



Firefighters win world titles

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Thanksgiving

Early Holiday Edition

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The Signal



Friday, Nov. 28, 2008

Published for the Department of Defense and the Fort Gordon community

Vol. 29, No. 48

News Update

Signal Conference schedule overview

The 2008 Signal Conference will be held **Dec. 2-5** at Fort Gordon. More than 800 senior Signal Corps leaders are expected to participate in the conference during the first week in December.

See the overview schedule of events on page 2

For information call, (706) 791-8035.

Christmas tree lighting

Fort Gordon will light the Christmas Tree in Freedom Park at 6 p.m. **Dec. 5.**

There will be refreshments, band music and an appearance by Santa Claus. For information call (706) 791-3880.

Identification Card office temporarily closes

The Fort Gordon ID card and DEERS office in Darling Hall will be closed **Dec. 15-17** for a system upgrade to RAPIDS 7.3.

After the upgrade, all personnel will require two valid forms of identification before being issued a new identification card.

Normal business hours will resume on 7:30 a.m. **Dec. 18.**

Only emergencies will be processed/accepted during the closure.

For more information, call (706) 791-1927 or (706) 791-1930.

Financial Education

Financial experts will visit Fort Gordon to offer free management and much more. The financial education forum is being presented by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, which regulates all securities firms in the United States, in partnership with the Leader College for Information Technology and Fort Gordon's Army Community Services. They will present information from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. **Dec. 10** at Alexander Hall, noon to 2 p.m. **Dec. 11** in the break room of the Active Duty Rehabilitation Unit at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center; and from 9 to 11 a.m. and again at 1 to 2:30 p.m. **Dec. 12** in the first auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center. The programs are free.

For more information contact Sonya McCaw at (706) 791-2147 or visit the website: www.SaveAndInvest.org.

Wounded Warrior Transition services significantly expanding

Charmain Z. Brackett
Correspondent

A year ago, there was a grove of pines in the place where seven buildings devoted to the care of Warriors in Transition now sit.

"We were housed in modular buildings, in the hospital and spread out," said Lt. Col. Everett Sharpe, at the Nov. 21 ribbon cutting and open house for the Warrior Transition Battalion campus.

With 40,000 square feet of space to house 160 personnel, the campus is consolidated to

provide better care to warriors.

The WTB itself is a relatively new concept, said Brig. Gen. Donald Bradshaw, commanding general for Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center and Southeast Regional Medical Command.

The WTB's purpose is to "improve, support and care for injured, ill and wounded warriors," he said. "We consolidated a bunch of things already going on."

Once the Soldiers were consolidated into one unit, it followed to consolidate the areas which served them.

The staff moved into buildings as they were completed from July to October.

The complex provides for better care for the Soldiers in several ways, said Bradshaw.

"It improved support for

the Soldiers and their Families. We knew where people were," he said.

"It improved information flow. It improved the injured, ill and wounded warrior's transition back to service in uniform or back

to service in the civilian world."

The results are already evident. "We are a whole lot better than we were 18 months ago," he said.

And improvements continue to be made.



Photos by Charmain Z. Brackett

(Above) Members of the American Legion Riders group formed a flag line at a ribbon cutting ceremony. (Left) Patrice Smith, Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Clark, U.S. Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon command sergeant major, Brig. Gen. Donald Bradshaw, commanding general of Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center and the Southeast Regional Medical Command, Lt. Col. Everett Sharpe, Warrior Transition Battalion commander and Spc. Christopher Metcalf cut the ribbon on a new Warriors in Transition facility at Fort Gordon Nov. 21.

Fort Gordon continues Family covenant commitment

Charmain Z. Brackett
Correspondent

Fort Gordon celebrated all the accomplishments of the Army Family Covenant's first year at the Gordon Club on Nov. 19. "The Army Family Covenant has had a significant impact on Fort Gordon more so than any other installation," said Col. John Holwick, garrison commander. When he first heard about the covenant, he thought it was more of a "strategic communication plan to advertise what we've already done," he said. "It provided funding to double the size of the Army Community Service staff and provide the same range of services only found at the larger posts."

Leading players in the effort to implement the initiatives set forth in the covenant included ACS and Children, Youth and School Services.

Vanessa Stanley, Fort Gordon's ACS chief, outlined some of the highlights in her department over the past year.

Fort Gordon pre-kindergarteners and their teachers led the Pledge of Allegiance during the Fort Gordon Army Family Covenant anniversary ceremony Nov. 19.

Eight Family readiness support assistants were added to the staff and about a dozen employees became part of the new Soldier and Family Assistance Center.

The respite care program spent \$127,000 for 12,000 hours of respite care to Families in the Exceptional Family Member Program. A resource library with videos for Families

of deploying Soldiers to utilize was brought on board to make items readily available.

The Army spouse employment program forged partnerships with local businesses to benefit spouses seeking jobs.

Mary Crowder, Children, Youth and School Services director, spoke about the initiatives within her organization.

"In FY 09, 135, 144 and 232 capacity child development centers and a 150 middle school/teen center, as Fort Gordon attempts to take care of military Families, will soon break ground," she said.

One center will be located near the Gordon Club, a second will be on the campus of Dwight David Eisenhower Army Medical Center and the third will be located south of 45th and Avenue of the States. "The much needed 150 capacity middle and teen center will provide for military youth in sixth through 12 grades and have a high school regulation sized basketball court," she said.

Other highlights from CYSS included the elimination of program fees and reduced patron fees.

"ACS does so much, but ultimately it's the leaders of Soldiers, the squad leaders, platoon leaders, company commanders and first sergeants who have the ultimate obligation of ultimately reaching out to Soldiers and Families," said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Foley, U.S. Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon commanding general.



Photo by Charmain Z. Brackett

Command celebrates Native American heritage

Charmain Z. Brackett
Correspondent

Chipa Wolfe's main objective during the Nov. 21 Native American Indian Heritage Month Command Program was to draw a line between Hollywood and reality.

"Indian people have all been stereotyped in many ways," said Wolfe, who

along with four additional Native American Indians, educated and entertained during the program.

The drum beat used by Native Americans is a simple one. It's a singular rhythm.

"It represents the heartbeat of the Earth mother," he said. "We dance and sing with it. It's always a steady beat."

The Atlanta Braves tomahawk chant is not a traditional

rhythm, he said.

Some of the dances performed had stories attached to them.

The grass dance was performed in the Plains states as people pressed down the tall grasses in order to build their homes.

While most dances have a theme, Katrina Fisher demonstrated one that was strictly for fun.

"The hoop dance came about in the 1900s during reservation times," Wolfe said.

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Anthony Lett performs a dance during the Fort Gordon command Native American heritage program Nov. 21 in Alexander Hall.



Photo by Charmain Z. Brackett