



## Schweinfurt honors engineers

By Mark Heeter

The Dagger Brigade and Schweinfurt military community bid farewell in a memorial service today to three Soldiers from the 9th Engineer Battalion who were killed while conducting a mission in Baghdad, Iraq, Dec. 25.

Sgt. John T. Bubeck, 25, Spc. Aaron L. Preston, 29, and Pfc. Andrew H. Nelson, 19, died of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near their vehicle during combat operations.

The engineers were on a route clearance mission at the time of the attack, seeking out for destruction the very IEDs that killed them.

"This mission is dangerous but critical," said Capt. Chad Ramskugler, relaying the remarks that Lt. Col. Glen

Masset, 9 ENG commander, gave during a memorial service in Baghdad Dec. 30.

"They knew that on each mission, they must look the devil in the eye. And sometimes the devil looks back," Masset said.

"They were excellent Soldiers, engineers and true Sappers," said Sgt. 1st Class Ash McFarlane, reading the remarks that 1st Lt. David McPhail gave during the Baghdad service.

McFarlane also read the remarks of several of the Soldiers' other colleagues.

"There are no words that can describe him," said Cpl. George McMichael of Bubeck, the former supply sergeant who joined 9 ENG in September 2005.

"I always looked at him as an older brother," said McMichael, describing Bubeck as a "peer, friend and brother to us all."

"It was his duty to keep us on the right trail," protecting his fellow Soldiers from



his position in the lead vehicle, McPhail said of Bubeck.

McFarlane read the remarks that Sgt. James Hilyard used to remember Preston, who enlisted in the Army in October 2004.

"He always gave advice and would work with anyone. You could always count on him being there," Hilyard said, recalling Preston's "wonderful and sarcastic sense of humor."

"It seems he always had time for everyone," whether to watch movies or prepare for a mission, he said.

Just days before the attack that claimed his life, Gen. Peter J. Schoemaker, Chief of Staff of the Army, visited the Soldiers, and Preston tried to defer the honor of receiving a coin from the general. He believed he was simply doing his job and did not deserve the coin, according to McPhail.

Nelson, who enlisted in July 2005, was recalled by McPhail as an "old-school type of Soldier," who would have fit in on the



beaches of Normandy or the fields of Vietnam.

"He wanted to get into the fight," earned the nickname "Ranger Rick," and enjoyed carrying the squad automatic weapon, McPhail said.

"He tried so hard at everything he did," he said.

Ramskugler also relayed the remarks of the Soldiers' company commander, Capt. Geoff McKenzie. While describing Bubeck as his hand-picked supply sergeant based on his skills, and Nelson as an aspiring helicopter crew chief, McKenzie remembered Preston for another reason.

"He was a smart man, but I will always remember that crooked smirk when he was trying to pull one over on me," McKenzie recalled to the chuckles of those in the Ledward Chapel.

"These courageous sappers died protecting us," McPhail said of the three Company A Soldiers.





# News Briefs

## Forums scheduled

Lt. Col. Anthony Haager, USAG Schweinfurt commander, invites the entire community to attend one of the community forums scheduled for next week. The Schweinfurt community forum will be held at the Schweinfurt Elementary School Jan 9 at 6 p.m., and the Wuerzburg community forum takes place the following day at the Community Activity Center at 6 p.m. This gives people a chance to exchange ideas with the commander and key members of his staff.



## Get to know your town

The Army Community Service Center offers the Schweinfurt Newcomers' Awareness Program for Spouses (SNAPS) and the Newcomer's Orientation and Welcome (NOW) in Wuerzburg. Both are offered Jan. 8-12 and give people a chance to get familiar with both the military-sponsored programs and off-post offerings. Advance registration is required and child care is available. For the SNAPS in Schweinfurt, call 354-6933 or 09721-96-6933; for NOW in Wuerzburg, call 350-7103 or 0931-889-7103.

## NSPS meetings

All general schedule employees are required to attend one of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) town hall meetings Jan 10. The meetings, held to inform employees about the impending changes to the civilian personnel system, will be held at the Ledward Theater from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3 p.m.

## Commissary changes

Effective Feb. 7, the Wuerzburg commissary on Leighton Barracks will be closed Wednesdays. The hours of operation for the rest of the week remain the same: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.



## Tutor available

The Army Learning Center in building 242 on Ledward Barracks offers free tutoring services Jan. 8 and 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. A professional tutor can help everyone from Soldiers trying to raise their GT score to the family member who is working his or her way through college. Customers must first fill out a tutor assistance form, located at the MOS library in the education center, and then must contact the tutor to schedule sessions. To obtain the form, stop by room 24 of the learning center or call 354-6355 or 09721-96-6355.

## Classes available

The Army Community Service Centers on Ledward and Leighton Barracks offer many classes throughout the week of Jan. 8-12. In addition to the newcomer programs, the Schweinfurt ACS offers Love & Logic; Birth and babies; Living Debt-free; and the ABC's of FRG's. meanwhile, Wuerzburg ACS offers Stress and Anger Management Class and Civilian Resume 101. For more information about times and exact locations, call 354-6933 or 09721-96-6933 in Schweinfurt or 350-7103 or 0931-889-7103 in Wuerzburg.

## Customs hours change

The U.S. Forces Customs office on Conn Barracks has the following new Customer Service Hours: Mon-Fri, from 8 a.m. to noon and 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. The office is closed on German and American holidays. For more information, call 353-8349 or 09721-96-8349.

## Christmas tree pickup

The USAG Schweinfurt environmental management office announces the city of Schweinfurt will pick up Christmas trees until the end of January during regular trash pickup. Schweinfurt residents can also bring their trees to the recycling center on Conn Barracks. For Wuerzburg customers, containers have been placed in the parking lots at the middle school and high school on Leighton Barracks.

# Schweinfurt Dispatch



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The newsletter is published and distributed bi-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: [Mark.Heeter@cmtymail.98asg.army.mil](mailto:Mark.Heeter@cmtymail.98asg.army.mil) or [elvira.gladwell@cmtymail.98asg.army.mil](mailto:elvira.gladwell@cmtymail.98asg.army.mil).

For more information about the Schweinfurt Dispatch, or to reach the USAG Schweinfurt public affairs office, call 354-1600/6381 or (09721) 961600/966381.



## News Briefs

(cont'd)

### Seeking applicants

The USAG Schweinfurt Child and Youth Services seeks people to become qualified Family Child Care providers. FCC Orientation sessions are held in building TI 173 on Leighton Barracks Tuesdays at 10 a.m. and in building 224 on Ledward Barracks Fridays at 10 a.m. For more information, call 09721-96-6551/6459 or 354-6551/6459.

### Clinic open on training holidays

The Schweinfurt Health Clinic is now open on training holidays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Full services will be available. This new policy takes effect Friday, Jan. 12. In case of emergency, patients' first choice should be Leopoldina Hospital, according to the clinic staff. The well-staffed emergency room is open 24 hours daily.



### Bowling specials

The Kessler Bowling Center in Schweinfurt will hold a King of the Hill tournament Jan 5 at 6 p.m. The registration fee is \$20 and the winner takes all. The center also offers a family day Jan. 7, when adults pay \$1.50 per game, and children pay \$1. In addition, the Kessler Bowling Center also has a Thursday special and participates in the Young American Bowling Association. For details, call 354-6332 or 09721-83391.

# Exceptional Family Member Program offers assistance

Story by Sandra Wilson

When a Soldier has a family member who is in need of special physical or educational care, the Exceptional Family Member Program, or EFMP, is there to help.

"It's important that soldiers and families know what the EFMP can provide for them and specifically the depth of services," said Patricia Lamson, mobilization and deployment readiness program manager.

EFMP was developed to include all family members with special needs regardless of age, but who is considered an exceptional family member?

An exceptional family member can be any child or adult dependent of a Soldier who has a physical, emotional, developmental, or intellectual disorder that limits the individual's ability to fully engage in every day activities or that requires special treatment, therapy, education, or training.

So how do I know if my family member qualifies?

"All family members get assessed for any special needs... and the army then uses that information as a tool to provide top quality care and first class services for [them]," Lamson explained.

Whether it's asthma, developmental delays, behavioral issues, physical disabilities, or mental-health disorders, EFMP wants to

make transitions smooth and help improve the quality of life for loved ones.

"[It's] one of the examples of the army's dedication to take care of families," Lamson said.

Soldiers are required to enroll in the program if they have an exceptional family member. This ensures that the family member's needs will be properly addressed and met at each military facility that the Soldier is assigned to.

Sometimes Soldiers may not be granted command sponsorship for their exceptional family member.

"They think that all is lost," said Michael Payne, EFMP manager. He proceeded to explain how he makes phone calls and writes emails trying to get the denials lifted.

"The best part [of my job] is seeing somebody that's happy because they got their spouse and their children over here and... now they can do their job and not worry."

EFMP also hosts a class each month on topics addressing special needs. This month at Brainstorming Autism Across Ages & Stages, EFMP invites EDIS professionals to speak on and answer questions about autism. The class will be held at the Abrams Entertainment Center 10 a.m., Jan. 31. For more information call ACS in Schweinfurt 354-6751 or 09721-96-6751.



# Holiday partnership with Army, police

## Dagger Brigade leaders strengthen ties in Baghdad

By 1st Lt. Cassidy Eaves  
Task Force Justice, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE JUSTICE, Iraq – The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, the Dagger Brigade, strengthened relations between security forces by hosting Iraqi brigade-level Iraqi Army and national police commanders in western Baghdad at a holiday dinner here Dec. 20.

U.S. transition team leaders and task force commanders also attended the dinner, reinforcing the bonds they have established over months of combat.

With music of the season subtly playing, Iraqi and American military leaders feasted on traditional holiday cuisine and exchanged pleasantries. After the brigade’s own Dagger Quintet sang a few Holiday carols, the Task Force Justice staff played an inspirational video featuring coalition and Iraqi security forces in action.

Col. J.B. Burton, commander of the Dagger Brigade, then led a discussion of the current state of affairs in west Baghdad and prospective courses of action for coalition and Iraqi security forces operating in a common area and facing common challenges.

Burton shared his vision of the area of operations with Iraqi Commanders and encouraged them to share their perspectives. The Iraqi commanders agreed with Burton’s assessment of the nature of sectarian violence and militia activity across western



Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division’s “Dagger Quintet” sings a holiday carol during a special dinner hosted by Task Force Justice Dec. 20. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Katherine Konkkel, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)

Baghdad.

All of the commanders discussed possibilities for subduing the violence. Some voiced concern about the rise in displaced persons due to threats and violence based on religious bias. All leaders agreed that the best remedy for displacement is prevention.

While issuing his plan of action, Burton emphasized the idea of “One mission, one team,” calling for a unified approach to combating the insurgency and militia threat.



## Soldiers hand out blankets

Sgt. Thomas Bailey of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, poses for a photo with an Iraqi girl after he and members of his unit handed out blankets to residents in western Baghdad Dec. 27. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Richard Kolberg, 1-7 FA, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)



# \$2500 shopping spree ends Operation Army Santa 2006

*story and photos by Kimberly Gearhart*

Operation Army Santa, created by Spc. David Downing to gather presents for Soldiers, has been getting a lot of press.

“Without the attention, we wouldn’t be getting so much in for the Soldiers downrange,” Downing said.

The attention hasn’t just come from the local community either. Dec. 31, Downing and lead volunteer Erin Barclay spent the afternoon at the Schweinfurt PX, spending a \$2500 donation from a Maryland community.

“They normally adopt a family for Christmas. They heard about us, and sent the money here instead,” Barclay said.

“I’m trying to make the money stretch as far as it can,” Downing said. He spent \$1000 of his own money on a Christmas Day trip to Landstuhl, and learned that, when buying high-end items like iPods, \$1000 is gone in a flash.

Initially, they carried a calculator to keep track of their purchases, but that quickly went by the wayside as the carts began to overflow. Downing and Barclay eventually filled up four carts with gifts, and their \$2502 total created a receipt over 4 feet long.

That’s a lot of presents to wrap, but Barclay had a plan.

“We’re having a New Year’s party, and everyone gets a roll of wrapping paper at the door.”



Spc. David Downing (bottom right) and lead volunteer Erin Barclay (below) finished out the 2006 Operation Army Santa with a \$2500 shopping spree at the Schweinfurt PX. Downing gathered up board games at the PXtra (right), video games, CDs, and even cologne to send to Soldiers down range. The day ended with four shopping carts full of presents and a receipt over 4 feet long (above).

