



## Task Force 1-26 returns home

Story and photos by Kimberly Gearhart

The first large group from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, to deploy is now also the first to return: Task Force 1-26 has come home.

Sunday night, Families gathered in the Finney Fitness Center to await the return of the final two waves, 222 individuals, of the main body of returning TF 1-26 Soldiers.

“My stomach’s been turning all day,” said Kate Olson, who was waiting for her husband, Sgt. Scott Olson. “You know when he came home from R&R? A year ago today,” Kate added. With such a large group, many Soldiers took rest and recuperation leave, or R&R, early to ensure that everyone would get a chance. The additional three months extension meant that some Families, such as the Olsons, may have spent a year or more apart.

Spouses and children waited excitedly for their loved ones to arrive, checking manifests repeatedly just to be sure their Soldier was really on the way home.

“My dad’s coming in,” said Victoria Richards, a 15-year-old

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Bailey, left, and Isabell brought roses for their dad, Sgt. Scott Olson, to welcome him home from a 15-month deployment with Task Force 1-26. Olson returned home for Rest and Recuperation leave exactly one year before his unit’s redeployment to Schweinfurt.

## Covenant signed as promise to Army Families

Story and photo by Kimberly Gearhart

Army Families are Army Strong, and Army leadership is making a promise to ensure Families only grow stronger in the future.

The Army Family Covenant is a pact between the Army and its Soldiers and Families, recognizing the strength of the Family as the backbone of the Army and committing time and resources to improving housing, education, job opportunities and more.

“It’s our Family; it’s our community,



Brig. Gen. Stephen Lanza and Lt. Col. Tony Haager discuss the personalization of Schweinfurt’s Army Family Covenant Document.

and we take care of each other,” said USAG Schweinfurt Commander Lt. Col. Tony Haager.

Across the world, Army leadership is symbolically sealing the pact with Families by signing copies of the Army Family Covenant. Haager and Brig. Gen. Stephen Lanza, deputy V Corps commander, placed their names alongside the signatures of the Secretary of the Army, Sgt. Major of the Army, and the Army Chief of Staff, bringing the big Army promise into the garrison, where it belongs.

“We, here in Schweinfurt, have been on the cutting edge of Family-centered improvements even before the covenant,” Haager said, noting that the popular “Family Strong” video now being circulated could easily have been recorded in Schweinfurt.

From MWR programs such as the street festivals and Family friendly trips to discounted childcare and numerous facility upgrades, the Schweinfurt community has benefited from the Family focus that makes this garrison unique.

This uniqueness extends to the covenant itself. The USAG Schweinfurt document

is personalized with pictures from local events, thanks to the efforts of the MWR staff, a move Lanza praised, noting that the covenant itself may mean more to people when they see themselves pictured on it.

The covenant, which calls for a standardization of Army services across all installations, reinforces at the Army level the work now being done locally.

“[The covenant] is to ensure that there are no have-nots. Everybody’s a have,” Haager explained.

This guarantee is especially important with the current deployment tempo in today’s military. Soldiers are spending more time away from their Families, and the Army knows that if the Family isn’t ready for a deployment, the Soldier cannot focus on his mission.

“When you go downrange, you don’t have time to worry about anything but the mission in front of you,” Haager said.

With the covenant, the Army is taking steps toward making sure you don’t have to worry, because your Family will be supported, protected, and they will be Army Strong.



## News Briefs

### Shop 'til you drop

Community members between 12-18 years of age are invited to attend Army Community Service (ACS) Shop 'til you drop Friday. Those interested should meet at ACS in Leighton at 1 p.m. and from there take local transportation to downtown shopping. Bring euro fro bus fare, shopping, and food. For more information, call 350-7103 or 0931-889-7103.

### Scrapbook with friends

Join the community scrapbook crop Friday in the 299<sup>th</sup> classroom next to the community mail room on Conn Barracks from 6 p.m. to midnight. Cost is \$10. All crops include dinner, door prizes, and a free instructional class. For more information, please contact Wendy Sledd at 09721-96-6141 or [wendy.sledd@us.army.mil](mailto:wendy.sledd@us.army.mil).

### Flu shots available

The Schweinfurt and Wuerzburg Health Clinics are now offering influenza shots. Schweinfurt takes walk-ins every Tue, Wed, and Thu in the health clinic basement on Ledward from 2 to 5:30 p.m. For questions, call 354-6378 or 09721-96-6378. Wuerzburg health clinic will take DoDDS, CYS, CDC, commissary, and PX employees Friday only from 4 to 6 p.m. and Family members can walk in Saturday only from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### Live concert Friday

Armed Forces Entertainment presents "Scratchtrack," R&B show at the Kessler Fitness Center Friday at 7 p.m. Check them out online as well at [www.scrachtrackmusic.com](http://www.scrachtrackmusic.com). Come enjoy live entertainment at no charge.

### Book and craft fair Saturday

Come to Schweinfurt Elementary School's (SES) fall book fair starting on Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and continuing Monday through Nov. 8 at 8 a.m. Then peruse the SES fall craft fair Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Food will be available for purchase. Get great Christmas gifts and good deals.

### Trip to crafter's market

Join the Arts and Crafts Studio as they take a trip to Lauterbach Saturday to visit its crafter's market and fall festival. Trip departs at 9 a.m. with plans to stop at a flea market. Reservations for a seat must be made in advance. Call the studio for more information at 354-6903 or 09721-96-6903.

### Logo design competition

Schweinfurt Community Spouses' Club (SCSC) is holding a 2007 logo design competition. Deadline for submission is

midnight Nov. 15. Winning entry will receive \$100. Each participant is entitled to submit a maximum of three designs. For more information about the format of submissions or to submit your entries, email [scscemail@googlemail.com](mailto:scscemail@googlemail.com).

### Bank opens later next Wednesday

The Community Bank will open one hour later on Wednesday due to training. Doors will open for business at 10 a.m. for that one day. Normal business hours resume the following day.

### B.O.S.S. event

Join Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers for classes, trips, and events this winter as part of the "I can do it" Success Series. Nov. 8, learn about auto shop safety at Conn Auto Skills Center from 6 to 9 p.m. For more information, call B.O.S.S. President Sgt. James Smogonovich at 354-6270 or 0170-725-6464.

### Play bingo, win prizes

Join Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 69th ADA for a night of bingo Friday at Leighton Barracks Community Activities Center. Dinner begins at 6 p.m., and games start at 7 p.m. Single pack cards at \$10 and double pack cards are \$15. Ten gaming sessions will be held and ten prizes awarded.

## Schweinfurt Dispatch



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The Schweinfurt Dispatch weekly newsletter is an unofficial publication of the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt, IMCOM-Europe and the U.S. Army authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1.

The newsletter is published and distributed weekly in an electronic format. The newsletter can be viewed on the U.S. Army Schweinfurt website at <http://www.schweinfurt.army.mil>.

This newsletter is a command information product that places emphasis on events and activities occurring throughout the Schweinfurt and Lower Franconia areas.

Information and photos included in this

newsletter are acquired from sources that highlight events, programs and activities in Schweinfurt and Lower Franconia.

Dates, times, locations, and the events themselves might change or be cancelled without prior notice.

To be added to the Schweinfurt Dispatch distribution list, please email: [mail.sft.pao@eur.army.mil](mailto:mail.sft.pao@eur.army.mil).

This address can also be used to submit community slides or information on upcoming events, or you can reach the USAG Schweinfurt public affairs office by calling 354-1600/6381 or (09721) 961600/966381.



- 2 NOV --Thankful to be a Military Family ACS event, 6 to 9 p.m., Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room.  
--Teacher work day, no school for DoDDS students.
- 3 NOV --MWR Family Friendly Trip to the Black Forest, free transportation. Call to sign up 350-6305.
- 4 NOV --Crafts Studio trip to Lauterbach Crafters' Market, leaves 9 a.m. Call 354-6903 to register.
- 5-8 NOV --Basic computer, Microsoft Word, Excel, or Internet and Outlook ACS computer classes, 8 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. each day, open to community, Finney Gym Learning Center, 354-6933.
- 5-9 NOV --SNAPS orientation program, Ledward ACS. Call 354-6933 for times.
- 6 NOV --Rock Climbing class, 1 p.m., Outdoor Recreation, part of the 'I can do it' series. Call 354-6933.
- 8 NOV --Shop Safety class at Auto Skills Center, Conn Barracks, 1 p.m., 353-8224.  
--Monthly ACS Lunch Bunch, meet at Ledward ACS bldg. 242 at 11 a.m. Call 354-6933 for info.
- 9 NOV --Thankful to be a Military Family ACS event, 6 to 9 p.m., Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room.
- 10 NOV --Super Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., no cost CYS care program. Call 354-6517 or 350-7762.
- 12 NOV --Unit level basketball registration deadline, open to military ID card holders. Call 353-8234.
- 14 NOV --College fair at Wuerzburg American High School, 4-6 p.m. For more info. call 350-7230.
- 15 NOV --B.O.S.S. "This One's for You" program, 3-7 p.m., Finney Fitness Center. Call 354-6270.
- 16 NOV --Thankful to be a Military Family ACS event, 6 to 9 p.m., Leighton CAC, 350-7103.
- 17 NOV --MWR Family Friendly Trip to Wartburg Castle, free transportation. Call 350-6305 to sign up.  
--ACS Nutcracker Tea for ages 3 to 12, Schweinfurt Abrams Center. Call 354-6933 to reserve.  
--Wuerzburg Transition Showcase, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., in front of Leighton Theater 350-6305.  
--"I can do it" paintball lessons, ID card holders 12 and older. Call 354-6933 for details.  
--Worlds Apart Fun Run/Walk in support of 173rd Airborne Brigade, 9 a.m., Kessler Fitness.
- 20 NOV --ACS paintball class, 1 p.m., Conn paintball field. Call ACS for more information at 354-6933.
- 22 NOV --Thanksgiving Dinner, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Leighton CAC. Call 350-6305 for reservations.
- 22-25 NOV --Ski/Snowboarding trip to Austria with Outdoor Recreation. Call 353-8080 to register.
- 23-25 NOV --International Bazaar, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Fri. & Sat., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sun. Kessler Fitness.
- 25 NOV --Nutcracker Suite children's trip, 1 p.m., meet at Leighton ACS for transportation to Wuerzburg Nutcracker Suite matinee performance.
- 26-29 NOV --Advanced Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point, or Access ACS computer classes, 8 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. each day, open to community, Finney Gym Learning Center, 354-6933.
- 30 NOV --B.O.S.S Meet & Greet, Route 66 Party, begins at 5 p.m., Conn Keller Bar. 354-6270 for info.  
--Kid Friendly Trip to Wuerzburg Christ Kindl Markt, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., meet at Leighton ACS.
- 1 DEC --MWR Family Friendly Trip to Bad Wimpfen Christmas Market, free trans. Call 350-6305.
- 7 DEC --Leighton Barracks Christmas tree lighting, 4 p.m., Victory Garden.
- 16 DEC --Ledward Barracks Christmas tree lighting, 4 p.m., Andrus Garden.

Community 6 week outlook calendar



# Wuerzburg and Schweinfurt celebrate the season

Wuerzburg Trunk-or-Treaters, approximately 250 children, flooded the PX parking lot with ghosts, ghouls, and jack-o-lanterns Halloween night. Prizes, in the form of AAFES gift certificates, were awarded to the three best decorated cars. Kristen Lester, top right, came in third with her pumpkin-stuffed SUV, but the Merkle Family, below, roped first prize. Their Hogwarts-themed display included the entire Family in costume with mom Marae, son Jesse, and daughters Jillian, Miranda, Grace and Avery all helping keep up the Harry Potter Halloween.

In Schweinfurt, the Chaplain's Office hosted a Harvest Fest, full of candy and fun for all ages. Event organizer Cynthia Browning estimated nearly 800 adults and children attended the event. Events included bobbing for apples, as demonstrated at right by Kelsey Gunter; musical chairs, an event that attracted princesses; face painting such as Julz Tramel is receiving at the hands of Brennan Booker, bottom right, and much more. Browning noted without the help of many volunteers, "We couldn't have done it."





# Frame memories, craft with wood

Story and photo by *Miranda McLean*

Looking for a place to create unique, homemade Christmas presents? How about a place to frame those photos you took during your recent travels? Or maybe you need to build some custom shelves for your bedroom. Believe it or not, you can do all of these things at the Schweinfurt Wood 'N' Frame Shop.



**Achim Friedrich, Schweinfurt wood shop facility manager, constructs a frame with the help of a machine.**

For customers who need help along the way with any venture or design, Achim Friedrich, wood shop facility manager, is there to help. With over 26 years of experience working for the Wood 'N' Frame Shop, customers are in good hands.

"We assist. We show them the tricks of the trade, help them out step by step," he said.

The shop is broken into two sections: the wood shop and the framing section. In the wood shop, customers can use a variety of power tools to work on customized projects such as entertainment centers and shelving units. Smaller projects such as toys and chessboards can also be tackled in the same area. Friedrich offers a "Make Your Own Chessboard" class Tuesday nights.

However, before using the wood shop, customers are required to take the free orientation class, offered the first and third Saturday of the month.

"It's a requirement to (learn) safe and proper use of the machinery," Friedrich explained.

On the framing side of the shop, customization is a popular feature, whether customers are framing their own pictures or placing special orders with Friedrich. All necessary supplies are available at the shop.

There is a large selection of over 50 colors of mats and molding styles. In addition, the Schweinfurt Crafts Studio works in conjunction with the Wood 'N' Frame Shop and provides engraving.

"We do custom framing but they still have the ability to come in and do their own framing," said Friedrich. For beginners, Friedrich offers a custom framing and matting class, every second and fourth Saturday of the month. It's an opportunity to save a little money and take pride in creating art, according to Friedrich.

"I had a couple things I wanted to frame. I had done art in the past and thought this would be a good way to learn the art [of framing]," said Jamie Taylor, class participant.

According to David Haywood, MWR Director of Arts and Crafts, the Wood 'N' Frame Shop offers award worthy services.

"It provides an economic source for matting and framing... and also self-help in both framing and wood-working with a qualified instructor," said Haywood.

The Wood 'N' Frame Shop is open Tuesday through Friday from 2 to 8:45 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. For more information or to sign up for a class, call 354-6304.

# ACS classes take the scare out of computers

By *Sandra Wilson*

When the technology that is supposed to make life easier no longer works that way, many people may want to throw in the towel and give up. Perhaps the most frustrating thing about computers is when a "user friendly" program just isn't.

Army Community Service (ACS) knows the importance of computer skills and has scheduled beginning computer classes next week at the Digital Training Facility in Finney Fitness Center to be open to the entire community on a first-come, first-served basis.

"We have people all the time that don't feel that their computer skills are what they should be," said Frank Jackson, employment readiness program manager.

"It's not just for people who are seeking jobs... it's for everybody— even teenagers who have a day off from high school. It'll help them with their homework," said Grete Timmons, the contracted instructor of the courses.

Classes range from basic computer training to Microsoft Word,

Excel, Access, Power Point, and more. Classes for each computer application can be taken separately and run from 8 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. with a certificate of participation awarded at the completion of a class.

Timmons recommends everyone take the basic courses before moving onto the advanced classes which will be held at the end of November.

"A lot of people actually think they are very good with the programs," said Timmons. But in beginner's classes, they learn many new tricks that make working with the program easier, and afterwards they realize how much they didn't know, she said.

No previous knowledge about the programs is necessary for the basic classes. Timmons also highly encourages people to bring in real-world examples to work on in class.

"Grete is taking people to a new level. We hope to get rid of some of the fear of 'if I hit that button, what will happen?'" said Jackson.

Call ACS at 354-6933 or 09721-96-6933 to sign up or to get a schedule of the classes offered that start on Monday.



# Blue Star continues to shine

## End to extended Thursdays frees up staff for reintegration

Story and photo by Mark Heeter

The Blue Star card program, the Schweinfurt Child and Youth Services (CYS) version of the Army Family and MWR Command 15:12 initiative is off and running, having been launched in August.

“It’s the Army’s way of providing extra support to Families that are affected by the extended deployment,” said Kris Davis, the CYS program operations specialist who had been acting CYS coordinator for the past several months.

The dollars are rolling in for Schweinfurt Families, who have been able to save \$17,000 since August in costs for regularly scheduled child care, according to Davis. And the Blue Star card has meant an additional \$10,000 in Family savings for sports programs, she said.

“This is a tangible way that the Army leadership is showing that they appreciate the sacrifices that our Families and Soldiers make,” she said, noting that the program offerings were designed to benefit the Families and children of deployed Soldiers but have since been extended partially

to garrison and rear-detachment Families as well.

“I think perhaps the biggest benefit is to relieve some of the stress that Families are going through with this deployment. We really want to make that as easy and painless as possible,” said Michael Payne, the incoming CYS coordinator who is returning to an agency (CYS) he worked with earlier in his career.

“The CYS team in Schweinfurt has done a tremendous job in helping to support needs of the community during a difficult and stressful deployment,” Payne said.

The Blue Star card program has been in effect long enough for program officials to evaluate which programs to continue and



From the left Maya Nath, Jaily Morgan and Kaleb Scott practice their fishing skills at the Schweinfurt Child Development Center, where the Blue Star program is paying off for local Families.

where adjustments need to be made.

One change is that, Effective Nov. 12, the Child Development Center and School Age Services will no longer remain open Thursdays until 8 p.m.; this will allow the staffs to provide free child care to Families on day three of reintegration.

“It’s a far better utilization of the caregivers’ time to be supporting that as opposed to a program that is not being utilized in the community,” Payne said.

The extended Thursdays were not heavily used by Families, so officials looked at how to better serve the deployed and reintegrating Families, Davis said.

“It’s really diverting some of our resources to be there to provide that care,” she said. “It was our least-used program.”

Super Saturdays will continue on the second Saturday of each month, and around 80 children are slated right now to take advantage of the next offering Nov. 10.

Davis wanted to remind customers specifically of two important points. First, all the Blue Star programs will continue for the Families from the 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 91<sup>st</sup> Cavalry. Second, consider the timing of requests to use hourly care.

“There’s usually more availability in the afternoons than in the morning,” she said. “They have more than one option.”

### Final checks for new Iraqi Policemen

Capt. David Diaz, commander of Company C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, based in Schweinfurt, Germany and operating in southern Baghdad with the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., does final checks on the application of an Iraqi Police candidate in the Muthana neighborhood of the Iraqi capital Oct. 22. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Kirk Luedeke, 4th IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. Public Affairs Officer)





## More Dagger Soldiers prepare to come home

Staff Sgt. Kyle Scott, right, is all smiles as he and other Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, attached to 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, pack duffle bags as they prepare to redeploy to Schweinfurt, after a 15-month deployment.

Dagger Soldiers will continue to return home over the next several weeks. The expectation is that most, if not all, will be home in time for Christmas.

(US Army photo by Cpl. Ben Washburn, 4th IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. Public Affairs Office)



## RETURN

Family member with 299<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion. Richards, like Olson, was feeling butterflies as the time drew near for her Family's reunion.

Yvette Stewart, whose husband Master Sgt. Maurice Stewart is wrapping up his fourth deployment from Germany alone, noted that while the deployments never get any easier, the reunions do.

"You kinda get to where you

know what to expect," she said. Master Sgt. Stewart and Master Sgt. Elmer Richards, Victoria's father, served together in Iraq during this deployment.

Soldiers returning to their Families are released to go home with their Spouses. Single Soldiers are made welcome and comfortable by their rear detachments.

"We have one person for every three incoming single Soldiers," explained Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class David Hanid, of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery.

Soldiers are escorted back to their new barracks rooms, which have been prepared for their arrival.

"They have snacks, soups, whatever the FRGs have put together. Some churches and other entities from the States donated sheets and such, so they have everything they need right there, hopefully," he added.

If the single Soldiers have significant others, such as girlfriends or fiancées, living on the economy, rear detachments and FRGs work together

to make sure they are able to participate in the welcome home celebration as well.

Many people turned out to support the incoming Soldiers and their Families, including Wounded Warriors looking for their friends to return, agency representatives from around the garrison, and FRG leaders.

"I'm here as a supporter," said 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Armor Regiment FRG leader Tonia Johnson, whose husband has

yet to return.

Johnson, who has spent 20 years as an Army spouse, noted that changes to the homecomings, including the tighter schedules and manifest lists, help reduce the stresses Families feel when waiting for their loved ones to come home.

"It's become better, more planned. We really appreciate what the Army and the Brigade has done to make this easier on Families," she said.



Spouses, lovers, parents and children ran to embrace their Soldiers Sunday evening: an end to a long, hard wait.



Tired, but happy to be home, 222 Soldiers from the Dagger Brigade returned home Sunday night, having completed the last leg of their long journey from Iraq with a bus ride from Ramstein.