



The DOUBLE EAGLE

"Twice the Citizen! Army Strong!"

MARCH 2016, Vol. 4 No. 12



INSTRUCTORS OF THE YEAR

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Sgt. 1st Class JaDrion A. Whitfield, with the 80th Training Command, Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Griffin with the 83rd U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, and Capt. Edgar Borgella, also with the 83rd USARRTC, were named the U.S. Army Reserve Instructors of the Year for 2015. They will represent the U.S. Army Reserve at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Instructor of the Year competition in April. (Photo by Brian Godette/U.S. Army Reserve)



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DOUBLE EAGLE





MARCH 2016 VOL. 4, No. 12

**THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
HEADQUARTERS,
U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE,
FORT BRAGG, N.C.**

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS AWARDS:**"BEST IN THE ARMY RESERVE" ONLINE PUBLICATION**

WINNER: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015

DEPT. OF THE ARMY

MAJ. GEN. KEITH L. WARE AWARD

HONORABLE MENTION: 2013



**CLICK HERE for
Double Eagle back issues.**

Another Year Older

With this edition of the "Double Eagle", the online publication of the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C. completes its fourth year. During this time, we have seen many changes not only in the format and content of this publication but in the U.S. Army Reserve as well.

What started out in April 2012 as the brainchild of then USARC PAO, Col. Ernie Parker, has grown into a regularly read product featuring not only news of the Soldiers and civilians that work in the headquarters but also those who are making news serving across our force of Citizen-Soldiers at home and overseas.

Over the past four years, we have produced 52 issues including special editions covering Sequestration and the U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior competition. Published through the Defense Video & Imagery Distribution System (<https://www.dvidshub.net/publication/451/double-eagle>), the "Double Eagle" has been viewed or downloaded 27,819 times for a 605-time monthly average - far surpassing many other active and reserve component publications published on DVIDS. These numbers do not reflect copies that are printed and distributed.

Through the years we've covered the requisite military topics such as changes of command, Soldier training, distinguished visitors, and Fallen Soldier ceremonies. But we've also featured stories the names and the faces of this command - Hector Morales who retired with a combined 60 years of federal service; Capt. Jason Tolbert who volunteers his time as a youth wrestling coach in Fayetteville; Capt. Don Fontaine who raised awareness of the bone marrow donor program; 5-year-old Ayden Frail, who was fighting Stage 4 Neuroblastoma, received his wish of visiting a U.S. Army Reserve UH-60 Black Hawk unit at Simmons Army Airfield; Staff Sgt. Lynette Collier, the "elder stateswoman" of the 2014 U.S. Army Soldier Show; and Neldia Watson, a retired master sergeant and Equal Opportunity specialist and Diversity Manager. We've featured participants in the Day with the Chief of Staff program, and USARC Double Eagle Effect recipients - those who have gone above and beyond to ensure Soldiers and civilians are taken care of in this headquarters.

We've even tackled the harder subjects such as manpower cuts, Temporary Change of Station Fraud, sexual harassment and sexual assault, and suicide prevention.

Without the "Double Eagle," these stories would most likely have never been told.

As we prepare to enter our fifth year, we can only imagine what the future holds. Thank you for your loyal readership and story ideas. Each one of you have helped make the "Double Eagle" a success. 🇺🇸



Timothy L. Hale
Editor

Timothy L. Hale, a U.S. Air Force veteran, is an award-winning photojournalist and editor of the USARC Double Eagle. He is member of a number of professional organizations to include: Nikon Professional Services, National Press Photographer's Association, and the North Carolina Press Photographer's Association. The views expressed in this column are expressly his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, the Department of the Army, and/or the Department of Defense.

"Steel Sharpens Steel" U.S. Army Reserve selects the 2015 Instructors of the Year

Story & photos by BRIAN GODETTE
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – It's been said the finest weapons the U.S. military has are its Soldiers. To that point, without the tactful guidance of instructors, the U.S. military would arguably have no capable fighting force.

Since 1989, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command has recognized instructors

throughout the Army for their critical job of developing Soldiers, and as the U.S. Army Reserve continues to search for the best examples in the Army to put in front of promising leaders, this year marked the first year the U.S. Army Reserve Command hosted its very own competition to select the best instructor.

Winners from each category – officer, warrant officer, and noncommissioned officer – joined colleagues and guests at the USARC headquarters Feb. 11, 2016, for a ceremony in their honor where they were awarded for their selection as Instructor of the Year.

Capt. Edgar Borgella, assigned



HONOREES. Maj. Gen. Peter S. Lennon, Deputy Commanding General (Support), U.S. Army Reserve, left, stands alongside the 2015 U.S. Army Reserve Instructor of the Year recipients, at USARC headquarters, Feb. 11. Capt. Edgar Borgella, assigned to the 83rd U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Center; Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Griffin, also with the 83rd USARRTC; and Sgt. 1st Class JaDrian A. Whitfield, with the 80th Training Command. Each instructor, representing the officer, warrant officer, and noncommissioned officer category, were honored in the first USARC hosted Instructor of the Year Ceremony held here. They will represent the U.S. Army Reserve at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Instructor of the Year winner competition with the winners announced April, 8.

to the 83rd U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Center; Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Griffin, also with the 83rd USARRTC; and Sgt. 1st Class JaDrian A. Whitfield, with the 80th Training Command; won their respective categories and will represent the U.S. Army Reserve at the TRADOC competition.

"We're a very small population training a very large population," said Master Sgt. Raymundo Soto, 2014 TRADOC and U.S. Army Reserve Instructor of the Year.

USARC G3/5/7 sergeant major, Sgt. Maj. Blaine Huston, acknowledged the importance instructors have on the military population as he provided remarks during the ceremony.

"Steel sharpens steel, and we wouldn't have an Army without you," Huston said.

"It's a great honor. I feel very humbled by it," Whitfield said. "It's an opportunity to provide encouragement for the people that will be coming next and competing."

Whitfield took time to reflect on the significance being an instructor has on all Soldiers.

"Throughout any Soldier's career they are going to be going to different units, they're going to be seeing so many different people, and building different relationships, but I think some of the most important ones that we tend to remember are the people that taught us something important," Whitfield said.

"As instructors it gives us the opportunity to be the person that gives them (Soldiers) some long lasting knowledge or guidance that will help them in their career and hopefully their lives," Whitfield said.

Providing instruction, for Whitfield, is more than just a single facet of her motivation. The Citizen-Soldier embodies the full process of learning as she

performs her civilian job as well.

"Working on the civilian side I help to facilitate training for Army intelligence units, so I'm kind of at the back end of it, able to see the product of what instructors are producing and the reflection of the training that takes place in the units," Whitfield said. "That provides me additional motivation while I'm on the platform, in uniform, to make sure that Soldiers are ready to take that knowledge and perform well once they leave the schoolhouse."

Soto, having experienced being in the seat of Instructor of the Year, and being a dual-hatted U.S. Army Reserve Soldier like Whitfield, and many of the Soldiers they teach, understood the relationship between their military job and civilian careers.

"I'm teaching several of my employees on my civilian side how to be an instructor, so when they get up and teach something they use the Army Learning Model," Soto said. "I change the words around because they might not be able to understand certain acronyms, but for me the military side of being an instructor has really boosting the overall effect of my civilian career."

"It's an art to being an instructor," Soto said. "You can't script your art of instructing, because your audience is going to make you change within a second how you're going to ask your next question, or move on to the next block of instruction."

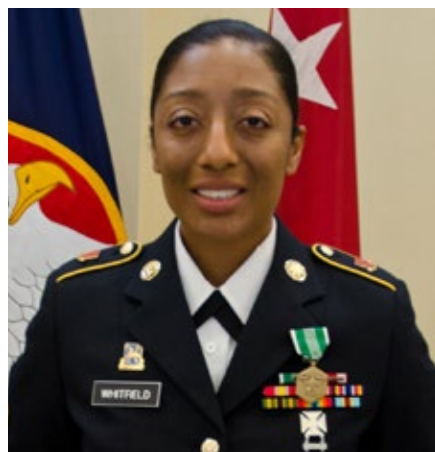
As Whitfield and Soto stood amongst their colleagues in the field of instructional training, the consensus that the Soldiers come first was a common theme.

"It's reassuring to know that we are making a positive influence on the Soldiers out there and giving them the tools so that they can be successful," said Griffin, who is a chief instructor at the 83rd USARRTC.

Griffin honed in on what success in the field means to him.

"To get the interaction with the students, to try to draw out their experiences and build on that so they have something to relate to, is important," Griffin said. "If other people are leading, maintaining, if they're doing good things, and if they're improving, that is my reward."

That intangible reward may have been one of the



Sgt. 1st Class JaDrian A. Whitfield
80th Training Command

INSTRUCTORS

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reasons why Griffin and his colleagues made it this far as instructors of the year. The more tangible aspects began with scoring sheets.

“What separates a lot of instructors is the Army Learning Model,” Soto

said. “Do you know the Army Learning Model and are you using the Army Learning Model?”

Prior to being selected as winners the instructors were graded by a panel of judges on their techniques via video, during an actual classroom instruction period.

“Whenever we start a briefing there’s a motivator, and the motivator could be ‘hey everybody, here’s a joke’, and you caught everyone’s attention,” Soto said.

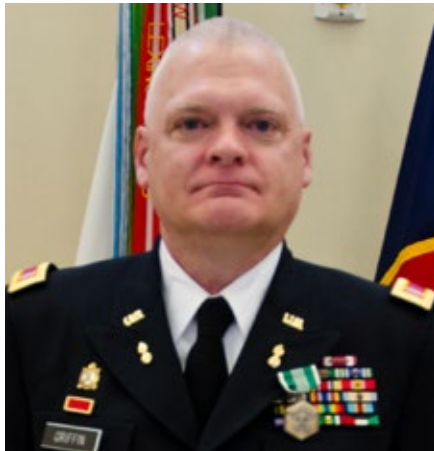
“What the scoring sheet does is look at small things as a motivator and rates you one, two, three, four, five,” Soto said. “So to get to the levels that the instructors are here you’d have to have the highest score in that overall scoring sheet.”

The meticulous grading sheet measured things like eye contact, the number of times the instructor said “uh’s”, mannerisms, job aides, and how many times they looked at the slides.

The end of grading saw the top three candidates separated from the pack, and in line to be rewarded for their achievements.

“It’s shocking and overwhelming because the intent was never to look for awards,” said Borgella, course director at the 83rd USARRTC. “It was just to do the best job you can do for the Soldier, doing the best job you can do, period.”

All the instructors agreed with Borgella on what the actual award was.



Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Griffin
83rd U.S. Army Reserve Readiness
Training Command

“Whenever I get a ‘thank you’ from the Soldier, that’s my award right there,” Borgella said.

“This award, although I accept it, is a team award for me,” Borgella said. “My success is still based off my team, making sure I look good, sound good, and provide the best information possible, so I accept this achievement with my team, whether they are here or not.”

The tie-in to all the instructors at the ceremony and those they instruct was simple for Borgella – they are all Soldiers striving for a common goal of success, and the instructors are doing their part.

“For me its knowledge and experience, but it’s also passion,” Borgella said. “I sat in your shoes,



Capt. Edgar Borgella
83rd U.S. Army Reserve Readiness
Training Command

I know what its like to not have everything you need to be successful. My desire as a leader and an instructor is to give you everything you need to be successful.”

Whitfield, Griffin, and Borgella have proven to be

successful and wished to push others to do the same.

“This is a program that should continue,” Whitfield said. “I think it helps others push to reach that same goal and in the process of doing that it will bring up the standard of instructors and provide better quality training to Soldiers.”

The USARC-hosted Instructor of the Year ceremony highlighted what right looks like in the U.S. Army Reserve and the U.S. Army, and according to Huston, the instructors who won represent a force which trains the finest weapon in our military, our Soldiers.

The TRADOC Instructor of the Year winner is scheduled to be announced April 8. 🇺🇸



TOP INSTRUCTORS. U.S. Army Reserve Instructor of the Year recipients, above, Capt. Edgar Borgella, assigned to the 83rd U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Center; Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Griffin, also with the 83rd USARRTC; and Sgt. 1st Class JaDrian A. Whitfield, with the 80th Training Command, listen to remarks during the ceremony.

Maj. Gen. Megan Tatu, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Reserve, congratulates Capt. Edgar Borgella, course director assigned to the 83rd U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, for his selection as the U.S. Army Reserve Instructor of the Year (Officer).

"Livin' the dream"

Drill sergeant serves as New York firefighter



Story & photos by
Sgt. 1st Class. BRIAN HAMILTON
108th Training Command

CALLED OUT. Staff Sgt. Russell Vidler, 98th Training Division (IET) Drill Sergeant of the Year and firefighter for the city of Ithaca, peers out of the window of engine 901 while on the way to a call in Ithaca, N.Y., Dec. 16, 2015. Vidler has worked as a firefighter with the Ithaca Fire Department for two years now.

ITHACA, N.Y. — *Citizen Soldiers often take very separate and distinct career paths from their chosen Army fields.*

Staff Sgt. Russell Vidler, 98th Training Division (IET) Drill Sergeant of the Year, is no exception.

Vidler left the active component in 2004 to pursue a degree in history. Not unlike any other 22-year-old coming out of the Army, his plans were subject to change at a moment's notice.

"I know I've always wanted to be in the Army and I know that being a fireman is something that I've always wanted to do. The camaraderie in both is amazing. We're like a family," Vidler said.

"The biggest thing that I missed coming off active duty was the camaraderie. After the Army I spent four years in college and I had one friend. Four years, one friend. I missed the camaraderie terribly."

Having earned his degree after leaving the Army, Vidler joined the Army Reserve in 2009 as a drill sergeant and later landed a job in California working private security.

That's when he got the call from the fire department back home in Ithaca, New York.

"Everybody loves the fire service. It doesn't matter what we get called out for, people know we're there to help," said Vidler. "I love being the guy that when things go south people call. And the same goes for everyone in that ready room."

Peter Snell, one of Vidler's co-workers and driver of engine 901, started out as a volunteer in 1993. He was hired by Ithaca in 1999 and has worked with a whole host of veterans throughout the years.

"This job comes with quite a bit of downtime but has a tendency to go very south, very quickly.



NIGHT DUTY. Vidler, top, prepares his gear in preparation for the night at Central Station. Vidler, bottom, poses in front of Engine 902 as fellow firefighter Peter Snell looks on behind the wheel of the truck.

See **VIDLER** Pg. 10

VIDLER

from Pg. 9



You take comfort in knowing that when the s--t hits the fan those guys are going to be around to have your back,” Snell said.

Vidler, who by all is considered a rookie in the fire service, says training has been the key to success with his civilian job and also in the Army. He says it is that training that will get you through the day and get you home safe at night.

“There is a direct correlation between being in the Army and being a firefighter,” Vidler said. “Training is paramount in both. That’s what we do when we’re not on a mission in the Army and also when we’re not on a call here.”

Assistant Chief Rob Covert, who has served with the department Ithaca Fire Department for 23 years, took the correlation a step further.

“I think the choice to serve the community and public is a large motivator for most of these guys. I think that’s why most people join the military and when veterans look to transition to the civilian world a lot of them look to places like the fire department to continue that service,” he said.

“Like the military, the fire service is a very team oriented

BLOODIED BUT NOT BEATEN. Vidler, 98th Training Division (IET) Drill Sergeant of the Year, is given first aid after injuring himself at the confidence course during the 108th Training Command’s combined Best Warrior and Drill Sergeant of the Year competition held at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., March 25, 2015. Vidler won the competition for the 98th and went on to face the winner from the 95th Training Division (IET) at the TRADOC level competition.

business and people coming out of the military enjoy working in that type of environment,” Covert said. “Our profession gives them the opportunity to continue to work together as a group in order to solve problems for the community. Working in that type of environment and the camaraderie that comes along with it is something that our veterans really seem to excel at.”

Vidler said he plans to continue serving in both

the Army Reserve and the fire service for as long as they’ll have him; hoping to commission someday in the Army Reserve and climb the ladder to assistant chief with the fire department.

“I couldn’t imagine sitting behind a desk doing the same thing every day. Just showing up to work each day and not knowing what to expect is an awesome feeling. I can’t see myself doing anything other than this. I’m livin’ the dream.” 🇺🇸



FAMILY MATTERS. Vidler poses for a picture with his family after the awards ceremony at the 2015 U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Drill Sergeant of the Year competition held at Fort Jackson, S.C., Sept. 14, 2015. Vidler placed second for the Army Reserve in the competition that year.



Healing and serving in Senegal

Story & photo by Capt. CHARLES AN
U.S. Army Africa

DAKAR, Senegal – U.S. Army Reserve medical professionals from around the world gathered in Dakar, Senegal, Jan. 18-29, partnering with Senegalese military medical professionals for Medical Readiness Training Exercise 16-1.

U.S. Army Africa conducts MEDRETE exercises in different partner nations throughout the year to increase medical capabilities and proficiencies. MEDRETE 16-1 is the first of many exercises to be coordinated by USARAF this year and brought U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers to Dakar to share and learn with their Senegalese counterparts.

“The most exciting thing for me to learn was traditional intubation with a laryngoscope on a patient that is under general anesthesia,” said Staff Sgt. Angela Langley, health care specialist for the 399th Combat Support Hospital based in Taunton, Massachusetts. “I was trained to use other intubation devices,” said Langley.

Langley and six other

HEALING HANDS. General surgeons U.S. Army Lt. Col. Charles Boggs, of 345th Combat Support Hospital, and Senegalese Defense Force Maj. Diop Balla, of Hospital Militaire de Ouakam, perform surgery on a patient to fix a hernia in Dakar, Senegal, Jan. 25. Boggs and other members of the U.S. Army Reserve are in partnership with the SDF to conduct a U.S. Army Africa Medical Readiness Training Exercise from Jan. 18-29. This exercise is the first of many scheduled throughout the year to demonstrate the strong partnership the U.S. has with its African partners.

members from her unit were joined by Lt. Col. Charles Boggs, a general surgeon for the 345th Combat Support Hospital, St. Petersburg, Florida, to form the medical team that crossed the Atlantic Ocean to Senegal.

“There was an opportunity to help train, and also receive training from African medical assets,” said Boggs on why he joined the 399th for this exercise.

Boggs recently returned from Afghanistan, serving as a surgeon for special operations teams, just months prior to coming to Senegal. Once the medical team was complete, they met with other U.S. Army Reserve personnel from Medical Support Unit-Europe of the 7th Civil Support Command in Germany, and the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), based in Atlanta, to help with the mission.

One of the Soldiers supporting the exercise was 1st Lt. Alyson Ochs, an emergency room nurse for the Medical Support Unit-Europe in Germany.

“I’ve been fortunate to wear two hats on this particular mission. I’m assigned as the finance officer, but I also act as an emergency nurse,” Ochs said.

“I’ve been able to rotate to the various clinics to work with our Senegalese counterparts,” said Ochs.

The U.S. medical team

integrated into the radiology and pediatric clinics, as well as the emergency and operating rooms, assisting with day-to-day operations where they learned how their Senegalese partners conducted medical operations.

“I’ve learned a lot. They really rely more on assessment skills and physical assessments rather than technology - what we rely on back in the U.S.,” said Ochs.


“I think the American team will learn to work in a country with means that are different,” said Senegalese Maj. Diop Balla, a general surgeon at Hopital Militaire de Ouakam.

“I think it is not the same in the U.S. and they can come and learn with our local factors,” said Balla.

Balla’s assessment was echoed by Col. Jim Czarnik, U.S. Army Africa command surgeon.

“The MEDRETE was essentially bringing U.S. and Senegalese clinicians shoulder-to-shoulder to solve problems not necessarily with their equipment, but using their minds,” said Czarnik.

The learning experiences shared at the hospital were the focus and goals of MEDRETE 16-1.

Testimonies from both U.S. and Senegalese military medical professionals stated the mission was a success. 



The F.I.T. Principle

FREQUENCY:

Aerobic conditioning three to five times a week is optimum.

INTENSITY:

Aerobic benefits occur between 60 percent and 85 percent of target heart rate. Calculate target heart rate by age: $220 - (\text{Age } 40) = 180$. So, 60 percent to 85 percent = 108 to 153 beats per minute. (Do not exceed 85 percent for more than 20 minutes).

TIME:

Beginners start with 10 minutes building to a goal of 20 to 60 minutes per session.

How hard should you exercise?

Use the "Talk Test" while exercising....

SLOW DOWN:

When talking is difficult, you are gasping for air.

SPEED UP:

When talking is easy.

CORRECT INTENSITY:

When talking comes in short bursts and breathing is deep yet comfortable.

Common Training Errors:

In the spring, it's natural to increase training volume — Do not increase more than 10 percent per week.

— Increasing speed and intensity is similar to increased volume, follow the 10 percent rule.

— Your body "Talks", listen to it, days off are as important as hard training sessions.

Heat Injury Prevention:

Drink six to eight glasses of water daily (avoid caffeine, alcohol, energy and

carbonated drinks)

General water consumption guidelines during exercise:

— Drink 20 ounces water about three hours before.

— Drink 16 to 24 ounces of water per pound of body weight lost after exercise.

— Drink 7 to 10 ounces for every 10 to 20 minutes of exercise.

Safety Considerations:

— Visibility, especially to traffic, always use reflective gear and evaluate exercise location for risk.

— Hearing, never use ear buds if your exercise plans potentially mix with traffic.

— Variations in F.I.T and Rest are important to prevent injuries.

"READINESS 2016" For more information on aerobic fitness, running and exercise, consult with your medical professional and unit training coordinator and safety officer. 🇺🇸

Lessons of Forgiveness from St. Patrick

By CHAPLAIN (LT. COL.) RICHARD SAVAGE
USARC Chaplain's Office

St. Patrick is known as the Patron Saint of the Irish and the holiday that bears his name in March.

This holiday is associated with parades, wearing of the green, rivers being dyed green for his birthday, and people thinking they are Irish for a day.

But there is a part of the story that few of us know about St. Patrick and how he became associated with Ireland.

St. Patrick was born in Scotland, captured at the age of 16, and sold into slavery in Ireland. At the age of 20, he escaped from slavery and made his way back to Scotland. After returning to Scotland, he became a Catholic Priest and felt called to go back to Ireland and minister to the people in Ireland. St. Patrick would remain in Ireland as a priest for 40 years.

Would we be able to overcome the hurt and pain of being made a

slave for four years by a people but still able to go back and help the people who held us in slavery?

To do what St. Patrick did takes a life that is able to forgive others and to love them enough to go back and work with them for such a long time.

If each of us were able to do so in our lives, think of the changes that could be made in this world.

Would such actions stop a lot of the fighting in the world? It could.

Will it ever happen around the world? It probably will not, but it doesn't mean we can't start making a difference in the world around us.

In Proverbs 17:17 (NIV) it reads "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity."

St. Patrick was not able to overcome the hurt and pain from this adversity by himself, but through the help of God working



(Image of St. Patrick courtesy of Catholic.org)

in his life and changing his heart.

In our own lives, we can overcome adversity through God's help and also by being there for each other as we face adversity. 🇺🇸

FORSCOM/USARC Christian Bible Study

**U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Reserve Command
hosts a weekly Christian Bible study.**


**Studies are held each Tuesday,
starting at 11:30 a.m., Room 1901 near the USARC G-4.
Please come and share a time of fellowship and worship with us.**

**"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching,
for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that
the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work."**

Second Timothy 3:16-17

Fort Bragg Passover and Lent Special Services

The Religious Support Office will be holding the following special services to celebrate Passover and Lent through March and April.

For more information about any of the programs offered, please call the Religious Support Office at: 910-396-1121, visit us online at <http://www.bragg.army.mil/directorates/chaplain/pages/default.aspx> or Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/FtBraggRSO> or Twitter at <https://twitter.com/FtBraggRSO>. 

LIVING LAST SUPPER

March 23-24 at the John F. Kennedy Chapel starting at 7:30 p.m.

JEWISH PASSOVER SEDER

April 22 at Watters Center Building #1-3358, Randolph Street starting at 6:30 p.m.

CATHOLIC - STATION OF THE CROSS

Every Friday Beginning 12 February – 18 March at All American Chapel starting at 6 p.m.

CATHOLIC

Lenten Penance Service, Tuesday, March 15, Pope Chapel starting at 5:30 p.m.

Holy Thursday, March 24, All American Chapel starting at 6 p.m.

Good Friday Service, March 25, WAMC Chapel at 11:30 a.m. & All American Chapel at 6 p.m.

Easter Vigil Service, March 26 at All American Chapel starting at 9 p.m.

Easter Sunday, March 27

All American Chapel - 9 a.m.

Main Post Chapel - 11 a.m.

WAMC Chapel - 11:30 a.m.

Pope Chapel (Bilingual) - 1:30 p.m.

All American Chapel - 5 p.m.

PROTESTANT

Palm Sunday, March 20 at John F. Kennedy Chapel starting at 10 a.m.

Tenebrae Service, March 24 at the Main Post Chapel starting at 7 p.m.

Good Friday Service, March 25

John F. Kennedy Chapel starting at 11:45 a.m.

Main Post Chapel starting at noon

Veneration of the Cross, Chapel Ancient (JFK Chapel)

Easter Vigil Service, March 26 at John F. Kennedy Chapel starting at 8 p.m.

Easter Sunday, March 27

Sunrise Service, Main Post Chapel starting at 7 a.m.

John F. Kennedy Chapel at 10 a.m.

Wednesdays in Lent

Sermon, Prayers, and Holy Communion starting at 11:45 a.m.

Operation Love Letters

Survivors Remember the Fallen

Story & photo by Contributing Writer

FORT BRAGG, N.C. -- For many, writing a letter is a lost art, replaced by e-mails and instant messages. To others, it's still the most sincere way to express the deepest matters of the heart. To military Families who have lost a loved one in combat or at home, the handwritten letter is the ultimate expression of their unending love and tangible proof that their Soldier will never be forgotten.

Operation Love Letters brings these Family members and their children together to express their continued love by celebrating their loved one's memory; through letters, spoken words, songs, and poetry.

Operation Love Letters began four years ago as a collaboration between Shinekqua Baines, a Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) Support Coordinator with the U.S. Army Reserve Family Programs, and Toni Gross, a Gold Star Mother, as a cathartic outlet to remember their loved ones. After the death of Gross' son, Cpl. Frank Gross in Afghanistan in 2011, she began volunteering with Gold Star Mothers to provide her a sense of healing and an outlet for her grief.

She said that Operation Love Letters is unique because it focuses on the children and provides fellowship for the Family members.

"Many memorial events are very somber," said

Gross. "Operation Love Letters is more of a joyous celebration. Being able to come together with other Family members who have been through the same thing provides much needed fellowship. Then seeing the smile on the faces of children as they release the butterflies or fill their memory boxes makes it magical."

SOS Financial Counselor, Gwendolyn Hannah, picked up the baton for the 143rd Expeditionary Support Command and carries on the momentum of the Operation Love Letters event. Hannah says these events are important because they help the military and civilian community come together to support Survivor Families.

"Each year we are seeing more participation," said Hannah. "The events are driven by the Family members, and it gives us, as a community, the chance to give back to those who have sacrificed and given so much."

After being implemented as an Army Reserve Family Programs initiative last year, the event has now spread to 16 locations across the country.

"The event provides an atmosphere to create new relationships with other surviving Families," said Barbara Giddens, U.S. Army Reserve SOS program manager. "It is an opportunity to gain spiritual insight and resilience, and to interact with the Army Reserve community." 🇺🇸



FIND OUT MORE

For more information about Operation Love Letters, the Survivor Outreach Service or other Army Reserve Family Programs' service and resources, visit www.arfp.org, contact Fort Family at 1-866-345-8248 or your command's Family Programs Director or Coordinator. We Inspire and Empower. Anytime. Anywhere. 24x7x365

Operation Love Letter, Wichita, Kansas memorial scrap booking event. The OLL event was designed to give survivors an opportunity to honor their fallen Soldiers as a method of tribute and healing.

FORSCOM/USARC staffs celebrate African-American Heritage



The equal opportunity directorates of the U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Reserve Command presented a special African American/Black History observance performance "Hallowed Grounds," at FORSCOM/USARC headquarters February 25. The cultural presentation highlighted historic sites of African American memories, and their importance to African American history.

A table display of African American books and figurines were set out for viewers to see after the African American/Black History observance performance. (Photos by Brian Godette, USARC Public Affairs)

Army Reserve offers \$25,000 bonus for most warrant officer specialties

Story & photo by Lt. Col. JEFFERSON WOLFE
7th Mission Support Command

DAENNER KASERNE, Germany - The U.S. Army Reserve needs more warrant officers, a senior leader told 7th Mission Support Command Soldiers.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Russell Smith, the Army Reserve Command chief warrant officer, conducted a town hall with about two dozen Soldiers Sunday afternoon at the 7th MSC headquarters building.

"I need every warrant officer I can get," he said, emphasizing, "Being a warrant officer is the best job in the Army."

Warrant officers make up the technical foundation of the U.S. Army, according to GoArmy.com.

Throughout their careers, they specialize in a technical area like intelligence, aviation, or military police, the site stated.

Although they make up less than three percent of total Army strength, warrant officers have a great job responsibility that includes training Soldiers, organizing and advising on missions and advancing within their career specialties.

The Army Reserve is offering a \$25,000 bonus or \$30,000 Student Loan Repayment Plan for new warrant officers in most career fields, payable when they complete their warrant officer basic course, Smith said. Army band and avia-



SPREADING THE WORD. Chief Warrant Officer 5, Russell Smith, the U.S. Army Reserve Command chief warrant officer, speaks during a town hall meeting, Feb. 7 at the 7th Mission Support Command headquarters building in Kaiserslautern, Germany.

I need every warrant officer I can get. Being a warrant officer is the best job in the Army.

— Chief Warrant Officer 5 Russell Smith
U.S. Army Reserve Command Chief Warrant Officer

tion candidates are among those not receiving bonus money right now, he added.

Warrant officers can come from many different ranks, he said. Many sergeants and staff sergeants join the program, as do lieutenant colonels and colonels who want to serve in the Army past their mandatory retirement dates.

Recently, even first lieutenants have been becoming warrants, he added.

The key to becoming a warrant officer is a General Technical score of 110 or better on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery.

Although waivers may be granted for many other requirements, there is no waiver for the 110 GT score, he said.

Units should identify privates who come into the Army with a 110 or greater GT score as possible warrant officer candidates, Smith said.

The units can groom the private into becoming noncommissioned officers, and then becoming a warrant officer candidate.

There are two ways to become qualified as a warrant officer. One is to complete the five-week warrant officer school at Fort Rucker, Alabama.

The other is to complete a National Guard Regional Training Institute, which requires attended weekend drills and then a two-week phase at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, or Fort McClellan, Alabama.

A Soldier must be in good physical shape to complete the Fort Rucker schooling, Smith said.

The course is physically and mentally demanding - as students spend 8-10 hours a day in class.

"If you're in good physical shape, warrant officer school is a piece of cake," he said.

Once commissioned as a warrant officer, a Soldier has good promotion prospects through the ranks to chief warrant officer four, Smith said.

"What I can't promise is W5," he said, adding there are a limited number of slots in the Army Reserve for that rank.

Because warrants are expected to be subject matter experts, it is unusual for a warrant to switch specialties after being commissioned. Some transfers are granted, but is unusual.

"When we assess you as a warrant officer, we want you to stay in the branch the rest of your life," Smith said.

"If you're interested in being a warrant officer, I'd highly recommend it," he said.

Other topics Smith discussed included:

- The Army Reserve is working with state governments to offer free state college tuition to Army Reserve Soldiers, a benefit already available to National Guardsmen.

- Gen. Mark A. Milley, the chief of staff of the U.S. Army, is stressing readiness as the Army's highest priority. To that end, the Army Reserve's current effort is to increase medical readiness. The goal is to ensure Soldiers are up to date on the Periodic Health Assessments and dental examinations.

- For leader development, the Army Reserve is using Select-Train-Educate-Promote, also known as STEP. All Soldiers must complete the appropriate level of formal military education before being determined fully qualified for promotion to the next rank.

- The Army Reserve is conducting the 10-Week Fitness Challenge, between Feb. 1 and May 31. This voluntary program is designed to help Soldiers get in shape for the Army physical fitness test. A Facebook page, "USAR Fitness Challenge," has more details.

- The Army offers licensing and credentialing programs that Reserve Soldiers can use to get civilian certifications using their documented military training. More details are available at www.cool.army.mil.



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