



Weather Forecast		Today	 High:50 Low: 25
Saturday	 High:52 Low:20	Sunday	 High:48 Low:23

FRIDAY

Fort Riley Post



This Week on 'In Step'

The Fort Riley Recycling Center's effective program is discussed. The Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program is highlighted. The 266th Transportation Detachment wins a national award and soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry are featured.

In Step with Fort Riley airs every Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. on FOX 43.

More schools to teach NCO classes

By Jim Caldwell
ARNEWS

FORT MONROE, Va. (Army News Service) - More schools in the Army School System will begin teaching the stand-alone common core for basic and advanced NCO courses in a pilot program beginning in January.

"Expanding throughout TASS gives even more soldiers the opportunity to complete the common core phase of BNCOC and ANCOG at or near their home installations," said Sgt. Maj. Steve Merrill, chief of the NCO branch or the Deputy Chief of Staff for Training at the Army's Training and Doctrine Command.

The U.S. Army Reserve NCO Academy at Fort Lewis, Wash., and the South Carolina Army National Guard in Eastover, S.C., were to begin teaching the stand-alone common core in classes beginning Jan. 4. The 3747th JSAR Multifunctional Training Brigade (Europe), Graffenwoehr, Germany, starts classes later in January.

In May the NCO Academy in Alaska and the 25th Infantry Division NCO Academy, Fort Shafter, Hawaii, will enter the pilot program and begin teaching the common core.

Branch-specific NCO academies began teaching common core basic leadership tasks as Phase I for both BNCOC and ANCOG courses last October. Soldiers must pass this Phase I before taking the MOS-specific Phase II in residence.

"NCOs selected by Personnel Command to attend BNCOC and ANCOG may take the stand-alone common core at any location that teaches it, regardless of military occupational specialty, as long as it's within 50 miles of where they're stationed," Merrill said.

See Classes Page 2

Gauntlet

By Jeremy Heckler
19th PAD

Signal soldiers took their first steps toward the National Training Center this week participating in an external evaluation conducted by the 24th Infantry Division.

Soldiers from 331st Signal Company deployed to the maneuver areas near the Multi-Purpose Range Complex and were tested in a number of job-oriented and soldier-oriented tasks.

"We use the NTC rules of engagement for everything," said CWO2 Brad Dalgarn, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 24th Infantry Division. Dalgarn said that communication tests the two signal companies on Fort Riley on how well they set up and protect their sites. The company moved into an area and set up their communications equipment under tactical conditions as observers and the Opposition Force watched.

"We called on the logistics' section as well as the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical soldiers from operations to provide the expert advice in the areas we weren't as familiar with," said Dalgarn. "Our goal is to look at all of the company's operations down to the team level and provide them an honest evaluation by an external source."

He explained that keeping communications up and running is the heart of a signal unit's training.

"I worked as a team leader as part of a node center," said Spec. Christopher Engle, 331st Sig. Co. A node center works like a telephone switchboard where calls from the command can move forward to the deployed units, allowing the commander to keep in constant contact with them.

"Our nodes allow the brigade

commander to place a call to our First Sergeant by just reaching out and dialing our number," said Engle.

In addition to the company's primary mission, all of 331st's support elements were evaluated.

"We were evaluated on our Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services as well as our technical mechanical services," said Sgt. Arthur Phillip, 331st Sig. Co. The unit's mechanics were tested on how well they recovered downed vehicles under both day and night conditions.

"Being in an environment like Gauntlet or NTC puts pressure on you and your team and teaches them how to work under pressure," said Dalgarn.

"In our small team, we had four people so I sent one person out to patrol the area while the other three set up the site," said Engle. "I pulled in the rover to help us and that's when the OPFOR came in and attacked and took us out."

Signal soldiers take to field, prepare for NTC

"At the end of the mission, we conduct an after-action review and tell them what they can do better by providing them with our experience," said Dalgarn. He said that each team has different strengths and weaknesses and that information is provided to the company commander so that they can use it to train their soldiers more effectively.

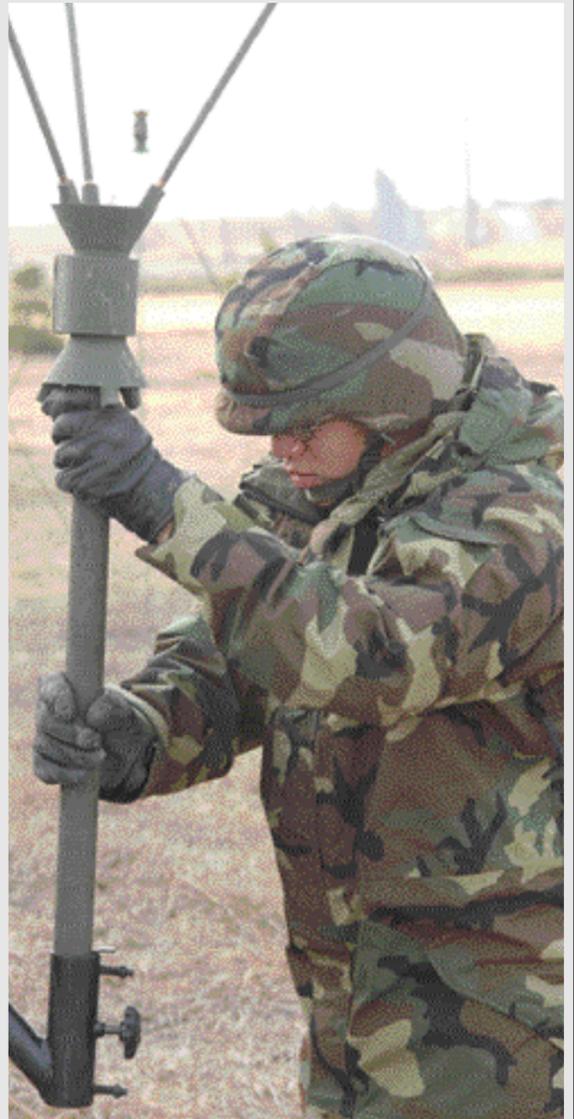
At the end of the operation, the unit moved into their position to support the 1st Brigade Combat Team during Gauntlet, providing uninterrupted communication of the battle.

The unit's seasoned professionals help prepare the rookies for their training.

"I tell my soldiers that it could be worse and while it can be tough on the younger soldiers, they can make it through because mentally they know that they are going to be all right," said Phillips.



PFC James Jenkins, 331st Signal Company, drops a bag of camouflage poles during Gauntlet exercises. The company provides communications support to the 1st Brigade Combat Team.



Pvt. Juan Caldera, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 24th Infantry Division communications section, puts an antenna section into place for the division tactical operations center. The division tactical operations center monitors and evaluates the 1st BCT during Gauntlet. The communications section performed an external evaluation on the 331st Signal Company as they prepared for Gauntlet exercises and their National Training Center rotation.

Stop-loss program expanded to National Guard, Reserves

By Marcia Triggs
ARNEWS

WASHINGTON (Army News Service) -- The "stop-loss" program implemented in November to stop soldiers in certain specialties from leaving active duty has been expanded to include Army Reserve and National Guard soldiers.

Previously, the stop-loss program retained soldiers in the fields of special operations and aviation. This second iteration of stop-loss also includes the fields of civil affairs, psychological operations and mortuary affairs.

"The Army's approach to stop-loss has been incremental with stop-loss 1 focused on active-duty soldiers," said Lt. Col Bob Ortiz, chief of Enlisted Professional Development for the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel. Stop-loss 2 covers down on Reserve-

component soldiers as the next logical increment in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle."

The Army will re-evaluate stop-loss on a monthly basis and use it as a tool to maintain unit readiness, Ortiz said. Additional stop-loss actions for other officer, warrant officer and enlisted specialties are also possible, he said.

The additional specialties now covered under stop-loss for active-duty commissioned officers and enlisted soldiers include career management field 39, psychological operations and military occupational specialties 37F, psychological operations and 92M, mortuary affairs.

Reserve commissioned officers affected by stop-loss will be those in CMF 18, Special Forces; CMF 38, civil affairs and CMF 39, psychological operations.

Reserve warrant officers affected by stop-loss include those in MOS 180A, Special Forces and aviation warrant offi-

cers with the following specialties:

- 152C, OH-6 Scout Pilot
- 153D, UH-60 Pilot
- 153E, MH-60 Pilot
- 154C, CH-47D Pilot
- 154E, MH-47 Pilot

The stop-loss will also affect all warrant officers with the following additional skill identifiers:

- K4, Special Operations Aviation
- K5, MH-60K Pilot
- K6, MH-47E Pilot

Reserve enlisted specialties affected include soldiers with the following MOSs:

- MOS 18B, Special Forces Weapons Sergeant
- MOS 18C, Special Forces Engineer Sergeant
- MOS 18D, Special Forces Medical Sergeant
- MOS 18E, Special Forces Communications Sergeant

- MOS 18F, Special Forces Assistant Operations and Intelligence Sergeant
- MOS 18Z, Special Forces Senior Sergeant
- MOS 00Z (only those with Career Management Field 18 background)
- MOS 67U, CH-47 Helicopter Repairer
- MOS 92M, Mortuary Affairs
- MOS 37F Psychological Operation
- MOS 38A Civil Affairs

The only National Guard commissioned officers affected by stop-loss are those in CMF 18, Special Forces.

National Guard warrant officers affected by stop-loss include those in specialty 180A, Special Forces and aviation warrant officers with the following specialties:

- 153D, UH-60 Scout Pilot
- 154C, CH-47D Pilot

National Guard enlisted specialties affected by stop-loss include:

- MOS 18B, Special Forces Weapons

- Sergeant MOS 18C, Special Forces Engineer
- Sergeant MOS 18D, Special Forces Medical Sergeant
- MOS 18E, Special Forces Communications Sergeant
- MOS 18F, Special Forces Assistant Operations and Intelligence Sergeant
- MOS 18Z, Special Forces Senior Sergeant
- MOS 00Z (only those with Career Management Field 18 background)
- MOS 67U, CH-47 Helicopter Repairer
- MOS 92M, Mortuary Affairs

No new requests for separation will be accepted from soldiers in categories affected by stop-loss, officials said.

However, soldiers who have already started to transition out of the Army and have had their final out-processing will be allowed to separate, officials said.

CG calls Fort Riley 'Army's best kept secret'

By Jeremy Heckler
19th PAD

FORT RILEY, Kansas—Sharng "the Army's best-kept secret" was a key message from Maj. Jen. Thomas Metz, commanding general, 24th Infantry Division (Mech) and Fort Riley, at a press conference with local media Jan. 1.

Metz addressed a wide-range of topics from the post's role as a

with connections to road, air and rail access that need only minimal improvements.

"Probably the thing that we should improve is the ramp space and the capabilities at the Manhattan Airport," he said. Metz added that Fort Riley and local congressmen are looking into the possibility of expanding the airport to handle more military aircraft.

The commanding general said that he bears the responsibility to

mand of soldiers individually or in units. So, I bear the responsibility that when soldiers or units deploy from Fort Riley, they will be ready," he said.

He explained that readiness takes the form of being physically fit, the ability to perform common skills individually or as a group, as well as work as a combined arms team.

"Our units are heavy mechanized units and that warfare is

learned both here and abroad.

"We maintain a very fast, very tough pace here with one brigade cued up for the National Training Center and another brigade helping them and we just picked up the Operation Desert Spring effort with the Task Force that just came back from Kuwait," said Metz. That pace has gained the additional duties of a quick reaction force as well as post security operations.





Press continued from page 1

he public is welcome on Fort Riley.” Metz said that it is up to the young soldiers to set the example in the community as well as on the battlefield. “I will work very hard to instill the Army values in soldiers and work with my leaders so they are taught from day one, upon their arrival at Fort Riley, to be that good example to the community,” said Metz. He said that each soldier is taught the core values of loyalty, duty,

respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage in basic training. The goal is to maintain the positive relationship Fort Riley has with the surrounding communities. “There is not a better relationship of an installation and a local community than here on Fort Riley,” said Metz. One way Fort Riley gives back to the community is through the Kids 2000 program in which units on Fort Riley adopt

local schools and provide mentors for students. Metz said that in the coming months, he hopes to continue the tradition of Fort Riley and keep it one of America’s finest. “Fort Riley is the best place in the United States Army in the world to soldier,” said Metz. “I can’t make it the very best location for EVERY soldier to be, because some soldiers would like to have Mall of Americas outside the gate and I

can’t make the cold weather go away, but I can make it the very best place to soldier.” Metz said that he is thinking not only of the present but also future soldiers and their families. “We enlist single soldiers in the Army, but we reenlist the families and so when you get a new set of quarters or a new commissary built, you’re helping to reenlist the family in the Army of the future,”

said Metz. He said that readiness is not just about the training of soldiers but their overall quality of life. Metz hopes that both the community and the post can come together and show what is special about Fort Riley. “Lets quit holding Fort Riley a secret,” said Metz. “You hear all the time from people who serve at Fort Riley that it’s the best kept secret in the Army, and I think we ought to let it (the secret) out.”

Classes continued from page 1

Soldiers will not be reimbursed for mileage if they elect to take the common core at or near their home installation. “If I’m an infantry soldier stationed at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., I have the alternative to take the BNCOC or ANCOG stand-alone common core at Fort Huachuca. Then I can go to my Phase II at Fort Benning, Ga.,” said Jeffrey Coliman, senior military analyst in DCST’s personnel proponent directory.

That means that it will be two less weeks a soldier must be away from the family, Colimon said. It will also be two less weeks for which the Army won’t have to pay temporary duty costs to send the soldier to his or her branch school. To attend a branch school of another MOS on the same installation, an NCO must have been selected to attend ANCOG or BNCOC by Army Personnel

Command, Army National Guard or Army Reserve personnel. The school also must have room in a class. “The interesting aspect of the stand-alone common core training in Europe is that it will be done by distance learning,” Colimon said. “It will be broadcast through video teletraining from Graffenwoehr to several locations in Germany and to other

locations in Europe, such as Vicenza, Italy.” Merrill also said active soldiers can only take the stand-alone common core at RC schools when the training is conducted as a two-week block of instruction. Active soldiers are not permitted to attend training that is done on scattered weekends, nights or during other reserve component training periods.

More TASS schools will be added each year so that by 2004 the stand-alone common core will be taught in schools convenient to nearly every soldier, TRADOC officials said. “The Army School System is one system, one standard, so every soldier taking the stand-alone common core will receive identical training no matter which school he or she attends,” Merrill said.

Gift of leadership highlighted at breakfast

By Kevin Doheny
Staff Writer

“Heavenly Father, I am in need of your guidance so very, very much for the job I have been commissioned to do. Lead me, Lord, so I can lead the soldiers in my command properly and wisely. I long for their friendship. I guess everyone wants most of all to be liked, but I know that I need most of all their respect and obedience.” This was the beginning of the Commander’s Prayer, which was spoken by the leaders on Fort Riley, during the Commanding General’s New Year’s Prayer breakfast Jan. 3 at Riley’s Conference Center. Welcoming the leaders to the

breakfast was Chief of Staff Col. Michael Phillips. Chap. (Col.) Daniel Paul gave the invocation. The leaders were then given the chance to enjoy the breakfast. Riley’s prepared a buffet which included eggs, bacon, sausage, biscuits, toast, orange juice, coffee and more. With breakfast over, the leaders went over several passages from different parts of the Bible with Col. Arthur Wallace, Medical Department Activity commander, Col. Randy Davis, Dental Activity commander, Col. Robert Townsend, commander, 3rd Brigade, 75th Division and Col. James Milano, commander, 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, who led the Commander’s Prayer. The Fort Riley Soldiers’ Choir followed with their rendition of

“Amazing Grace.” Maj. Gen. Thomas Metz, commanding general, 24th Infantry Division (Mech) and Fort Riley, then spoke to the leaders about ‘Employing God’s Gifts.’ “One of the first believers in the Bible was a soldier,” said Metz. “A Roman officer came up to Jesus and asked if he could heal his servants. After he had listened to the officer, he turned and told the crowd, ‘I have never found anyone in Israel with faith like this.’” Metz went on to tell them, “There was no accident the Lord had this recorded in the Bible. I think, we as leaders need to be proud of our faith. It’s not a weakness. I think our faith gives us strength.”

Metz spoke of how the leaders had the gifts of leadership. “By virtue of the fact that you are a leader in the United States Army, the most powerful army the world has ever known and you have risen to the rank and the position you are in, I’m talking about the gifts of leadership, which are right here in this room,” Metz said. “Do you really know what God gave you? Are you using it to the best of your ability?” he asked. The event ended with the singing “God Bless America” and leaders recalling the last line of the Command Prayer. “Watch over my soldiers! Protect them! Keep them unharmed in the spirit as well as the body. And let me, Father, regard the life of each one of these soldiers as highly as my own.”

New program beginning at CYS

By Cathy Spiegel
CYS Director

Child and Youth Services is starting a new program called the Fort Riley School of Arts and Sports. The plan of the program is to expand the instructional classes and services offered to youth on post in arts, recreation, leisure and sports activities. Presently, piano lessons, martial arts classes, dance (tap, ballet, jazz and lyrical) classes and gymnastics tumbling classes are being offered. In an effort to provide detailed information about these programs, an open house is scheduled for Jan. 16 from 6-7:30 p.m., at the Teen Center, Bldg. 5800. The open house will include complete class information and registration and instructors will be available to answer questions and provide demonstrations. CYS is also looking for additional instructors including piano and gymnastics/tumbling for three year olds and up. Classes will be divided by age and ability. CYS also has requests for cheerleading and musical instrument instruction. Any one experienced and interested in teaching should call Cathy Spiegel at 239-9850.

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Army changes command selection process

WASHINGTON (Army News Service) - Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki has approved 13 modifications to the process by which battalion and brigade commanders are selected.

Changes to the Command Selection List process will reportedly increase the number of officers eligible to compete for command. Officers will also be able to decline command without prejudice, and compete again at a later date.

"These modifications are in response to issues concerning how we treat officers during the command selection process and those already selected," said Lt. Col. Kent Burstein, chief of the Command Management Branch or U. S. Total Army Personnel Command. He said the changes stem from Army Four-Star Conference notes, Army Research Institute Well-Being survey results and issues raised by the Army Training and Leader Development Panel.

"I am positive that these changes will better serve the officer corps and improve the timeliness and efficiency of the CSL system," Burstein said.

"By opening the system up to more individual and command input, we can better serve officers by selecting and slating them into the right command category in the right command."

Some modifications are internal to the PERSCOM selection and slating process, but most will be noticeable to the field, Burstein said. All but one will take effect immediately. Most will affect both lieutenant colonel and colonel-level commands. They are:

1. Extending the Active Federal Commissioned Service requirements for command eligibility to expand the eligible population. This will take effect Aug. 1, 2002. Command eligibility will be extended up to three years before an officer's mandatory retirement date from 26 to 27 years for

colonel from 21 to 23 years of service for lieutenant colonel.

2. Publish official results of command selection boards as soon as the results are approved to allow additional time for officers to consider their future options. The results will be published alphabetically by category.

3. Requiring officers who request a deferment or decline command to obtain an endorsement from the first general officer in their chain of command to provide timely and proper counsel.

4. Allowing officers to decline, without prejudice (officers remain eligible to compete for command in future years at their current grade level), up to 30 days after release of the command selection list. Officers can re compete for command in their next eligible year.

5. Limiting officers and Major Commands to request command deferments within 60 days after official release of the command slating. If the deferment is

approved, the officer will become a deferred principle. If received after 60 days from slate release, officers will not become deferred principals, but will be allowed to re compete for command the next year.

6. Extending the validation of the alternate list to the end of the respective fiscal year. The fiscal year 2002 alternate list will remain valid for any FY02 command vacancy and the fiscal year 2003 alternate list for any command vacancy in FY03.

7. Officers on current alternate command lists will be removed from 'alternate' status if they are selected as a principal on a subsequent list.

8. Alternates who are activated for command, then subsequently deferred from command, will not receive deferred principal status. However, they will be allowed to re compete for command in their next eligible year.

9. Officers on the alternate list who are contacted in accordance

with procedures for command activation and are determined to be unavailable for command will remain on the alternate list. However, if contacted a second time for command activation they must accept command or decline command with prejudice (officers lose their eligibility to compete for command at their current grade level).

10. Officers will be allowed to remain on the command list pending the Command Review Board results. As most officers are reinstated to the CSL after the CRB results are complete, they will remain on the list but they will not assume command until they receive a final favorable adjudication from the CRB.

11. The Post Board Screening Process will be reviewed to reduce completion time and allow for an earlier release of the selection list and command slate.

12. U.S. Army Recruiting and garrison commands will be separated within the Institutional com-

mand category for lieutenant-colonel Army Competitive Command boards. Officers will be able to compete in one or both subcategories to better match officer preference with command vacancies.

13. An institutional generalist command category will be added (consisting of non-branch specific institutional commands) that allows all eligible colonels to compete for institutional generalist commands at the colonel ACC level. This will ensure all the most 'experienced and qualified' officers are able to compete for institutional category commands, officials said.

"These issues are important to all officers who desire to command," Burstein said. "I believe that officer satisfaction will dramatically increase, and both the officer and the command will benefit."

Garrison Commander speaks

Safety stressed when jump-starting vehicles

Welcome back! I hope everyone had the very best holiday season possible. We can take pride in that every soldier and family member assigned to Fort Riley returned safely from the holidays. We all want to keep our safety record unblemished. To do so, we would keep safety considerations at the forefront of our thoughts at all times. This message is another effort to keep us aware of seasonal specific safety challenges.

In Kansas, the coldest winter weather tends to occur after the New Year and I want you to be aware of some of the personal and environmental hazards cold weather can bring to you and your vehicle. Today, I would like to focus on your vehicle's battery and the lubrication systems.

The highest personal risk occurs during charging or jump-starting batteries. In 1997, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimated there were over 1,100 injuries during this type of operation, with 72 percent of the injuries being to the eyes. Wearing goggles, not smoking and properly charging or jumpstarting batteries are major precautions in preventing injury. The US Army Safety Center has put out a sticker, "Here's How To - Jump Start," which is

shown here. The non-profit organization, Prevent Blindness America, also has an article "10 Things You Should Know About Jump-Starting a Car Battery," which is available at <http://www.preventblindness.org/safety/battery.html>.

Besides the risk of personal injury, mishandling batteries can cause other problems. Spills from frozen batteries can cause environmental damage. Short-circuits from metal objects connecting battery posts can result in electrical fires, and incompatible storage with oil products and other chemicals can result in chemical reactions and fires. Likewise, mishandling used oil can contaminate the environment or make an existing fire worse.

The Directorate of Environment and Safety has put out a handling procedure on how to properly store vehicle batteries. The handling procedure covers personal protective equipment, secondary containment, identification, and segregation precautions. While this procedure was written for motor pools, the same concerns and principles apply to your homes. Call the DES Hazardous Waste Program at 239-8436/2385 to obtain a vehicle battery

handling procedure.

Fort Riley has made it easy to recycle spent batteries. Military batteries are exchanged one-for-one with the Directorate of Logistics picking up spent batteries at the motor pools and providing replacements. The DOL has requested that grease and grime on the batteries be cleaned off before they are

Townhall Message By Col. Philip Pope Garrison Commander

picked up. Non-military batteries may be turned-in to the DES Environmental Waste Management Center, Bldg. 1945. The DES does not require that paperwork be completed beforehand, but please call 239-6797 for an appointment. Spent batteries from personal vehicles can be exchanged for a new battery at the place of purchase.

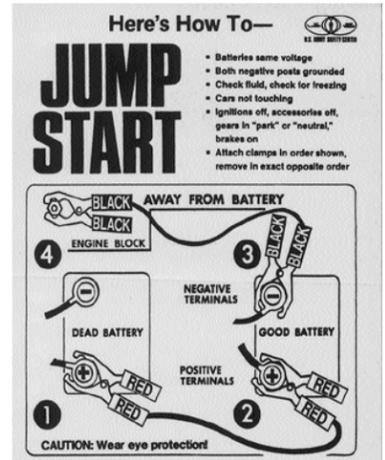
Another source of spills associated with vehicles is improper handling and storage of used oil. Most importantly, used oil must be stored in closeable containers and labeled "Used Oil." Other guidance on disposal procedures and spill cleanup for motor pools and

civilian activities can be found in the DES Environmental Compliance Management Plan. Used oil from personal vehicles can be taken to any one of the following locations: your motor pool, the Main Post AAFES Service Station, Bldg. 640, at 784-2493, the AutoCraft Shop, Bldg. 7753, at 239-9764, or the Household Hazardous Waste Facility, Bldg. 1945, at 239-6797. If used oil from personal vehicles is accidentally spilled, call the Fire Department for assistance. The DES Water Program at 239-0399/2630 can answer any other questions you may have on used oil.

General vehicle winterization guidelines can be found on Fort Riley's Intranet at the DES Safety site in Safety Bulletin, SB01-011, "Winter, Your Car, and You. Be Prepared!" The US Army Safety Center also has an excellent article "Winter Driving, Are You Ready?" available at their website at <http://safety.army.mil/pages/sbo/WinterDriving.html>.

I hope these safety tips help to protect you and your family, take care of the environ-

ment, and help to ensure your vehicle makes it safely through the winter.



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Briefs

Winners noted

The Recreation Adventures for Tomorrow team of the Directorate of Community Activities conducted its first Holiday Home Decorating Contest and Holiday Card Contest over the 2001 holiday season. Judging was conducted in mid December. Winners were Jary and Penny Black, Ellis Heights; Melitta Barton, Coyer East; and Kerney and Helen Day, Coyer West. Honorable mentions went to Luis Franceschi, Coyer East and Darrick and Alicia Lewis, Coyer West.

Other entries were Melanie Klem, Meade Heights, Leona Russel, McClellan Heights, Karin Trapp, Monteith/Odonnell; Kim Smith, North Warner; Robyn Brownfield, South Warner; and Jennifer Hagen, Scott/Stone. Winners received a holiday gift basket.

Music programs

Sports U.S.A. continues its two new special DJ music programs in the New Year. The next "Late Nights" featuring Urban and Hip-hop with DJ Monroe are scheduled tomorrow, Jan. 26, Feb. 9 and 23 starting at 10 p.m.

Upcoming Sports U.S.A. "Latin Music Nights" are Jan. 19, Feb. 2 and 16. The "Latin Music Night program also begins at 10 p.m.

CAC meeting

The next Community Action Council is scheduled for Jan. 23, from 7-8:30 p.m. at Riley's Conference Center.

Hours explained

The Fort Riley Arts and Crafts Center offers a number of open shop usage areas for patrons. Usage areas include woodshop, ceramics studios, matting and framing studio, computer lab, photography, stained glass, sewing, quilting, basket weaving and leather. Specialized equipment such as sewing machines, glass saw and grinders and engraving equipment are available for walk-in use. Open shop activities hours of operation are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday and 1-9 p.m. Monday and Tuesday. The Arts and Crafts Center is co-located with ITR in Bldg. 6918 across from the Post Exchange.

Outdoor Rec

Outdoor Recreation is presenting a number of programs in the weeks ahead beginning tomorrow with an outdoors update at 9 a.m. The latest information on the 2002 hunting and fishing seasons will be presented. Maps, regulations and post permits will also be available. The program is free of charge. Other program dates include Feb. 2, Outdoor Recreation Equipment Orientation beginning at 9 a.m., and a 3D Archery shoot Feb. 23, beginning at 9 a.m. All programs conducted at the Outdoor Rec Center, Bldg. 6011, Rifle Range Road, Camp Forsyth

Lesson sign-up

Sign-up for the next series of swimming lessons at Eyster Pool begins Jan. 22. The swim lessons sessions run Monday-Thursday, Feb. 4-15. Sessions scheduled

include 4-4:30 p.m., Level I; 4:30-5 p.m., Level II; 5-5:30 p.m., Level III; 5:30-6 p.m., Level IV. Cost for the swim lessons is \$20.

Collectors show

The 8th annual Fort Leavenworth Collectors Show is set for Feb. 2. The show is on Historical Fort Leavenworth at the Fort Leavenworth Frontier Crossroads Club.

The Frontier Crossroads Club is directly across from the post cemetery. The Fort Leavenworth Historical Society sponsors the Military Collectors Show, which is a non-profit organization. This one-day show is from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

There will be 100 tables of items from the Frontier Army to Desert Storm. Historical authors will be signing books along side displays of WWII, WWI, Spanish American, and Civil War collections and displays. Doors open to public at 9 a.m.

Dinner theater

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged) will be performed in dinner theatre format featuring Italian Buffet Feb. 1. Dinner will begin at 6 p.m. followed by curtain time at 8 p.m.

The production will take place at Riley's Conference Center. Tickets are on sale, and are available through B.O.S.S. representatives, ITR by calling 239-5624 and Riley's Conference Center at 784-5999 for \$12.95.

Commissary sale

The Fort Riley Commissary is having a budget sale Jan 18-19, from 9 a.m.- 6 p.m.

Focus group

The public is invited to participate in a focus group regarding the Fort Riley Commissary on Feb 13. The objective of the meeting is to obtain the views and perspectives of commissary shoppers to assist in helping the commissary better serve customers.

The focus group will meet in the Fort Riley Commissary Training Room located in Bldg. 2310 at 10 a.m. For more information, contact Alice Miller at 239-2921.

Chef visits post

The Fort Riley Commissary announces the return visit of Chef Dan who will be at the commissary, 11a.m.-4 p.m., Feb. 2. He will be sharing his preparation and presentation of gourmet cuisine.

Shoppe open

The Shoppe is open. It has a new look and new merchandise to help you get through those winter blues! The Shoppe is located in Bldg 259 Stuart Ave. Hours of operation are 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.

For more information, call 239-2783.

Course offered

The Postal Operations Center will conduct the next Unit Mail Service Training Course on Jan. 16 and Jan. 30 at the Digital Training Center, Bldg. 7285. Class hours will be 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. For additional information, con-

tact Sylvia Johnson at 239-5411.

Thrift Shop hours

The Fort Riley Thrift Shop is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. The Thrift Shop will also be open tomorrow from 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. Consignments are now taken on Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and on open Saturdays from 10 a.m.- noon. The shop is located in Bldg. 267 on Stuart Avenue near the stables. Volunteers are needed during business hours to help tag and put donations on the shelves. Child care reimbursement is available. Please call 784-3874 for more information. The Thrift Shop e-mail address is thrift@oz-online.net, for customer questions or concerns.

Class offered

Want to make a good marriage better?

Want to better understand your spouse?

Want to have your spouse better understand YOU?

Come learn how to deal with misunderstandings and how to stop the argument cycle at the Couple Communication Class on Jan. 22, from 6-8 p.m., at the Soldier and Family Support Center, Room 29. Free child care is provided.

The class is presented by Chap. Jim Paulson, the Fort Riley Family Life chaplain.

Register by Jan. 18, by calling 239-3436.

Spring bazaar

The 2002 Spring Bazaar will take place April 6-7. There will be family readiness group booths and vendors, children's events and DJ/music radio broadcast entertainment, not to mention all sorts of local crafters and artisans. Those wanting to participate as either a vendor, family readiness group or volunteer to assist in the bazaar can contact Amy Schultz at (784) 565-0228.

Schedule changes

Due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday on Jan. 21, the refuse collection will be as follows:

Jan. 21 - No Pick-up

Jan. 22 - Coyer Manor, Marshall Air Field, Main Post Family Housing.

Jan. 23 - Ellis Heights, Peterson Heights, Montieith Heights, and O'Donnell Heights.

Jan. 24 and 25 will be a normal pick up days.

Due to the holiday schedule, there will not be any large item pick ups.

Celebration set

The 1st Personnel Services Battalion and the Post Equal Opportunity Office are sponsoring a Martin Luther King Jr celebration 11:30 a.m.- 1 p.m., Jan. 23, at Normandy Theater. Contact your Brigade EOA or the EO office at 239-2928 for more information.

Musicians sought

The Contemporary Protestant Service is looking for the following musicians: Piano player, lead guitar player, bass guitar player and an additional drummer.

The service meets each Sunday

at 11 a.m.. The praise team practices on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m..

If interested, call Chap. Jim Paulson at 239-3436. (If no answer, please leave a message on the answering machine.)

Television show

In Step with Fort Riley, the installation's new television news program airs on FOX 43 at 9:30 a.m. Sunday mornings.

Museum hours

The U. S. Cavalry Museum's hours of operation are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Until further notice, the museum will be closed on Sunday's. The Fort Riley Regimental Museum (Bldg. 207) remains closed due to exhibit renovation.

Groups interested in arranging tours of Custer House may do so by contacting the Public Affairs Office or by calling the U. S. Cavalry Museum at 239-2737/2743.

Worship service

A Protestant Liturgical Worship Service has resumed at St. Mary's Chapel every Sunday at 8:30 a.m. For information, call 239-5313/5711.

Soldier service

Fort Riley is now hosting a Catholic Soldier Service at 6 p.m. Sunday evenings at Kapaun Chapel Bldg. 7806. Volunteers are needed to help with the service. Call 239-2818/6684.

Services start

Jewish religious services are being held at Normandy Chapel

for anyone desiring to attend at 6 p.m. Friday nights.

Volunteer class

The next Red Cross volunteer orientation class is Jan. 23 at 9 a.m. in the fourth floor training area at Irwin Army Community Hospital. BAT training is set for Jan. 24 in the same locations from 7:45-11:30 a.m. for information, or to register, call 239-1887.

Vet clinic

The Fort Riley Vet Clinic is running a Saturday clinic Feb. 2, the hours are 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The clinic will accommodate both vaccinations and sick call by appointment only. Call 239-3886 to schedule an appointment.

Army chaplaincy

A discernment retreat will be held Feb. 7-9 in Washington, D.C. The retreat, which includes room and meals is free and financial help for transportation and assistance in obtaining permissive TDY, a pass or leave is available.

Single Catholic male soldiers of all ranks are welcome. For information, call Chap. (Lt. Col.) David Kenehan 239-2818.

AFTB classes

Jan. 16, 6:30-8:30 p.m. What's in it for Me? (Cluster of Level I modules. Introduction to military and civilian community resources and your child's education.)

Jan. 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Finding, Motivating, Managing Volunteers

(Three Level II modules. Volunteer management. Needs and motivating factors to build a volunteer program.)

Jan. 25, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. What are They Talking About? (Three Level I modules. Military terms, acronyms, customs and courtesies, chain of command, chain of concern and military benefits.)

For more information, call 239-1366/9435 or email DCAARMY-FAM@riley.army.mil

Christmas lights

Christmas lights need to be taken down by Jan. 15.

SAMC elections

The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club is holding elections

Feb. 4 at 11:45 a.m. at Normandy Theatre during a brown bag luncheon.

All SAMC and SMC members are encouraged to attend.

Change of responsibility

Sgt. Maj. James Sands,arrison sergeant major, will change responsibility Tuesday to CSM Kenneth C. Fyffe. The ceremony is at 10 a.m. in Hangar 817 on Marshall Army Air Field and will be followed by a reception.

Fyffe was most recently assigned Aviation Brigade Command Sergeant Major for the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii. Sands is retiring in the spring after 30 years of military service.

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DeCa successes enhance soldier quality of life

By Ron Kelly

DeCA

FORT LEE, Va. - When it comes to improving the quality of life for America's military, the Defense Commissary Agency continues to play an important role.

Always considered one of the military's top non-pay benefits, the commissary benefit has become even more valuable to service members and their families as a result of DeCA's continued efforts and success in reducing costs and increasing savings and sales.

By changing its focus from a budget-based to a cost culture and employing fact-based business methods - moves that began more than a year ago - the agency has been able to control operational costs and at the same time increase customer savings to 10.4 percent over commercial supermarkets. In quality-of-life terms, this equates to annual savings

around the world. "By controlling costs and operating more efficiently - especially at large stores like Fort Belvoir - we gain the financial leverage we need to support smaller operations at higher unit costs in remote and overseas areas - where quality of life takes on added importance," said DeCA Director Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr. "The result is consistency and savings in all of our stores."

These efforts, combined with aggressive merchandising, are expected to increase sales, adding even more value and consistency to this most-valued benefit. Courter explains: "When more people use their commissary more often, sales increase, and so do total customer savings - savings that supplement military pay and quality of life. Increased sales also lead to further savings, as our Marketing Business Unit is able to obtain better prices from vendors. And improved savings is the key - it's the reason for the benefit!"



Operation Santa Claus

Hundreds receive toys through Army program

By Lillian Flegle
Contributing Writer

Operation Santa Claus provided Christmas cheer to more than 125 military and 820 civilian children this year. Each child received at least two toys from the program.

According to MSgt. Mike Hitzges, senior elf for Operation Santa Claus, over 2,700 toys were distributed to children through agencies and the program received more than \$26,000 in cash donations and toys valued in excess of \$23,000.

"I think that people have been even more compassionate to our program since the '9-11 tragedies," Hitzges said. "With the amount of toys, cash received, supplies donated and volunteer workers, I feel we did very well."

"We supported over 11 agencies this past holiday season," Hitzges explained. "Most of our support went to Fort Riley, Junction City, Manhattan and Emporia groups such as the Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Club, Geary County Health Council, and the Red Cross, just to name a few," he said. "We also supported the Families Together program in Kansas City, Mo., and reserve units that drill at Fort Riley."

Hitzges added that he was surprised at the number of families traveling to and from Fort Riley

during the Christmas season. He said, "Families who were leaving, retiring or being assigned to Fort Riley needed a Christmas too. We delivered an OSC toy box filled with wrapped gifts to the Billeting Office and had to refill it so kids who were traveling had something for Christmas."

Hitzges said that Operation Santa Claus also gave toys to children spending Christmas in the Fort Riley, Junction City and Manhattan hospitals. Fortunately, no children were in the hospital over the holidays, although three kids were treated by the Medical Emergency Services of Irwin Army Community Hospital, Fort Riley. He added that only three newborns and their mothers spent the Christmas holiday in a Manhattan hospital.

"Operation Santa Claus gave the mothers of newborn babies, a stuffed animal with the year 2001 embroidered on them. We also gave each hospital a bag of toys with two toys for each age and gender," he said. "That way if any kids were admitted during the New Year holiday, the hospitals could cheer them up with a new toy."

This is Hitzges' first year of working with OSC. He said he feels that OSC is an excellent program and he has been continuously amazed at what the program has done for children and how it has helped out in the surrounding communities

"The publicity received this past year by Operation Santa Claus will boost it in the future," he said. "I feel there will be stronger support in the future, and we'll expand our support and spread the support more evenly across the board to the communities."

Gloria Elder, member of the Enlisted Spouses' Club and volunteer gift wrapper, believes that OSC is a good program and can be a "pace-setter" for other installations. She hopes to carry the ideas from the program to her family's next duty station.

"We've been in the Army for 20 years and Fort Riley's the first time we heard anything about a program like this," she explained. "You hope to bring a piece of something good with you everywhere you go and hopefully, when we reach our next duty station, we'll share this experience and be able to say, 'We learned this at Fort Riley.'"

Sgt. Maj. James Sands, head elf for OSC and garrison sergeant major, said that Operation Santa Claus doesn't just happen at Christmas, but throughout the year as well.

"If there's a fire and a family is burned out of their home, we like to get the family and kids back to some type of normalcy. So, we give the kids brand new toys to get started again," Sands explained.

Charlie Quick, a retired

sergeant first class and OCS coordinator, added that Fort Riley military police and fire departments reap the benefits of OSC stuffed toys as well.

"We reach out to children in the communities on post and off when there's a natural disaster or traumatic accident. We give stuffed animals to the police and fire departments so they can give a child something to hug," he added.

"Everybody benefits from this program," said Quick. "When a tornado hit western Kansas last year, we took a load of games, footballs, basketballs, toys and stuffed animals to the kids hit the hardest in that disaster. You see," he said, "they needed something to play with while they were in the shelters waiting, and they had things to do and something to comfort them."

Quick said he is the program's point of contact for the upcoming year.

"Anyone affected by a natural disaster or accident can contact the Red Cross at 785-239-1883, and they can get in touch with me," Quick said.

"We at Operation Santa Claus truly appreciate the public's understanding and support this year," Quick said. "The support came through a tremendous outpouring of generosity from people in the local communities, and I hope Operation Santa Claus is around forever and ever."

FORT RILEY POST

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Fort Riley Sports

January 11, 2002

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Page 7

Guard Biathletes qualify for Winter Games in Utah

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell
Army News Service

Army National Guard soldiers, including two veterans of the 1998 Games in Nagano, Japan, will dominate the United States biathlon team competing in the XIX Winter Olympics in February.

Five of the eight positions on the men and women's biathlon teams are being

held by Guard soldiers, and two other Guard soldiers are alternates.

The guardsmen - two men and three women — secured positions on the team when the four-day trials ended near Salt Lake City, Utah, Jan. 3.

The United States will send teams of four men and four women into the Olympic hunt.

The biathlon competition combines

the aerobic sport of cross-country skiing with the precision of riflery, officials said. Biathlon itself is derived from a Greek word for two contests. The sport was developed first as a means for hunting, then developed for defending one's borders by the Norwegian military.

Vermont Army Guardsmen Lawton Redman, who won two of the Verizon Championship Series' four races, and

Jeremy Teela from Alaska will be teamed with civilians Jay Hakkinen from Alaska and Dan Campbell from Minnesota on the men's team.

Minnesota citizen-soldiers Kara Salmela and Andrea Nahrgang, along with Kristina Sabasteanski from the Vermont Guard will join civilian Rachel Steer from Alaska, the top-ranked U.S. woman biathlete for the past three years,

on the women's team.

Salmela and Sabasteanski are the Guard's Olympic veterans along with Hakkinen, who also competed in Nagano four winters ago.

Redman, Teela, Nahrgang and Sabasteanski are members of the Army's World Class Athlete Program and com-

See Athletes Page 8

Troopers' season comes to close

By Kevin Doheny
Sports Editor

The Troopers from Fort Riley Middle School wrapped up their wrestling season Dec. 8 by hosting the 19th Annual 7th and 8th Grade Invitational Tournament. The team thanked faculty, staff and all the students who helped make the tournament a success.

Winning one match, but not placing were Thomas Rush, Andrew Stanley, Jeff Sheehan and Anthony Sheehan.

Winning two matches, but not placing were Steve Lillard, Tony Hutchinson and Jean Stanley.

Earning a bronze medal and placing fourth were Chris Williams, Will Gaskins and Cory Smith.

David Watson placed third.

Winning silver medals and placing second were Paul Clark, Chris Bertucci, K.C. Brown and Rodney Hutchinson.

Winning the gold medal and becoming the tournament champion was Chris Toner.

The Trooper wrestlers who finished with winning records were Chris Bertucci, 14-3, Paul Clark, 13-5, Chris Corbett, 4-3, Chandler Holt, 4-1, Rodney Hutchinson, 11-6, Brad McCormick, 11-1, Cory Smith, 7-5, Chris Toner, 17-1, and Reshean Uzzle, 7-4.

Torch pauses at Pentagon

By Marcia Triggs
Army News Service

The Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Torch Relay paused at the Pentagon Dec. 21 and for the first time ever, before the torchbearer began his stint in the relay, the torch was handed to three others whose lives were impacted by the terrorists attack on the Pentagon.

"The ceremony today is really very simple," said an Olympic official. "One flame, one torch, one moment of remembrance and tribute and one group united in conquering the future."

SSgt. Christopher Braman, a cook at the Pentagon, and a ranger at heart, said carrying the Olympic torch was the second best honor that could be bestowed on him. Serving his country is the best honor ever, he said.

On Sept. 11 Braman went back inside the burning Pentagon to save three people - one of them survived. The survivor Sheila Moody was clapping her hands hoping someone would hear her. She couldn't speak because of intense smoke inhalation. Braman heard her, and brought her out.

It was Moody's second day on the job Sept. 11, and in an appearance on the Oprah Winfrey show she told the world that Braman was her guardian angel that day.

Braman also helped to find and recover many who died in the Pentagon, he also retrieved the Marine Corps Flag. The flag was carried on the most recent Space Shuttle Mission.

Receiving the Purple Heart for his injuries and the Soldier's Medal for his bravery has only humbled the staff sergeant. He said he wasn't the only one there making a difference



PostDoheny

The 24th Transportation Company's Anthony Hopkins shoots a three-point basket in the first half of their 46-40 win over 1st Maintenance Wednesday at King Field House. Hopkins was a key part in the team's victory.

Late run not enough

By Kevin Doheny
Sports Editor

It was too little, too late for 1st Maintenance Company, as 24th Transportation Company held them off in the final seconds of a 46-40 basketball game at King Field House Wednesday.

The first half began with 24th Transportation jumping out to a 15-4 lead early on in the first half. They used their ability to hit the three-point shot to jump out to the lead.

"Everybody just came out firing on all cylinders," said Joshua Washington, 24th Transportation, and leading scorer in the game with 21 points. Everyone was feeling their shot.

"We were all in sync," said Anthony Hopkins, 24th Transportation. "We had the tempo the way we wanted it."

After jumping out to the big lead, Transportation began to put the pressure on 1st Maintenance by playing

ball, and everybody pretty much played their role."

"We played man-to-man defense and we boxed them out well," said Washington. "They are a big team so we concentrated on boxing them out."

At the half, Transportation was up 27-11. Then, things began to go sour for them.

1st Maintenance came out of the break with vengeance.

They would start the second half by going on a 16-11 run in the first part of the half.

Unlike the first half, they were able to generate offense and gather rebounds.

The keys players in the second half for 1st Maintenance were their big men. They were able to open up holes in the Transportation defense for themselves and other players.

They also were able to rebound the ball in the second half, creating second

digits.

Then, with just over five minutes left in the game, Transportation had one of their five players foul out. This presented them with a huge problem. Having to play four against five.

"It was a new feeling having to play four on five," Washington said. "We had to slow down the pace because we only had five players to begin the game."

Maintenance took advantage of playing the rest of the game with the five on four advantage.

They were able to get the lead down to three points with just over one minute left to play in the game.

The deficit was just too much though, as Transportation won 46-40.

"Everybody on the team came to the table tonight with something to offer," said Washington. "We only had five players tonight and everybody had to pull extra

Three soldiers make Olympic bobsled team

Army News Service

Three soldiers have qualified for the U.S. Olympic bobsled team and will slide for medals in Utah during the Winter Games Feb. 8-24.

Active-duty soldier Spec. Doug Sharp and Virginia Guard soldier Spec. Mike Kohn are sled pushers on the men's squad and Utah Guard soldier Spec. Jill Bakken is one of two drivers for the women's squad. All three soldiers are with the Army's World Class Athlete Program.

The 2002 games are the first for women's bobsled. Bakken, a team member since the U.S. National Team was created in 1994, said it's been a long road.

"As a kid, I always wanted to go to the Olympics but I didn't ever think that I would come to bobsledding," the 24-year old said. "I went to Lake Placid (in 1994) and tried out and I loved it so I continued."

Bakken became the first National Guard athlete to earn a spot on the 2002 team by finishing second in the U.S. trials Dec. 23. She joins driver Jean Racine and pushers Gea Johnson and Vonetta Flowers on the Olympic team. Racine and Johnson were the winners in Olympic qualifying races Dec. 21-22 with Bakken and Flowers second.

During Olympic qualifying trials Dec. 28-29, Sharp and Kohn were pushers for driver Brian Shimer. Their team, including former WCAP athlete Dan Steele, finished second to driver Todd Hays.

"I feel very relieved, said Kohn, 29, who has devoted most of the past decade to becoming one of the world's premier bobsled pushers. "This has been a long journey for me."

Kohn has made the U.S. Olympic team for the first time.

"Now I feel like I can take my training to a new level," Kohn said. "I don't have to worry about making the team anymore. It's

going to be a matter of winning a medal from this point on."

Kohn, Steele and Sharp form the three-man push team for veteran civilian driver Brian Shimer who at 39 has made the U.S. Olympic team for the fifth time.

For Sharp, the Olympic dream began watching bobsled and men's hockey during the 1980 Games at Lake Placid, N.Y.

"I ran into the front yard, gathered all the neighborhood boys and built a bobsled run," Sharp said. "We took the hose out, flooded the yard, and accidentally let it run all night and flooded the whole street."

"Every once in a while someone sneaks in, we're hoping that'll be us, said Kohn. "Home field advantage helps. Hopefully we can get better between now and then."

Shimer, making his fifth straight Olympic team, has been driving the U.S. Army bobsled for nearly two years as an Army contractor. He, Sharp, Kohn and Steele rode the black and gold Army sled during the trials last month. The Shimer team secured its berth with two solid runs, hitting nearly 90 mph, during the Verizon Champion Series, the U.S. trials, on Dec. 28-29 down the twisting Utah Olympic Park track that drops 341 feet over eight tenths of a mile.

They were considered underdogs because of Shimer's age and his two knee operations and because Steele had signed on as the team's brakeman only about three weeks before the trials.

"Shimer is a great, great driver. I'd love for him to finally get an Olympic medal," said Steele, who replaced Shimer's previous brakeman when he suffered a back injury.

"We jelled right away. From the very first practice, the three of us had very good timing and our loads were right on the money," assessed Steele of the teamwork critical for pushing and jumping into the cramped, sleek sleds at the start of each run.





Athletes continued from page 7

ete for the U.S. national team. Salmela races for the All-National Guard biathlon team.

This year they will compete on the same Soldier Hollow course outside Heber City where the trials were held and where local legend says that U.S. cavalry troops camped in the shadows of the Wasatch Mountains while serving outside Salt Lake City in the late 1850s.

"Representing your country as a soldier and an athlete is twice the honor," said Salmela after the three Guard members representing Vermont and two from Minnesota earned their distinctions as Olympic athletes on the same ground.

Sabasteanski locked up her spot on the final dramatic day, almost beating Minnesota Guard member Jill Krause.

The hard-charging Krause won that race, and the national championship, in 23 minutes, 39.7 seconds, even though she had to ski three 150-meter penalty loops after missing three of her 10 targets. Sabasteanski finished third,

32.4 seconds behind Krause, after missing two targets.

But that was good enough to give Sabasteanski the fourth spot on the Olympic women's team based on her four-race performance.

"I wanted to die at the finish," said the exhausted Sabasteanski, who is 32. "I left everything I had out on the course."

"She's that kind of athlete when the pressure is on," praised Salmela.

I saw her do the same thing in 1998, when she had to win by nearly a minute on the final day to make the team."

Krause will be one of two alternates for the women's team, and Vermont Army Guardsman Dan Westover will be one of the men's alternates.

The 25-year-old Redman dominated the men's trials during his second year on the national team.

He won the 20-kilometer race Dec. 29, the first day of the trials, and capped off the week by winning the 10-kilometer sprint in 26 minutes, 50.5 seconds, after miss-

ing just one of 10 targets.

"I had two great races and two mediocre races," said Redman, who moved from Vermont to Heber City in the fall of 2000 to train for the Salt Lake City Games.

Making the team was harder than he had expected.

"People who you didn't expect to be strong early in the year came together and did really well in the trials," Redman observed. "No one knew what was going to happen until we raced today. This was a real fight."

Victories in the men and women's sprints Dec. 30 helped Teela and Nahrgang lock up their first Olympic team berths. Salmela iced her spot by winning the women's 10-kilometer pursuit race on Jan. 2, following a two-day break in the trials.

The team members and coaches will continue to size up the international competitors they will face in February during two World Cup biathlons in Germany this month.

Although this is considered the fastest team the United States has ever sent to the Olympics, Germany, Norway and Russia are considered the class of that field.

Salmela believes she and her teammates will perform considerably better than in the past, especially before huge home crowds.

A reported 14,000, for example, have already paid \$25 and \$50 to watch the pursuit races, the most popular biathlon events.

Living near Soldier Hollow — and staying away from Salt Lake City — during the Games will help keep the biathletes focused, predicted Nahrgang.

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