1,000 food and goodie bags. The USO staff utilized the airfield's golf carts to serve the community. In addition, they awarded 75 prize bags

**See 'July 4' on Page 3**

### BLOOD DONOR RULES EASE

Now local nationals and people who have lived in Europe more than five years can donate blood. **Page 13**

### SPECIAL DELIVERY

Certain packages can now be delivered to a Packstation outside the Clay gate. **Page 2**

### OVERSEAS VOTING

Americans can get information, assistance for voting by mail. **Page 14**



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**The Wiesbaden Postal Service Center will no longer accept handwritten customs forms beginning Aug. 13. Military postal officials recommend customers begin preparing computerized forms for their packages ahead of the change. Go to <https://cfo.usps.com/cfo-web/labellinformation.html> to fill out the form.**

# Packstation opens outside Clay

Lena Stange

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

A DHL Packstation in the visitors' parking lot outside Clay Kaserne opened July 13. It will make it easier for community members to receive packages, since DHL drivers will not have to enter Clay Kaserne, but can deliver the packages off post to the Packstation.

"This is a good service for our community. It is a needed service," said Liz Moore, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden government relations officer. "People will be able to get packages faster."

Community members can now order online from German shops and delivery stores and can choose to have their packages delivered to the Packstation. Only Deutsche Post and DHL are able to offer that service, Moore said.

Before community members can use the Packstation, they have to register online for a free customer account at <https://www.dhl.de/en/privatkunden/pakete-empfangen/an-einem-abholort-empfangen/packstation-empfang.html>. Community



Lena Stange/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

A DHL Packstation is set up July 9 in the visitors' parking lot outside Clay Kaserne for use by the American community and Erbenheim residents. Community members can now order online from German shops and delivery stores and have their packages delivered to the Packstation.

members have to make sure they use their passport and not their ID card for registration. In addition, they have to provide their physical home address and a German cellphone number, said Moore.

Once account verification is complete, the registered community member will receive a customer card via regular mail, according to DHL.

A customer card and pick-up code are needed to be able to

get your packages. The pick-up code will be provided by email, according to DHL.

To have a package delivered to the Packstation, the address field has to be filled in correctly during the ordering process, said Moore. The street name (Straße) is always "Packstation," while the number is the number of the individual Packstation chosen. The one near the Clay visitor center has the number 207. The postal code (PLZ)



Lena Stange/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Workers build a DHL Packstation July 9 in the visitors' parking lot outside Clay Kaserne. On-post residents and others can now have their packages delivered to the Packstation.

is 65205 and the city (Ort) is Wiesbaden.

Once notified that the package has been delivered, the community member has nine days to retrieve the package from the Packstation, according to DHL. The language on the screen can be switched to English and will guide the customer through the process.

For more information, go to [https://home.army.mil/wiesbaden/application/files/8415/9428/2112/DHL-Packstation-allg-informationen-032020\\_ENGLISH\\_VERSION.pdf](https://home.army.mil/wiesbaden/application/files/8415/9428/2112/DHL-Packstation-allg-informationen-032020_ENGLISH_VERSION.pdf).

## HOUSING

Continued from page 1

the states, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden residents provided responses specifically for Army-owned housing.

"We appreciate our residents taking the time to provide us feedback," said Garrison Commander Col. Noah Cloud. "We recognize we have areas where we can improve, and we have made a lot of changes over the past year. It's important for us to keep the lines of communication open so we know what's working and what isn't."

The most common comments and concerns addressed five main areas within housing. The housing assignment policy that mandates on-post living for families and many single service members was mentioned in a majority of responses. This topic will be forwarded to the U.S.

Army Europe and Installation Management Command-Europe level to be addressed as those agencies set the policies for living on post.

Many comments were shared about government furnished appliances and the need for frequent repair or replacement. The Housing Office is looking at the age of items in its inventory and at implementing a new lifecycle replacement program.

Grounds maintenance was on the list of concerns for many residents. A newly established Area Beautification Committee has been addressing ways to improve the look of the installation and housing areas, and DPW is reviewing the grounds maintenance contract to see where modifications might be made to improve neighborhood care.

Housing customer service and the assignment process

was another hot topic in survey responses. Over the past year, housing has opened neighborhood centers to decentralize the assignment process and revised the policy about how homes are assigned. Since the spring survey, housing staff has received additional customer service training, and further information on the assignment process is being outlined in a housing action plan to provide further transparency on the process.

Housing and community security was brought up in resident responses, especially from residents in the open housing areas of Aukamm and Crestview. Patrols through these neighborhoods have increased and housing is looking into better ways to secure trash and other public areas.

Numerous positive comments in the surveys highlighted the responsiveness of DPW personnel to work orders

and the quality of the housing at USAG Wiesbaden.

The Army will use the survey results as one of several tools to continue identifying ways to improve housing conditions by enhancing communication with residents, creating and prioritizing action plans to correct deficiencies, and identifying items that are most important to residents.

The goal of these successive surveys is to quantify, compare and evaluate performance over time. Army leaders are committed to further improving housing conditions, and the survey results will help to shape future housing quality and services.

The Army's release is available at: [www.army.mil/article/236599](http://www.army.mil/article/236599), and a summary of the results is available at [https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/families/2019\\_fall\\_survey\\_afh\\_summary.pdf](https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/families/2019_fall_survey_afh_summary.pdf).



# COVID testing promotes safety, readiness

Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

About 50 Mission Command Center personnel with no symptoms were tested June 30 for COVID-19 as part of a surveillance testing program to ensure a safe work environment and promote readiness at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden.

Testing a sample population helps U.S. Army Europe maintain readiness while giving people who work in the building peace of mind so they know they're not coming to work where someone is sick, said Maj. Joel Osterhout, public health nurse at the Wiesbaden Army Health Clinic.

"We're here to make sure the population is safe and healthy and mission ready, and we want to make sure that we don't have COVID spreading here," he said.

Besides the testing, the MCC and other organizations around the garrison require hand washing at stations situated outside the entrances, require masks be worn indoors, ask health questions and perform temperature checks.

"We want to make sure the force is safe and healthy and that our readiness does not slip at all," said Sgt. Maj. James Herrington, U.S. Army Europe G-3.

Surveillance test results

work differently than diagnostic tests, used on individuals with suspected COVID-19. The samples taken at the MCC will be tested by Regional Health Command Europe, Osterhout said. A positive result would then be sent to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, a certified lab, where it would be rerun so that it could be used as a diagnostic. Those with negative results will not be notified. Anyone who tests positive would be notified so they could begin quarantine.

Osterhout said he expects the surveillance testing to continue throughout the summer and include various units.



Emily Jennings/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

A medical professional from the Wiesbaden Army Health Clinic administers a COVID-19 test to a Soldier June 30 at the Mission Command Center on Clay Kaserne. The tests were given to a sample population of about 50 people with no coronavirus symptoms that day as part of a surveillance testing program to ensure a safe work environment and promote readiness.



## Subject matter experts answer PCS questions during live symposium

Laurri Garcia (left), director of public affairs, and Liz Moore, government relations officer, discuss the unique housing issues of Germany during U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden's PCS Symposium June 24. In the background from left to right, DeAngelo Bivins, central processing facility manager; Dr. Jason Ter Horst, Sembach, Wiesbaden and Baumholder community superintendent of DoDEA schools; and other subject matter experts answer questions posted during the Facebook Live event. These symposiums were conducted to address the unique situations created by the COVID-19 pandemic as Soldiers and civilians plan their PCS moves. Between the two symposiums already conducted, more than 500 comments were posed to the experts with answers being posted live or in follow-up notes on Facebook. Those planning their moves can see both symposiums on the garrison's Facebook page at [facebook.com/usagwiesbaden](https://facebook.com/usagwiesbaden). All of the symposium questions and answers will be posted in the notes section.

Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs



Photos by Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

The Wiesbaden Entertainment Center drive-thru serves barbecue food, including ribs, bratwurst and burgers to event goers July 4. Many families picked up barbecue and drove to the airfield on Clay Kaserne to enjoy their traditional fare followed by a half hour long fireworks display.

## JULY 4

Continued from page 1

to the first 75 cars who set up with patriotic decorations.

Jane Porto-Turner, advertising and sponsorship manager for FMWR, hosted a live feed of the event. She conducted trivia contests and also gave away prizes throughout the evening.

Many families opted to stop by the Wiesbaden Entertainment Center for drive-thru barbecue food, including ribs, bratwurst and burgers. The line was long, but event goers had plenty of time for the airfield

opening at 8 p.m.

While families waited for the fireworks display to commence, they stayed close to their cars. They enjoyed food, played games and talked at a distance to families in neighboring cars.

Military police patrolled the airfield, enforcing requirements set by the host nation, including social distancing and keeping emergency lanes unobstructed.

AFN broadcast the event and played patriotic music during the fireworks show. The entire show can be seen on Wiesbaden's FMWR Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/WiesbadenArmyMWR](https://www.facebook.com/WiesbadenArmyMWR).



While dad sits in the driver's seat of his parked pickup truck, the children wait on top of the cab for the fireworks to begin at the U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden Independence Day celebration July 4.



## News flash

### Upcoming holidays

Community members should be aware of the following U.S. federal and training holidays, which may affect some garrison services.

**Aug. 14** — Training holiday

**Aug. 17** — Training holiday

**Sept. 4** — Training holiday

**Sept. 7** — Labor Day

On holidays, call before you go. Find the garrison phonebook at [home.army.mil/wiesbaden](http://home.army.mil/wiesbaden). For holidays, go to [www.eur.army.mil](http://www.eur.army.mil) and click the "Employee Resources" tab.

Soldiers should confirm with their local chain of command whether they have a federal or training holiday off.

### Texasstrasse gate closure

The Texasstrasse gate on Hainerberg will be closed July 22-24 to install new barriers.

### Vehicle registration, fuel cards

The temporary license plate extension period ended July 14. This means anyone who comes in and still has a cancelled temp plate will have their fuel card cancelled and must proceed as usual with their registration.

### Home-based businesses

Home-based businesses are operated by family members of U.S. Army Soldiers or civilians and provide services to other U.S. forces members and affiliates. Find the list of garrison-approved HBBs and learn more about how to register a home business at <https://home.army.mil/wiesbaden/index.php/about/Garrison/HBB>.

### Mental health resources

- 24/7 On-Call Duty Chaplain — (0611)143-548-7777 or 7778
- Behavioral Health Clinic—06371-94641320 or DSN 590-1320
- 24/7 Military Crisis Line [www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/military-crisis-line](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/military-crisis-line), DSN 118, or Civ. 001-800-273-8255
- Employee Assistance Program (0611)143-548-1402 or [john.w.kaiser.civ@mail.mil](mailto:john.w.kaiser.civ@mail.mil)
- Military Family Life Counselors — Hainerberg Elementary: 0152-2390-2413/2498; Wiesbaden Middle School: 0152-0269-8526; Wiesbaden High School: 0151-4558-3637

### COVID-19 information

For information on how the coronavirus pandemic affects the garrison, go to [home.army.mil/wiesbaden](http://home.army.mil/wiesbaden) and click the COVID-19 graphic. The page contains a wealth of coronavirus related information.

## VOLUNTEERS

Continued from page 1

Recognition Ceremony at Army Community Service.

ACS presented a check to the garrison for \$1,531,931.17, representing the dollar value of the hours worked.

"The people are the fabric of this community," said Garrison Commander Col. Noah Cloud. "Volunteerism not only helps the community; it builds people up. When we take our own time and focus it on the well-being of others, there's something inherently about that that builds us up and makes us stronger people. As we do that as individuals and serve one another I believe the byproduct is a stronger community."

## Winners

### Medium Organization of the Year nominees:

1. Civil Air Patrol, Wiesbaden Flight
2. Wiesbaden Re-Use Center

**Winner: Civil Air Patrol Wiesbaden**

### Large Organization of the Year nominees:

1. Boy Scouts, Boy Scout Troop/Crew 107
2. Boy Scouts, Cub Scout Pack 13
3. Wiesbaden Wahoos Swim Team

**Winner: Boy Scouts Troop/Crew 107**

### Mega Organization of the Year nominees:

1. Wiesbaden Community Spouses Club
2. American Red Cross
3. USAG Wiesbaden Girl Scouts
4. USAG Wiesbaden Chapel

**Winner: Wiesbaden Community Spouses Club**



Travis Thurston/Wiesbaden Family and MWR

Lt. Col. Norman Hodges and Kerrie Hodges receive their award for Family Volunteer of the Year with their children June 30 during a Facebook live virtual ceremony at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden Army Community Service. Volunteers were recognized for 60,241 hours of their time and contributions.

### Military Volunteer of the Year nominees:

- 1st Lt. Kevin Gamble
- Sgt. 1st Class William Young
- Lt. Col. David Schilling
- Col. Jeffery Merenkov
- CW5 Richard Tanner
- Sgt. Robert Spencer Cooper
- Sgt. Tyler Dean Stevens
- Spc. Joshua Jaleeh Williams
- Staff Sgt. Howard Woodberry III
- Staff Sgt. Joshua Marrero

**Winner: Lt. Col. David Schilling**

### Civilian Volunteer of the Year nominees:

- Chris Eisenberg
- Kent Mohr
- Sean T. Sutherland
- Nathan Eglund
- Tammy Simmons
- Martin Heinen

**Winner: Nathan Eglund**

### Family Volunteer of the Year nominees:

- The Church Family
- The Stohr Family
- The Cooper Family

The Ballard Family  
The Steininger Family  
The Hodges Family

**Winners: Hodges Family**

### Retiree Volunteer of the Year nominees:

- Chris Moed
- Christopher Bowen
- Victor Garcia
- Les Waller
- Michael Richter

**Winner: Christopher Bowen**

### Youth Volunteer of the Year nominee and winner:

**Atreyu Allen**

### Family Member Volunteer of the Year nominees:

- Monique Hines
- Kaitlyn Himmelberger
- Eleanor Len Tai Prohasak
- Carole Bougouin-Thruelsen
- Samantha Cooper
- Rachel Baker
- Tanja Pierce-Virtanen
- Jacqueline Marie Wagner

**Winner: Rachel Baker**

## AER campaign open through July

### RETURN ON SOLDIERS' DONATIONS

A \$10 donation sends \$30 to the field. Support AER and multiply your impact.

### CARES ACT

The CARES Act allows individuals to deduct contributions of up to \$300 to charitable organizations like AER, even when they take the standard deduction. These claims reduce taxable income which, in most cases, will yield a smaller tax bill in 2020.

### DONATE

[www.aerbq.org](http://www.aerbq.org)



# Garrison employees recognized for service

## USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Congratulations to the following U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden employees for their length of service. Employees were recognized during several separate ceremonies.

### 45 years

James W. Waller, DFMWR  
Gerhard Rathmacher, DPW  
Gerhard Blum, LRC  
Rainer Hager, LRC

### 40 years

Charles D. Banfi Jr., S3/5/7  
Alberto J. Marquez, S3/5/7  
Harri Mueller, DES  
Gregory W. Neal, DFMWR  
Karl J. Weisel, DFMWR

### 35 years

Walter Effenberger, DES  
Thomas Graef, DES  
Patricia H. Fransted, WC  
Claudia Fenney, DPW  
Eduard Herrmann, DPW  
Klaus-Dieter Ott, DPW  
Jaime MGoloyugo, DFMWR  
Earl J. McFarland, DFMWR  
Joel D. Rhodes, DFMWR



Volker Ramspott/TSAE

Claudia Fenney, Directorate of Public Works, was recognized for 35 years of service during one of several separate length of service ceremonies June 22 at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden.

Carolyn D. Simms, DFMWR

### 30 years

Renate Weinmann, LRC  
Kumarasamy Sriskantha, DHR  
Marlene K. Balzer, DFMWR  
Curtis Ravenel, DFMWR  
Allen Stephens, DFMWR  
Raimond Schaaf, DPW

### 25 years

Scott B. Bourque, DFMWR

Mia L. Degirmenci, DFMWR

Casey P. Malloy, DFMWR  
Kevin L. Washington, DFMWR

### 20 years

Luther D. Summerlin, DFMWR  
Herman O. Washington, DFMWR  
Renardo V. Yearby, DFMWR

### 15 years

Roland Femi Macwen, LRC

Christian Trostel, LRC/IFMS  
Turgut Bicer, DPW  
Mirco Grimm, DPW  
Sinan Koc, DPW  
Michael Roeder, DPW  
Katarzyna Bialy-Sikora, DHR  
Adrian Deshawn Boles, DFMWR  
Steven D. Hall, DFMWR  
Katherine D. Vahrenkamp, DFMWR

### 10 years

Richard M. Martinez, DFMWR  
Travis Lee Thurston, DFMWR  
Justin Allen Williams, DFMWR  
Christian Brauchle, LRC  
Phitsamai Sripolamart, LRC/IFMS  
Dennis M. Dutton III, DHR  
Peter Filipek, DPW  
Thomas Ochel, DPW  
Julius Muehleck, S3/5/7

### 5 years

Christian Schipper, DES  
Martin Heinen, DRM  
Bruno Falenski, LRC

Michael E. Henderson, LRC  
Quinton Rashad Pittman, LRC  
Godfrey Samuel Swan, LRC  
Leia Mary Hall, DES  
Megan Ann Blevins, DFMWR  
Eric Lee Corona, DFMWR  
Nadia A. Crawford, DFMWR  
Rebecca Jean Henning, DFMWR  
Kori R. Lekar, DFMWR  
Atila Osman, DFMWR  
Donald Hiroshi Owens, DFMWR  
Katrina Lenea Pennington, DFMWR  
Elena Sergeevna Samokhval, DFMWR  
Denise Louise Wilson, DFMWR  
Daniel Gonzalez De Leon, DHR  
John W. Kaiser, DHR  
Sarah Ouachee, DRM  
Aziz Demiebas, DPW  
Sebastian Di Bari-Wittoesch, DPW  
Sven Grueneberg, DPW  
Mara Hupfeld, DPW  
Pavel Michalek, DPW  
Corinna Simmons, DPW

# DPW staff happy to be back serving Wiesbaden community

## Lisa Bishop

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

The customer service representatives at the Operations and Maintenance Division are happy to be back in their office answering phones and processing housing repair requests for U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden.

When the garrison closed or modified many of its services in response to COVID-19, the customer service telephone line for housing repairs got forwarded to the fire department. The Customer Service Center went from handling an average of 350 repair calls a week to none. The office's five customer representatives went home.

Martina Schulz, 15-year veteran of the department, said, "This was new to everyone."

During the down time, the

employees reviewed internal processes and updated policies. Schulz came into the office once a week to file emergency repairs, but never got to speak to customers. "I really missed that," she said.

Corinna Simmons, five-year veteran of the department, also missed customers. She processes large work orders and said, "The contact with customers keeps you on your toes."

Simmons manages what she called the "bureaucracy of details." She reviews complicated and expensive work orders, researches associated issues and prepares requests to go before a work order board for approval. "It is a day-by-day job," she said. "I love to do this; I love to work with my customers."

The department is slowly returning to normal. Oliver Stroh and Diana Syenda have

joined Simmons and Schulz back at their desks full-time. One customer service representative, Patricia Winslow, is teleworking while the last of the office furniture is rearranged to address the health and safety needs to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

"It is very good to be back to normal," Schulz said. From her perspective, the office is more than a place to process repairs. "The community sees us as an information center, list A to Z."

Martin Hallbauer, chief of the business operation and integration division, said, "We are happy to be back and serving our community."

Simmons takes pride in the work she does. "I am able to help the community. To see the garrison evolving is very rewarding," she said.

For those filing repair requests,

## Operations and Maintenance Division



Diana Syenda



Martina Schulz



Corinna Simmons



Oliver Stroh



Petra Klein



Martin Hallbauer

Graphic and photos by Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Simmons had advice. "Make sure you have very detailed information — the more the better."

To request a work order, visit

the website <https://home.army.mil/wiesbaden/index.php/about/Garrison/directorate-public-works/customer-service>.



# USAG Wiesbaden celebrates Pride Month

Story and photos by Lisa Bishop  
USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

As Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month comes to a close, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden celebrated the contributions of the LGBT community to the defense of the nation at a lunch-time cake-cutting event June 25.

"We continue to take great pride in all that these men and women contribute to the nation and our mission," Sgt. 1st Class Shannon Wyatt, garrison equal opportunity advisor, said in pre-event correspondence. "Their hard work, courage and sacrifices make them respected members of our diverse military family."

Sgt. Natahlie McNair and Spc. Herminigildo Araneta assisted Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Truchon in cutting the Pride Month cake at the Strong Europe Café.

Prior to cutting the cake, Araneta said, "I am very proud

to say that I belong in the Army where I was never discriminated for who I am."

"I am proud to be here to do this," Truchon said. "Our military is comprised of a diverse population, and that is what makes us so strong."

McNair and her wife cut the Pride cake last year and she was honored to be invited back for the event. "Thank you for the support, honestly," she said. Those observing the celebration applauded when she concluded by saying, "We all stand together — one team, one fight, that's it."

"The struggles, sacrifices, and successes among the LGBT community continue to shape our history and remind us to uphold tolerance and justice for all," Wyatt said. "LGBT Americans have helped ensure that we as a force embody the values we're sworn to uphold, and that our republic—born from the idea that all are created



Sgt. Natahlie McNair expresses gratitude for the Army's support of the LGBT community June 25 before cutting the Pride Month cake at Strong Europe Café.

equal, endowed with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—will remain strong and secure."

"These words are more than a pinnacle to strive for," Wyatt added. "They are principles we must promote every day."

Because of COVID-19 closures, other Pride Month activities and events for June 2020 had to be cancelled. Wyatt



Spc. Herminigildo Araneta (left) and Sgt. Natahlie McNair (right) assist Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Truchon in cutting the Pride Month cake at the Strong Europe Café June 25.

is optimistic that celebratory events will be permitted to commemorate Women's Equality Day on Aug. 26.

For more information on how diversity strengthens the Army, visit [www.armydiversity.army.mil](http://www.armydiversity.army.mil).

Auto Exchange

5x155



# SFL-TAP Wiesbaden offers online classes

## July virtual class schedule

Take Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program classes virtually on your personal laptop, tablet or smartphone with local transition counselors via Video Conferencing.

### July 20

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Pre-Separation Counseling, MY Transition and MOS Cross-walk

### July 22

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.: Department of Labor Employment Fundamentals of Career Transition

### July 23

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.: DOL Employment Workshop (Day 1)

### July 24

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.: DOL Employment Workshop (Day 2)

### July 27

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.: DOL Vocational Training Track (Day 1)

### July 28

8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: Financial Planning for Transition

### July 28



**TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
Start Strong • Serve Strong • Reintegrate Strong • Remain Strong

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.: DOL Vocational Training Track (Day 2)

### July 30

8:30 to 11:30 a.m.: Interview Techniques, Salary Negotiations and Dress for Success

### Aug. 10 to 11

Boots 2 Business

## Other required SFL-TAP courses

VA Benefits and Services: Available via JKO Course TGPS-US006. Email PDF copy of JKO completion certificate to career counselor to receive credit. Contact your VA Benefits Advisor Cassandra Hall ([hall\\_cassandra@bah.com](mailto:hall_cassandra@bah.com)) for questions.

Continuum of Military Service: Contact Reserve Component Career Counselor, Master Sgt. Mark Briggs, at DSN

537-1062 or [mark.a.briggs18.mil@mail.mil](mailto:mark.a.briggs18.mil@mail.mil) and provide documentation of your meeting to your career counselor.

Contact the Wiesbaden SFL-TAP office at (0611)143-548-1320 for more information and to register for classes.

CHURCH OF ST. AUGUSTINE

2 x 50

The Refuge Wiesbaden  
2x50

GEBRUDER STERN

2 x 70

AUTOHAUS HOLLMANN

2 x 150

2 x 120

Wiesbaden Dental Care

Pfingstgemeinde

1 x 100



## Emergency vest

Having a reflective safety vest for every person in the car is a requirement in Germany, Savovski said. In case of an accident or a breakdown on the Autobahn, people should wear the vests and stay behind the guardrail while waiting for the Polizei or the towing truck.

30

## Right-before-left

In Germany, drivers have to yield to the right when no signs or traffic lights indicate otherwise, Savovski said. This applies most of the time to residential or industrial areas or 30 kph zones.

# Rules of the road

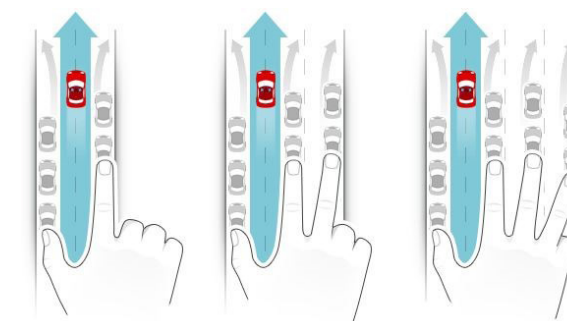
Lena Stange  
USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Driving on German streets is very similar to driving in the U.S. most of the time. However, some small differences can complicate the lives of American drivers in Germany. Jovica Savovski, training instructor with the Drivers Training and Testing Station, highlighted some of the differences between the two countries.

## Fog

If the visibility in foggy weather conditions is less than 50 m, the maximum speed on German streets is 50 kph. Drivers should also make sure to keep a 50-meter distance to other cars. The formula is 50-50-50, Savovski said.

If the car has a fog light, it is mandatory to turn it on, Savovski said. Not doing so can result in a fine of up to 80 euros. If the car does not have a fog light, the driver is still allowed to drive in fog.



## Emergency lane

When in a traffic jam, drivers have to keep an emergency lane for emergency personnel, Savovski said.

During an emergency, mere seconds can save lives. "Once traffic slows down, drivers in the left lane should move as far to the left as possible, while drivers in the other lanes should all move as far as possible to the right. Failure to do so, can result in a fine," said Thomas Becker, first police chief inspector with the Wiesbaden Police Directorate.

## Learn more

For more information on traffic rules in Germany, contact the Drivers Testing and Training Station (<https://www.afsbeurope.army.mil/Logistics-Readiness-Centers/LRC-Bavaria/Transportation-Division/Drivers-Testing/>).

## Parkscheibe

A Parkscheibe is a plastic device that lets the driver indicate the time of arrival, and has to be placed on the dashboard. This device is necessary in some residency zones where parking is limited to a certain time frame — usually two hours — in certain streets and on some supermarket parking lots. The need to use the Parkscheibe will always be indicated. It can get expensive if the Parkscheibe is required and the driver forgets to put it on the dashboard, he said.



100

## Speed limits

Within city limits, the speed limit is 50 kph, Savovski said, outside city limits, it is 100 kph, unless indicated otherwise. On the Autobahn, the recommended speed is 130 kph, unless a lower speed limit is indicated. Even when it is allowed to drive faster, people might lose their insurance coverage in an accident in bad weather conditions, he said.

On U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden premises, the speed limit is 30 kph. People who drive faster might be suspended from driving on post for a 30-day period according to regulation, he said.

## Autobahn

On a German Autobahn, it is not only a recommendation, Savovski said, it is a law to drive in the right lane whenever possible. For passing a slower car, the driver has to change to the left lane. It is forbidden to pass cars on the right side. If a driver infringes this rule and the German Polizei sees that, a fine up to 450 euros might be imposed. The only exceptions to the rule are getting on the Autobahn, exiting it or being stuck in a traffic jam.

"I always say the left lane is for BMW, the middle one for Golf and the right lane for Corsa," Savovski said, referring to the differing maximum speed of the three cars with the Corsa being the slowest one.

Within the city limits, the lanes can be chosen freely, he said. Outside of city limits, passing other cars on the right is forbidden.



## Roundabouts

Most roundabouts have yield signs, which means cars in the circle have the right of way, Savovski said. However, some do not have signs. In these cases, the right-before-left rule applies and the driver to enter the circle has the right of way. Once in the roundabout, the driver has to yield to the right.





# Caution urged as summer heat increases

Emily Jennings

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Community members are reminded to stay hydrated and be mindful of the sun as summer approaches and temperatures begin to rise.

Typical summer hazards such as sunburns, heat injuries, insect bites and stings, and drownings can be avoided with some awareness and simple precautions, said Todd Lewis, acting Safety manager for U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden.

## Sunburn

When planning to enjoy outdoor activities, it's important to protect oneself against solar radiation, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest, Lewis said.

"Everyone wants a tan because in our society fashion dictates that tanned skin is beautiful," he said. "But it's definitely not beautiful when you're 60 and you've had melanoma (a serious form of skin cancer)."

People who are outside during the day should wear sunscreen with a sun protection factor of 15 or higher for adults and 30 or higher for children, he said.

## Heat exhaustion

When doing strenuous outdoor activities such as yard work, sports or exercise, it is important to hydrate.

"It is essential to drink water before, during and after your activities," Lewis said.

Mild symptoms of heat exhaustion include thirst, fatigue and muscle cramps in the legs or abdomen. If not treated, heat exhaustion can progress to a heat stroke, which requires immediate medical assistance.

Besides drinking water, taking more frequent breaks may be needed.

## Insect bites and stings

Another summer hazard is bites and stings from insects. The Safety Office recommended avoiding wearing perfumes and colognes as one way to keep bugs at bay.

"If you like to have breakfast on your porch or a barbeque in your garden, keep in mind that insects are attracted by the smell of meat, marmalade and sweet drinks like orange juice," Lewis said.

Every summer many people end up in an emergency room because of being stung by a bee or wasp.

Tick bites are another grow-



Staff Sgt. Sheila deVera/U.S. Army

Summer weather can be unpredictable. Increasing water intake can help people avoid heat exhaustion when working or playing outdoors.

ing problem in Germany. The largest threat from tick bites is Lyme disease.

"Most people don't even recognize a tick bite until some time later a skin rash that looks like a bull's eye shows up on your body," Lewis said. "That's definitely the time when you should see a doctor to get medical attention."

Some precautions can help to prevent tick bites. This includes avoiding areas with high grass and bushes and wearing long sleeved shirts and pants while outdoors, especially in wooded areas. At the end of the day, check your child from head

to toe if you suspect that she or he has been playing in areas where ticks could be present.

## Drowning

In regard to water safety, Army in Europe Circular 190-24 prohibits Soldiers from swimming in ponds or water-filled rock quarries. Swimmers are advised to only visit swimming pools where life guards are on duty and never to swim alone. Children should always be under close supervision.

Swimming pools, with the exception of small plastic wading pools, are prohibited in Army Family Housing in accordance with Policy Letter

#35 on the garrison website, [home.army.mil/wiesbaden](http://home.army.mil/wiesbaden). Pool dimensions may not exceed 14 inches in height and 60 inches in diameter and must be emptied and properly stored when not in use. When water is in the pool, the sponsor or spouse must provide continuous supervision.

"Children can drown in only 5-inch deep water within 20 seconds," Lewis said.

Bathers should never jump head first into shallow water or where they cannot see what's under the surface of the water, Lewis said. "Remember the rule, 'feet first, first time,'" he said. "In the military we are used to the buddy system, and there's definitely nothing wrong with using it at a public swimming pool, as well. Keep an eye on each other and that way stay out of trouble."

Finally, the Safety Office urges people to be extremely careful with alcoholic drinks. Consuming alcohol during hot weather dehydrates the body faster than usual and can cause a person to over-estimate their strength and skills and impair judgment.

For more information for safety on and off duty, visit [safety.army.mil](http://safety.army.mil).

## Soldiers brush up on SHARP knowledge



Emily Jennings/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Sgt. Jacob Paul (from left), Pfc. Thomas Vollmer and Sgt. Rachel Weiss, of the 66th Military Intelligence Battalion, participate in Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Prevention in-person training while getting physical training at the same time during a unit scavenger hunt June 25 on Clay Kaserne. The sign challenges participants to increase their SHARP knowledge by listing three behaviors that may be considered non-verbal sexual harassment.

## Recruiters match people with careers



Lena Stange/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Sgt. 1st Class Latorrie Smith works at the Army Recruiting Station Wiesbaden at the Exchange on Hainerberg. Smith has been a recruiter for more than 10 years and said he finds his job rewarding. Recruiters take into account an individual's interests and desires when helping them find their place in the Army, he said. "It gives me great pleasure to take an individual and see them transform from civilians into Soldiers." For more information about Army opportunities, visit [goarmy.com](http://goarmy.com) or visit the recruiting office at the Exchange.



# Sponsors go the extra mile for newcomers

**Lisa Bishop**

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

The challenges of COVID-19 imposed quarantines have changed the nature of sponsoring incoming Soldiers and families. Sponsors at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden have responded to those challenges with a combination of teamwork, creative thinking and selfless dedication.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Rafael Marin can attest to the changing dynamics of sponsorship. “Before COVID-19 hit, we would pick up our families and take them over to the hotel and typically within a week or two, they were able to manage their appointments,” he said. “With COVID, it has been significantly harder to help our families out.”

“Back then, we would try to get the families situated as soon as possible,” Marin said. “Now we are on call 24/7 for two weeks making sure if they need anything, we are available for them.” He added, “We try to limit the interactions we have with them because they are in quarantine from the states.”

Marin’s wife, Maritza, is a true partner in sponsorship responsibilities. As an Exceptional Family Member Program systems navigator for Army Community Service, she has insight into what resources are

available to help new families when they arrive to Wiesbaden. Marin said, “The lending closet can provide our families with pots and pans, essential items for cooking, while they are waiting for household goods to arrive. And to help save some money, we are able to go to the food pantry and pick up non-perishable foods other military families have donated.”

Christina Schmitt and her husband Maj. Brad Schmitt are sponsoring the recently arrived North family. They have invested many hours into preparing for the family of five and their two dogs. She said, “We went and looked at the house for them; my husband was there when they delivered the furniture; we asked them for a grocery list; we shopped for all their groceries; we picked up a water cooler; I went to the lending closet; I washed all their dishes; I made them a welcome basket with things we like from Germany like snacks and wine; I got stuff for their kiddos, coloring books and things like that; and I’m making a dinner for them so they don’t need to think about that on their first night.”

For Marin, he sees “thinking outside the box” as an important tool for sponsorship under COVID-19 restrictions. “We put ourselves in the family’s position and think, ‘What



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Rafael Marin stands with his truck July 1 at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden. “I am the go-to guy with everyone coming in when they have larger items that don’t fit in compact cars,” he said.

would I like to have if I were in quarantine?”

Schmitt echoed the exact sentiment. “I do what would be a nice thing for someone to do for me,” she said.

The Marins have lent televisions, games, puzzles and other items in an effort to keep quarantined newcomers and their children busy. “A lot of our families are coming over with no entertainment,” he said.

Senior Airman Jacob Foster has been the beneficiary of a team-like approach to sponsorship. His sponsor, Staff Sgt. Brandon Alt, answered questions, viewed four apartments, grocery shopped and picked up boxes from the post office.

Marin picked up Foster, his

wife and two large dogs from the airport. While Marin isn’t Foster’s official sponsor, he has followed up on the family’s needs since the airport arrival. “Under a normal situation, you get here and go out and start doing stuff,” Foster said. “For us, we have nothing else to do but paint.” Marin went out and bought paint and supplies so the family could bring fresh color to their living room, bedrooms and bathroom.

Marin said, “we understand that members can be anxious or scared being overseas and away from home; we have it down pretty well that we can make them feel at home right away.”

Marin is a part of a small Air Force unit in Wiesbaden. “It is more family structured

and the cohesion helps us help each other,” he said. “There is that sense of belonging; you are a part of a family.”

“Once they exit quarantine, that is where all the fun happens — helping them move, scheduling appointments and handling basic needs like getting a cellphone,” Marin added.

Marin and Schmitt see communication as the key to effective sponsorship. Schmitt said, “Ask for help; don’t be shy; we can only help you if you ask.”

“Be open with your sponsor,” Marin said. “Help your sponsor identify your priorities — whether that be a cellphone or getting a vehicle. If we know that is a priority, we can help them start looking.”

Marin encouraged Soldiers and their families to reach out to their sponsors and engage at least once a week before they arrive. He said, “Getting to know your sponsor helps you.”

“We owe a big debt of gratitude to our sponsors,” Foster said. “They’ve been fairly selfless in making sure our needs have been taken care of and we hope to be able to pay it forward to someone else coming in during this whole COVID situation.”

For more information on sponsorship and newcomer resources, visit U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden’s website at [home.army.mil/wiesbaden](http://home.army.mil/wiesbaden).

Andrews Federal Credit Union

3 x 100

The comm shop

2 x 100

EBS Universitat  
3x100

Maiss  
2 x 25

AUTOHAUS HOLLMAN  
2 x 50

Zahnarzte am Kurhaus  
2 x 50

Auto Exchange  
5 x 155



# Relaxed blood drive restrictions allow more to donate

## Armed Services Blood Program – Europe

U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden became the first installation in Europe to see relaxed donor restrictions when the Armed Services Blood Program implemented sweeping changes to blood donor eligibility July 13 that allowed thousands more to donate to the Department of Defense's own blood program.

"This will be the first time since the early 2000s that local national employees, as well as many military, retirees and veterans and family members who have lived in Europe for some time, will be eligible to help maintain the military's blood supply with whole blood, platelets or plasma," said Blood Donor Recruiter Stacy Sanning. "We are very excited, as these changes will help ensure we can continue meeting the military's blood needs throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and in the future."

These eligibility changes are in response to updates in the Food and Drug Administration's guidance for variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease or the human form of "mad cow" disease, human immunodeficiency virus and malaria.

In keeping with the FDA's recommendations, the following changes were implemented July 13:

### Travel restrictions lifted and reduced for mad cow disease and malaria:

Nearly all deferrals were removed for people who spent certain amounts of time in Europe and were previously considered to have a potential risk of transmitting vCJD, or mad cow disease.

- The only remaining travel deferrals are for individuals who lived three months or more in the United Kingdom from 1980-1996, or those who have spent a total of five years or more in France and Ireland from 1980-2001.

- There will no longer

be any deferrals based on time spent in other European countries, including Germany, Italy, Belgium, Spain and more. This is what will allow many local nationals to give blood.

- Deferral time following travel to a malaria-risk area, which includes many locations where military deploy, will reduce from 12 months to three months.

### HIV restrictions reduce for sexual relations and tattoos:

- Deferral time following transmission risks associated with HIV will reduce from 12 months to three months. Individuals who may be affected include men who have had sex with men, women who have had sex with men who had sex with another man, people who received a blood transfusion and people who received a tattoo overseas or in a U.S. state that does not regulate tattoo facilities.

"We are asking for all those who have been unable to donate blood with the ASBP

due to the previous restrictions to please consider making an appointment at one of our upcoming blood drives," Sanning said. "During this pandemic, it is more important than ever to give blood directly to our military and families, so it will be on the shelves when they need it."

Find all ASBP blood drives throughout Europe at [www.militarydonor.com](http://www.militarydonor.com) and search by sponsor code: Europe or simply scan the QR code with a smartphone camera. Appointments are required to maintain physical distance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information about blood drives or blood donor eligibility, contact the ASBP - Europe at DSN 590-5885, [usarmy.donateblood-europe@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.donateblood-europe@mail.mil) or [www.facebook.com/ASBPEurope](https://www.facebook.com/ASBPEurope).

The ASBP is now testing all whole blood donations for COVID-19 antibodies, Sanning said. The updated blood donor eligibility will open the

doors to more people who may have potentially lifesaving antibodies. This testing may provide critical insight into whether a person may have been exposed to COVID-19. An antibody test is not a diagnosis, it simply assesses whether a person's immune system has responded to the virus, not whether the virus is currently present. The ASBP is working to help the Department of Defense collect at least 8,000 units of plasma that could help severely ill COVID-19 patients.

Donors who have these antibodies will be informed and will have the opportunity to donate plasma at the donor center in Landstuhl.

The next ASBP blood drive in Wiesbaden is Oct. 13. Sign up to secure a spot at [www.militarydonor.com](http://www.militarydonor.com).

*U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden Public Affairs contributed to this report.*

ADVANTI PRO

5 x 150



# Voters can exercise rights

**Emily Jennings**  
USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Americans have the right to vote wherever they are, and the process for doing so while overseas is simple.

U.S. citizens can go online, fill out a form, print and sign it and send it to the voter registrar at their home state of record.

"Voting is a right that we all defend," said 2nd Lt. Nathan Laughlin, of 2nd Theater Signal Brigade and the installation voting assistance officer for U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden. "Whether you're a contractor, civilian, a family member or a Soldier, you are defending the right to vote with your presence here at the garrison overseas serving your country."

For the general election, the Federal Voting Assistance Program recommends voters send their Federal Post Card Application by Aug. 1 to ensure ample time to receive their bal-



Petty Officer 3rd Class Danilo Reynoso/U.S. Army

The Federal Voting Assistance Program works to ensure service members, their eligible family members, and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to successfully do so.

lot and mail it back before the deadline. When voters use the FPCA, their ballot will be sent at least 45 days before the election.

Laughlin stressed the importance of voting not only in the presidential election, but at the state and local levels as well.

"It's very important to vote," he said. "You can make an impact even when you're overseas."

People must vote in their home state of record, Laughlin said. This does not necessarily mean where a person owns property, but for military voters is usually the last address a person lived in their state of legal residence, or for civilians the last place they lived in the U.S. before moving overseas.

Laughlin has set up a table at the Exchange on Hainerberg to provide instructions and contact information for those needing assistance with voting.

The general election is Nov. 3. FVAP recommends citizens send a new FPCA every January and each time they move to a new location.

For more information and to register and request a ballot, go to [fvap.gov](http://fvap.gov). Voters should reach out to their organization's voting assistance officer or contact Laughlin at [nathan.l.laughlin2.mil@mail.mil](mailto:nathan.l.laughlin2.mil@mail.mil) or (0611) 143-565-3602.

## Family outing



Lisa Bishop/USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Kraig Tidwell helps his son, 1-year-old Sebastian, use the ball ramp to bowl June 20 at the Wiesbaden Entertainment Center bowling lanes. The WEC has reopened for bowling, with some restrictions. Got to [wiesbaden.armymwr.com](http://wiesbaden.armymwr.com) for details.

# Clinic welcomes new commander

**Marcy Sanchez**  
Landstuhl Regional Medical Center

The Soldiers and staff of Wiesbaden Army Health Clinic welcomed a new commander during a change of command ceremony June 12.

During the ceremony, Col. Stacy Freeman relinquished command of WAHC to Lt. Col. James McWherter, along with a concurrent relinquishment of responsibility where the clinic's senior enlisted advisor, Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Johnson, also departed.

"To command is a privilege. It's a special relationship with the government and American people," said Col. Michael Weber, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center commander who hosted the ceremony. "Commanders have special authorities and responsibilities, they are responsible for everything their unit does and fails to do."

Wiesbaden Army Health Clinic is one of six community clinics which operate under LRMC, and one of three clinics in Germany.

"During (Freeman's) command, (WAHC) soared, quality and safety con-



Landstuhl Regional Medical Center

Lt. Col. James McWherter, incoming commander, Wiesbaden Army Health Clinic, presents a salute during a change of command ceremony where McWherter assumed command of WAHC June 12.

tinues to be the center of gravity and clinic staff also excelled," Weber said.

"I'm honored and humbled for the privilege to command a talented team of professionals such as this, I recognize all the hard work this organization has done and commend you on all the differences you've made during this COVID pandemic," McWherter said.

# Corps of Engineers changes command

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,  
Europe District**

Col. Patrick J. Dagon became the 22nd commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Europe District, during a military change of command ceremony at the Amelia Earhart Center June 30 in Wiesbaden. He assumed leadership from Col. John K. Baker, who had commanded Europe District since July 2017.

Dagon takes command of one of the largest and most globally diverse districts in the Corps.

"There's no place I'd rather be right now than here in Europe taking command of this incredible organization," Dagon said. "To the District's many international partners and stakeholders, I want you to know you have my commitment to providing the best service possible."

The Europe District provides engineering, construction management and general services in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe, Africa and Israel. A presence in Europe since 1945,

and headquartered in Wiesbaden, Europe District and its more than 500 military, civilian, and contracted employees execute a program in excess of \$7.6 billion with projects in 44 countries.

At U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden, the District is overseeing construction activities on a handful of key projects, such as Wiesbaden Elementary and the Post Office, and most recently completed the new Outdoor Recreation Center. They are also the official sponsor of Wiesbaden Middle School, engaging with students throughout the year to take part in career days, STEM events, and other opportunities to talk about engineering.

This assignment is Dagon's second time commanding a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers district, having previously commanded the Albuquerque District in New Mexico.

Watch the ceremony online on the District's Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/europedistrict](http://www.facebook.com/europedistrict).



# Schultüte: A German tradition

**Nadine Bower**

USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Every year at the end of July or early August, you can see German kids walking to school with a cone-shaped object in their hands. However, if you look again the very next day, the objects seem to have disappeared and you won't see them again until next fall.

The cones have been a German tradition for more than 100 years. Although there are no records of its actual origins, the so-called "Schultüte" or "Zuckertüte" seems to have been introduced to school children in Eastern Europe and Germany in the 19th century. Back then, parents took the cones to the school before the first day of first grade. The teachers then hung them up on a so-called "Zuckertütenbaum" (sugar cone tree). Children believed that the Zuckertütenbaum grew in the school's basement. Once the sugar cones were ripe and large enough to pick, it was time for the children to go to school. This story was first introduced in a book by

Moritz Heger in 1852, but other records mention the sugar cones even as early as 1801, according to a newspaper article in "Die Welt."

At the end of their first day of school, first-graders picked a sugar cone from the tree and took it home where they were allowed to open it. Contents of the cones usually ranged from fruits and sweets to small toys as a reward for the child to have made it through their first day of school.

Nowadays, no German first-grader goes through their first day of school without their Schultüte. The word Zuckertüte can be mostly heard in the Eastern parts of Germany. It doesn't matter if the Schultüte is bought or self-made — it is a must-have, because the first day of elementary school has a special meaning in Germany. It has even become customary that godparents, aunts, uncles and grandparents contribute to the contents of the Schultüte. Even nowadays, contents still include sweets and small toys or even



Shutterstock.com/FamVeld

No German first-grader goes through their first day of school without their Schultüte, a cone filled with sweets, small toys and school supplies.

school supplies.

Although the story of the Zuckertütenbaum has disappeared largely, the eye-catching shape still remains. The cones come in all colors and can be self-made or bought. However, one tradition is still the same: The Schultüte may not be opened until the first day of elementary school is over.

# Army spouse makes masks for community

**Pfc. Raekwon Jenkins**

7th MPAD

Laura Irick, a military spouse at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden, has been giving away free handmade face masks to help in the fight to flatten the curve of COVID-19.

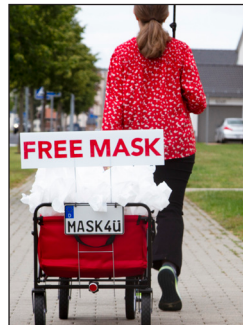
Irick started making masks for the community in March when she watched a video tutorial on how to make a mask and then read an article

that stated that wearing cotton masks could reduce coronavirus transmission by up to 75%, she said.

"I truly enjoy making these masks, and the feedback I get from the community has been heartwarming," Irick said.

"Every time I give away a mask I hope that it helps that person and their family," she added.

Contact Irick to request a mask at [reformedbyfaith@yahoo.com](mailto:reformedbyfaith@yahoo.com).



Laura Irick, a military spouse, walks around post to hand out masks June 6 at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden.

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