



## 'A break in the ranks' Couple remembered during ceremony

By Mark Heeter

The 9<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Dagger Brigade and Schweinfurt community honored a Soldier and his wife at a memorial ceremony at the Ledward Chapel here this morning. Sgt. Justin Spears, 28, Co B, 9<sup>th</sup> EN Bn, and his wife, Vilma Crespo-Spears, 26, were killed in an automobile accident on Autobahn 70 near Eltmann, Germany, Dec. 30, when a motorist traveling the wrong way collided with their vehicle. The couple's 10-month-old daughter, Amira, was injured in the accident but has since been returned to the custody of family members.

"There is a break in our ranks," said Chaplain (1<sup>st</sup> Lt.) Richard Nevard, 9<sup>th</sup> EN Bn.

"In a flash, this young family, making their way back to us, was taken from us," said Lt. Col. Glen Masset, 9<sup>th</sup> EN Bn commander.

"Events like this are not supposed to occur. So why did it?" Masset pondered. "Maybe in this case, there is no right answer."

The Spears family was at a place they wanted to be in their lives

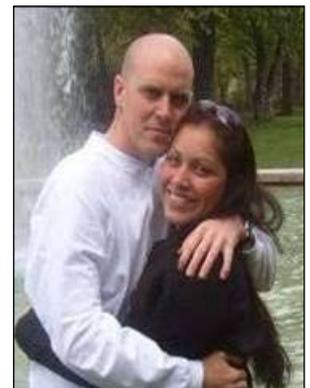
at the time leading up to the accident, Masset said.

Crespo-Spears had recently completed military service with the 38<sup>th</sup> Personnel Service Battalion and was the proud mother to Amira. Justin had recently returned from deployment to Iraq, and the pair was together for only a few weeks before the accident.

"They were happy," he said.

Spears' company commander, Maj. John Fernas, recalled the first time he met Spears, during a training rotation in Grafenwoehr.

"We were stuck in what seemed like mountains of snow," he said, describing the harsh conditions facing



Sgt. Justin Spears and Vilma Crespo-Spears

**COUPLE, see page 6**

## Boyle informs Dagger Soldiers, families about Graf

Story and photos by Kimberly Gearhart

Representatives from USAG Grafenwoehr held a town hall meeting at the Conn Club Tuesday aimed at familiarizing Dagger Soldiers and families with what will soon be their new home. Approximately

1,500 Soldiers and their families will be relocated to Grafenwoehr by mid-June.

Col. Brian Boyle, USAG Grafenwoehr commander, believes his command and community are ready for them.

"Every one of these big moves is a challenge ... but we have done this a couple of times," he said, referring in particular to the recent move of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

The decision to move the Dagger Brigade to Grafenwoehr, announced last week by U.S. Army Europe, was primarily a tactical one, but Boyle's main focus is on more day-to-day concerns.

Housing for Soldiers and families is a top concern, particularly when moving such a large group so quickly. Most family housing in Grafenwoehr is handled off-post in built-to-lease housing, with the

largest single group being located in the exclusively built-to-lease community of Netzaburg. New schools and care centers are under construction there as well.

Many other small communities in the surrounding area support built to lease housing, "and frankly, they're ecstatic" at the prospect of such a large influx of people, Boyle said.

That influx may put a strain on the elementary school in Grafenwoehr, which is currently operating at capacity with temporary buildings supplementing teaching space.

"We do not believe we will have a problem next year (because of new construction) ... but kids may have to be bussed" to the Vilseck school if they arrive before the end of the current school year, Boyle explained.

Another area of support about which families may be concerned is health care. Lt. Col. Telita Crosland, health clinic commander, was on hand at Monday's

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USAG Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Brian Boyle passes the microphone to Jenny Roper, WIC Overseas regional manager, during a Q&A session after Monday's briefing.



## News Briefs

### New ASAP numbers

The local Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) office numbers have changed. ASAP can now be reached at 354-1710 or 09721-96-1710. Other numbers of interest are: Alcohol and Drug Control Office 354-6106 or 09721-96-6106; Installation Biochemical Coordinator 354-6116 or 09721-96-6116; and Prevention Coordinator 354-6770 or 09721-96-6770.

### Celebrate MLK

The community is invited to come out and celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday beginning at 12:30 p.m. at the Ledward Chapel. The guest speaker will be Steven Ward, teacher for the DoD school system in Schweinfurt. Please come out and be a part of this celebration of a man who gave so much for so many.

### Free computer classes

Free computer classes are being offered by Army Community Service at the Schweinfurt digital training center. Classes include: Advanced Word Tuesday, Advanced Excel Wednesday, Power Point Jan. 24, and Access Jan. 25. All classes run from 8 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. A certificate of completion is given for each class. Call 354-6933 or 09721-96-6933.

### Three-day cruise

Join USO on a mini-Baltic cruise to Copenhagen, Denmark and Luebeck, Germany Feb. 16-18. Cost is 299 euro per adult and includes transportation, tours, two overnights, and two breakfasts. Space is limited, so sign up soon. For information 09721-96-6711.

### Tricare referrals

In order to match referral office hours with German physician office hours, the Tricare service center referral desk is open Mon-Thu from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 4 p.m. but will close Wednesday afternoons and only be open until 2:30 p.m. Fridays.

This reflects the opening hours of most of the German physicians with whom referrals must be coordinated. In addition, the referral desk is closed from noon to 1:30 p.m. daily, and every third Thursday all morning due to training. Billing inquiries can be handled Mon-Fri from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; lunch break from noon to 1 p.m. For more information, please call 354-6835 or 09721-96-6835.

### Smooth move seminar

Leaving the community? Army Community Service wants to help "smooth" your transition. Attend a seminar at Leighton ACS Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon to get tips on packing, shipping, moving with pets and more. For information, call 350-7103 or 0931-889-7103.

### Lunch Bunch

Enjoy a budget and family-oriented lunch on the economy. Join Army Community Service for the monthly lunch bunch at Hornpfad on Johann-Sebastian-Bach Str. 2, Schweinfurt. Meet at Ledward ACS to car pool at 11:00 a.m. Jan. 24. For more information, call 354-6933 or 09721-96-6933.

### German language classes

Learn basic German communication skills in a free four-week course at Ledward Army Community Service. Class begins Wednesday and will be held Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Call 354-6933 or 09721-96-6933.

### Memorial dedication

The Dagger Brigade will dedicate a memorial to honor their fallen Soldiers in the Dagger Rose Garden on Conn Barracks Wednesday beginning at 10:30 a.m. The community is invited to attend.

### Meet Curious George

Curious George will visit the Ledward Shoppette for story time and a kids' coloring contest this weekend. Contest submissions must be entered before Friday. Story time will be Friday, Saturday, and Monday from 12:30 to 1 p.m. Get a photo with Curious George at the photo shop from 11 a.m. to noon Friday and Saturday.

## Schweinfurt Dispatch



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**Command Sgt Maj.** CSM Keith McMullen  
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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.



- 25 JAN --MWR Winter Fest, Finney Fitness Center, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- CYS Parents Night Out, care for kids 6 weeks to fifth-grade, Leighton Barracks, 6:30-11 p.m.
- Daddy Basic Training class, Ledward ACS, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Call 354-6933.
- Free Microsoft Access class, Finney Gym, 8 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. Call 354-6933.
- Teacher work day, no school for students.
- 25-27 JAN --Fishing license course, Conn Outdoor Recreation. Call 353-8080 for more information.
- 26 JAN --Retiree Health Day, Wuerzburg health and dental clinics, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Health screenings, vaccinations, dental exams and cleanings free of charge for retirees.
- Fasching party, club "Black Eleven" at the Stadthalle. Begins at 8 p.m.
- 27 JAN --Musical "Fame" performed in English, Schweinfurt City Theater, 7:30 p.m. Call 09721-51475 or 09721-510 for tickets.
- 28-31 JAN --AFTB Level II classes, Schweinfurt Education Center, 8:45 a.m.-2 p.m. Call 354-6933.
- 29 JAN --IMCOM-E boxing five-day clinic in Schwetzingen. Call 353-8234 for more information.
- PWOC new evening Bible study begins, Ledward Chapel, 5:30-7 p.m. Call 354-1570.
- 30 JAN --B.O.S.S. create your own stein, Ledward Arts and Crafts Studio, 6-9 p.m. Call 354-6270.
- "Couples can do it" salsa dancing, Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room, 6-8 p.m. Call 354-6933.
- 31 JAN --Sign up for The Big Read at Ledward and Leighton libraries. Call for information 354-1740.
- American Drama Group Europe performs "Short Stories - One Language, Many Voices," Schweinfurt City Theater, 7 p.m. Call 09721-51475 for tickets.
- 1 FEB --Schweinfurt Elementary Parent/Teacher conferences. No school.
- 2 FEB --Flea market at Wirsingstrasse (near the train station) in Schweinfurt, 6 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- 3 FEB --B.O.S.S. superbowl party at Finney Sports & Leisure Center. Time TBA. Call 354-8476.
- 4-8 FEB --ACS Schweinfurt Newcomer's Awareness Program. Call ACS at 354-6933.
- 5 FEB --German Fasching Parade, begins at Spital-See-Platz, near St. Josef's Hospital, 1 p.m.
- 9 FEB --Super Saturday Respite Care from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Call 354-6517 to sign up.
- 12 FEB --Treadmill challenge at Finney Fitness Center, Conn Barracks. Call 353-8234 for more info.
- 14 FEB --USO Valentine's evening out. Call Schweinfurt USO, 354-6711, for more information.
- 15 FEB --Sign ups begin for CYS Parents Night Out for Feb. 22 from 6:30-11 p.m. Call 354-6517.
- 15-18 FEB --Outdoor Recreation ski and snowboard trip to Dolomites, Italy. To sign up call 353-8080.
- 18 FEB --President's Day, federal holiday.
- 19-21 FEB --Army Family Team Building (AFTB) Instructor Training, 8:30 a.m. to noon, Ledward YRR.
- 26-28 FEB --Army Family Action Plan, Conn Club, 8:15 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more info, call 354-6933.
- 28 FEB --Daddy Basic Training class, Ledward ACS, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Call 354-6933 to register.
- 29 FEB --B.O.S.S. cosmic bowling, Kessler Bowling Alley, 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. Call 354-6270.



# Brigade honors ‘Heroes of the Heart’

By Kimberly Gearhart

Conn Community Club was an island of activity in a dense sea of fog as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team gathered to honor 88 family members and civilian employees, and 11 local agencies Jan. 10 for their long-standing support and assistance to the Dagger Brigade and for being “Heroes of the Heart.”

Col. J.B. Burton, Dagger Brigade commander, thanked everyone in attendance for their hard work and dedication.

“Where there are caring people ... wonderful things can happen,” he said.

Cathy Burton, who has been a driving force for volunteerism and family support during the Dagger Brigade’s deployment, praised awardees as “the future of the Army.”

“You are, by far, the greatest volunteers in the greatest Army, in the history of the world,” she added, holding back tears.

Recognized agencies were: Red Cross, Army Community Service, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Child & Youth Services, MEDDAC, DENTAC, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Dagger Guardian Association, Schweinfurt Community Spouses Club, United Service Organization, and the USAG Schweinfurt.

Individual awards went to (in alphabetical order):



Friends and supporters of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team packed the Conn Club to honor 88 individuals and 11 community agencies for their dedication and volunteer service to the brigade during its deployment. (Photo by Eugene Pittman)

**Angele Ackerson**  
**Michelle Adair**  
**Jo Ellen Arthur**  
**Leigh Ann Bandy**  
**Maggie Banks**  
**Gervais Baptist**  
**Angela Beller**  
**Brittany Blake**  
**Jenny Bohns**  
**Morrissa Booker**  
**Jacqueline Borum-Evans**  
**Maria Branyan**  
**Annette Carlsrud**  
**Tom Casarez**  
**Deborah Chambers**  
**Diana Choudhri**  
**Diana Clark**  
**Chris Comish**  
**Marisol Corbett**  
**Jacqueline Dean**  
**Michelle Delgado**  
**Sara Dick**

**Gabriela Egan**  
**Kelly Ferris**  
**Susi Gawlick**  
**Valerie Glaze**  
**Carol Gowin**  
**Kary Griffith**  
**Katrina Hardy**  
**Manuela Hedman**  
**Denise Higgins**  
**Cris Isom**  
**Annabel Jasso**  
**Kelly Johnson**  
**Tonia Johnson**  
**Carrie King**  
**Heike Kloeckl**  
**Stacie Kolberg**  
**Lynn Lauer**  
**Brittany Learmonth**  
**Dora Lewis**  
**Blanche Livingston**  
**Era Sue Lowenthal**  
**Crystal Malone**

**Grace Maravilla**  
**Melissa Marbut**  
**Angela Martin**  
**Monika Martin**  
**Nadja Martin**  
**Peggy Masset**  
**Jackie McClaffin**  
**Meghan McCormick**  
**Nicole McMurtrie**  
**Laura Merkle**  
**Amy Meyer**  
**Ron Mihalko**  
**Amy Miska**  
**Ramona Morris**  
**Nicki Moser**  
**Barbara Murphy**  
**Kim Napier**  
**Anna Parke**  
**Lisa Parmeter**  
**Debby Pedroza**  
**Susan Perkins**  
**Angleina Philbin**

**Sarah Polacek**  
**Jennifer Pray**  
**Cheryl Ray**  
**Andrea Reynolds**  
**DeeDee Reynolds**  
**Tuvala Robinson**  
**Jessica Romero**  
**Brandy Simmons**  
**Wendy Sledd**  
**Yvonne Spiller**  
**Bettie Strickland**  
**Dennis Swain**  
**Staci Swotek**  
**Jessica Tanner**  
**Jamie Taylor**  
**Wendy Theis**  
**Ruth Torres**  
**Silvia Turpin**  
**Christina Vargas**  
**Cindy Weisskopf**  
**Sharlynn Wermter**  
**Casie Wester**

A special brigade award, the Dagger Rose, given for “exceptionally meritorious volunteer service” to the Schweinfurt military community and the Dagger Brigade Combat Team was awarded to: Cris Isom, Laura Merkle, Morissa Booker, Amy Meyer, Denise Higgins, Lynn Lauer, Sarah Polacek, Christina Vargas, DeeDee Reynolds, and Angelina Philbin. All awardees were given a copy of the presentation slide show and an Italian charm emblazoned with the Army seal.



# Commander ushers in New Year 2008



Lt. Col. Anthony Haager, left, USAG Schweinfurt commander, addresses the crowd at his New Year's reception in the Community Club on Conn Barracks Friday. Haager used the opportunity to thank his partners and friends from the local German communities for their support, while also looking forward to the year ahead. Noting the Jan. 9 announcement that the Dagger Brigade is slated to move to Grafenwoehr, Haager reminded his guests that Schweinfurt remains a critical and important installation for the American military. (Photo by Mark Heeter)

## DAGGER

briefing to allay concerns and explain what her clinic has to offer.

"I'm gonna sum it up: We're going to give great health care," Crosland said of her clinic's mission.

The clinic is requesting additional staff in preparation for the growth spurt the garrison will soon experience. Using nursing staff to triage and handle patients with routine problems is one way Crosland intends to keep appointments available for more serious or complex issues.

"We've focused on what you need, and on getting it in place before you get there," she added, referring to the many new services being added, such as audiology and psychiatric care.

Audrey Bender, Grafenwoehr Moral, Welfare & Recreation (MWR) director, briefed attendees on MWR and Army Community Service Center programs as well as Child & Youth Services (CYS) available in her area.

"I have a very dynamic staff that does a lot of out of the box thinking" which allows Bender to be able to offer unique programs

like scuba diving.

Those moving with children will be able to electronically transfer their CYS registration when moving to Grafenwoehr, she added. Participants should notify Central Registration in Schweinfurt, so that records may be released.

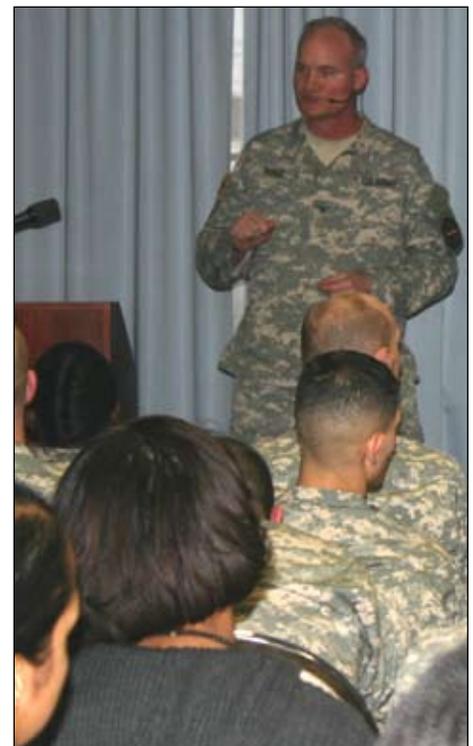
Brigade representative Maj. John Nelson fielded questions from Schweinfurt community members faced with a move to Grafenwoehr. Questions focused on issues ranging from delaying moves to dislocation allowance eligibility to when and how orders will be issued.

"We're trying to avoid taxing out the transportation system. It's a little bit of a Rubik's cube," Nelson said.

For many questions, however, the answer had to be, "I'll get back to you."

Questions from Monday's Town Hall were catalogued by brigade representatives and answers are forthcoming for those as yet unaddressed concerns.

Nelson noted that individual Soldier requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration not only the needs of the Army, but also the needs of the Soldier and his family.



Col. Brian Boyle, USAG Grafenwoehr commander, addresses Dagger Soldiers and their families during a town hall meeting in Schweinfurt Monday afternoon. Boyle will become host to 1,500 Dagger Soldiers by June.



# Deployment? ACS class says ‘Don’t sweat it’

By Sandra Wilson

The Dagger Brigade has returned from Iraq and is now moving on, but what about the 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 91<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Regiment? Our Soldiers are still in Afghanistan and are not forgotten.

As part of the continued effort to support Operation Enduring Freedom and family members back home, Army Community Service (ACS) will hold a class called “Don’t sweat the deployment stuff” next week. It will provide information and tips on persisting through the remainder of the deployment as well as preparation for possible future deployments.

“There is no formula for making deployments easy on families, but this class will address many of the skills that can make it easier,” said Patricia Lamson, mobilization and deployment specialist at

ACS.

Jennifer Litchfield, instructor of the course, stresses how important it is to encourage the family members who are still waiting for their loved ones to come home. The CAV has not lost support here in Schweinfurt just because Dagger Soldiers have returned, she says.

“We want to make sure we still offer classes (for them),” Litchfield said, explaining that the class was specifically designed for family members of 1-91 CAV.

Litchfield will facilitate both classes scheduled next week. The first is on Tuesday in the Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room (YRR) from 6 to 9 p.m. and is geared to the concerns of adults. The topics include stress management and enhancing personal relationships.

“It’s really easy to get into fights on the phone,” Litchfield said about talking with a spouse

downrange. This is only one of the scenarios that will be addressed. Learning effective communication techniques is one of the goals that Litchfield has for the attendees of the class. She will teach how to build up relationships over long distance.

Litchfield also plans to discuss crisis, coping, and grieving, “in case you have a friend that experiences a loss or even a traumatic injury.”

The second class on Thursday, also in the YRR, is from 5 to 7 p.m. It’s designed for children of all ages to come and voice their questions and concerns about their parents downrange.

Crafts will be incorporated into the children’s class during the discussion.

“It can be very tense waiting for your Soldier to come home,” Litchfield said, speaking from experience with her husband’s



Litchfield

two deployments. Providing an outlet and a place to glean new skills, Litchfield hopes to ease some of the stress for families associated with deployment.

ACS plans to schedule the classes again in March when 1-91 CAV is gearing up to return home.

## MWR Winter Fest event scheduled; necessitates temp gate changes

Schweinfurt will hold a second-annual Winter Fest Jan. 25 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. in the Finney Fitness Center on Conn Barracks.



A variety of performers will entertain hourly from noon to 5 p.m., and the Kansas City Cheerleaders will perform at 6 p.m., and Kojak will round out the night with live music beginning at 8 p.m.

There will be face painting, balloon art, clowns, Velcro wall and more.

The following gate hours changes will allow maximum security and ease of access for the event:

- Conn East, close 5:30 a.m. Jan. 26.
- Conn Geldersheim, close 10:30 p.m.
- Askren Main, close at 4 p.m.
- Ledward Main, close at 6 p.m.

These changes are effective on Jan. 25 only. Normal hours return Jan. 26.

## COUPLE

him, Spears and the rest of the Company B “Outlaws” in early 2006.

When he asked his platoon sergeants to name the Soldier who was most up to any task they gave him, one name came to mind – Spears.

“He was self-motivated, mature, focused and dependable,” Fernas said. Above all, though, he said, Spears was a family man.

“His topic of conversation was always his family,” which also included children, Thunder, 10, and Steel, 7, Fernas said.

Recalling his comrade, Staff Sgt. David Barrera remembered that Spears was a willing friend who was always there for anyone who needed him.

“He definitely made an impact on my life,” Barrera said, adding that Crespo-Spears was “a really amazing woman.”

“They will always be on my mind, in my prayers,” Barrera said.



# Tour acquaints Soldiers, families with new home

Story and photo by Pfc. Michael Syner  
U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs Office

Approximately 300 Soldiers and family members from the Dagger Brigade toured Grafenwoehr Jan. 12 to get familiar with the military community the brigade will soon call home.

The daylong excursion began at noon with a roughly two-hour drive to Grafenwoehr.

The first stop at “Graf” was the base’s recently opened Army and Air Force Exchange Service shopping center. Eyes widened when the Schweinfurt visitors saw the post exchange, many for the first time.

“This is a beautiful PX,” said Yvonne Spiller as she, her husband Sgt. Artis R. Spiller, and the couple’s two children perused the selection offered by the new facility.

Sgt. Spiller, who is assigned to the 57<sup>th</sup> Signal Company, believes the exchange will serve his family’s needs well.

The two-story facility, opened in September 2007, boasts more square footage than any other AAFES exchange in Europe, according to PX manager Stephanie Burns. The shopping center also offers several restaurants and specialized concession shops in its mall-like setting.

The Schweinfurt visitors also had the opportunity to see the new commissary located in the shopping center complex.

From the shopping center, tour participants bundled into the post’s theater for a brief overview of the community, led by Col. Brian T. Boyle, the USAG Grafenwoehr commander.

“Our mission is to get you acquainted with our community,” Boyle told the visitors. “We are sure you will find it satisfactory,



**Soldiers and family members from the Dagger Brigade check out family housing in Grafenwoehr’s Netzbürg Housing Area during a familiarization tour of the post Jan. 12. About 300 Soldiers and family members toured the base where the brigade is soon to relocate.**

and that you will enjoy being here.”

“I’m really concerned about the living conditions,” said Staff Sgt. Brett E. McHaney of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry. “We are leaving the home we’re (settled) in,” he added, as his wife, Rachel, nodded in agreement.

The tour made a sweep through the post’s recently renovated on-post housing area before taking a walk-through of homes in the new off-post Netzbürg Housing Area.

“This housing is better than what I was offered when I initially took my commission,” said V Corps Commander Lt. Gen. Kenneth W. Hunzeker, who joined the group for the in-depth look at Grafenwoehr. “It’s amazing.”

# Second time’s the charm for SES annual spelling bee



**Heather Miska spelled her way to a second “genuine” spelling bee victory.**

Story and photo by Sandra Wilson

Schweinfurt Elementary School (SES) reconvened their annual spelling bee this morning for third- through fifth-graders. Twenty-eight children gathered with numbers around their necks, ready to spell.

“They’ve all taken it in stride,” said Sharon Rakestraw, SES reading support teacher, regarding the student reactions to having to repeat the spelling bee due to complications with the initial competition held Tuesday.

Each student was provided the opportunity to study the pre-approved words ahead of time.

“This year everything was online,” Rakestraw said. Teachers, students and parents were given instructions on downloading “Spell It!” in order to view 700 possible words to be used in the

competition.

Teresa Duncan, Susan Wesley, and Carol Haager served as judges while Rakestraw pronounced each word to the participating students.

By round three only 10 of the 28 students remained, and within 45 minutes of the first word being read, fourth-grader Heather Miska correctly spelled “genuine,” winning for the second year in a row. Fourth-grader Justin Bulanadi came in second place and will serve as alternate for the next competition in Ramstein.

“I wasn’t here last year, but it’s just nice to be here this year,” said Lt. Col. Steven Miska, who was downrange when his daughter won last year.

“Spelling is a lot of hard work,” said SES Principal Wilma Holt. “Some of us have it naturally, and some of us have to work at it.”