



APG celebrates Native American Heritage Month



Va. tribe member speaks at Native American event

Story and photos by **RACHEL PONDER**
APG News

Native American history and culture was celebrated during the Aberdeen Proving Ground annual observance of National American Indian Heritage Month at the APG Post Theater Nov. 17.

Wanda "Singing Wind" Fortune, a descendant of Pocahontas, spoke about what the theme of the event, "Service, Honor, Respect: Strengthening Our Cultures and Communities," meant to her.

Fortune, who has been an active member of the Rappahannock Tribe in Virginia from a



Fortune

Retired Col. John "Swift Fox" Fortune performs a traditional powwow dance during the American Indian Heritage Month observance at the APG Post Theater Nov. 17. Native American Indian dances often mimic animals in nature. In this dance Fortune mimics a crow.

See **TALKS**, page 8

Open season begins for federal employee health care

By **C. TODD LOPEZ**
Army News Service

Even if a federal employee is happy with current health insurance, officials say it's probably a good idea to do at least a little research during "open season," which began Nov. 14 and runs through Dec. 12.

The Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan open season refers to the time each year when employees are allowed to change options for health care coverage, including dental and vision insurance.

"A federal employee has many choices between health plans," said Anne Healy, a representative from the BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program.

In Maryland, Healy said, employees can choose from as many as 25 plans, including preferred provider plans, health management organizations, and high deductible health plans.

"There's all different types of options," she said. "If an employ-

See **EXPLORE**, page 13

Deadline approaches for Stars and Stripes Holiday Greetings

American Forces Press Service

Thanksgiving is practically here, and closely behind it, the deadline for submitting holiday messages and photos to appear in Stars and Stripes newspapers and its online editions.

"Stripes" is continuing its tradition of publishing free holiday messages to family members and friends, no matter where they are deployed or stationed, officials said.

Messages submitted by Nov. 28 will appear in the Dec. 17 newspaper edition of the sender's choice: Europe, Mideast or Pacific. Greetings received after that date, or to recipients in the United States, will appear in the online version only, officials said.

Messages can be submitted on the Stars and Stripes website at <http://holidaymessages.stripes.osd.mil/>. Click "Submit message," and then either "Text" or "Picture Message."

Once the message is approved for publication, senders can search or browse messages by edition or the recipient's name using the site's publication tabs or "Find Messages" button.

Pocahontas descendant reflects on distant heritage

By **YVONNE JOHNSON**
APG News

An Aberdeen Proving Ground officer is one of an estimated 100,000 people in the world with lineage to the fabled Native American princess Pocahontas.

Capt. Matthew D. Smith is the aide-de-camp to APG senior leader Maj. Gen. Nick Justice. Born in Seattle and raised in Cleveland, Smith's family roots are in the mid-Atlantic. He said the story of his family's lineage passed from generation to generation but was never confirmed until his mother decided to "do some digging."

He recalled her taking him and his brother on outings to the library where she would spend hours researching birth records and other documents.

"My mom was always interested in genealogy. She was the first to actually verify it," he said.



Smith

See **MI OFFICER**, page 8

APG's deceased eagles gifted to Native American tribes

By **YVONNE JOHNSON**
APG News

Ever wonder what happens to bald eagles when they die? Do laws prohibiting possession of bald eagles or bald eagle parts under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act still apply after death?

Absolutely. According to John Paul, a biologist with the Installation Environment Division, deceased bald eagles are evaluated on site, then sent to the National Eagle Repository at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge near Denver, Colo.

From there, the eagle parts are distributed only to Native Americans enrolled in federally recognized tribes for use in religious and cultural ceremonies.

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WEATHER

Thurs.



49° | 30°

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APG Snapshot

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IT'S THE LAW

Be aware of the rules and regs that apply to federal employees during holidays. Find out more **PAGE 4**

OPINION

Indian heritage must be kept alive

Although November was not designated as National American Indian Heritage Month until 1990, I grew up knowing about my Indian heritage by hearing stories from my mother, who was born to a French woman from Quimper and an Indian descended from Chief Black Hawk.

I and my Sac and Fox cousins didn't play cowboys and Indians growing up. We played at "taking back our land and restoring our nation." We imitated our ancestor who tried to do that in 1832, giving the future President Abraham Lincoln his only battle experience during the Black Hawk War.

We knew we were playing, however, because like so many of those who had gone before us, not only had the names of Indian places and people become destinations and football team names, the people had become assimilated, too. It's a fact of life.

After warring with people, we all begin to become "one", even though some insurgents take longer than others to understand this rite of passage. Or, as we jokingly said of ourselves, "our Indian blood had become polluted."

For instance the Lenni Lenape, better known as the Delaware Indians, had assimilated long before William Penn came to Philadelphia on his ship, "Welcome."

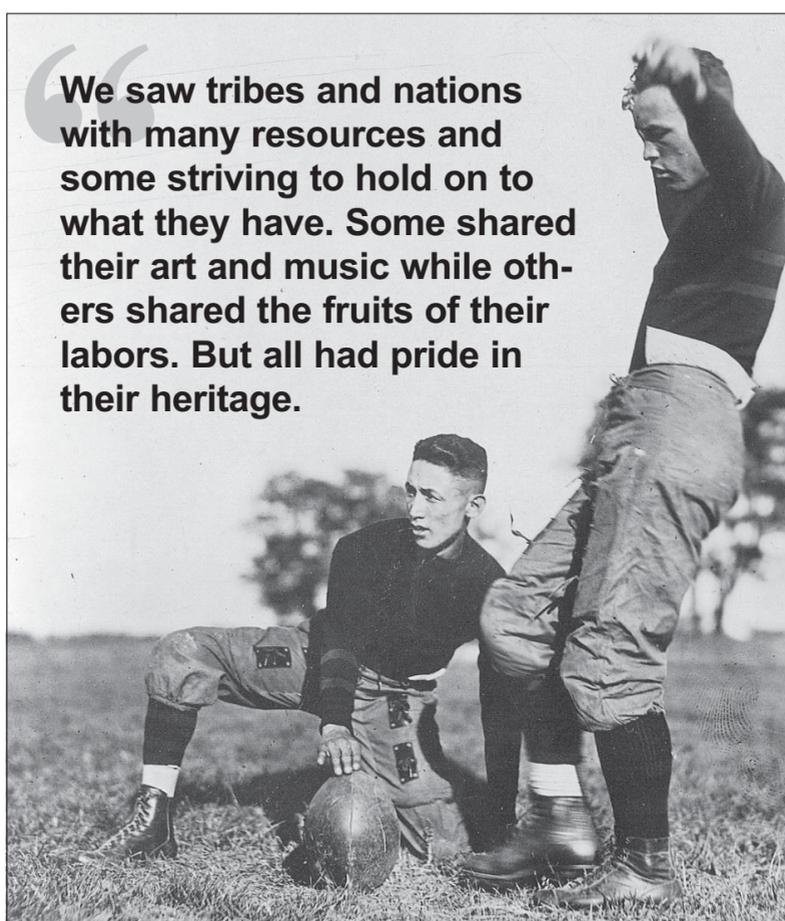
However, when my grandfather, Wapahmak -- Dark Shining Object on Still Water -- took me fishing or watched me play football, I knew the eyes of my ancestors were upon me. When we played at war and performed stunts, such as diving through windows, climbing rock walls, swimming in cold springs, catching fish with our hands and holding onto electric fencing, we knew we were testing ourselves.

My Indian grandfather did the same but it wasn't play. He was a deep-sea diver in World War I and a ship fitter in World War II and then he built radio towers outside of Philadelphia.

Indian men always wanted to prove themselves, but when war ends, they take jobs considered too dangerous by many.

Before that, my grandfather attended the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania -- founded by Capt. Richard H. Pratt in 1879. There my granddad played football with his cousin Jim Thorpe.

So, even though Pratt's effort to take



Courtesy photo

Tom Miles, the author's grandfather, is shown holding the football for a kick at Carlisle Indian Industrial School circa 1911. Miles was a freshman when his cousin Jim Thorpe was a senior on the team.

the Indian out of the Indian had, in large part worked, my cousins, disbursed by marriage and opportunity from our tribal lands in Shawnee, Okla., still held on to both sides of our heritage.

And then, in 2002, I had the opportunity to be executive producer for the National Museum of the American Indian on the mall, near the U.S. Capitol.

While my mom -- First Ray of Dawn, and granddad had both been given Indian names at birth, the museum experience gave me the opportunity to reconnect with my ancestors many years later.

During my time at the museum, through my sponsors Grace Thorpe - Jim's daughter, Bud McClellan, and other elders of the tribe, I was given the name Ni-Ka-Noo-Ko-Huk -- Lead-

er when Lightning Strikes. I became a member of the We mi ko (Thunder) Clan, and also was invited to dance with the Gourd Clan because of my military experience.

I hired a TV crew and we traveled through Canada from Montreal to Winnipeg and from the Virginia tribes to Oklahoma, New Mexico and up to Washington state and got the chance to dance with a group of Indians in Chicago.

I was hesitant to join the other dancers because I had once told a cousin that I didn't know how to dance. His answer to me was, "that's alright, no one knows how to dance ... only God knows."

My film crew and I interviewed members of the Kahnawake Mohawk territory, many of whom built the Empire State Building and the World Trade Center.

We saw tribes and nations with many resources and some striving to hold on to what they have. Some shared their art and music while others shared the fruits of their labors. But all had pride in their heritage.

This powerful tribe stood up against the Canadian police when they refused to make French their first language.

This was the first time I had heard of Indians re-learning or holding onto their language -- or that which makes them Indian. The tribe had an elementary, middle and high school where children were immersed in the language.

We made friends with the Tohono O'odham reservation near Tucson, Ariz., which began a non-profit organization called Native Seeds, and we were invited into a home to eat the results of their labors as they promoted the use of ancient crops.

We journeyed to Yakama Nation and visited Mount Adams -- their source of water and irrigation for their crops and lumber mill, and saw salmon fishing along the Columbia River in Washington.

We also visited the relatively small Hoopa Valley Tribe where they showed us how they cut the river grass to make baskets, and took a boat ride up the majestic Trinity River in northern California where we saw eagles soar.

We saw tribes and nations with many resources and some striving to hold on to what they have. Some shared their art and music while others shared the fruits of their labors. But all had pride in their heritage.

Not unlike the Pow-Wow, where the people get together to join in dancing, visiting, renewing old friendships and making new ones, and to preserve their heritage, the Native Americans we met across North America knew the importance of sharing their past, present and future with others at the National Museum of the American Indian which officially opened in 2004 with a national Pow-Wow.

Once many of the tribes raided and fought against each other. Now they gather together to keep a people alive ... to prove we are still here and we still have a voice.

Where once there was mutual honor and respect for the enemy in battle, this now has evolved into mutual honor and respect for each tribe, nation or native community. We work with each other to keep alive the language, the song, the dance and the beat of the drum.

Rob McIlvaine
Army News Service

Great American Smoke Out

One great idea, several determined individuals

The Great American Smokeout Walk at APG occurred Nov. 16 despite the downpour of rain that that day.

We had a decision to make—cancel the event or continue forward. It would have been easy to cancel since the rain date was already established, but we chose to go forward. With the support of FMWR, Kirk, ASAP and PHC, we were able to keep the momentum going. It was a team effort that resulted in a turnout of over 90 participants.

APG's Great American Smokeout Walk, which was planned in support of the nationally recognized American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout Day,

was moved indoors from Fanshaw Field to the APG North gym. Freestate Challenge cadets also showed up to support the event. And KUSAHC Commander Lt. Col. Ellen Daly led the first group of cadets—all girls—around the gym for a quarter-mile walk.

The enthusiasm from the cadets, alone, was well worth the efforts. Eight of the young ladies were also recipients of the raffle prizes that ranged from fruit and vegetable baskets to teddy bears and restaurant gift cards.

I can tell you that the appreciation that the cadets showed was extremely gratifying and to have our youth—our future leaders—support this cause with us, was amazing. I hope the event and the camaraderie

we shared will make a positive impact on their future decision not to use tobacco.

The idea of the Smokeout Walk started with one Soldier. Sgt. 1st Class Trowbridge and I were having a discussion on how to go beyond putting up posters to support the national Smokeout when the idea of the walk came up. Next year, weather permitting, we plan to hold another walk. So lace up your tennis shoes. We hope to see you there!

Wendy LaRoche
Health Promotion Officer
Community Health Promotion Council, USAPHC

APG SEVEN DAY FORECAST



APG NEWS

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Deadline for copy is Thursday at noon for the following Thursday's paper.

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Photo by Adrienne Foss

(From left) APG Youth Center students Keshawn Gardner and Jyree Ivory, both 7, perform Michael Jackson impersonations during Family Night Nov. 12.

Youth Center addresses bullying, showcases talent

By **JASON DOMINGUEZ**
FMWR

Anti-bully campaigns are increasingly gaining nationwide attention from the media, parents and government officials.

Members of the APG Youth Center joined the effort Nov. 12 when they held a Family Night dinner to raise awareness about bullying and its effects on children.

“Bullying is a very hot topic right now,” said Youth Center Program Manager Karen Johnson. “We have no tolerance for it here at the center.

“Our message is simple: We don’t harvest bullies here; we harvest character,” said Johnson. “During a recent 4H meeting, we were sitting down talking to the kids, and I was telling them about Taylor Swift’s song, ‘Mean.’ I asked them to pay attention to the lyrics because Swift was bullied, and she’s telling young kids what to do about it.”

The evening’s theme was “Families Taking a Stand Against Bullying,” and the gathering also served as an oppor-

tunity for children to showcase some of their skills during performances that ranged from singing and dancing to a magic show and poem recitals.

“We wanted to make the parents feel special,” said Johnson, who organized the event and decorated the gym to look like a theater.

Before the children performed, parents were treated to slideshow presentations and discussions about bullying.

“We talked about gender differences because girls bully differently than boys,” explained Johnson. “We asked for audience participation and asked parents what they were going to do to prevent this type of behavior.”

Johnson said she plans to continue to raise awareness about bullying with the children at the center, but she also plans to teach them about obesity and the importance of staying active.

“We’re also planning to have a dinner disco night,” she said.

For more information about bullying or the Youth Center, call Johnson at 410-278-4992.

Observe employee regs for holidays

CECOM Office of the Staff Judge Advocate

Each year at this time many of us participate in holiday celebrations and activities occurring in and out of the office.

While this is a time of celebration, we must remain aware of the rules and regulations which apply to federal employees.

Before asking someone to contribute a gift, soliciting for funds to support a holiday event, or giving a seasonal gift, keep in mind that the Standards of Conduct for Executive Branch Employees and the Joint Ethics Regulation apply to most holiday activities.

These regulations apply to gifts from outside sources (including contractor personnel), gifts between employees, and offers of free attendance or tangible items. A gift can be anything that has monetary value.

During the holidays, don't accept gifts or event invitations worth more than \$20 and given to you because of your official position, or from a prohibited source. A prohibited source is anyone who:

- seeks official action by the employee's agency;
- does business or seeks to do busi-



It's the Law

ness with the employee's agency;

- conducts activities regulated by the employee's agency; or

- has interest that may be substantially affected by the employee's performance of duty (e.g. a contractor or financial agent).

There are no restrictions on gifts given to peers or subordinates, but supervisors should be mindful of appearances and avoid creating the perception of par-

tiality or favoritism when giving gifts to peers or subordinates.

Gift-giving in the workplace should be even-handed and diplomatic in spirit, and no one should be left out. If you want to give a supervisor a gift (or accept a gift from a subordinate), the rules require that the gift have a value of \$10 or less.

Also, you can never accept a cash gift or solicit cash to support a holiday event from a prohibited source. If you receive an otherwise improper gift, but it is perishable like flowers, fruit or food, and it is not practical to return the gift, then with the approval of your supervisor and the organization's ethics counselor, you may share the gift with your office, donate it to charity, or discard it.

The Army encourages everyone to enjoy the season with co-workers, friends and family. In addition to the ethics rules regarding gifts, holiday celebrations must also observe rules for workplace ethics. The key to avoiding problems is to use good judgment, and remember that organizing or participating in events can never amount to a significant use of government resources. Yes, your time is a government resource.

The Standards of Conduct prohibit the use of government resources for other than authorized purposes, however, supervisors can approve the limited use of duty time for holiday parties and for preparation.

Contractor employees may attend holiday parties however, the mission must not be impacted. Contractors should not bill the government for time its employees spent at holiday parties. Recreation expenses designed to improve company loyalty or team work are not allowable on Government contracts.

The contractor has to decide whether to let its employees attend and forego payment for their time, or insist that they continue to work. If the contractor employees are allowed to attend, the contractor must decide whether it would pay its employees for that time, even though the government would not reimburse it. Nonetheless, the contractor is not obligated to pay its employees for that time.

Your office may want to raise money to offset the cost of a holiday event. As a general rule, no fundraising may occur in the federal workplace; however an exception exists in the JER for office events.

The exception permits employees to raise money among themselves for their

own benefit when approved by a supervisor and an ethics counselor. There are a couple of other points to consider when raising funds for a holiday event.

First, never solicit contributions from an outside source e.g. a contractor or prohibited sources., and second, raffles may not be used to raise money for an office party.

Another exception to the general prohibition relates to attendance and participation in holiday parties. All employees and contractor employees may attend a private party hosted by a federal employee.

Food, refreshments, and entertainment may be shared and enjoyed. Subordinates may bring hospitality gifts, such as a bottle of wine, but these gifts must be modest in cost. Hospitality gifts among federal employees are not strictly limited to a \$10 value, but that amount should be used as a guide. However, hospitality gifts from contractor employees are strictly limited to a \$20 value.

Federal employees may accept free attendance at a private party hosted by a contractor or a contractor employee if:

- the average cost for each guest is less than \$20;

- the invitation is based on a bona fide personal relationship with the contractor employee instead of a congenial office relationship;

- the party qualifies as a "widely attended gathering"—that is, it has more than 20 attendees representing a diversity of views and backgrounds;

- the employee's supervisor (or ethics counselor for general officers and political appointees) determines that it is in the agency's interest for the employee to attend; the contractor is having an open house for the public or all government employees or military;

- the invitation is offered to a group or class that is unrelated to government employment;

- or you have been assigned to represent the Army at an official function.

If none of these conditions applies, the employee must decline the invitation or pay to attend.

It is never inappropriate for an employee to decline a gift from any source, and you are encouraged to consider every situation carefully when contemplating the acceptance of a gift or holiday party invitation.

Soldier Santa Ball set Dec. 9

Special to the APG News

The Aberdeen Chapter of the Association of the United States Army will host its second holiday gala, the Soldier Santa Ball, 6 to 11 p.m. Friday, Dec. 9 at Bldg. 3200 Raritan Avenue (the C4ISR Consolidated North Facility).

The building will be transformed by caterers and decorators into this year's theme, Winter Wonderland, according to AUSA president Scott Cheseldine of Rsc2 Inc.

With more than 500 attendees when the gala debuted in Baltimore in 2010, Cheseldine said the event is expected to surpass 700 now that it's come home to APG.

"This event supports the Army Community Service Christmas Drive for Soldiers and their Families," he said. The gala includes dinner, entertainment, a silent auction and dancing, and the guest

speaker is retired Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, former Army Chief of Staff and current AUSA chief operating officer.

Tickets are \$75 per person; \$50 per person for active-duty military and their guest (captain and below).

Registration ends Dec. 5. Dress is black-tie optional.

To register online or for more information, visit the Soldier Santa Ball website at <http://www.soldiersantaballapg.com/index.php>.

With the approaching New Year, AUSA is planning more events to "bring the community together to support the warfighter," Cheseldine said. "Our area has been extended from Harford County to Ocean City so expect even more great events in 2012."

AFCA Aberdeen, AAAA Mid-Atlantic, ITEA Aberdeen and CCRA Aberdeen are co-hosts for the event.

Hazard signs posted on APG South

DPW Environmental Div.

Motorists and personnel at APG South (Edgewood) may notice new signs cautioning against digging or construction without formal approval.

The signs, installed in compliance with a formal agreement between the Army, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), state the following:

"WARNING, Potential Hazardous Waste Site, Site Restrictions, No Unauthorized Digging, Excavating, or Construction".

The signs also provide a telephone number for APG's Environmental Division, where questions about the signs and the sites can be answered.

The signs will be installed at the locations of three historic laboratory waste disposal sites, which have been sampled and studied via the Comprehensive Environmental Response,

Compensation and Liability Act program implemented by APG's Installation Restoration Program.

The CERCLA studies have indicated that the sites, as they are, do not pose unacceptable risks to human health under the current and likely future land uses, or to animals and plants. But because of the historical documentation indicating the past presence of disposal sites, the Army, EPA and MDE agree that the installation of hazard signage is necessary as a warning to those who may inadvertently dig in the area without proper approvals.

The signs will be an additional measure to the land use controls on these sites, which ensure that the sites are not developed for residential-type land uses.

Hazard signage will be installed on Fleming Road, 32nd Street and K St. in the vicinity of Bldgs. E5101, E5185, E5310 and E5311; and on Blackhawk and Magnolia Roads in the vicinity of Bldg. E5027.

Call Rurik Loder or Allison O'Brien of the APG DPW Environmental Division for information at 410-436-7313 and 410-278-5446, respectively.

Post Shorts

MARC shuttle shuts down for Thanksgiving

The MARC Station daily shuttle to and from APG will not operate Friday, Nov. 25, due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Normal service resumes Monday, Nov. 28. For more information, contact George Angelucci, TMP chief, 410-278-3330.

DFAC Thanksgiving meal

The installation's annual Thanksgiving meal will not be offered in the APG dining facility this year. Call 410-306-1607

Special Emphasis volunteers sought

APG's Equal Employment Opportunity Office Special Emphasis Program is seeking volunteers from the garrison and tenant activities to establish Special Emphasis Program Committees (SEPC).

We are also seeking employees who previously engaged with the SEP to return and assist. The SEPC is a working committee composed of civilian and

military personnel from various organizations on APG. Committee representatives are designated by unit commanders and directors, and they are placed on official orders to attend regularly scheduled monthly meetings and to assist in workforce development programs.

Individuals interested should call Charles Thomas at 410-278-1131.

Thanksgiving with a Soldier

On-post Families who would like to welcome a Soldier into their home for Thanksgiving dinner can contact 1st Sgt. Sonya Jackson at 410-278-9818 or sonya.l.jackson@mail.mil

Christmas Special

Teachers and children from the post chapel's Religious Education will host an ecumenical (Catholic, Gospel and Protestant) Christmas Special Dec. 4 from 3-5 p.m. at the main post chapel. The event will include an enactment of the Jesse Tree Symbols, the O Antiphons, The Nativity Masks Drama, the Empty Manager Activity, the Posadas and a Joy to the World Dance. Refreshments will be provided.

DAU ribbon cutting

DAU invites the community to its ribbon cutting ceremony Nov. 30 at 11 a.m.

The ceremony will inaugurate the new DAU facility at 6175 Guardian Gateway. This location expands DAU capabilities in supporting the Defense Acquisition Workforce and the APG Community.

The facility features state of the art classrooms, breakout rooms, and expanded space for the resident DAU-Senior Service College Fellowship program.

RSVP to parker.bennett@dau.mil by Nov. 23. Call 410-272-9471 for information.

Celebrate Holiday by the Bay

All Picerne Military Housing residents are invited to join in the festivities and celebrate the holiday season with neighbors and the Picerne team at Holiday by the Bay. The event is free for residents and will be held at 2727 Chesapeake Blvd. Dec. 2 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Enjoy holiday music, hot chocolate and holiday treats, work on crafts at Santa's Workshop and take a picture with Santa himself.

For more information, call the Neighborhood Office.

Kirk Clinic Closings

Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic will be closed Thursday, Nov. 24 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday and Friday, Nov. 25th for a training holiday.

No pharmacy services will be provided during this period. Refill medications at Kirk before 5 p.m. Nov. 23. Call 1-800-248-6337 or visit www.tricare.mil/pharmacy for information.

For after hours medical services, call 443-807-0725 for the staff duty officer, who will coordinate your care with the Referral Management Office. To avoid charges, a referral is required to go to any urgent care clinic. In an emergency, call 911 or visit the nearest emergency room, which do not require referral.



MORE ONLINE

More shorts can be seen at www.apgnews.apg.army.mil under Shorts.

COMMUNITY NOTES

SATURDAY & SUNDAY

DECEMBER 3-4 STEPPINGSTONE

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Join the Steppingstone Museum, located on 461 Quaker Bottom Road, Harve de Grace, will hold its annual Christmas Open House noon to 4 p.m., Dec. 3 and 4. Admission is free. There will be tours of the historic farmhouse decorated for the holidays, Christmas music, cookies and cider. The museum store will be open for holiday shopping. The event will be held rain or shine. For more information, call 410-939-2299, 888-419-1762, or e-mail steppingstonemuseum@msn.com or visit www.steppingstonemuseum.org.

SATURDAY

DECEMBER 3 SKELETAL CSI

Learn how to identify animals by their bones. Feel free to bring skulls and bones to try to figure out what they came from. This program will be held 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. for ages 12 to adult. The program is free but online registration is required at www.otterpointcreek.org.

For information or directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

SUMMER RESEARCH ROUND UP

Volunteers, members, and general public come for fascinating research updates and highlights from the 2011 OPCA summer research interns,

Donny McKnight and Nathan Byer. Hear monitoring updates on the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas (MARA), box turtle survey, and turtle telemetry. Learn the answers gleaned from research questions about predator response time in green frogs; sedimentation rates in HaHa Branch; and water, soil, and vegetation of the vernal pond along the Discovery Trail. Refreshments will be served. This program will be held 1 to 3 p.m. for ages 12 to adult. The program is free but online registration is required at www.otterpointcreek.org.

For information or directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

HISTORY OF THE HOLIDAY STEA

Dress up and come out for a lovely

Victorian afternoon tea with a history of the holidays to get participants into the spirit. This program will be held 3 to 4:30 p.m. for parents and children ages 5 and up. The cost is \$10 per parent & child, and \$5 per additional child and online registration is required at www.otterpointcreek.org.

For information or directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.



MORE ONLINE

More calendar events can be seen at www.apgnews.apg.army.mil under Community Notes.

FAMILY AND MWR

Activities/Events

Learn to hand paint custom shirts

The Army Child, Youth & School Services will teach children ages 6 to 8 to hand paint custom shirts during November. Classes will be held at the Aberdeen Area Youth Services building Nov. 30 from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. In these classes, children will learn the basics of hand painting artwork on to shirts, use a projector, paint fabric and learn about other materials to hand paint their own shirts. The classes are open to all DoD ID cardholders.

To register, call Stacie Umbarger at 410-278-7571/7479 or Stacie.e.umbarger.naf@mail.mil.

Holiday performances for the whole family

The community is invited to attend several holiday performances presented by the APG MWR Theater Group.

A stage adaptation of *It's a Wonderful Life* will be performed Saturday, Dec. 3, at the post theater at 7 p.m. and a Sunday matinee will be performed Dec. 4 at 2 p.m.

The film version of *It's a Wonderful Life* was nominated for five Oscars and starred James Stewart as a man whose pending suicide on Christmas Eve brings about the intervention of his wingless guardian angel.

Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* will be performed tentatively Monday, Dec. 19, at the APG North recreation center at 7 p.m. *A Christmas Carol* includes some of the holiday's most memorable characters—from the hard-hearted Scrooge, four ghosts, Tiny Tim and the kindhearted Bob Cratchit.

Bring the family and make it an evening to remember, or gift the gift of entertainment by purchasing a ticket for a friend.

Visit the MWR Leisure and Travel Office to purchase tickets, or buy them over the phone by calling 410-278-4011.

It's *A Wonderful Life* tickets cost \$10 for the general public, \$5 for active duty service members and children 12 and under. *A Christmas Carol* tickets are \$5 for the general public and free to active duty service members and children under 12.

(A dinner theater performance of *A Christmas Carol* will also be presented at the Clarion Hotel in Aberdeen. Call 410-273-6300 for information on the dinner theater.)

Armed Forces Vacation Club

Planning a vacation? The Armed Forces Vacation Club has tons of incredible discounts on spacious accommodations all over the world. Seven-night stays at select location start as low as \$349.

All active military service members and their direct dependants, retired military and their direct dependants, DoD civilian employees and their direct dependants and 100 percent disabled American Veterans are authorized to take advantage of these amazing deals. Discounts are valid for Space Available Inventory only. Remember to enter base code 105 at the time of the booking. If you have questions, please call

410-278-4011/4907 or e-mail APGR-USAG-MWR-LeisureTravel@conus.army.mil.

ACS Holiday Card Making Event

The ACS Hearts Apart Support Group will host its Holiday Card Making Event at ACS, Bldg 2503 High Point Road, December 7, 2011, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

All participants will be given the opportunity to decorate a card for their deployed family member. There will be light refreshments for all who participate. Hearts Apart seeks to empower Families (military and DOD civilians) with information to help prepare the Families for the separation during deployments and TDYs.

ACS offers a comprehensive array of programs and services dedicated to maintaining the readiness of the Total Army Family by fostering self-reliance, stability and resilience.

For more information, call Wilhelmina Cromartie at 410-278-2464.

Blended Family Class

The Army Community Service Family Advocacy Program honors our diverse military and DoOD community. As part of our commitment and drive to enhance their lives, we are excited to offer a class on the blended family.

The blended family is so called because it blends two Families together. Sometimes the blending of two Families present a unique set of challenges, unexpected struggles and joys. Successful blending of Families is a process that can take time but can be done effectively with knowledge and skill.

The Blended Family class objec-

tives includes: Understanding Problems and Adjustments, Learning the Different Family Compositions, Understanding Impact of Past Experiences, Myths and Expectations, Family Structure, and Tasks and Issues. The class is Dec. 6, 2011, from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. at the Army Community Service Bldg. 2503. Childcare is available. Call 410-278-2435 for information.

EFMP Bowling on Sundays

Exceptional Family Member Program Families and all individuals with disabilities are invited to bowl at APG bowling center from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Sunday. The APG bowling center is on Aberdeen Proving Ground next to the Burger King and Post Exchange.

The center offers video games, food and fun for all. Contact Ann Battaglia to reserve lanes at 410 838- 5026 or tabat@msn.com.

Mixed Martial Arts Seminar

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and wrestling extraordinaire James Brasco is coming to APG Athletic Center Nov. 30 at 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. to conduct a Mixed Martial Arts seminar.

Brasco will demonstrate various martial arts techniques including the latest Jiu-Jitsu and MMA quick winning moves. A seminar demonstrating anti-bullying and self-defense techniques will also be taught by Brasco. The seminar is free to members of the APG community. For more information, call 410-278-4011/7934.



MORE ONLINE

For a listing of FMWR activities and events, or to read the weekly MWR newsletter, scan the code.

November bowling specials

■ **Early Bird Special:** From 7am till 10am bowl for \$1.50 a game.

■ **Friday night after 9 p.m.** Rent a lane for \$12 an hour. Includes up to six people and shoes.

■ **Pizza & Bowling Special:** 1 Hour of bowling, 1 whole cheese pizza and a pitcher of soda of for \$34

■ **Football special,** Every Sunday in the month of November. Each

game of bowling is \$1.50, shoe rental-\$1, wings-\$.50 each, Jr. hot dogs-\$1, Reg. Soda \$.50 and 16- ounce Draft Beer \$1.50.

Bowling rates

Bowling costs \$3 per game, Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; games cost \$3.50 each on Fridays, 9:30 to 11 p.m.; Cosmic Saturdays cost \$3.75 per game; and \$3 per game on Sundays.

APG Bowling Center Snack Bar specials

Building 2342

Week of November 21

Special #1: Tuna salad sandwich with chips, cookie and regular soda for \$5.50.

Special #2: Pepperoni Pizza Sub with french fries, cookie and regular soda for \$6.50.

Week of November 28

Special #1: Egg salad sandwich with chips, cookie and regular soda for \$4.50.

Special #2: Cheese steak izza sub with french fries, cookie and regular soda for \$7.25.

The Bowling Center also serves breakfast. For more information or to place an order, call 410-278-4041.



APG SNAPSHOT

A peek at the events making news in and around U.S. Army Garrison Aberdeen Proving Ground. For complete photo coverage, visit <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usagapg/> or <http://www.flickr.com/photos/rdecom>.



GOING GREENER

(From right) APG Garrison Pollution Prevention Program Team leader Janmichael Graine and team members Maia Kaiser and Vickie Venzen deliver personal recycling bins to the garrison headquarters building. The team acquired more than 3,000 excess bins from Scott Air Force Base, Ill., saving the garrison \$42,948, while encouraging personnel to recycle and advancing the garrison toward the Army goal of 40 percent diversion from landfills.

Photo by Yvonne Johnson

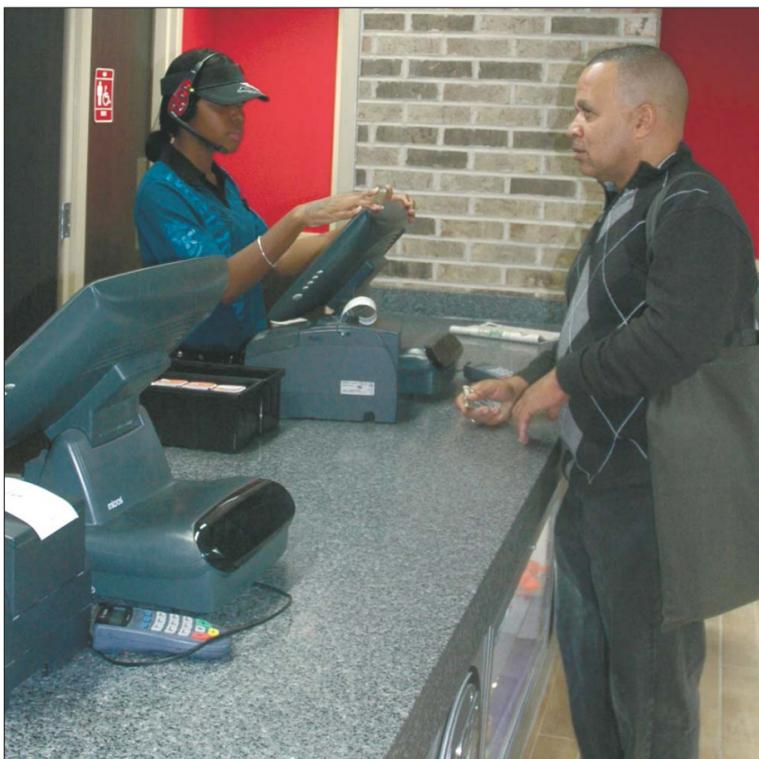


Photo by Rachel Ponder

BACK IN BUSINESS

Morris Harris (right), an engineering technician from United States Army Test, Measurement, and Diagnostic Equipment Support Group, orders from Burger King's new LCD menu screen as BK employee Ecstasy Morrison takes the order. The fully renovated restaurant, which reopened Nov. 12, has an edgier, futuristic redesign that replaced the traditional earth-tone décor. The 20/20 redesign was implemented at several restaurants in Canada earlier this year, but APG's Burger King is the first in America to implement the bold new design.



BLASTS FROM THE PAST

Lorina Huntley (at right) sings "Unchained Melody" by The Righteous Brothers and Candy Garcia (above) sings Patsy Cline's "Crazy" on karaoke during the Open Mic Thursday debut at Ruggles Golf Course Nov. 17. Patrons enjoyed music and finger foods while cheering on their friends and coworkers. Check www.apgmwr.com for the next Open Mic Thursday.

Photos by Yvonne Johnson

Explore options during open season

Continued from Page 1

ee is enrolled in one plan, say an HMO (health maintenance organization), and they decide they want to change to a PPO (preferred provider organization), the only time they can do that is during the open season."

New federal employees pick a health care plan when they are hired. And existing employees can change their coverage options during "life-changing events" such as getting married or having a baby. But otherwise, employees must wait until "open season" to make changes to their health coverage.

But even if an employee doesn't make changes to health insurance coverage during open season, providers can make changes of their own. And employees should be aware of those changes, because they can reflect on their paycheck come January.

"A couple years ago we had one health carrier that raised its premiums tremendously," said Peggy Schultz, the director of the Army Benefits Center. "We had a lot of unhappy people after

open season because by then it's too late to do anything about it. And it was a significant increase."

Schultz said that federal employees, during open season, should investigate changes being made to their current health, dental and vision plans to ensure that when the new year rolls around, there will be no surprises in their paycheck.

"People should go out there to investigate with the tools available," she said.

Schultz said some of those tools are available on the "Smart Choice" website that is available at <https://www.plansmartchoice.com>.

Additionally, there is information available on the "Army Benefits Center-Civilian" website at <https://www.abc.army.mil>.

Schultz said that during open season, Army civilians can look at and modify their health coverage options on the "Employee Benefits Information System" at <https://www.ebis.army.mil>.

Somewhere between 90 and 95 percent of Army civilians use the EBIS

site to make changes to their health insurance plans, Schultz said. "They have embraced the automation." Others, she said, can call the toll-free number available on the site to work with an operator.

Mark Ruddick, a representative of the Kaiser Permanente health care organization, said during open season, federal employees should reassess their health care needs and then look at all the options available to them.

"What's important for them -- that's part of my dialogue when I meet with a potential member -- it is not necessarily to sell a plan to them, but to really find what they are looking for.

"Buying health insurance is a very personal issue," Ruddick said. "So what's important to you might not be important to me. So it's having a conversation with somebody, as they look at all this information. Is it choice of physician, is it the cost of the plan, it is having them on an integrated network?"

According to the Office of Person-

nel Management website, most Federal Employee Health Benefit plans will see benefit and rate changes beginning in January 2012. Some plans are dropping out, for instance, and some plans are changing their coverage area.

"It is wise to review your coverage during this period to decide what coverage and premium best suits your needs for the upcoming year," the website reads.

Information from OPM can be found at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/open-season>. Included there is information about health, dental and vision plans, as well as information about flexible spending accounts.

A flexible spending account allows an employee to set aside untaxed money to use for authorized medical expenses. Employees who use flexible spending accounts must enroll each year to continue participating.

The OPM website also offers several video seminars online regarding the 2012 open season.