

GUARDIAN

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recognized
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take hazardous materials
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COVER PHOTO

Fort Polk firefighters head into a simulated live fire aircraft to put out the flames Feb. 27 at Maks Army Airfield. (U.S. Army photo by Angie Thorne)



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DES firefighters train at airfield



8

DPTMS/WOC members take hazardous materials class



13

AER kicks off its 2026 campaign

2



JRTC AND FORT POLK

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EFMP Exceptional
Family Member
Program

PLAY TOWN
& CAFÉ

EFMP PLAY TIME

AT PLAYTOWN & CAFE



TIME CHANGE:

4:00PM-6:00PM

**4th THURSDAY OF
EACH MONTH**

Service dogs
allowed!



NO outside
food. Socks
must be
worn.

scan to
email us for
more info



Army Community Service & Prevention Center
ACS
Real-Life Solutions for Successful Army Living



OUTSIDE THE GATES

OFF POST

EVENTS



3-4
April

**Bunnies and Berries Festival at
CM Farms**
DRY CREEK, LA.

[Click for more info](#)



4
April

**Easter Farmers Market and
Egg Hunts**
DERIDDER, LA.

[Click for more info](#)



4
April

Car and Music Show
LEESVILLE, LA.

[Click for more info](#)



4
April

Easter on the Yard
LAKE CHARLES, LA.

[Click for more info](#)



24
April

**Backyard Beats: A Spring
Concert Swerries**
LEESVILLE, LA.

[Click for more info](#)

NO ARMY OR FEDERAL ENDORSEMENT IMPLIED.

FORT POLK SITES NAMED AFTER

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS



Master Sgt. Gary I. Gordon

On Oct. 3, 1993, Gary I. Gordon, a sniper team leader with the United States Army Special Operations Command assigned to Task Force Ranger, distinguished himself during the Battle of Mogadishu in Mogadishu. After providing precision fire from a helicopter during an assault and at two crash sites, Gordon volunteered with another sniper to be inserted to defend four wounded soldiers when ground forces could not reach them. Inserted about 100 meters from the crash site and armed with only a sniper rifle and pistol, they fought through heavy enemy fire to reach the crew, pulled them from the wreckage and established a defensive perimeter. Gordon killed multiple attackers, recovered weapons and ammunition from the crash site, and gave the last rounds to the wounded pilot before continuing to fight with only his pistol until he was fatally wounded, actions credited with saving the pilot's life.

The **Shughart-Gordon Training Complex** on North Fort is named in honor of Gordon and Sgt. First Class Shughart.



Sgt. First Class Randall D. Shughart

On Oct. 3, 1993, Randall D. Shughart, a U.S. Army sniper with United States Army Special Operations Command assigned to Task Force Ranger, distinguished himself during the Battle of Mogadishu in Mogadishu. After providing sniper fire from a helicopter during an assault and at two crash sites, Shughart and his team leader volunteered to be inserted to defend four wounded soldiers when ground forces could not reach them. Inserted about 100 meters from the crash site and armed with only a sniper rifle and pistol, they fought through intense enemy fire to reach the crew, pulled them from the wreckage and established a defensive perimeter. Shughart killed multiple attackers while protecting the survivors and continued firing until he ran out of ammunition and was fatally wounded, actions credited with saving the pilot's life.

The **Shughart-Gordon Training Complex** on North Fort is named in honor of Shughart and Master Sgt. Gordon.



Sgt. Henry Johnson

On May 15, 1918, on the Western Front in France, Henry Johnson, a private (later promoted to sergeant) with the 369th Infantry Regiment during World War I, fought off a surprise German raiding party of at least 12 soldiers while on sentry duty. Despite suffering serious wounds, Johnson returned fire and engaged the enemy in close combat. When his fellow soldier was captured, he charged forward and fought the captors with only a knife, rescuing his comrade. Johnson continued holding off the attackers until they retreated, preventing the capture of the outpost and leaving behind valuable intelligence.

The **Sgt. Henry Johnson Fort Polk Main Post Exchange** is named in Johnson's honor.



Pfc. Milton Lee Olive III

Pfc. Olive, a member of 3rd Platoon, Company B, displayed extraordinary heroism during a jungle operation against Viet Cong forces. After coming under heavy fire, his platoon counterattacked and forced the enemy to retreat. While pursuing the insurgents, a grenade landed among Olive and four fellow soldiers. He grabbed the grenade and fell on it, absorbing the blast and saving his comrades' lives. His actions prevented further casualties and reflect the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.

A **monument at Honor Field** is placed in Olive's honor.



1st Lt. Samuel Woodfill

During an advance against enemy positions, First Lt. Henry T. Woodfill repeatedly exposed himself to heavy machine-gun fire to lead his company forward. He flanked and silenced multiple enemy gun nests, killing several combatants in hand-to-hand fights, including an officer, and capturing others. When confronted by additional gunners, he used his rifle, revolver, and a nearby pick to neutralize the threat. His extraordinary bravery inspired his men to continue the assault under intense fire and achieve their objective.

Woodfill Hall, also known as building 350 or the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's Headquarters, is named in Woodfill's honor.



Cpt. William D. Swenson

On Sept. 8, 2009, Cpt. William D. Swenson displayed extraordinary heroism during an ambush by more than 60 enemy fighters in Ganigal, Kunar Province, Afghanistan. Under intense rocket-propelled grenade, mortar, and machine-gun fire, Swenson returned fire, coordinated Afghan Border Police, called in artillery and aviation support, and provided medical aid to wounded soldiers. He repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire, threw grenades, led recovery missions for missing and fallen comrades, and helped evacuate the wounded, acting with complete disregard for his own safety. Swenson's leadership and courage during six hours of continuous combat disrupted the enemy assault and exemplified the highest traditions of military service.

A **plaque at Honor Field** is placed in Swenson's honor.



Staff Sgt. Travis W. Atkins

While manning an observation post in Abu Samak, Iraq, Staff Sgt. Atkins noticed four suspicious individuals and moved his squad to intercept them. When one insurgent acted erratically, Atkins approached to search him, engaged him in hand-to-hand combat, and restrained him with a bear hug after noticing he was reaching for a device. As Atkins shielded his fellow soldiers, the insurgent detonated a bomb, killing Atkins but saving the lives of three others. His selfless actions exemplified extraordinary courage and devotion to duty.

A **plaque at Honor Field** is placed in Atkins' honor.



Sgt. Emanuel Stance

Sgt. Emanuel Stance was awarded the Medal of Honor for his extraordinary bravery while serving as a scout during campaigns against Native American forces in the late 19th century. Recognized for his gallantry in the field, Stance demonstrated exceptional courage, skill, and leadership while tracking and engaging hostile forces in often dangerous and unpredictable conditions.

E. Stance Loop, located in Palmetto Terrace, is named in his honor.



Sgt. Hulon B. Whittington

On July 29, 1944, near Grimesnil, France, Sgt. Whittington assumed command of his platoon after his leaders went missing during a German armored attack. Under heavy fire, he directed gun positions, mounted a tank to stop a leading German Mark V, coordinated the destruction of over 100 enemy vehicles, inspired a bayonet charge, and administered first aid to wounded soldiers, demonstrating extraordinary courage and leadership above and beyond the call of duty.

H. B. Whittington Court, located in Palmetto Terrace, is named in his honor.



Cpl. Hampton M. Roach

Cpl. Hampton Mitchell Roach showed extraordinary bravery under close-range fire from ambushed Native American forces, building defensive breastworks and, for three consecutive nights, carrying water and supplies to his unit, actions that exemplified selfless courage and devotion to duty.

H. M. Roach Court, located in Palmetto Terrace, is named in his honor.



Pfc. Milton Arthur Lee

Near Phu Bai, Thua Thien Province, Pfc. Milton Arthur Lee risked his life under intense fire to aid wounded soldiers, maintain radio contact, and assault enemy positions. He killed enemy combatants, captured weapons, and, despite being grievously wounded, delivered covering fire that allowed his platoon to advance, actions that saved lives and exemplified extraordinary courage.

M. A. Lee Street, located in Palmetto Terrace, is named in his honor.



Pfc. James H. Diamond

Pfc. Diamond displayed extraordinary heroism in May 1945, killing a Japanese sniper, directing heavy fire on enemy positions and helping evacuate wounded soldiers despite being wounded himself. On May 14, while leading a patrol to rescue trapped troops, he ran through intense fire to seize an abandoned machine gun and, though mortally wounded, drew enemy fire long enough for the rest of the patrol to escape.

JH Diamond Street, located in Palmetto Terrace, is named in his honor.



2nd Lt. Lloyd H. Hughes

2nd Lt. Hughes displayed extraordinary heroism Aug. 1, 1943, during a low-level bombing attack on Axis oil refineries at Ploesti, Romania. Despite severe antiaircraft damage that left his aircraft leaking fuel, he pressed the attack and accurately bombed the target. His plane caught fire afterward and crashed as he attempted a forced landing, killing him after completing the mission.

LH Hughes Street, located in Dogwood Terrace, is named in his honor.



1st Lt. Douglas B. Fournet

1st Lt. Fournet displayed extraordinary heroism while leading a rifle platoon in the A Shau Valley. After his unit discovered an enemy claymore mine during an uphill advance under sniper fire, he ordered his men to take cover and ran toward the device to cut its control wires. Using his body as a shield, he attempted to disable the mine but it detonated, killing him and preventing more serious casualties among his soldiers.

DB Fournet Court, located in Dogwood Terrace, is named in his honor.



1st Sgt. Homer L. Wise

While 1st Sgt. Wise's platoon was pinned down by enemy fire, he left cover to help carry a wounded soldier to safety. He then exposed himself to kill three enemy troops threatening his flank and later used multiple weapons to suppress enemy positions blocking the advance. Climbing onto a tank to fix and fire its jammed machine gun under heavy fire, he helped reduce enemy resistance and enabled his battalion to secure its objective.

Wise Street, located in Maple Terrace, is named in his honor.



Col. John R. Kane

Col. Kane displayed extraordinary heroism Aug. 1, 1943, while leading a formation of heavy bombers in a low-level attack on the Ploesti oil refineries. After becoming separated from the main formation during the long flight, he continued the mission and led his aircraft through intense antiaircraft fire, enemy fighters and explosions over the target area. His leadership and flying skill enabled his formation to successfully bomb the vital refinery despite the extreme hazards.

Kane Street, located in Maple Terrace, is named in his honor.



1st Lt. Edward R. Schowalter

1st Lt. Schowalter displayed extraordinary heroism while leading Company A in an assault on a key enemy position. Despite being wounded twice by grenades, he continued to lead his men, directing the attack and clearing enemy bunkers with grenades until the objective was secured, refusing medical aid and inspiring his troops through his courage and leadership.

Schowalter Street, located in Maple Terrace, is named in his honor.



Pfc. Leslie A. Bellrichard

Pfc. Bellrichard displayed extraordinary heroism during a fierce enemy assault while serving as a fire-team leader with Company C. After repelling multiple attacks with hand grenades, he threw himself on a live grenade to shield four comrades, was seriously wounded, and continued firing at the enemy until he succumbed. His selfless actions helped defend the position and saved the lives of several fellow soldiers.

Bellrichard Avenue is named in his honor.

Fort Polk steeped in Medal of Honor history, heroes

By Mark Leslie
DPTMS director

FORT POLK, La. — National Medal of Honor Day was established on March 25 in 1990 by a Congressional resolution to foster public appreciation and recognition of Medal of Honor recipients.

The Medal of Honor is awarded “through conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty.”

Of the 40 million Americans who have served in the Armed Forces since the Civil War, only 3,533 have earned the Medal of Honor. Of those, we have 64 living recipients still with us. Since the Medal’s inception, there have been 19 double recipients.

What the Fort Polk community may not know is that Fort Polk is steeped in Medal of Honor history. This post has 11 Streets — ten in the housing areas — named in honor of Medal of Honor recipients, all from the state of Louisiana. The street signs are emblazoned with the Medal of Honor (a little secret – look for QR codes on the poles for links to the ci-

tations!). Then there’s Bellrichard avenue — named for a California native — a Soldier from the 4th Infantry Division who earned the Medal of Honor in Vietnam posthumously.

Fort Polk’s post headquarters is Woodfill Hall (sometimes called building 350). The building is named after Major Samuel Woodfill — a hero and Medal of Honor recipient from World War I. Woodfill was a member of the the 5th Infantry Division — once stationed at Fort Polk and the man General John Persing called “the most outstanding Soldier of World War I.”

We have the Master Sgt. Randy Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Gary Shugart Training Complex — an urban training site. They heroically earned their Medals, and sacrificed themselves, in Somalia as captured in the movie “Blackhawk Down”.

Of course, we have the Sgt. Henry Johnson Exchange, our main post exchange. Johnson was another World War I hero known as the “Black Death.” His memorial is positioned outside the front of the PX. Read it to discover how he earned this name and the medal.

There are also some other relatively un-

known Medal of Honor tributes on Fort Polk. At Honor Field, right next to the parking area, there is a small pavilion honoring Staff Sgt. Travis Atkins, 2/14 IN, 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division who earned the Medal posthumously in Iraq in 2007, and Capt. Willian Swenson 1/32 IN, 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, who earned the Medal in 2009 in Afghanistan, and thankfully, is one of the 64 MoH recipients still alive.

Right next to this pavilion is a stone and bronze memorial to Pfc. Milton Lee Olive III, a 173rd Airborne Brigade Soldier and first African American to earn the Medal of Honor in Vietnam.

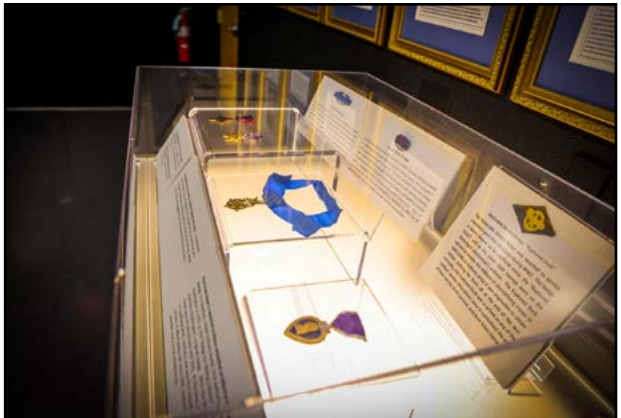
I encourage all Americans to learn more about these real American heroes and the nations highest symbol of gratitude. You can learn more at the Fort Polk home page under Medal of Honor under the menu tab or go to the Congressional Medal of Honor Web Site: <https://www.cmohs.org/>

Or visit the newly opened Fort Polk Louisiana Medal of Honor Event Center where the old museum was located. All 29 Louisiana Medal of Honor recipients are featured and more.

Commentary

Event Center ribbon cutting

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held at Fort Polk’s new Medal of Honor Center, March 25. The date was selected to commemorate the first presentation of the medal in 1863, linking its historic origins to the recognition of today’s recipients. The newly repurposed center will serve as a special event venue and honors 29 Medal of Honor recipients connected to Louisiana or the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. (U.S. Army photos by Porsha Auzenne)



DPTMS, WOC take HAZMAT class to prepare for upcoming exercise

By Angie Thorne
Fort Polk Garrison Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Being prepared for any emergency is the focus of Fort Polk’s Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security and the Warrior Operations Center. Learning the skills necessary to successfully manage disasters when they strike is part of what they do.

During the last week of February members of DPTMS and the WOC took a Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response training class presented by Directorate of Public Works - Environmental Management Support Services - Compliance Management Branch.

Terry Palmer, class facilitator, said one of the biggest obstacles in doing what’s right is the lack of knowledge, or “second guessing.”

“Being trained removes the guesswork; you see it, you fix it (if possible), you report it, and you learn from it,” Palmer said.

Mark Leslie, DPTMS director, took the class and said as the directorate responsible for managing a crisis on Fort Polk, he recognized that while his team has a large amount of training and real-world experience in just about every type of incident there is, what they didn’t have was a lot of experience and knowledge dealing with hazardous materials.

“HAZMAT is a real threat in this region with a lot of it moving on the railways, while not on the installation, it is in our local area. We have a great plan, our upcoming Full-Scale Exercise in June will be focused on a HAZMAT incident to validate this plan to best protect our community. This is always our number one priority,” Leslie said.

Planning for the exercise and absorbing that information is the reason they took the course. “As our instructor, Palmer related the material in a way that made it applicable to what we do, not only for an emergency, but in everyday life, Leslie said.

He said learning prevention and proper handling of dangerous chemicals in an emergency was one of the most important concerns. Second - training and education are key.

“You don’t know what you don’t know. I went into this class expecting to get a few “nuggets” to take away to use and apply in our exercise. What I left with was a healthy respect for HAZMAT and a comprehensive understanding of HAZMAT response and a new respect for the complexity of the HAZMAT world and those who work in it,” Leslie said.

Palmer said, from his perspective, teaching his students to be strategic about safety; understanding how to avoid risk and having the capacity to respond reflexively in a variety of situations were key concepts he wanted them to walk away from the class knowing.



Members of DPTMS and the WOC take notes during a Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response training class. (U.S. Army photo by Angie Thorne)

Taking the information learned and relaying it into a more realistic exercise to provide a better training is part of the goal.

“Setting expectations for leaders in a HAZMAT response is key. The HAZMAT environment moves at a much slower pace due to its complexity, lethality and the precautions that must be taken to protect first responders. Situational awareness is going to be more progressive due to the methodical response that must be taken to prevent more casualties,” Leslie said. “This class also helped me take a real analytical look at our current plan and address potential capability gaps. This is very helpful. Nobody can do a HAZMAT response alone. In our Full-Scale Exercise in June, it will be a multi-agency response, installation, local, state and federal, plus, some private industry partners, all putting expertise together to protect people — our people. That’s a great thing.

Leslie said this was a great course that is only given two times a year and delivered very professionally.

“You leave with three different certifications. I highly encourage any of our civilians or uniformed service members who work or perform in the HAZMAT, CBRNE, NBC or related fields to attend,” Leslie said.

Palmer said although the WOC members are not the individuals directly involved in the emergency, their decisions and coordination are critical in understanding the situation, an-



Terry Palmer teaches members of the WOC about hazardous waste safety protocols and more. (U.S. Army photo by Angie Thorne)

icipating the needs, and asking the correct questions.

“The better you understand the mission and roles of each responding team, the easier it is to identify gaps between the different organizations and correct them,” said Palmer.

Family life chaplain focus: Prevention, resilience, restoration

By Chuck Cannon
Fort Polk Garrison Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Being a family life chaplain is not your typical pastoral role. Just ask Chap. (Maj.) David Thompson who fills that role at the Fort Polk Religious Services Office.

“I’m a religious subject matter expert, a licensed and ordained minister, I’ve pastored church districts in Ontario, Canada and the Bronx, New York, so I’ve had strong congregational focus during the years I felt God called me to the ministry,” Thompson said. “But here I am in the military, focusing on areas of prevention, resilience and restoration.”

And Thompson said that’s just fine with him. “I really enjoy what I do,” he said. “In a nutshell, I provide support for Soldiers and their family members who are navigating issues like deployment, stress, reintegration and relational strain.”

While standing in a pulpit and preaching in Sunday morning services is part of Thompson’s job, that’s what most people see as the military chaplain’s goal – being a spiritual leader for the military congregation. Thompson said that’s what garners the most attention among service members and their families. But, he adds, his job is much more than that.

“Most people don’t necessarily see what I do because it’s often done behind closed doors and not broadcast,” he said. “And because not many are aware of what a family life chaplain offers, they are often under used.”

With the high tempo faced by Fort Polk Sol-

diers as they train units for war and for war themselves, Thompson said stress is always facing them.

“Units rotate constantly, leaders carry immense responsibilities and Soldiers are training hard, and what often absorbs that pressure first?” Thompson asked. “I would say the family. When stress hits the soldiers at work, from 6 a.m. when they have PT to 6 p.m. or later in the motor pool, it’s a long workday. Who pays the price for that: The Family.”

Thompson said that can put a tremendous strain on a marriage relationship.

“This is why a family life chaplain is so important, especially at Fort Polk,” he said. “If the importance of training, deployments and maintaining physical fitness is not communicated well, then the family relationship plummets.”

That’s where the family life chaplain comes into play. Thompson said the chaplains create an environment and space for dialogue between the Soldier and his or her Family.

“You might think you communicate well with your spouse, but when stress enters the equation, communication can easily break down,” he said.

And when communication breaks down in the Family, Thompson said it could lead to a breakdown in the unit.

“When we meet with a Soldier, when we meet with a Family, we as family life chaplains are thinking, OK, if I can help them mitigate the stressors and issues in their relationship, then I’m not just helping them,” he said. “I’m also helping their kids, their first sergeant, the com-



Chap. (Maj.) David Thompson talks about being a family life chaplain at Fort Polk. He explains the many ways he works to help Soldiers and families as they fulfill their mission. (U.S. Army photo by Chuck Cannon)

pany commander, the battalion, it has a ripple effect.”

Which leads to stronger families, stronger Soldiers and unit cohesion, Thompson said.

To set up an appointment with Chap. (Maj.) Thompson call 914-552-4465.

Editor’s note: This is the first of a three-part series outlining the role of the Army’s family life chaplain program and its importance at Fort Polk. Next Guardian we’ll look at the role family life chaplains play in preparing unit ministry teams provide support to their respective unit.

SERVE
HONORABLY,
DRINK
RESPONSIBLY

ARMY
RESILIENCE
DIRECTORATE

THIS IS OUR ARMY.

Remembering Dustoff 33: Honoring a crew’s selfless sacrifice

By Shane Denning
DPTMS-Airfield Division Chief

FORT POLK, La. — As the anniversary of the loss of the crew of Dustoff 33 nears, it’s only proper to highlight their heroic efforts.

This is a solemn anniversary in military history, a day to remember the crew of a MEDEVAC helicopter, call sign “Dustoff 33,” who made the ultimate sacrifice during Operation Desert Storm. Their story is one of profound courage and compassion in the face of conflict.

On the night of March 12, 1991, a UH-60A Blackhawk from the 36th Medical Detachment embarked on a humanitarian mission.

The crew was tasked with evacuating two injured Iraqi soldiers, a mission that transcended the lines of conflict to answer the call of humanity.

Tragically, their helicopter went down in the vast desert, and all aboard were lost.

We remember the four American heroes who gave their lives in that selfless act:

- 1st Lt. Joseph D. Maks of Roseburg, Oregon
- CW2 Patrick A. Donaldson of Corrigan, Texas
- Sgt. Michael S. Smith of Erie, Pennsylvania
- Sgt. Kelly D. Phillips of Madison Heights, Michigan



The crew of Dust-off 33 pose for a photo in front of their helicopter. (Courtesy photo)

crew. These memorials ensure that the story of Dustoff 33 and its valiant crew is never forgotten.

As we mark another year since their passing, we honor their unwavering dedication to their mission and their fellow man. Their actions exemplify the highest

ideals of a soldier: to provide aid and comfort even amidst the chaos of war. The memory of Dustoff 33 serves as a powerful and enduring reminder of the cost of freedom and the profound bravery of those who wear the uniform.

Commentary

DES changes phone number

The primary
Directorate of
Emergency
Services
non-emergency
dispatch number
is now
726-780-2677.
You can still call
911 for any
emergency.

Fort Polk firefighters hone skills during Aircraft Live Fire training

By Angie Thorne

Fort Polk Garrison Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — The Directorate of Emergency Services Fire Department held Aircraft Live Fire training Feb. 26-27. The training is an annual event held to refresh aircraft firefighting skills. In addition to classroom training, a live exercise was held on Feb. 27 at Maks Army Airfield.

Eric Makoski, instructor, said the training is based on the needs of the client.

“Every military installation is different, and every airport is different. That’s why we work closely with the local training staff to understand their specific needs and tailor the training to meet those requirements,” Makoski said. Alex Rivera-Agosto, Fort Polk Fire Department fire inspector, said Fort Polk firefighters don’t get enough practice responding to aircraft emergencies, but they have operations they take part in with airplane standbys.

“That means the potential is there for us to have to deal with this type of emergency at either Maks Army Airfield or with Geronimo out in the box. So, having this type of fire training gives of us the skills we need if a worst-case scenario occurs,” Rivera-Agosto said. During the classroom training, one of the things firefighters learned was how to change their airfield firefighting techniques because they are now using a different firefighting agent to help put fires out.

“It’s a clean agent that helps separate the vapor fuel from the fires. This means we are better able to put out the flames,” Rivera-Agosto said.

The live exercise included a large-scale airplane replica able to blast propane-driven fire at different spots inside and outside the aircraft for firefighters to put out.

Makoski said firefighters need to train for these real-world situations, and the best way to do that is by making the simulators as realistic as possible and giving personnel hands-on experience.

“Every day we’re doing our normal jobs, so when we can train, we need to make the most of that time. Creating mock-ups like this allows us to simulate real emergencies as closely as possible. That way, when a real emergency does happen, you’re better prepared to respond,” Makoski said.

Rivera-Agosto said this practical application of firefighting gives firefighters a feeling of reality that a classroom can never achieve.

Rivera-Agosto said Feeling the heat and urgency to put out the flames is the best way to prepare us to be able to successfully handle any emergency that occurs on Fort Polk. That means we are adding an additional layer of safety for Soldiers and family members living on the installation,” Rivera-Agosto said.



Left: Eric Makoski, Aircraft Live Fire training instructor, talks to firefighters before they practice putting fires out inside the aircraft.



Right: Fort Polk firefighters use a fire truck to aim water to put out the flames on the aircraft simulator.



Right: Fort Polk firefighters aim to put out the flames on the simulated aircraft live fire Feb. 27.



Left: Eric Makoski, Aircraft Live Fire training instructor, throws a flare to light the fire coming out of the tail end of the simulated aircraft.



Right: Eric Makoski, Aircraft Live Fire training instructor, gets out of the way as the flare comes back down.

(U.S. Army photos by Angie Thorne)

ARMY
EMERGENCY
RELIEF

EST. 1942



- ★ ZERO-INTEREST LOANS
- ★ GRANTS
- ★ SCHOLARSHIPS
- ★ OVER 30 CATEGORIES OF ASSISTANCE



AER kicks off 2026 annual campaign with a bowling competition

The Army Emergency Relief kickoff was held at Fort Polk's Warrior Lanes March 10. Soldiers and AER representatives took part in the event to gather information, listen to personal testimonies and have fun. Col. Adam Barlow, Fort Polk garrison commander, said a few words about the long history of AER and its importance to Soldiers and families. AER's mission is to provide financial assistance, educational scholarships and enduring support to Soldiers, retired Soldiers and their families, helping them to overcome financial obstacles and encourage financial stability. (U.S. Army photos by Angie Thorne)



Strike Out Sexual Assault!

WHO: All Military Personnel, DoD Civilians, and Families

WHERE: Warrior Lane Bowling Center, Fort Polk South

WHEN: 10 April, Noon-3 p.m.

WHY: To build community trust anchored in dignity and respect with a focus on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Prevention through Interactive play and fun.

Cost: \$9.00 for shoes, 1 game, and a drink. Each additional game will be \$3.50 until 3 p.m.

SHARP



**The Safe Helpline is available 24/7
for victims of sexual assault.**

Talk to someone who understands:

[safehelpline.org](https://www.safehelpline.org)



Fort Polk's SHARP 24/7 Hotline number is 337-718-7272

APRIL 29, 2026

ON THIS DAY, WEAR YOUR BEST PAIR OF DENIM JEANS IN SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE AFFECTED BY SEXUAL ASSAULT.

DENIM DAY

DENIM DAY ORIGINATED IN ITALY AFTER THE ITALIAN SUPREME COURT OVERTURNED A 1992 RAPE CONVICTION, CLAIMING THAT BECAUSE THE VICTIM WAS WEARING TIGHT JEANS, SHE MUST HAVE GIVEN CONSENT. IN RESPONSE, THE NEXT DAY ITALIAN WOMEN WORE JEANS TO WORK TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIM.



Unit Training Lighten the Load Prevention Ruck

Primary prevention activity that physically demonstrates the burden sexual assault, sexual harassment, alcohol misuse and retaliation places on unit readiness while identifying behaviors that strengthen healthy climates.

Contact Shantell Williams at
shantell.m.williams.civ@army.mil for more information



Come meet Sunny!



“PAWS” FOR PREVENTION

Learn how service animals can support trauma recovery and foster connection, strengthening the resilience and cohesion of our military community.

FEATURING :

- Live Service Animal demo
- Community Resources
- Photo opportunity w/Sunny BJACH's Service Animal
- Connection Station

MORE INFO :

Date: 9 April

Location: 1591 Bell Richard , Bldg 920 ACSPC

Time: 1500-1600

Call 726-780-0397 or email

shantell.m.williams.civ@army.mil for more info

Teamwork and safety take center stage during Patient Safety Week

By Jean Clavette Graves
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital is recognizing Patient Safety Awareness Week with team-focused training and activities designed to strengthen a culture of safety that supports both high-quality care and military readiness.

Observed across the Military Health System, Patient Safety Week highlights the role every member of the health care team plays in preventing harm, strengthening communication and ensuring reliable care for Soldiers, Families and beneficiaries.

One of the week's featured activities is a patient safety escape room designed to strengthen teamwork, communication and critical thinking among staff.

Alicia Jernigan, patient safety manager at BJACH, said interactive exercises help staff practice the same collaboration skills they rely on in real-world clinical environments.

"By participating in the escape room, our medical personnel are not just playing a game; they are actively honing the teamwork and communication skills that are paramount to patient safety," Jernigan said. "This creative approach allows them to experience the importance of collaboration in a memorable and impactful way, ultimately contributing to a more cohesive, effective and ready medical force."

Jernigan said the most important takeaway from the week is the shared responsibility every staff member has in protecting patients.

"If there is one message we hope every staff member takes away from this week, it is this: Every one of you, regardless of your rank or role, is a safety officer with the power and responsibility to protect our patients," Jernigan said. "It's about fostering a culture where every individual feels empowered to speak up, remain vigilant and act when something does not seem right."

Hospital leaders say that culture of accountability directly supports military readiness.

Lt. Col. Ralph Salazar, deputy commander for quality and safety at BJACH, said strong patient safety practices help ensure service members recover quickly and return to duty ready to support the mission.

"A strong culture of patient safety directly contributes to military readiness by minimizing preventable harm, ensuring a faster return to duty for service members and fostering a ready and reliable medical force," Salazar said. "By treating patient safety as a team sport that includes staff, patients and leaders, military treatment facilities reduce medical errors that could otherwise degrade operational strength and mission capability."

BJACH's commitment to safe, high-quality



Leaders and staff from Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital pose with The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® certificates during Patient Safety Week March 10 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. The Gold Seal of Approval is a nationally recognized symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to safe, high-quality patient care and high-reliability practices across the Military Health System. Pictured from left are Col. Patrick W. Miller, hospital commander; Lt. Col. Riliwan Ottun, deputy commander of administration; Lt. Col. Ashley Cesar, deputy commander of clinical services; Ria Moore, Joint Commission coordinator; Crystal Langston, primary care supervisory nurse; Col. Idongesit Ebeute, deputy commander of nursing; Col. Suzanne Jones, deputy commander of dental services; Capt. Debra Jones, M.D., chief of the emergency department; and Lt. Col. Ralph Salazar, deputy commander of quality and safety. (U.S. Army photo by Jean Clavette Graves)

care has also earned national recognition. For the fourth consecutive year, the hospital was named a Leapfrog Group Top Rural Hospital, an honor awarded to only a small fraction of hospitals nationwide for excellence in patient safety and quality outcomes.

Stephanie Parks, clinical outcomes nurse at BJACH, said sustaining that level of recognition reflects a culture where safety is embedded in daily operations.

"Sustaining a Leapfrog Top Rural Hospital award for four consecutive years signifies a deep-rooted and organization-wide dedication to patient safety," Parks said. "It demonstrates that the standards highlighted during Patient Safety Week are part of our daily operations through persistent vigilance, adherence to high standards and a shared commitment across the entire team."

The hospital also recently earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval, a nationally recognized symbol of quality and patient safety.

Ria Moore, Joint Commission coordinator at BJACH, said the accreditation reflects the hospital's commitment to continuous improvement.

"The Joint Commission evaluates patient care, facility processes and organizational performance to ensure the highest standards of safety and quality," Moore said. "Earning the Gold Seal shows our commitment to providing safe care and services for everyone and demonstrates to our community that we continuously strive to improve."

Stacy Hall, chief of clinical quality management at BJACH, said Patient Safety Week also supports the Defense Health Agency's strategic priority of delivering Ready Reliable Care across the enterprise.

"Reliable care begins with safe care, and this week sharpens our focus on preventing harm, strengthening systems and reinforcing the behaviors that make consistency possible," Hall said. "By aligning our workforce around proven practices and shared accountability, we build patient trust and ensure dependable care for service members, Families and beneficiaries."

BJACH leaders say the week serves as a reminder that patient safety is not a single initiative, but a continuous commitment shared by every member of the health care team working to deliver safe, reliable care for Soldiers, Families and beneficiaries.

Behind the smiles: Dental assistants support Soldier readiness

By Jean Clavette Graves
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Dental assistants play a critical role in keeping Soldiers healthy, deployable and ready to support the mission. From preparing treatment areas to assisting during procedures and maintaining infection control standards, these professionals help ensure dental teams can deliver timely care that supports Soldier readiness across the installation.

Fort Polk dental clinics are highlighting the contributions of their dental assistants this week as part of Dental Assistants Recognition Week, observed the first full week of March.

Dental assistants serve as essential members of the dental care team, helping providers move efficiently from patient to patient while ensuring care is delivered safely and effectively.

Sgt. 1st Class Angel M. Suarez Marquez, senior enlisted leader for Fort Polk dental services, said dental readiness is essential to maintaining combat power.

"If a Soldier has a dental problem down-range, they may have to be removed from the operational environment to receive treatment," Suarez Marquez said. "Our job is to identify and treat those issues before deployment so Soldiers can stay focused on the mission."

Dental pain and untreated oral health issues can quickly become a serious readiness concern.

"If a Soldier has severe dental pain, they cannot focus on their mission," Suarez Marquez said. "That's why dental readiness is so important."

Arin Cicchelli, a dental assistant at the Shira Dental Clinic, said she was drawn to the profession because she wanted a career that allowed her to work directly with patients.

"I originally went to school for something completely different, but I realized I wanted to do something more hands-on," Cicchelli said. "Dental assisting gave me the opportunity to work directly with patients and be involved in their care."

Dental assistants review medical histories, assist chair-side during procedures and ensure exam rooms meet strict infection control standards before and after each patient visit.

"We set up the room for procedures, review medical history with the patient, and assist the doctor during treatment," Cicchelli said. "You have to stay one step ahead the entire time and make sure the doctor has everything needed."

Much of their preparation begins before the patient enters the room. Dental assistants review schedules, examine X-rays and anticipate the instruments and materials needed for each appointment.

"You learn how your doctor works and pre-



Maj. Kelly McElroy, dentist, performs a dental procedure while Aurora Maynus-Gann, dental assistant, assists at the Shira Dental Clinic. Dental assistants serve as key members of the care team, supporting providers during procedures, maintaining infection control standards and helping ensure Soldiers remain dentally ready for deployment. (U.S. Army photo by Jean Graves)

pare the room accordingly," Cicchelli said.

Cpl. Ido Ibrahim, a dental specialist assigned to the Shira Dental Clinic, said helping relieve patients' pain is one of the most rewarding parts of the job.

"Sometimes Soldiers come in with a lot of pain," Ibrahim said. "When we treat them and they leave feeling better and happy, that makes us proud of what we do."

Beyond supporting procedures, dental assistants often serve as the first point of contact for patients entering the clinic. They help triage concerns, take X-rays and reassure patients who may feel anxious about dental treatment.

Delmelia Craft, practice manager at the Chesser Dental Clinic, said dental assistants are essential to the clinic's ability to care for patients and maintain readiness across the installation.

"They work so hard and they keep the show running," Craft said. "We wouldn't be able to do it without them."

Craft said the clinic treats many patients each day, highlighting the importance of teamwork among providers, hygienists and dental assistants.



Capt. Tony Song, dentist, and Misty Fumi, a Red Cross Dental Assistant Program student, provide dental care to a Soldier at the Shira Dental Clinic. The American Red Cross Dental Assistant Program provides hands-on clinical training for those interested in pursuing dental careers. (U.S. Army photo

**NOW
OPEN!**

Fort Polk Armed Forces Wellness Center



Conveniently located in the
Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital

1585 3rd Street, BLDG 285 (BJACH), Fort Polk, Louisiana

0630-1530, Monday-Friday

726-780-1152 | 726-780-1190



2026 APRIL



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 FUELING FOR HEALTH	2 STRESS MANAGEMENT	3	4
5	6 STRESS MANAGEMENT	7 UPPING YOUR METABOLISM	8 MEALS IN MINUTES	9 FUELING FOR HEALTH	10	11
12 	13 STAYING FIT AT HOME	14 STRESS MANAGEMENT	15 PERFORMANCE OPTIMIZATION	16 MEALS IN MINUTES	17	18
19	20 FUELING FOR HEALTH	21 HEALTHY SLEEPING HABITS	22 UPPING YOUR METABOLISM	23 STAYING FIT AT HOME	24	25
26	27 HEALTHY SLEEPING HABITS	28 PERFORMANCE OPTIMIZATION	29 UPPING YOUR METABOLISM	30 MEALS IN MINUTES	z z 	

NOTE

IN PERSON CLASSES

7460 COLORADO AVE., BLDG 660
FORT POLK, LA 71459
RM 105

VIRTUAL CLASSES

MHS GENESIS LINK WILL BE PROVIDED VIA ON FILE EMAIL.

IN PERSON CLASSES WILL BE HELD
MONDAY & WEDNESDAY @ 0800

VIRTUAL CLASSES WILL BE HELD
TUESDAY & THURSDAY @ 1100

OFFICE : 726-780-1152/1190





BAYNE-JONES ARMY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

presents

A Spoken Word Event

APRIL

Monday, April 13 | 11:00 a.m.

Location: Bayou Theater, Fort Polk

TOPIC: Emotional Intelligence when interacting with survivors

(MEDICAL STAFFS AND FIRST RESPONDERS)

About Obbie West

Obbie West is an international spoken word artist, advocate and author. Originally from Los Angeles, California, he is a retired U.S. Army Soldier who began writing in 2011 and later published his acclaimed book of poetry, Blossom.

Today, he travels worldwide as an educator and trainer, using poetry to address challenging topics such as abuse prevention, consent, accountability and mental resilience. His direct and thought-provoking style leaves audiences inspired and empowered.

Edward Wilson is the owner of Words of West, L.L.C., and performs under the stage name "Obbie West."



Guest speaker

MR. EDWARD WILSON
(Mr. West)

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT OUR SHARP
OFFICE @ 337-718-7272



DRUG TAKE BACK EVENT



Safely Dispose of Unused or Expired Medications



April 24th



Outside of
BJACH Pharmacy



10:00 AM –
2:00 PM



**Protect Your Family.
Protect Your Community.**

Bring your unused, unwanted,
or expired medications for safe
and proper disposal.

Protect Your Family. Protect Your Community.

✓ Accepted Items:

- ✓ Prescription medications
- ✓ Over-the-counter medications
- ✓ Tablets, capsules, creams,
and liquids

NOT Accepted:

- ✗ Needles (sharps)
- ✗ Aerosol cans
- ✗ Illegal drugs



Let's keep our community safe!
Do your part. Clean out your medicine cabinet today!

"We are BJACH!"



Soldiers receive unit patches during ceremony

Soldiers from Fort Polk's various tenant units receive unit patches during a ceremony March 23 at Fort Polk's Army Community Service Center.



(U.S. Army photos by Karen Sampson)

Garrison commander holds breakfast with spouses



Col. Adam Barlow, garrison commander, speaks with spouses from the installation community during a breakfast hosted by Rebecca Curl, spouse of Maj. Gen. Jason Curl, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general, March 23 at Fort Polk's Warrior Center.



(U.S. Army photos by Karen Sampson)

Check VIN numbers

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic Division will release the following vehicles to MWR for disposal if they remain unclaimed. Vehicles are listed with the last four of their VIN number. If one of these vehicles belongs to you, please contact the Fort Polk Police Traffic Division at 337-531-1806, 6675 or 2675.



2016	Chevrolet	1500	5376
2018	Nissan	Versa	1902
2011	Volvo	XC 90	5453
2015	Nissan	Sentra	9958
2007	Ford	Edge	7768
UNK	Boat trailer	Homemade	none
2011	Chevrolet	Impala	4578
2003	Kia	Optima	2898
2009	Ford	Crown Victoria	2951
2012	Honda	Accord	8762
2013	Nissan	Sentra	5613
2020	Chevrolet	Malibu	9378
2014	Hyundai	Genesis	4966
2003	Chevrolet	Suburban	9751
2009	Chrysler	300	4616
2016	Ford	Escape	6912
2002	Ford	Taurus	5257
2002	R Vision	Trail Bay Travel Trailer	4262

Ready and Resilient Performance Center

The Fort Polk R2PC, 8148 Alabama Ave. — bldg 2380, offers a variety of training formats to meet the unique needs of individuals and groups across the installation.

Think Tank Thursdays

Introducing a new professional development series! Every Thursday of the month, the R2 Performance Center will put on professional development workshops aimed at teaching and applying resilience-based and performance psychology skills. **These workshops will cover different levels of performance: leadership, unit/team, and individual. These workshops are offered to all Soldiers, Dependents, and DoD Civilians across the installation.**

- **Escape Room** (1st Thursday of each month; One-hour blocks as requested) — Work together as a team to strategize your way out by solving clues and decoding messages.
- **Leadership Labs** (2nd Thursday of each month; 1-2 p.m.) — Dynamic training focused on leading from the front, building trust, and bringing the best out of your team.
- **Team Building Sessions** (3rd Thursday of each month; 1-2 p.m.) — Grab your squad and tackle hands-on team challenges built to strengthen communication, cohesion and mindset for mission success.
- **Mind Gym Sessions** (4th Thursday of each month; 1-2 p.m.) — Targeted performance training to enhance resilience and key mental skills, self-awareness, self-regulation and more.

ADVANCE YOUR MILITARY CAREER...



at every stage of your journey.

The USO Transition Program equips service members for career success, whether you're staying in the military or preparing for civilian life! Take advantage of free professional development resources and educational certificates to boost your promotion potential and job competitiveness. Step confidently into the next phase of your career!

Program Support includes:

- Education
- Navigate Installation Support
- Financial Wellness
- Mentorship Opportunities



Contact a USO Transition Specialist today to develop a personalized plan!

USO.org/ServiceMemberSupport

USO TRANSITION PROGRAM

The USO is a not-for-profit organization and not part of the Department of Defense (DOD).



FOLLOW FORT POLK ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM AND YOUTUBE

GET CONNECTED



WHAT STEPS SHOULD I TAKE AFTER A SERVICE MEMBER IS EXPOSED TO A POTENTIALLY CONCUSSIVE EVENT?

- ✓ Report all service members involved to Joint Trauma Analysis and Prevention of Injury in Combat, if deployed.

- + [DOD instruction](#) outlines the minimum required content to report.
- + Submit report within 24 hours using the [Concussive Event Reporting System](#) (<https://jincs.army.mil/>).

- ✓ Ensure service members receive prompt medical evaluation.

- + Since an exposure can impact the reliability of a service member, medical evaluation is essential.
- + Early detection using the [MACE 2](#) fosters optimal outcomes.

- ✓ Direct a minimum of 24 hours of rest or downtime, if deployed.

This is required regardless of TBI diagnosis or presence of symptoms.



HOW CAN I ASSIST A SERVICE MEMBER WHO IS DIAGNOSED WITH A TBI?

- ✓ Assure service members follow the medically directed [Progressive Return to Activity](#) protocol.

- + By slowly increasing physical and cognitive demands, the PRA is a stepwise process shown to return service members to full duty as quickly and safely as possible.
- + Returning to normal activities too soon can increase risk of another injury, worsen symptoms, or lengthen recovery time.

- ✓ Maintain open lines of communication with the medical team.

- + Routinely review the [Patient and Leadership Guide](#), used by the medical team to communicate PRA progression and recommend duty modifications.
- + Notify medical team of symptoms affecting service member's ability to work.

- ✓ Assist the medical team in making the return to duty determination.

- + The medical team will evaluate physical and cognitive readiness by using a physical exertion test and [Automated Neuropsychological Assessment Metrics](#), known as ANAM.
- + Service members who sustain three or more TBIs in a year require a specialty referral for a comprehensive medical evaluation before returning to duty.

To learn more, watch this [Warfighter Brain Health for Leaders video](#)



★★★ FORT POLK ★★★

CAREER SUMMIT

RESOURCES | TRAINING | CONNECTIONS



📍 Bayou Theater

7830 Mississippi Ave. | Ft. Polk, LA

📍 Warrior Fitness Center

1321 Corps Rd. | Ft. Polk, LA

APRIL 2

Transitioning service members, veterans, military spouses, and military caregivers are welcome.

TRANSITION
WORKSHOPS

9 AM - 12:30 PM

HIRING
FAIR

1:30 - 4 PM

HiringOurHeroes.org/polk



Register now!

*The DoW and Service Branches do not endorse any company, sponsor or their products or services.

BE SURE TO REGISTER!

RECYCLING CENTER

Recycling at Fort Polk

Recycling supports the Army mission. Fort Polk strives to make reducing, reusing and recycling simple by offering an array of programs at the Recycling Center. To view a full list of recyclable materials and more information on additional programs at the JRTC & Fort Polk Recycling Center, visit the At the Recycling Center page.

Beyond the environmental benefits, recycling on post can also provide a financial benefit to military units. **Military units on the installation have the opportunity to earn cash at their Battalion level from recycling materials at the JRTC and Fort Polk Recycling Center.** To contribute towards unit funds, units and their families should:

- Recycle cardboard and paper (mixed or white) at the Recycling Center, bldg 3622, during business hours.
- Request that the weight of the recyclable materials be tracked and delegated to the unit upon drop off. A QRP employee will be available to assist in weighing the materials and ensuring it is correctly recorded for the unit.

Follow the Recycling Center on Facebook by searching "Fort Polk Environmental" for tips on recycling and reducing waste and additional information.

**Fort Polk Recycling Center's
hours of operation
8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.**

**For more information call
337-531-7556**

Detour to drop off your recycling during current road construction



Recycle Center entrance closed



Detour to next
road on the right



Turn right at Illinois Ave.



Follow the detour sign



Turn right at Recycle
Center's back gate



Use recycle containers or head
to Bay #2 during normal hours

Check your inbox for the Army Housing Tenant Satisfaction Survey!



Open
Now!

Corvias
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

OMB Control Number: 0704-0553 Expiration: 8/31/2028

Have you taken the Army Housing Tenant Satisfaction Survey?



Weekly
gift card
drawings!

Corvias
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

OMB Control Number: 0704-0553 Expiration: 8/31/2028



Point of Contact

Mr. Bobbie Parks

726-780-0389

<https://home.army.mil/polk/>

bobbie.l.parks.civ@army.mil

JRTC & Fort Polk Mayor Volunteer
Program Application



Mayor Volunteer Program



Fort Polk Garrison is looking for volunteers that are interested in making our housing areas better by serving in the Mayor Volunteer Program.

If interested, submit your application by scanning the QR code or copying the link below, you can also call the point of contact for further information. The application window opens 11 March 2026 and closes 31 March 2026.

These positions are open to all spouses of active-duty military living in family housing. One applicant will be selected to represent each of the housing areas. Tour of duty is based on applicants' willingness to serve.

Come help us open the doors of communication and make Fort Polk a station of choice.

<https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/ZLsmRaeLgC>

Dribble in For Sweet Treats!



Stop in your community center March 30-April 2 for sweet treats and take your shot at the CEL Survey! Your voice helps make our community a slam dunk!

Corvias®
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Catfish Derby

April 25 from 7-11 a.m.

Fort Polk's annual Catfish Derby takes place at Catfish Cove. Children ages 15 and under are allowed to fish. Persons 16 and older are allowed to assist children fishing. The event is open to the public. There's no pre-registration required



The derby offers activities such as a fillet demonstration, raffles, games, educational booths and prizes.

**For more information call
409-504-2445**



Easter PICNIC

Celebrate the Resurrection Together You're invited
to a cozy spring gathering at the Main Post Chapel.
Enjoy a Hometown community atmosphere with
lunch, friends, and plenty of fun for the kids!

Bounce Houses & Easter Egg Hunt
Lunch Provided (Dessert potluck—bring your favorite treat!)
RISE RE Event

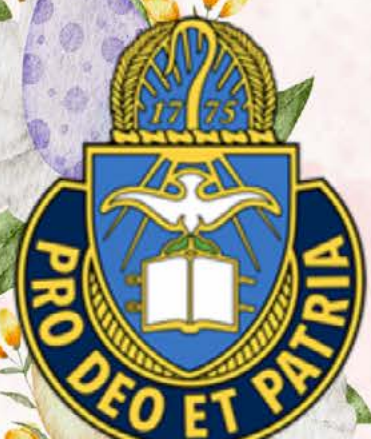


April 4
11 a.m.-1 p.m.



FORT POLK RELIGIOUS SUPPORT OFFICE

POC: Chrissa Gross, DRE
Chrissa.m.gross.civ@army.mil



CELEBRATE HOLY WEEK AT FORT POLK

RELIGIOUS SUPPORT OFFICE PRESENTS

SERVICES AT MAIN POST CHAPEL

✝ **HOLY THURSDAY**
• Mass 5:30 PM

✝ **GOOD FRIDAY**
• Catholic Service 3 PM
• Protestant Service 6 PM

✝ **EASTER SUNDAY**
• Sunrise Service 6:30 a.m.
• Catholic Mass 9 a.m.
• Protestant Service 11 a.m.

**EASTER
COMMUNITY PICNIC**
APRIL 4TH
11 AM - 1 PM
AT MAIN POST CHAPEL

POINT OF CONTACT: RELIGIOUS SUPPORT OFFICE

— Join Us for Our —
Easter Celebration!

Celebrate the victory of the risen Christ

He is risen!

Sunday, April 5, 2026

Start your morning with us... Then join us again!

Sunrise Service

6:30 AM
Carter's Pond

Easter Service

AT THE
Main Post Chapel

11:00 AM
7217 Radio Rd., Fort Polk

**Come celebrate the risen Christ with our
UNITY FELLOWSHIP FAMILY!**

Unity Fellowship
— observes —

GOOD FRIDAY
Reflections at the Cross

Scripture • Songs • Multimedia

ALL ARE WELCOME



FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2026

6:00 PM



AT THE MAIN POST CHAPEL

7217 Radio Rd., Fort Polk, LA 71459

Watch Care Available (limited space)

★ **U.S. ARMY**

Resources



Not all Heroes wear Combat Boots



OPSEC ...It's everyone's responsibility!



Defense Commissary Agency changes single use bag policy

By DeCA

FORT LEE, Va. – Starting April 6, commissaries will start charging a nominal price for each single-use paper or plastic bag.

Cost associated with this change is 5 cents for plastic and 10 cents for paper single-use bags.

This change will allow the Defense Commissary Agency to continue to offer its eligible patrons significant savings while strengthening its fiscal stewardship and reducing operating expenses.

Patrons submitting Commissary CLICK-2GO® curbside or delivery orders will be given the option to purchase bags when checking out.

DeCA also encourages patrons to bring their own bags from home or purchase reusable bags from in-store or Commissary CLICK-2GO® assortments.

For more information, please visit <https://shop.commissaries.com/bags>.



Rev Up and Win: Exchange Giving Away a Custom Motorcycle

By Staff Sgt. Marco Gomez
AAFES Public Affairs

DALLAS — The Army & Air Force Exchange Service is giving away more than \$50,000 in prizes in the Monster Energy Support Our Troops Sweepstakes.

One grand-prize winner will receive a 2025 Customized motorcycle, free energy drinks for one year and a \$1,700 American Express gift card — a prize package worth nearly \$33,000.

Fifteen runner-up winners will each receive free the energy drinks for one year.

Authorized military shoppers aged 18 and older may enter at [ShopMyExchange.com/sweepstakes](https://shopmyexchange.com/sweepstakes) through April 30.

“Our service members and their families sacrifice so much, and they deserve opportu-

nities to be recognized and celebrated,” said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Rich Martinez, the Exchange's senior enlisted advisor. “This sweepstakes is an exciting way to give back to those who serve with a fantastic grand prize and amazing rewards for our winners.”

Winners will be selected and notified no later than May 29. No purchase is necessary to enter. For full sweepstakes rules, visit [ShopMyExchange.com/sweepstakes](https://shopmyexchange.com/sweepstakes).

Department of War and Coast Guard civilians and honorably discharged veterans who have confirmed their eligibility to shop online may also enter.

Veterans can visit <https://aafes.media/paveterans> to learn more about their shopping benefit. DoD civilians can visit <https://aafes.media/cacbenefitspa>.



Stay Connected With Your Local PX, BX on Social Media

By Kerrington Bradley
AAFES Public Affairs

DALLAS — Staying connected with the Army & Air Force Exchange Service is easier than ever.

The military community can keep up with news, events and services by following their local PX or BX social media pages.

Local Exchange pages share installation specific updates, including special events, new offerings, updates on services and restaurants, hours of operation, holiday information and community highlights.

Following these pages helps ser-

vice members, families, retirees and Veterans stay informed about what's happening at their Exchange, right where they live and serve.

“No matter where the mission takes them, the military community can find the latest Exchange news and connect with their local store through official Exchange social media channels,” said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Rich Martinez, the Exchange's senior enlisted advisor.

He said a centralized list of local Exchange social media pages is available online, making it easy for shoppers to stay updated at each installation.”



Army & Air Force Exchange Service Continues Self-Service Market Expansion

By Zach Wright
AAFES Public Affairs

DALLAS – The Army & Air Force Exchange Service continues to expand its network of 24/7 self-service markets, delivering convenient access to everyday essentials wherever their mission takes them.

Strategically positioned in high-traffic or mission-focused environments to serve Soldiers, Airmen, Guardians and Department of War civilians, 24/7 self-service markets extend access to snacks, small meals, beverages and toiletries, including small, remote or austere locations.

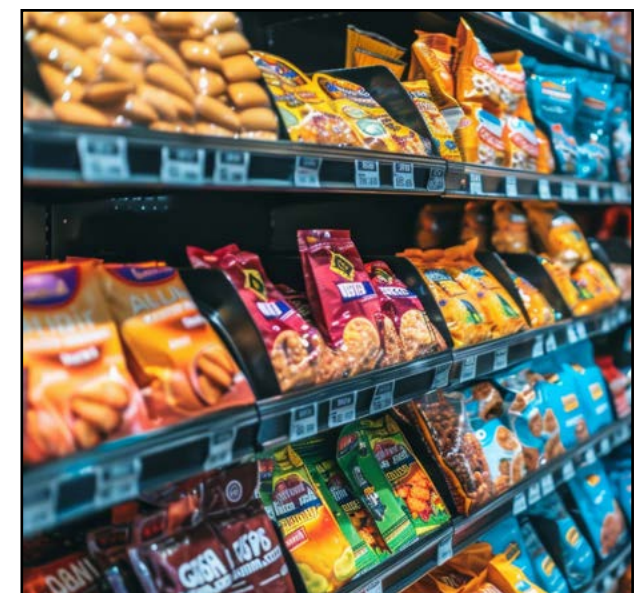
“Service members often work long, demanding hours and having easy access to better-for-you food and drink options when they need it matters,” said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Rich Martinez, the Exchange's senior en-

listed advisor. “The 24/7 self-service markets ensure, service members can find convenient options that support performance and overall well-being, day or night.”

All of the Exchange's 700-plus self-service markets offer better-for-you options, such as fresh fruit and vegetables, sandwiches, salads and more. Assortments are customized to meet the needs of each unique location. Markets are equipped with convenient features, such as self-checkout kiosks and microwaves for ready-to-eat meals. Sites can also be outfitted further to include additional amenities, such as coffee vending machines.

The Exchange plans to add 35 markets in 2026 while focusing on strengthening operations, expanding site opportunities and fulfilling requests for additional markets. In 2025, the Exchange installed 65 markets.

The continued growth of 24/7 self-service



markets reflect the Exchange's commitment to supporting the well-being of service members and their families, enhancing Quality of Life across the military communities it serves.

Tornado Ahead?



Stay Informed

about possible severe weather when you travel.



Keep WEAs

enabled on your phone. It could save your life or the lives of others.



Take immediate action and find shelter

if there's a tornado or threatening weather ahead!
Overpasses are not safe shelter.



weather.gov

Know Where to Go

When Sheltering from a Tornado



If you have no basement, move to an interior room with no windows.

Top floor rooms DO NOT protect you.

Exterior rooms and rooms with windows DO NOT protect you.

NO PLACE OUTSIDE is safe from a tornado.

Quickly move to your basement and bring your emergency supply kit.



weather.gov/safety/tornado

U.S. ARMY FORT POLK

FOLLOW US



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



@USArmyFortPolk



/usarmyfortpolk



@usarmyfortpolk



home.army.mil/polok

Don't Let the dark thoughts in your head win.



Visit
988lifeline.org

Call
988
Suicide
and
Crisis
Lifeline

RUN HIDE FIGHT

In the event of an active shooter:

RUN

Wherever you go, be aware of alternate exits.

Quickly and cautiously evacuate in a direction away from the attacker.

Don't hesitate. Seconds matter.

Remember windows and emergency exits.

▶ Leave belongings behind.

RUN

Keep empty hands raised and clearly visible.

Follow all instructions from the police.

▶ Don't stop until you are sure you have reached a safe location.

HIDE

If there is no safe escape route, find a good hiding place.

Lock and barricade the door.

Silence cell phones.

▶ Prepare a defense plan.

FIGHT

▶ Use teamwork and surprise. A coordinated ambush can incapacitate an attacker.

Fight only as a last resort.

▶ Use available objects as improvised weapons.

STOP THE BLEED

A victim can die of uncontrolled blood loss in 5 minutes or less.

▶ Apply pressure or a tourniquet to control severe bleeding.



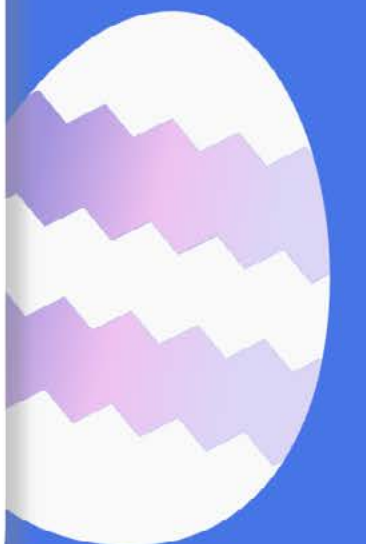
HOP SHOP HUNT!

FIND THE EGGS!

**RAFFLE
INSTANT
PRIZES**

**EGG-CITINGLY
GOOD TIME**

**APRIL
5**



FORT POLK COMMISSARY

ONE PRIZE PER FAMILY



Summer Competitive
SWIMMING

Call **726-780-1076**
 for more information
REGISTER TODAY!

PEREZ FIELD
March 28, 2026
YOUTH SPORTS

ARCHERY
COMPETITION
FREE + ATLANTL DART THROW

726-780-1359



Easter BRUNCH

April 5, 2026
 The Forge Bar & Grill



THE FORGE
 BAR & GRILL
 JRTC & FORT POLK

GARRISON COMMANDER'S
GOLF SCRAMBLE

FRIDAY April 3, 2026
WARRIOR HILLS GOLF COURSE

\$50

11 am TEE OFF

PRICE INCLUDES

- GREEN FEE
- HALF CART
- AWARDS
- DINNER

To register to play contact the number below or register in-person at Warrior Hills Golf Course

726-780-1281
polk.armymwr.com

165 DAY OF EVENT





THE GREAT GATSBY

ADAPTED BY GARY PETERSON

Show Dates

Dinner & Show

Adult \$25 Student \$20

Fri. April 24 & Sat. May 2

Doors open at 6:30 P.M.
Dinner is served at 7 P.M.
Show begins at 8 P.M.

Show Only

Adult \$15 Student \$12

Sat. April 25 & Fri. May 1

Doors open at 6:30 P.M.
Show begins at 7 P.M.

Sun. April 26

Doors open at 1:30 P.M.
Show begins at 2 P.M.

Tickets

Presale tickets for season ticket
holders are available until March 22.

General ticket sales begin March 23.

impromptuplayers.com
(337)221-8543



BATTLE OF THE DERIDDER BURNERS

WHERE SMOKE MEETS BRAGGIN' RIGHTS

BBQ COOK-OFF!

DeRidder, Louisiana



APRIL 11TH, 2026!

VFW POST 3619

COOK TIME: 6AM – 3PM

PLATE LUNCHES \$10

1115 HWY 27, DERIDDER, LA

337-463-3977



★★★
Second Annual



VETERAN RESOURCE ROUND-UP

Connect★Support★Empower

APRIL 25, 2026

9:00 A.M - 12:00 P.M.

WAR MEMORIAL CIVIC CENTER

250 W. 7TH ST. DERIDDER LA

Open to Veterans, Active Duty and their Families

★ **Proof of service is required** ★
Military or Veteran ID, DD-214

- ☒ **Meet Veteran-Focused Organizations/Companies**
- ☒ **Access Community Resources**
- ☒ **LDVA on site assisting with claims**
- ☒ **Health & Wellness Support**



WEBSITE

Would you like to be a vendor and/or a sponsor?
Contact us by email to receive more information.
events@warmemorialcc.com



NOTIFY TEXT



A CALL TO HONOR: THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER REPLICA

ON DISPLAY IN THE AUDITORIUM OF THE
HISTORIC FIRST OFF-BASE USO IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NOW KNOWN AS THE WAR MEMORIAL CIVIC CENTER

FRIDAY
May 1, 2026
9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

SATURDAY
May 2, 2026
9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

SUNDAY
May 3, 2026
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



THE HALF-SIZE REPLICA INCLUDES CRYPTS WHICH SYMBOLIZE THE SACRED RESTING PLACE OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIERS FROM WORLD WAR I, WORLD WAR II, THE KOREAN WAR, AND THE VIETNAM WAR — BRAVE HEROES WHOSE NAMES ARE KNOWN ONLY TO GOD, BUT WHOSE SACRIFICE WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT THIS POWERFUL AND MOVING EXHIBIT WHILE IT IS IN OUR AREA. TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT, HONOR, AND REMEMBER THOSE WHO GAVE EVERYTHING FOR OUR FREEDOM.

**FREE ADMISSION
DONATIONS APPRECIATED**

All proceeds benefit the Exchange Club of Rome, GA (the creators of the exhibit).



WMCC AUDITORIUM
250 WEST 7TH STREET
DERIDDER, LA 70634
337-463-7212
EVENTS@WARMEMORIALCC.COM
WWW.WARMEMORIALCC.COM

