

U.S. ARMY GARRISON FORT POLK

FORT POLK FIRST!

GUARDIAN

JAN. 29 VOL. 53, NO. 2

**CHECK OUT
AREA MARDI
GRAS PARADES**

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GARRISON
FACEBOOK PAGE**

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**INDUSTRY
EXPERTS VISIT
FORT POLK**

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**USE ELECTRIC
VEHICLE CHARGERS
ACROSS FORT POLK**

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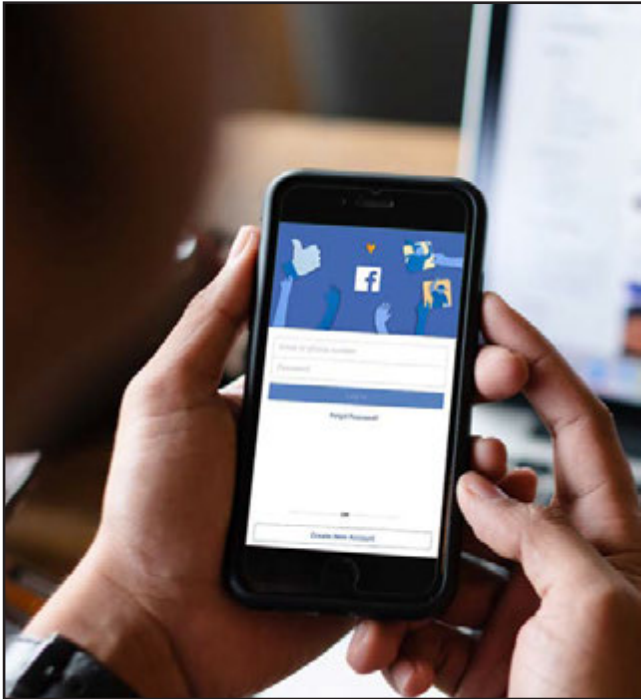
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COVER PHOTO
A vehicle charging at one of the new stations on Fort Polk. (U.S. Army photo by Angie Thorne)



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Use electric vehicle chargers across Fort Polk



Brig. Gen. Jason A. Curl
Commanding General
Col. Adam Barlow
Garrison Commander

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For additional information, please visit the @JRTcandFortPolk Facebook page.

Discover Louisiana



UPCOMING MARDI GRAS PARADES

Click photos for more information

It's Time for the
MARDI GRAS
PARADE!

Register at greatervernon.org

February 14, 2026 | 2:00 PM

Historic Downtown Third Street • Leesville



5th Annual DeRidder Parade

Saturday, February 14, 2026

Line up at 3:00 PM

Parade begins at 4:00 PM

On N. Pine Street

MARDI GRAS *Event & Parade Schedule*

COMMUNITY DANCE THURSDAY JAN. 22ND 6-8PM EVENT CENTER

MERCHANTS' PARADE FRIDAY, FEB. 13TH 7PM DOWNTOWN/MIDTOWN

GUMBO COOK-OFF SATURDAY, FEB. 14TH 9AM-3PM AMPHITHEATER

BOAT PARADE SATURDAY, FEB 14TH 7PM LAKEFRONT PROMENADE

CHILDREN'S DAY SUNDAY, FEB 15TH 11AM-1PM EVENT CENTER

CHILDREN'S PARADE SUNDAY, FEB 15TH 3:30PM DOWNTOWN/MIDTOWN

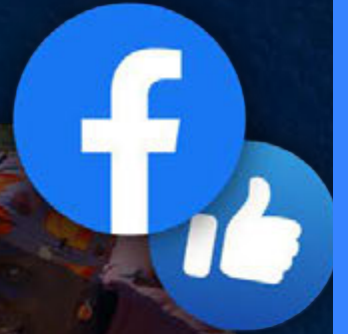
SECOND LINE STROLL TUESDAY, FEB 17TH 1PM RYAN ST. TO SALLIER ST

JEEP PARADE TUESDAY, FEB 17TH 2PM DOWNTOWN RYAN STREET

MOTOR GRAS PARADE TUESDAY, FEB 17TH 3PM RYAN STREET

KREWE OF KREWES PARADE TUESDAY, FEB 17TH 5PM DOWNTOWN/MIDTOWN

MARDI GRAS SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA



U.S. Army Fort Polk

1K followers · 20 following · 16 posts

Official Fort Polk Garrison Facebook page supporting Soldiers, Families, Civilians, and community.

@USARMYFORTPOLK ON FACEBOOK

Don't miss out—follow the Fort Polk Facebook page for updates, information and more!

CLICK HERE



OUTSIDE THE GATES

OFF POST

EVENTS



31
Jan.

Gumbo Cookoff

OPELOUSAS, LA.

[Click for more info](#)



12
Feb.

Mardi Gras Mask Making

LAKE CHARLES, LA.

[Click for more info](#)



13
Feb.

Galentine's Day

DERIDDER, LA.

[Click for more info](#)



14
Feb.

**Valentine's Day &
Mardi Gras Market**

LEESVILLE, LA.

[Click for more info](#)



14
Feb.

Rayne Gumbo Cookoff & Parade

RAYNE, LA.

[Click for more info](#)

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JRTC BRINGS INDUSTRY, EXPER



A Soldier with JRTC and Fort Polk showcases one of the Innovation Industrial Conference's static displays to a vendor, Jan. 14, at Fort Polk, La. (U.S. Army photo by Porsha

RTS TOGETHER TO SUPPORT TIC



Soldiers with JRTC and Fort Polk showcase one of the Innovation Industrial Conference's static displays to a vendor, Jan. 14, at Fort Polk, La. (U.S. Army photo by Porsha

By Porsha Auzenne

Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk hosted their first Innovation Industrial Conference, Jan. 14–15, bringing together defense industry vendors and Army modernization experts to support efforts to modernize JRTC's Transformation in Contact initiative.

The two-day conference focused on electromagnetic warfare, unmanned aerial systems, unmanned ground vehicles, artificial intelligence, command and control, and intelligence and fires integration.

More than 40 defense industry vendors from across the country participated, showcasing technologies aligned with concepts

developed by the JRTC Innovative Modernization Equipping Group. Vendors included Interference Management and Cancellation International, ORKID, Farada Group and EagleNXT.

Representatives from several Department of War organizations also attended, including Army Materiel Command, Army G-3, U.S. Army Reserve Command G-34, First Army Training and the Joint Counter–Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems University.

"This is super important for what we do here at JRTC," Brig. Gen. Jason A. Curl, commanding general, said about the event. "We're making sure we continue to move up and close the gap between what we're seeing in the current operating environment and what we're able to replicate. We're focused on making sure that we continue to advance the Army's Combat Training Center itself."

Organizers said the conference was designed to connect emerging industry solutions with JRTC's operational experimentation environment, ensuring future equipment supports realistic training at the Army's premier CTC.

Sgt. First Class Travis Keiper, USAR Soldier assigned to Task Force 76 from Salt Lake City, Utah, discussed the importance of the conference and gave feedback.

"To build our counter-UAS program, it's important for us to understand what capabilities and products are coming and how we can integrate them into a top-down program," he said.

"While I'm here, I can ask questions about what products are coming out, if we can get a better feel for those systems and understand the training timeline so we can continue to develop the program. We also attend several annual training events each year, so it would be beneficial to incorporate those programs as well, along with working with the JRTC here. Ideally, we could bring our unit to Fort Polk to train and gain hands-on experience across the full spectrum of capabilities."

Maj. Roman Xydias, USARC G34 Training and Exercises officer, shared similar beliefs.

"We are looking at both materiel training solutions and using a bottom-line up-front approach," Xydias said. "From the USARC G-34 perspective, our goal is to develop a complete concept that moves materiel solutions through the training and testing pipeline within an operational environment, allowing us to clearly determine what capabilities we should be fielding and which we should not."

Col. Justin Sisak, USARC G-34 program manager, said events like the Innovation Indus



Brig. Gen. Jason A. Curl, commanding general of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, speaks to guests at the Innovation Industrial Conference Jan. 14 at the Warrior Training Complex, Fort Polk, La. (U.S. Army photo by Porsha Auzenne)

Continued on page 11



Col. Justin Sisak, U.S. Army Reserve Command G34 program manager, observes during the Innovation Industrial Conference. (U.S. Army photo by Porsha Auzenne)

“ The current environment is saturated with individual organizations all trying to solve the same problem at the same time, often in isolation. Those are the walls we need to break down, and this type of event does exactly that for the USAR. It accelerates the maturation of our strategy and campaign plan significantly.”

— Col. Justin Sisak

trial Conference are important because they help build relationships to form partnerships and identify missing links.

“Now that we’re here at the Innovation Industrial Conference, we’ve identified a relationship that we can continue to build and grow,” Sisak said.

“The current environment is saturated with individual organizations all trying to solve the same problem at the same time, often in isolation. Those are the walls we need to break down, and this type of event does exactly that for the USAR. It accelerates the maturation of our strategy and campaign plan significantly.”

Lt. Col. Troy Allen Catterton, U.S. Army re-

servist assigned to the JRTC G-3 Directorate as the senior USAR advisor and the JRTC TIC modernization project officer, was a key organizer of the conference. Upon conclusion of the two-day event, Catterton expressed how the Innovation Industrial Conference enables JRTC to bridge the gap between Department of War initiatives and the modernization of war-fighter capabilities.

“There is much more that could be added to the broader environment, but our initial task is to create a venue where technology modernization and its various facets can be identified and where we can leverage vendor capabilities and industry leaders to synchronize our path

forward,” he said.

Catterton said he hopes to see the conference evolve into an annual event in the future.

As the Army continues to adapt to rapidly evolving threats, the Innovation Industrial Conference marked a significant step in aligning industry innovation with realistic, operational training. By fostering collaboration across Army organizations and defense partners, JRTC and Fort Polk strengthens its ability to modernize transformation in contact and prepare Soldiers for the complexities of the modern battlefield — setting conditions for continued innovation and readiness in the years ahead.



Vendors at the Innovation Industrial Conference observe drone displays outside of the Warrior Training Complex. (U.S. Army photo by Porsha Auzenne)



Attendees of the Innovation Industrial Conference, along with JRTC and Fort Polk leadership, pose for a group photo. (U.S. Army photo by Porsha Auzenne)



Lt. Col. Troy Allen Catterton, U.S. Army reservist assigned to the JRTC G-3 Directorate as the senior USAR advisor and the JRTC TIC modernization project officer, speaks with attendees at the conference. (U.S. Army photo by Porsha Auzenne)

TAP success stories

I officially began the process of going through the Transition Assistance Program in May 2025, exactly eight months before my transition. While deployment prevented me from starting sooner, I quickly realized the immense value of this program.

I am excited to share that I followed the Career Track via the Career Skills Program, attending a 10-week intensive course with Ryder. The training was comprehensive, focusing on a new vehicle system each week, and I am proud to announce that I have secured a position as a Level 2 Diesel Technician with them.

TAP was a wake-up call regarding the importance of financial budgeting, resume building and understanding the civilian job market. My biggest piece of advice to fellow service members: Go as early as possible. Give yourself the time to explore the abundance of resources available so you can choose the path that truly fits your future.

— Sgt. Cristian Guevara

I initiated the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) 15 months prior to my separation, allowing for a strategic and well-prepared transition to the civilian workforce.

Through the Career Skills Program, I completed 15 weeks of intensive training at the Southeast Lineman Training Center in Trenton, GA. During this period, I earned over 10 nationally recognized certifications, including my Class A CDL. I am now focused on launching my career as a Journeyman Lineman with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

My advice to fellow transitioning Soldiers is to remain committed to your professional goals — once you identify a beneficial path, follow through with discipline.

— Sgt. Dylan Arnold

I began my transition process exactly 18 months before my ETS date. Starting early provided the necessary runway to plan meticulously and utilize every available resource without the stress of a looming deadline. While I didn't limit myself to a single track, attending all of them provided a well-rounded perspective on civilian expectations.

A cornerstone of my transition with the Career Skills Program was an internship with CVS, where I trained as a Store Manager. This experience was invaluable, allowing me to translate my leadership into civilian-sector skills and giving me a competitive edge. My advice to fellow soldiers: Start early and attend often. The Army has utilized your skills to the limit; now it is your turn to prioritize your own success. Take initiative, because you are the primary architect of your future.

— Sgt. Terry Grigg

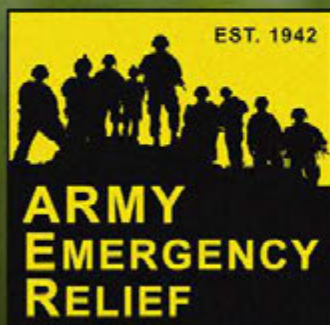


ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF

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Empowering Soldiers, Enhancing Lives
2026 Annual Campaign



March 1 - June 14



Charging stations provide convenience for Soldiers, families to



By Angie Thorne

Fort Polk Garrison Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Fort Polk is pleased to announce the activation of 15 dual Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, now available for use by both privately owned vehicles and government-owned vehicles.

Each dual charging station is capable of recharging two electric vehicles simultaneously, enhancing convenience for users. The charging stations strategically located throughout the installation, including at post headquarters (Bldg 350), Transportation Motor Pool, the Bowling Alley, the intersection of Third Street and Mississippi Avenue, the Commissary and the PX.

Many of the stations are activated and the rest soon will be.

Those with government vehicles will have a card to use at the stations. They will have to follow the instructions.

Civilians using the stations will have to sign into the system and establish an account.

“There is an app that you can download called ChargePoint — to set up your account,” said Jeffrey Rodgers, Fort Polk Garrison energy manager. “They can use the charging station to sign in.”

Rodgers said he wanted to make the community aware that the stations were there when charging their vehicles.

“The charging stations are available to anyone and anyone can use them,” he said. “There is no fee to use them. People will only have to pay for the electricity used.”

Provide convenience for charge their vehicles



ment vehicles already
the stations. They just
ctions on the screen.

tations will have to sign
establish a Charge Point

they can download —
up their account,” said
Polk’s installation en-
an also use the on the
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ts to make the Fort Polk
his option is available to
eir electric vehicles.

ns are there, available
em anytime they need
o fee to use the station,
pay the fee per kilowatt

The charging stations are level two, which
means they are more powerful than older sta-
tions.

“You should be able to get a full charge within
eight hours,” Rodgers said. “One of the biggest
benefits for EV owners is having that faster
charging station available to them on Fort Polk.”

Rodgers said if they live on post, they don’t
have to use a slower 1/10 battery to charge
their vehicle at home.

“Instead, if they work near one of the cha-
grining stations, they can plug it in when they
get to work and by the end of the day their car
will be fully charged,” he said.

Rodgers said Installation Command provided
Fort Polk with funds, more than a million dollars,
to install the chargers for the ease and benefit
of anyone who has an EV.

“We want people to use them,” he said.



Certified nurse anesthetists support surgical care, readiness

By Jean Clavette Graves

BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital is highlighting the role of certified nurse anesthetists in delivering safe anesthesia care and supporting medical readiness across the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

Certified nurse anesthetists at BJACH serve as the hospital's primary anesthesia providers, delivering care across surgical, obstetric and emergency settings. Their work supports patient safety, ensures access to care in a rural environment and contributes to the readiness of Soldiers and families assigned to the installation.

Maj. Bernard "Ben" Lease, a CRNA assigned to BJACH, said his interest in anesthesia began during a shadowing experience in his hometown of Fennimore, Wisconsin, where access to anesthesia providers was limited.

"Anesthesia providers in rural America are hard to come by, and I respect those CRNAs who work independently and care for people in small communities," Lease said.

Lease earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Edgewood University in Madison, Wisconsin, and completed a Doctor of Nursing Practice through the U.S. Army Graduate Program in Anesthesia Nursing at Fort Sam Houston. He said CRNAs at BJACH tailor anesthetic care to individual patients using a combination of general, regional and spinal or epidural anesthesia techniques.

"That individualized approach increases safety, satisfaction and outcomes," Lease said.

Maj. Laura Payton, chief of Anesthesia and Surgical Services at BJACH, brings more than two decades of Army service to her role. She earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice through Uniformed Services University in Bethesda, Maryland, and has served in anesthesia leadership roles across Army Medicine. She arrived at Fort Polk in 2025.

"Patients usually see me during a stressful time or situation," Payton said. "My goal is to provide exceptional, safe care and good pain management."

Payton oversees anesthesia services that support surgical readiness and ensure patients receive timely, high-quality care close to home. CRNAs at BJACH practice at full scope, allowing the hospital to maintain surgical capability in a rural setting while supporting the operational mission of the installation.

Maj. Sheena Jackson, a certified nurse anesthetist at BJACH, said vigilance and continuity of care are central to her role.

"As a CRNA, I remain vigilant in the care of patients and their families any time anesthesia is required," Jackson said.



Maj. Sheena Jackson, a certified nurse anesthetist assigned to Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, prepares anesthesia equipment in the labor, delivery, recovery and postpartum operating room during a demonstration held at Fort Polk. Certified nurse anesthetists provide anesthesia care across surgical and obstetric settings, supporting patient safety and medical readiness at the hospital. (U.S. Army photo by Jean Clavette Graves)



Maj. Laura Payton, chief of Anesthesia and Surgical Services at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, speaks with Spc. Jose David, an orthopedic specialist assigned to BJACH, during a demonstration held in January at Fort Polk, as Lt. Col. Robert "Scott" Wiltrout charts nearby. (U.S. Army photo by Jean Clavette Graves)

Jackson completed her nurse anesthesia education through the U.S. Army Nursing Anesthesia Graduate Program. She said CRNAs remain with patients throughout surgical procedures, providing continuous monitoring and care from induction through recovery.

BJACH also relies on reserve component support to maintain anesthesia capability. Lt. Col. Robert "Scott" Wiltrout, a CRNA and Individual Military Augmentee, supports the hospital while maintaining a civilian anesthesia practice in Kentucky.

"I always enjoy coming to BJACH and helping Soldiers when support is needed," Wiltrout said.

Wiltrout said his medical career followed a nontraditional path. He began as a surgical scrub nurse, later became a registered nurse

first assistant, attended physician assistant school, and ultimately pursued anesthesia after discovering a passion for the specialty.

Wiltrout completed his anesthesia training on the civilian side and joined the Army Reserve in 2001. He has served for approximately 25 years, providing experienced clinical support during periods of increased operational demand.

National Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists Week observed Jan. 18–24, highlights the contributions of CRNAs across the country, particularly in rural and underserved communities. At BJACH, CRNAs play a critical role in ensuring patient safety, maintaining access to surgical care and supporting medical readiness for Soldiers, Families and the Fort Polk community.

Beyond the delivery room: Where support for new parents begins

By Jean Clavette Graves

BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — When My’Kia Starks brought her newborn daughter home for the first time, the joy of becoming a mother was paired with the weight of a new and unfamiliar responsibility.

“I was running on only one or two hours of sleep,” My’Kia said. “But I also felt incredibly grateful knowing my baby girl had arrived safely. Becoming a mom was the biggest change of my life.”

At 21, she and her husband, Spc. LaMichael Starks, assigned to the 84th Combat Engineer Company - Infantry, 710th Light Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, welcomed their daughter, Me’Lani, on Jan. 6 at Beauregard Health System in De Ridder, Louisiana, after Starks was referred off post due to maternal health concerns. While the delivery went well, the days that followed brought fatigue and the realization that caring for a newborn came with challenges they had not fully anticipated.

For young military families, the transition home after childbirth can be just as important as the delivery. Unlike many civilian families, military parents often return home without nearby relatives or long-term support systems, navigating recovery and newborn care largely on their own. Post-delivery education, reassurance and hands-on support play an important role in helping new parents build confidence, strengthening families and supporting Soldier readiness.

Once home, My’Kia said feeding and nighttime routines quickly became challenging. Despite preparing to breastfeed, she found that learning in real time brought new questions and concerns.

“The first night was especially hard,” she said. “I struggled to tell whether my baby was eating enough or if she was even getting milk at all.”

As breastfeeding became increasingly painful, My’Kia said she began to worry. Like many new parents, the transition home brought questions and moments of self-doubt as she learned to care for her newborn.

Looking for guidance, My’Kia spoke with her mother — a BJACH employee — who connected the young Family with April K. Williams, a supervisory clinical nurse in the BJACH OB/GYN Clinic.

That connection, My’Kia said, made a lasting difference.

“She took the time to go over postpartum care from head to toe and answered questions



that helped us feel more confident as new parents,” My’Kia said.

Williams said supporting families during the transition home is a critical part of care, particularly for first-time parents.

“My role is to make sure Soldiers and family members have the education and support they need as they adjust to life with a new baby,” Williams said. “The period after discharge can be overwhelming, especially for families without relatives nearby.”

She explained that when she meets with new families, education often focuses on breastfeeding support, newborn care and recognizing postpartum warning signs.

“Many military families are navigating this phase on their own,” Williams said. “Consistent guidance helps them feel supported and confident during those early weeks.”

The most significant support, Starks said, came through breastfeeding education.

“She showed me different feeding positions, helped with proper latching, and taught me how to fix a bad latch,” she said. “She explained how to tell if my baby was swallowing and reassured me about her breathing. After that, my pain was gone, and I finally felt confident.”

For the new dad, the reassurance extended beyond learning how to care for a newborn — it directly affected his ability to balance family life with military service.

“Bringing our baby home felt unreal at first,” he said. “I was in shock realizing I was now responsible for a new life.”

Starks said hands-on guidance helped address concerns he did not know how to navigate on his own.

“I was worried about her breathing and her skin,” he said. “April explained what was normal and made sure we understood.”

“When your Family is taken care of, it allows you to focus on your duties without constant

worry,” Starks said. “That peace of mind is critical for readiness.”

Both parents emphasized how meaningful the support they received was during a vulnerable transition.

“It meant everything to have someone walk us through things step by step,” My’Kia said. “Her patience, kindness and genuine care showed how supportive the people at Fort Polk truly are.”

Starks echoed that sentiment.

“It showed that the military community supports its Soldiers and their families beyond professional responsibilities,” he said.

Support for new parents at BJACH is complemented by education and resources provided through Fort Polk installation partners.

Yadira Roman, a registered nurse with the New Parent Support Program, said the free and voluntary program provides education, support and resources to expectant parents and families with children from birth to age 3.

“NPSP focuses on healthy child development, safety and strengthening family resilience,” Roman said.

The program serves active-duty service members, spouses, families and veterans, offering evidence-based education, personalized support and access to resources that promote safe sleep, infant care, bonding and parental well-being.

Looking back, My’Kia described the experience as life changing. “April took the time to answer our questions and help us feel more confident as new parents,” she said. “She genuinely cares about mothers and families.”

Her advice to others navigating early parenthood is simple.

“Never hesitate to ask for help,” My’Kia said. “There is always more to learn and having someone with experience can make a huge difference.”

April Williams, RN, a supervisory clinical nurse in the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital OB/GYN Clinic, provides newborn education to My’Kia Starks and Spc. LaMichael Starks, assigned to the 84th Combat Engineer Company, Infantry, 710th Light Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, during a follow-up visit. Post-delivery education and support help new military parents navigate the transition home and strengthen family readiness. (U.S. Army photo)

BJACH earns Gold Seal of Approval for quality and safety

By Jean Clavette Graves

BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital has once again earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval®, reaffirming the hospital's commitment to delivering safe, high-quality care to Soldiers, Families, and the Fort Polk community.

The Gold Seal of Approval is a nationally and internationally recognized symbol of quality that reflects a health care organization's compliance with The Joint Commission's rigorous performance standards. BJACH underwent a comprehensive on-site evaluation that examined patient care, clinical processes, safety practices, and organizational performance.

The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest accrediting body, evaluating health care organizations to promote continuous improvement and patient safety.

"This accreditation is an objective evaluation of our hospital's performance," said Ria Moore, a registered nurse and The Joint Commission coordinator for BJACH. "It demonstrates our unwavering commitment to providing safe, high-quality care to every patient. More importantly, it shows that quality and safety are not something we focus on only during a survey — they are part of what we do every day."

BJACH is surveyed every three years; however, hospital leaders emphasize that quality and patient safety are sustained year-round. Accreditation standards are embedded into daily operations across inpatient, outpatient, ancillary, and administrative departments.

"To ensure continuous improvement, we've moved away from infrequent, paper-based exercises and toward a more automated, user-friendly approach," Moore said. "We conduct regular patient-care reviews that follow care processes across departments, review data consistently, and address any breakdowns in care as they occur. This creates a culture where quality is everyone's responsibility."

Stacy Hall, a registered nurse and chief of clinical quality management for BJACH, said Joint Commission accreditation strengthens patient safety and risk management by reinforcing evidence-based practices throughout the hospital.

"Joint Commission standards provide the foundation for a proactive approach to patient safety," Hall said. "They guide how we implement clinical practice guidelines, measure performance, and improve outcomes. By adhering to these standards, we promote consistent, high-quality care, stronger teamwork, and a safer environment for both patients and staff."

Hall added that accreditation aligns with the Defense Health Agency's focus on high-reliability health care and supports BJACH's mission.



Graphic illustration highlighting Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital earning The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for quality and safety at Fort Polk. The Gold Seal of Approval is an internationally recognized symbol reflecting a health care organization's compliance with rigorous performance standards for patient safety and quality of care. (U.S. Army graphic by Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital)

"The principles behind Joint Commission accreditation emphasize leadership engagement, continuous improvement, and a strong culture of safety," Hall said. "Those principles guide how we care for our patients and support our staff every day."

Col. Patrick W. Miller, hospital commander, said the achievement reflects BJACH's values and the culture the team works to uphold every day.

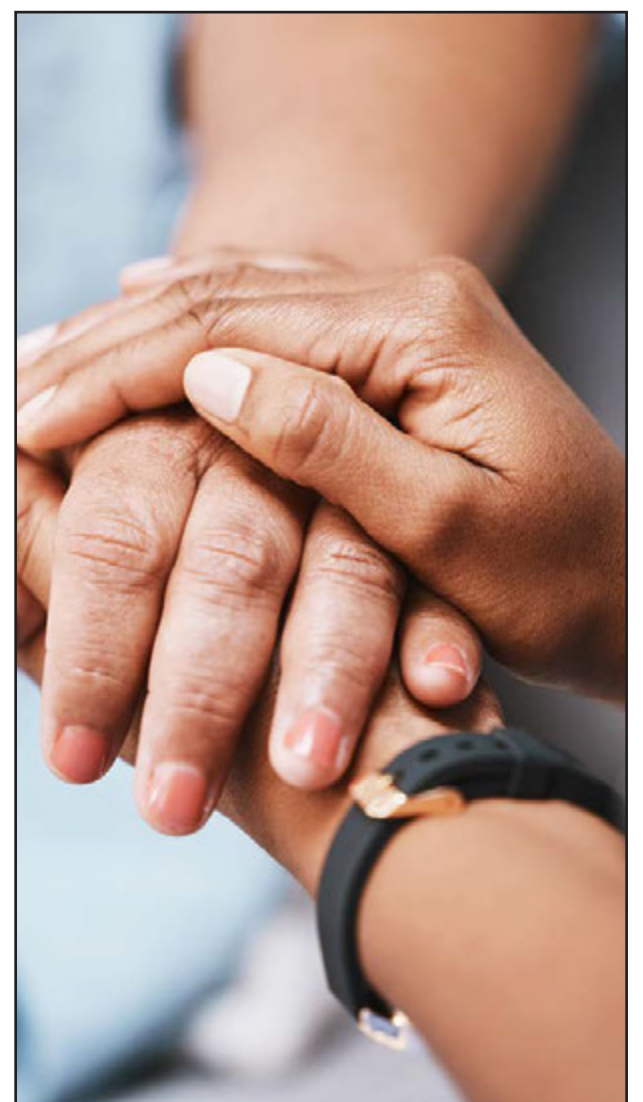
"This accreditation is a testament to the professionalism and teamwork of our BJACH staff," Miller said. "It reflects a culture rooted in caring for our patients, supporting one another, and remaining committed to providing safe, high-quality care for the Soldiers, Families, and community we serve."

For patients and Families, the Gold Seal of Approval offers reassurance.

"When patients see the Gold Seal, they can be confident that BJACH has voluntarily undergone a rigorous evaluation and met the highest standards of care," Moore said. "It reflects our promise to continually improve and to provide the best possible care to those who trust us with their health."

Hospital leaders emphasized that accreditation is not simply about passing an inspection, but about accountability, transparency, and sustained excellence.

"Earning Joint Commission accreditation again shows that we care — about our pa-



tients, our staff, and our community," Moore said. "We want to be better tomorrow than we were today."

DENTAL

ASSISTING PROGRAM

AT FT POLK DENTAC

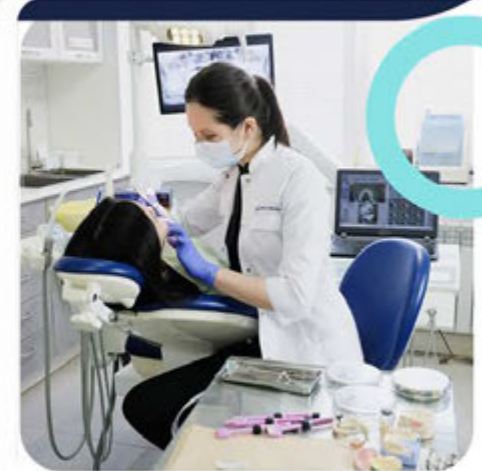


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Red Cross**

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REQUIREMENTS

- 🌀 U.S. citizenship required
- 🌀 Must have valid military ID
- 🌀 Minimum 18 years old



PROGRAM INFORMATION SESSION

*Tuesday, August 19th 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

*Thursday, August 21st 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

Location: Building 220 Briefing Room

Sessions will be an opportunity for potential questions on eligibility, time commitment and other information about the program

CONTACT US

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Fresh flavors meet fresh savings as Salad Wednesday returns

By Main Post Exchange public affairs

DALLAS – Eating healthy has never been so easy. Diners can stack the savings and toss the guilt at Army & Air Force Exchange Service restaurants with Salad Wednesday.

The healthy eating program is part of the Exchange's BE FIT 360 initiative, diners save \$2 on any entrée salad priced at \$4 or higher at participating restaurants. MILITARY STAR® cardmembers save an additional 10% off their salad purchase when using their card.

"The Exchange recognizes that healthy habits don't require big leaps, but small consistent choices can drive meaningful results," said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Rich Martinez, the Exchange's senior enlisted advisor. "Salad Wednesday is the Exchange's commitment to fueling our military's wellness goals by offering healthier, better-for-you options one meal at a time."

For more information on the Exchange's BE FIT 360 program, visit <https://publicaffairs-sme.com/Community/befit/>.



MAIN POST CHAPEL **FOOD PANTRY HOURS**

MONDAY-THURSDAY
9-11 A.M. • 2-4 P.M.

FRIDAY
9-11 A.M. • 2-3 P.M.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY
CLOSED

Wheelock Fitness Center

For more
information call
726-780-1415.



Current exercise class schedule

Monday

Zumba Toning
at 4:45 p.m.

Spin class
at 6 p.m.

Tuesday

Zumba Toning
at 4:45 p.m.

R.I.P.P.E.D.
at 6 p.m.

Wednesday

Zumba
at 6 p.m.

Thursday

Spin class
at 6 p.m.

Each class is \$3



RECRUIT  MILITARY®

MILITARY COMMUNITY VIRTUAL HIRING EVENT

TUESDAY, FEB 10, 2026

11AM - 3PM ET

TRANSITIONING SERVICE MEMBER & SPOUSE



rmvets.com/TSVCF0226

Join us 30 minutes before the event for an interactive session featuring tips, tools, and best practices.

FROM LOCAL TO REMOTE — OPPORTUNITIES AT EVERY LEVEL

- ✓ PROJECT MANAGEMENT
- ✓ TRANSPORTATION / LOGISTICS
- ✓ MANAGEMENT / SUPERVISION
- ✓ INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
- ✓ GOVERNMENT
- ✓ HUMAN RESOURCES
- ✓ HEALTHCARE
- ✓ AND MORE...

No Federal or DoD endorsement implied

Hiring Our Heroes

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

★★★★ 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.



Register now!

TRANSITION WORKSHOPS

9 AM - 12:30 PM

HIRING FAIR

1:30 - 4 PM

HiringOurHeroes.org/polk

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

Protect People, Pets, Pipes, & Plants from cold weather



People

Minimize time outdoors.
Prepare for power outages.
Check on elderly & other vulnerable people to make sure they're ok.



Pets

Keep your pets warm, dry & indoors as much as possible.
Ensure their food & water doesn't freeze.
Limit outside time & keep them bundled up.



Pipes

Insulate pipes if possible.
Open up sink cabinets to expose pipes to heated air.
Disconnect hoses & turn off water to sprinklers.



Plants

Know their temperature thresholds.
If possible, cover them before the cold weather sets in to help retain some heat.

weather.gov



After the Winter Storm: **POWER OUTAGE**



Be careful with heat sources

Candles and space heaters are a fire risk.
Also stay warm by bundling up and keeping doors closed, placing towels in cracks.



Practice portable generator safety

Use outdoors, at least 20 feet away from doors/windows/garages to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Follow instructions on proper use.



Check on neighbors

Once your family is safe, check on your neighbors and the vulnerable to make sure they are OK.

weather.gov



IMPORTANT INFORMATION QR CODES

FORT POLK SOCIAL MEDIA AND PODCAST



facebook.com/usarmyfortpolk



facebook.com/JRTCandFTPolk



facebook.com/fortpolkmwr



youtube.com/@JRTCandFortPolk



x.com/JRTC_FortPolk



MWR



polk.armymwr.com

CORVIAS



polk.corviaspm.com

BJACH



bayne-jones.tricare.mil

SUICIDE PREVENTION



home.army.mil/polk/about/suicide-prevention

ACS



polk.armymwr.com/programs/army-community-services

DES



home.army.mil/polk/about/garrison-directorates-and-support-offices/directorate-emergency-services

FORT POLK WEBSITE, MAGAZINE AND MAPA



WEBSITE
home.army.mil/polk



GUARDIAN
home.army.mil/polk/about/garrison-directorates-and-support-offices/public-affairs/guardian



MAPA
My Army Post App

LOCAL RADIO STATIONS



westcentralsbest.com/todays_country_1057



kjae935.com

Using your phone, scan the QR codes to access the variety of Fort Polk information listed above!

Other ways to get the most up-to-date info

Warrior Information Exchange: Engage with leadership, find out about upcoming events and more! (Held the first Wednesday of every month, 10 a.m. at the Warrior Center)

Electronic Indoor and Outdoor Boards: Fort Polk has multiple indoor and outdoor electronic marquees which display upcoming events and important information.

Explore Louisiana: Looking for fun, upcoming events happening off post? Visit explorelouisiana.com or scan the QR code to the right.

EMERGENCY ALERTS



everbridge.com/products/nixie

EXCHANGE



facebook.com/FortPolkExchange

CRISIS PHONE NUMBERS



home.army.mil/polk/contact/contact-us/crisis-phone-numbers

EXPLORE LOUISIANA



explorelouisiana.com

Winter Storm Planning Timeline

A few days out

If the forecast calls for winter weather, start preparing now.



Have emergency supplies for your home & car



Check your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors



Replenish fuel for your car and heating sources

The day before

Forecast accuracy continues to improve, so keep checking the latest.



Adjust plans



Have multiple ways to receive Warnings



Bring pets indoors and ensure they have water

During & After

Remain vigilant and stay informed. Drive only if necessary.



Check on neighbors and family



Properly ventilate emergency heat sources



Keep generators at least 20 feet from your home



Take it easy when shoveling

weather.gov





Shepard High School JRTC conducted a tour of several JRTC facilities on 22 February 2026. The cadets toured 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment and learned about Army aircraft and maintenance. Cadets visited the Riggers and learned about parachute operations. Cadets participated in weapons training utilizing the Engagement Skills Trainer. The day closed out with a visit to the Main Post Exchange. (U.S. Army photo by Gabe Walker)

Corvias Foundation Selected for Combined Federal Campaign

By Corvias

WARWICK, RI. — Corvias Foundation, a non-profit committed to the educational success of military-connected families and students, has been selected as an approved charity for the Combined Federal Campaign.

This distinction follows a rigorous federal vetting process that ensures participating organizations meet the highest standards of accountability, governance, and impact.

The Combined Federal Campaign is the official workplace giving program of the federal government.

For more than 60 years, federal employees, retirees, and contractors have used the CFC, the official workplace giving program of the federal government, to contribute more than \$9 billion to help those in need.

Now, they can further support the educational and career goals of military families by pledging funds to Corvias Foundation. To direct CFC donations to Corvias Foundation, choose CFC #86373.

“The Combined Federal Campaign represents a trusted tradition of giving,” said Julie Allen, executive director of Corvias Foundation. “This new partnership allows us to connect with those who share our commitment to



supporting military-connected students and families. Every pledge helps opens doors to brighter futures.”

Since its founding in 2006, Corvias Foundation has supported more than 500 military-connected families with more than \$20 million in scholarship awards. Through Corvias Foundation’s Opportunity Hubs, it is now expanding its

mission to pool resources, tools, and opportunities, connecting community members with local, regional, and national partners.

This partnership provides access to resources, shared learning, and national visibility, strengthening the Foundation’s ability to deliver high-impact programs.

Visit [CorviasFoundation.org](https://www.CorviasFoundation.org) to learn more.

Corvias winterization tips

- Turn your heat on and set the temperature to at least 65 degrees.
- If temperatures drop below freezing, open all cabinet doors under the bathroom and kitchen sinks, drip all faucets and make sure that both hot and cold lines are slightly opened and disconnect hoses that are attached to outdoor plumbing fixtures and make sure they are turned off.
- Keep garage doors closed.
- Report all leaks immediately so we can get a technician out.
- Emergency Work Order Line: 866-436-2047
- If you are going to be out of town for seven days or more, please get with your neighborhood community center and sign up to be on the House Watch.



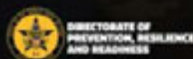


THE MILITARY CRISIS
LINE IS AVAILABLE 24/7.
DIAL **988** AND **PRESS 1**.

Call. Text. Chat.

988lifeline.org/chat

★ U.S. ARMY



Women are not the only victims of sexual abuse and assault.

More sexual assaults occur between November
and January than any other time of the year.

RESPECT your fellow Soldiers, **BE** an active bystander —
STEP IN and **ACT** if you see inappropriate behavior.

LIVE YOUR ARMY VALUES.



SHARP 24/7 Hotline: 337-718-7272
DoD Safe Helpline: 1-877-995-5247
www.safehelpline.org



INCOMING SOLDIERS

WELCOME TO JRTC AND FORT POLK

For **FREE** transportation to **FORT POLK**
please call
(337) 718-8820

or **SCAN CODE**



IN-PROCESSING STAFF DUTY DESK
CALL (726) 780-2160
JRTC ROTATIONAL TRAINING UNITS
(RTU) CALL (337) 653- 3488

**NATIONAL GUARD AND ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS
CONTACT YOUR UNIT FOR TRANSPORTATION**

Stay in the know
at Fort Polk with

MY ARMY POST APP

- ✓ Upcoming events
- ✓ Weather alerts
- ✓ Gate hours and information
- ✓ Maintenance orders
- ✓ Fitness facilities
- ✓ Dining and more!





ACS & Prevention Center

New Parent Support Program

Nurses provide education, support, and resources during pregnancy, newborn period, throughout infancy and up to 36 months of age

The Nurturing Nest

Cozy environment for parents and their baby at ACS & Prevention Center

Baby Boot Camp & Infant Massage, office visitation

Home Visitation within a 50 mile radius of Fort Polk

For more information, call: 786-780-1072

Scan our QR Code for one of our Nurses to call you





Infant Massage Class

Weekly sessions with your baby

Enhances bonding and attachment

Promotes growth and development

Calms fussiness and crying

Eases gas and constipation

Provides relaxation for baby and parent

New Parent Support Program

Call: 786-780-1072 or 337-718-8839

Scan our QR Code to have a NPSP nurse contact you



February 2026

Army Community Service and Prevention Center



1591 Bell Richard Avenue
Building 920
Fort Polk, LA 71549



Family Advocacy

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Teen Workshop @ CYS Teen Center

February 5, 4:30-5:30pm

Parent Workshop @ CYS Teen Center

February 12, 4:30-5:30pm

Teen Dance @ CYS Teen Center

February 27, 6:00-10:00pm

Annual Dynamics of Family Violence Training

Soldiers only – Units Welcome

February 9, 9:30-11:30am

Parenting with Love-N-Logic

February 9, 12:00-3:00pm (session 1 of 2)

February 10, 12:00-3:00pm (session 2 of 2)

Anger & Stress Management

February 12, 11:00am-12:30pm

EFMP

Storybook Creations @ Library

February 11, 11:30am-12:30pm

Playtime @ PlayTown Cafe

February 21, 10:00-12:00am

Volunteer Corps

VMIS Training

February 6, 10:00-11:00am

Employment Readiness

Federal Resume Workshop (Virtual)

February 10, 10:00-11:30am

How to Locate a Job/Employer (Virtual)

February 17, 10:00-11:30am

Hiring Fair Workshop (Virtual)

February 19, 10:00-11:30am

Hiring Fair

February 27, 10:00am-1:00pm

To register for ACSPC classes
Please contact (726) 780-1073
or scan the QR code.



More class information on MAPA

Army Community Service & Prevention Center



Forging the Warrior Spirit

Employment Readiness Program – Hiring Fair

February 27th from 10:00am-1:00pm

Get the most out of the Hiring Fair

Join us virtually on February 19th from 10:00-11:30am for a Hiring Fair Prep Workshop. Learn how to prepare a resume, create an elevator speech and perform well at an on-the-spot interview.

Mobilization & Deployment

SFRG Key Contact (Virtual)

February 2, 5:00-6:30pm

February 3, 1:00-2:30pm

SFRG Informal Funds (Virtual)

February 9, 5:00-6:30pm

February 10, 1:00-2:30pm

Command Family Readiness Representative (CFRR) (Virtual)

February 4, 9:00am-12:00pm

Financial Readiness

Home Buying

February 2, 9:00-10:00am

Finances and PCS

February 2, 12:30-1:30pm

LES & Budget Review

February 6, 1:00-2:00pm

Finances for Marriage

February 19, 9:00-10:00am

Finances for Divorce

February 19, 10:03-11:30

Promotion and Your Finances

February 19, 1:00-2:00pm

AER Campaign

Appointed Soldiers Only

Unit Representative

February 6, 9:30-11:00am

Unit Representative Training

February 20, 9:30-11:00

SHARP

SHARP Annual Refresher Training

Each Thursday at 1:30pm

Army Community Service & Prevention Center



Forging the Warrior Spirit

Financial Readiness Counseling & Army Emergency Relief	(726) 780-0384
Army Family Action Plan	(520) 725-7138
Army Volunteer Corps	(520) 725-7138
Employment Readiness Program	(726) 780-0385
Relocation Readiness Program	(726) 780-0386
Mobilization & Deployment	(726) 780-0387
SHARP Prevention	(726) 780-1013
Family Advocacy Program	(726) 780-1072
Exceptional Family Member Program	(726) 780-1162
Victim Advocacy Program	(726) 780-0509
Risk Reduction Program	(726) 780-1187
Army Substance Abuse Program	(726) 780-1140
Employee Assistance Program	(726) 780-1140
Suicide Prevention	(726) 780-1187

ACSPC Front Desk: (726) 780-1073

Domestic Violence Hotline: (337) 718-8837

HOPELINE Child Abuse & Domestic Abuse Reporting: (726) 780-2615

SHARP 24/7 Hotline: (337) 718-7272



New Parent Support

PlayMorning @ PlayTown Café

February 5 & 19, 10:00-11:00am

Baby Boot Camp

February 12, 1:00-4:00pm

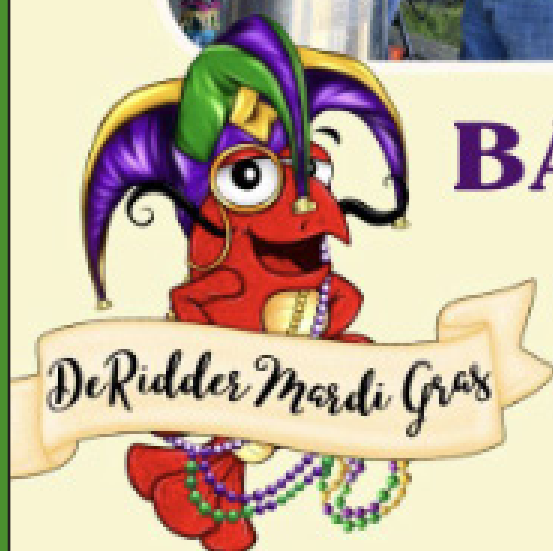
Understanding Childbirth

February 17, 1:00-4:00pm

Fatherhood

February 24, 1:00-4:00pm

All classes are held at the Army Community Service and Prevention Center, 1591 Bell Richard Avenue, Bldg. 920, Fort Polk, LA 71459 unless otherwise noted.



BATTLE FOR THE PADDLE 2026 Gumbo Cook-Off

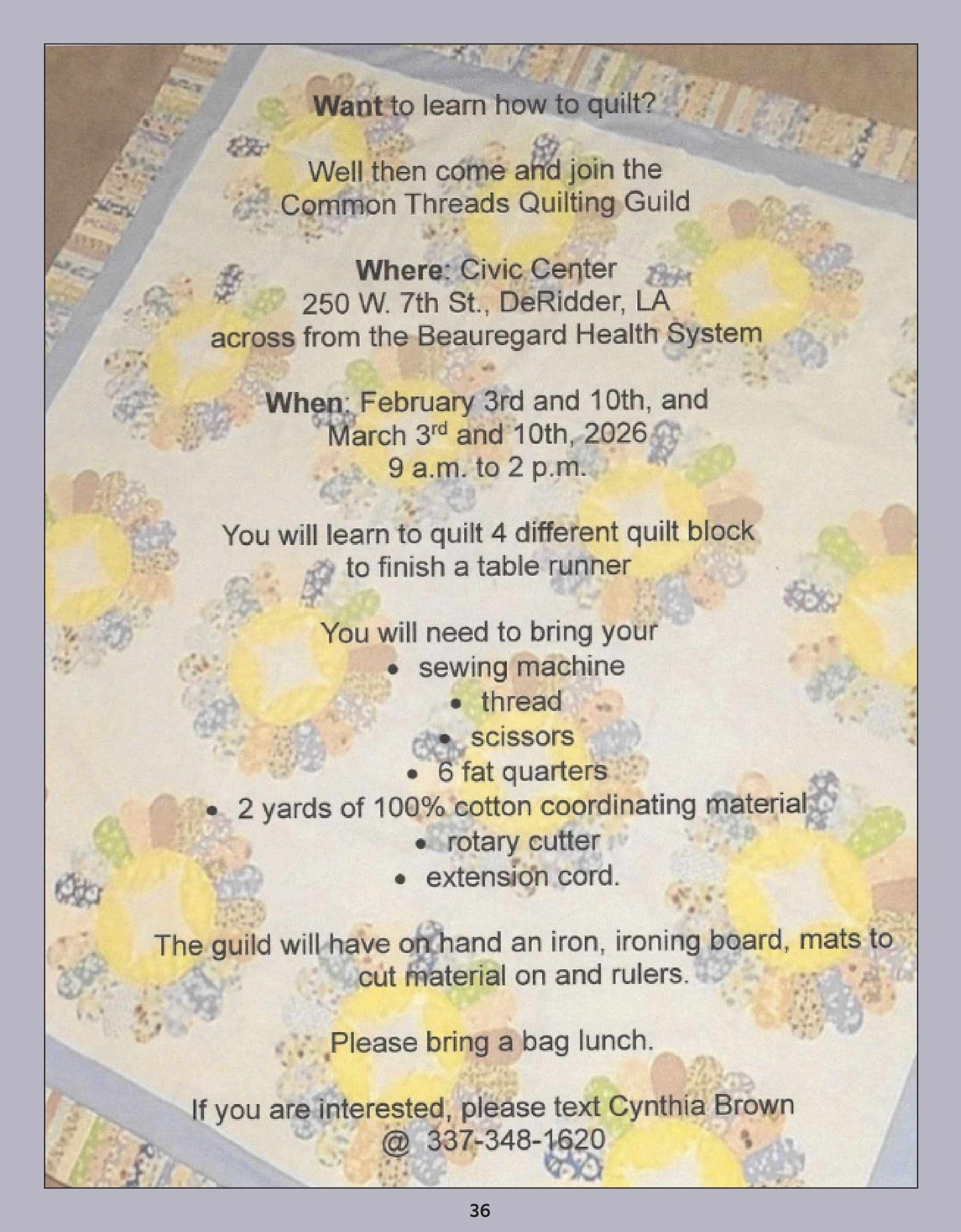


**Saturday
February 14, 2026
7:AM to 2:PM**

Prizes to be awarded in 3 Divisions:
Business/Commercial Division
Civic Organization Division
Individual Division
1st place: Custom Trophy Paddle &
Custom Apron (3)
2nd & 3rd Custom Apron (3)
Overall Fan Favorite: Custom Belt

 membersvcbcc@bellsouth.net

www.beauchamber.org 



Want to learn how to quilt?

Well then come and join the
Common Threads Quilting Guild

Where: Civic Center
250 W. 7th St., DeRidder, LA
across from the Beauregard Health System

When: February 3rd and 10th, and
March 3rd and 10th, 2026
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

You will learn to quilt 4 different quilt block
to finish a table runner

You will need to bring your

- sewing machine
 - thread
 - scissors
 - 6 fat quarters
- 2 yards of 100% cotton coordinating material
 - rotary cutter
 - extension cord.

The guild will have on hand an iron, ironing board, mats to
cut material on and rulers.

Please bring a bag lunch.

If you are interested, please text Cynthia Brown
@ 337-348-1620

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

OPERATIONS SECURITY



BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SHARE ONLINE

Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy for Intelligence & Security, Security Directorate

FOLLOW JRTC AND FORT POLK ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM AND YOUTUBE

GET CONNECTED



Be there. Shelter heroes help their neighbors in Louisiana when they need it most.

Join the Red Cross shelter heroes in your community. You can be the crucial lifeline for people in need where you live, amid increasing disasters. Here's how you can help make a difference:

- * Support disaster emergency shelters near you
- * Provide meals, comfort & more to your neighbors
- * Receive preparedness training & resources
- * Make your community more resilient
- * Set your annual availability in two-week shifts
- * Join a special force of hundreds of humanitarians

Turn your compassion into action.

To sign up, get more information & find upcoming trainings, contact our team today. Use the QR code below or contact:

redcross.org/ShelterHeroes
ShelterHeroes@redcross.org



Don't Be a Passive BYSTANDER

**If you See
Something
Suspicious,
REPORT IT!**

**In most cases,
concerning behavior
was observed
BEFORE an attack.**



Always Ready, Always Alert
Because someone is depending on you



Fun fact

- “Laissez les fêter” is a French phrase that means “Let them celebrate.”
- It’s illegal to drink alcohol in the streets of New Orleans.
- The first Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans was in 1699.
- The Krewe of the Comets is the oldest and most famous Mardi Gras krewe in New Orleans.
- The parade floats are decorated with thousands of colorful beads and other decorations.
- The parade floats are often decorated with large, colorful floats.



facts about Mardi Gras

“Laissez les bon temps rouler” is the unofficial slogan of Mardi Gras. It is Cajun for “Let the good times roll.”

It is illegal to ride on a parade float without wearing a Mardi Gras mask.

The first Mardi Gras beads were made of glass and hand knotted onto necklaces. They were introduced in 1921 by the Krewe of Rex.

The Krewe of Barkus, created in 1993, is the only canine parade krewe in New Orleans. They are a nonprofit that raises money for the adoption of homeless dogs in New Orleans.

Plastic cups thrown during the Mardi Gras parades are called “New Orleans throwware.”

