



Schweinfurt shoots for partnership



Story and photo by Emily Athens

Reiterswiesen Schutzenhaus boasts a quaint restaurant tucked away in the hills of Bad Kissingen. Plaques, trophies, and typical Bavarian style plates embellish the walls of the two rooms.

Follow the sounds of gunshots and find two indoor shooting ranges with floors lined with fresh bullet shells, walls decorated with targets, and the smell of gunpowder. It is an ideal place for anyone looking to hone their shooting skills or just enjoy a day of sport shooting, and members of the Schweinfurt community did just that.

Whether for the competition, camaraderie, or just for fun, military police, health clinic staff, Soldiers, and German community members took a trip yesterday to the Reiterswiesen Schutzenhaus to partake in a daylong shooting competition.

"This is a partnership event to formulate and strengthen bonds and friendship between the Soldiers, the community, and the club," said 1st Sgt. Hassan Wilson, Headquarters

RANGE, see page 7

Members of the Schweinfurt community aim their weapons at the targets while others wait their turn during yesterday's shooting competition in Bad Kissingen. The event marked the continuation of a partnership between the military community and the Reiterswiesen Schutzenhaus.

Just wait until you hear these stories

Story by Mark Heeter

Photo by Betsy Corsiglia

Three acclaimed storytellers will share their craft and spin their yarns at a storytelling concert and community expo at the Schweinfurt Elementary School (SES) March 5, from 4:30 to 7 p.m. The entire community is invited and encouraged to attend.

"They're people whose profession is telling stories, and it's classified as more of an art form," said Nena Stetson, who helped organize the event and related storyteller activities in Grafenwoehr March 7.

"We're doing the concert and also having a community expo at the same time of some of the services that the Schweinfurt community offers families," Stetson said.

The storytellers – Susan Klein, Baba Jamal Koram and Sandy Oglesby – will treat SES students to stories earlier in the day. Don't come expecting to see anyone reading from a book, though, according to Stetson.

"No one's going to be reading anything," she said. "Story telling is much more of an art. They're not performing artists. Nor are they readers."

"We sit or stand before a group and co-create the story journey through the spoken word in concert with the audience," wrote Klein in an email response to questions about the upcoming visit.

"So, each listener is the illustrator in his or her own imagination when a story is told and we each experience the story in our own

way," she wrote.

Military children have a special opportunity, according to Klein, who has told stories in Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) several times since 1991.

"I have always gotten the impression that the children of our service men and women know that they have an unusual opportunity to learn a great deal about the world by exploring the host culture first hand," said Klein, who enjoys taking her listeners to faraway lands with her words.

"My very favorite part is the moments when the audience and I are caught up in the story together and the walls fall away and we are in ancient China, or the Sonoran desert, or the jungle of Ghana, or the bayou of Louisiana, or inside a castle in Germany," Klein wrote.

"Though storytelling is ages old, it is still an enormously powerful means of entertainment and education. We're all delighted to be coming," she wrote.

Stetson, who enlisted private donors to fund the events in Schweinfurt and Grafenwoehr, sees the concert, expo and school events as "morale-boosters."

"It was important to us and the friends of the brigade, the Blackhawk Shield Association, that we were able to raise money for this event," she said.



Klein



SPRECHEN SIE FUN?

Events and activities in the local communities

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LOCAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS VISIT:
www.schweinfurtserver.de/user/tourismus/Neu/stadtplan_EN_Endversion_2008.pdf

Today:



“Stadtgalerie” New city mall opens in downtown Schweinfurt 9:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Saturday:

Children’s clothes and toys market at the parish hall in Geldersheim, 1 – 3 p.m.



Sunday:

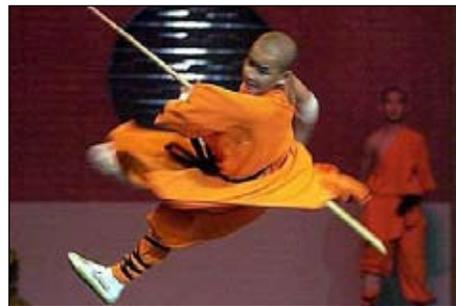
Children’s clothes and toys market at the parish hall in Üchtelhausen

Stand up and cheer...



March 6:

“The Return of the Shaolin” – a breathtaking Kung Fu Show telling the life of Shaolin monks performed at the Stadthalle in Schweinfurt at 8 p.m. For tickets, call 01803-776842 or e-mail www.proticket.de.



March 18:

“The Jungle Book” musical is performed at the Schweinfurt Theater by the Vienna Theater Ensemble for children 5 years and older at 9 a.m. For tickets call 09721-51475 or 510.



Looking ahead...

March 20:

The symphony orchestra of Bamberg performs at the Schweinfurt theater, Rosbrunnstrasse 2 at 7:30 p.m. For tickets call 09721-51475 or 510.



“Best of Irish Dance” at the Scheremberghalle in Gemünden at 8 p.m. For tickets, call 01801-793793.



March 22:

“Cinderella” by Tchaikovsky is presented by the classical ballet ensemble of the Ukrainian State opera of Kiev at the Schweinfurt theater, Rosbrunnstrasse 2 at 7 p.m. For tickets call 09721-51475.

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 web site 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 e-mail: 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 354-1400/6381 or (09721) 961400/966381.



News Briefs

Scholarship deadline

The deadline for high school seniors to apply for a college scholarship through Schweinfurt Community and Spouses' Club is Sunday. Applications can be found at www.schweinfurtspousesclub.com by clicking the SCSC senior scholarship link. Applicants must possess at least a 3.0 grade and reside in the Schweinfurt community.

New to the military?

Are you new to the military? Learn how your family readiness group can help you be successful in your new community by attending the Army Community Service class "FRG 101: Intro to the FRG" at the Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room Wednesday from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Call 09721-96-6933 to sign up.

Recycle center hours

Due to mandatory training, Ledward and Conn recycle centers will close at 12:45 p.m. tomorrow. Askren Manor recycle center will stay open from 10:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and 3 to 5:30 p.m. Normal hours will resume Monday.

Adult volleyball clinic

Participate in the Schweinfurt volleyball clinic at Kessler Fitness Center Tuesday through March 5 from 6-8:30 p.m. each evening. The clinic is open to all ID card holders age 18 and up and not in high school. A tournament will be held March 5 from 6-9 p.m. For more information, call 09721-96-8234 or email william.comeford@eur.army.mil.

Learn Web design

Come to the Army Community Service class "Basic Web design" in Ledward bldg. 206 computer lab March 5 to learn what it takes to get started designing a Web page. Class runs from 8:30 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. and all participants will receive a certificate of completion. Class is open on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information about other free computer classes offered by ACS, call 09721-96-6933.

Celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday

Celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday Monday by bringing your child to the Ledward Library story hour. Stories begin at 4 p.m., and children of all ages are welcome.

Assess your interests

Find out your strengths and weaknesses in the Army Community Service workshop "Career and interest assessment" held in the Ledward Yellow Ribbon room Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. The assessments are designed for immediate results for those looking to volunteer or seek a job in their areas of interest. Sign up at 354-6933.

CYS physicals

The Schweinfurt health clinic offers physicals by appointment only March 5 from 1-4 p.m. for children enrolling in programs through Child, Youth, and School Services. If your child is in need of a physical, call the clinic for an appointment at 09721-96-7901.

Child abuse awareness

Come to a class that will teach how to identify cases of child abuse or neglect. The awareness training, taught by Army Community Service, takes place at Ledward Chapel Tuesday at 6 p.m. Free child care is available on the premises, and refreshments will also be served. Participants will receive a certificate of completion. Call to reserve a seat at 09721-96-6860.



Schweinfurt

Tonight-	7 p.m.	Cadillac Records (R)
Tomorrow-	7 p.m.	7 Pounds (PG-13)
Saturday-	4 p.m.	Bedtime Stories (PG-13)
	7 p.m.	He's just not that into you (PG-13)
Sunday-	4 p.m.	Bedtime Stories (PG-13)
	7 p.m.	He's just not that into you (PG-13)
Monday-	closed	
Tuesday-	closed	
Wednesday-	7 p.m.	7 Pounds (PG-13)

Schweinfurt three-day weather forecast

A.M.		P.M.
	Friday Cloudy rain Lows 3 C / 37 F	
	Saturday Cloudy rain Lows 4 C / 39 F	
	Sunday Partly cloudy Lows 4 C / 39 F	

Source: 21st Operational Weather Squadron



- 6 MAR** --Registration begins for unit level soccer. To sign up, call Finney Fitness Center at 353-8234.
--Deadline to sign up for B.O.S.S. trip to Lego Land Mar. 14, 6 a.m.-10 p.m. Call 353-8476.
- 9 MAR** --“Couples communication through travel” class, Ledward ed. center, 9-11 a.m. Call 354-6933.
- 9-10 MAR** --Auditions for “Steel Magnolias,” Abrams Center, 10 a.m. & 6 p.m. Call 0162-296-2776.
- 9-12 MAR** --Terra Nova testing at Schweinfurt middle & elementary & Bamberg high. Info. at 354-6090.
- 10 MAR** --Bulk trash pick-up in Askren, Yorktown, gov’t-leased housing. Put items out prior to 7 a.m.
- 11 MAR** --Registration ends for racquetball shootout, Kessler Fitness Center, Mar. 14, 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- 12-14 MAR** --“School House Rock Live!” performances, Abrams Center, 7 p.m. Reserve at 0162-296-2776.
- 13 MAR** --Deadline to sign up for Super Saturday child care Mar. 21, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Call 354-6517.
- 14 MAR** --Flea market, elementary school MPR, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sponsored by 9E Alpha Company. To reserve a table or for more information, e-mail nicholerp@hotmail.com.
- 16 MAR** --Visit Schweinfurt city’s new mall 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Depart from ACS. Reserve a seat at 354-6933.
- 17 MAR** --Food handlers’ training at Ledward chapel, 6 p.m. Child care available. Sign up at 354-6860.
--St. Patrick’s Day celebration at the Conn Community Club, 5:30 p.m. Call 09721-96-6186.
- 19 MAR** --Women’s History Month tea party with guest speakers, Conn Community Club, 2 p.m.
- 20 MAR** --Registration ends for unit level soccer season Apr. 8 through May 18. Call 353-8234.
--Deadline to sign up for B.O.S.S. trip to Neuschwanstein Mar. 28, 6 a.m.-10 p.m. Call 353-8476.
--Job Fair at the Kessler fitness Center 9 a.m. to noon. For information, call 09721-96-6933.
- 24 MAR** --Bulk trash pick-up in Askren, Yorktown, gov’t-leased housing. Put items out prior to 7 a.m.
- 25-27 MAR** --Soccer clinic, Finney Fitness Center, 6-8:30 p.m. Tournament Mar. 28, 6 p.m. Call 353-8234.
- 26 MAR** --Lunch Bunch meets at Army Community Service 11 a.m. Bring euros for lunch. Call 354-6933.
--Book Club meets at Ledward Library, 5:15 p.m. to discuss “The Zookeeper’s Wife” by Diane Ackerman. Coffee and treats will be served. For more information, call 09721-96-1740.
- 27-29 MAR** --Annual spring bazaar by Schweinfurt Community and Spouses’ Club, Finney Fitness Center. Visit www.schweinfurtspousesclub.com for opening and closing hours.
- 28 MAR** --Spring festival outside Finney Fitness Center, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. for the whole family.
--Miss/Mister Schweinfurt pageant at Finney Fitness Center in conjunction with spring bazaar. For more information, call 0151-5161-2690.
- 30 MAR** --Effective management of volunteers class 10 to 11 a.m. at the Yellow Ribbon Room. 354-6933.
- 31 MAR** --Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS) training 10 a.m. to noon at ACS.
- 1-2 APR** --“Christ in the Passover” Protestant Women of the Chapel special program, Ledward Chapel. Community is invited. Wed 9 a.m. & Thu 5:30 p.m. Free child care on premises.
- 7 APR** --Bulk trash pick-up in Askren, Yorktown, gov’t-leased housing. Put items out prior to 7 a.m.
- 12 APR** --Easter egg hunt at Ledward Andrus Garden, 2:15 p.m. Call 354-6186 for more details.
- 13-17 APR** --Spring Community Enhancement. Information TBA.
- 15 APR** --“Gourmet Night” at Finney Fitness Center, 6 p.m. For more information, call 09721-96-8476.

Community 6 week outlook calendar



Sanborn promotes military support

By Sandra Wilson

When it comes to hometown support for deployed Soldiers and their families, Weston, Conn., is probably not the first place that comes to mind. But truly, it should be, as one man has made it his mission to get involved in military support while encouraging his hometown to jump on board as well.

In a phone interview from the states, Gil Sanborn, the driving force of support to first the 2nd Bridage Combat Team “Dagger” and now the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate) “Blackhawks,” explained the pivotal moment that turned his focus towards those who “selflessly serve.”

“I was a direct witness to the attacks in New York ... I was looking up at the first burning tower when I saw the second plane come in right above me and literally blow through the second tower,” Sanborn said.

“It really was a life-changing event for me ... I took both the attack personally, and I took the rescue personally and felt that I needed to step back and look at my life and what the implications were.”

That experience fueled his desire to give back in appreciation, starting with the rescue workers of Sept. 11. When American Soldiers began to deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan, he “adopted” a deployed Soldier and sent numerous packages with no response

from the receiver.

In subsequent days, his assistant at the financial firm where he was employed had a brother deploying with a platoon. Sanborn began sending packages that way.

“It was such an enjoyable experience, and really what I wanted to do was to develop a personal connection with military personnel who were deployed rather than just writing checks to an organization,” Sanborn said, explaining the relationship formed with this second “adopted” Soldier.

Through the connection with this second Soldier, he was referred to the Dagger Brigade in Schweinfurt, whose leadership helped Sanborn, his family, and the community of Weston to develop a plan of support for the brigade.



Sanborn

“It’s really amazing the efforts that one group, one hometown, one organization can make,” said Capt. Joshua Buchanan, commander of Company D, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment.

The Weston soccer club did a soccer ball drive and collected nearly 150 balls to send to deployed platoons for distribution. The senior citizens made cooling scarves for the deployed

SANBORN, see page 8

PTA raises funds through class photos

Story and photo by Sandra Wilson

The Schweinfurt Elementary School (SES) Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) can sometimes play a hidden role in the school setting, but some may be surprised at how deeply involved it is in fundraising and putting on events for the families in the community.



Louise Hurley (left) and Robert Voce, volunteers for the Schweinfurt Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), man the money table for class photos at the school yesterday.

“The idea behind PTA is to have the involvement between the school and the community ... in support of the kids,” said Robert Voce, SES PTA treasurer as well as the educational technologist at the school.

The SES PTA sponsors school-wide events like the “Read Across America” taking place Monday. Other typical events with PTA backing are the spelling bee, science fair, and the Wilbur awards.

“As a parent with a child here, you’re not aware of what the PTA is behind,” said Rebecca Pelkey, SES PTA president.

The organization not only sponsors events but also aims to fundraise to help out with supplies in the classrooms and cover costs of school activities.

“Everything we have here in fundraisers all turns around and goes back to the school or to the students through events that we provide,” Pelkey said.

The individual and class photos serve as one of the most substantial fundraisers, Voce said. A percentage of the photographer cost is returned to the PTA to channel into other activities and events. The elementary

school has also reserved a place for the PTA store which sells logo and mascot items on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:45 to 11 a.m.

Because of the long list of tasks that it undertakes, the PTA is always recruiting volunteers. Box Tops for Education are collected on a regular basis, Scholastic book orders for the school are made monthly, and planning for regular flea markets and bingo nights are also in the line-up.

“We can’t do it without the bodies there to help us. The PTA is open to everyone, not just those with children here at the school. It’s open to those also that don’t have children that just want to get involved and be a part of the school,” Pelkey said.

The SES PTA meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the school starting at 2:30 p.m. Attending meetings is a prime way to get started in finding a role within the organization.

“I’ve enjoyed being a part of PTA. It’s a worthwhile organization, and they do good not just for the kids but for the whole community,” Voce said.



Clarinet quartet inspires students to practice

Story and photo by Sandra Wilson

Schweinfurt Middle School (SMS) band students got a special treat Feb. 20 with a visit from the United States Air Force in Europe clarinet quartet.

“We prefer to do band students because they understand more what we do. They are the ones who would appreciate us the most,” said Staff Sgt. Becky Scharz, part

of the quartet.

Their whirlwind tour will take them to nearly 60 Department of Defense Dependent Schools throughout February and March playing a variety of classical, ragtime, dixieland, popular, and light jazz pieces.

“(The students) need more of this stuff to motivate them to practice,” said Joel Helston, music teacher at both the elementary school and SMS.

“Here, four people come in and say the exact same things I’ve been telling them,” he said, explaining how the quartet reiterated to the students the need to practice musical scales in order to improve.

“If you know your scales, you will have won half the battle with difficult music,” said Master Sgt. Gail Tucker.

The quartet only had five rehearsals to prepare for the show, but anyone could have said they played masterfully. Even so, they emphasized the importance of practicing in order to get to that point.

“After the lesson, don’t go home and watch TV— practice what he just told you,” said Senior Airman Denise Cardona-Santos.

The quartet played 45 minutes of

classical music, most tunes recognizable by the students, and then fielded questions and offered tips.

“Start out by at least practicing in 15-minute segments— a little bit every day— and play it slowly,” Tucker said, when a student asked how they could “get as good” as them on the instrument.

Each musician in the quartet shared how they first started playing when they were young and what encouraged them to stick with it.

Now, as active duty military, they are “expected to be prepared,” Tucker said. Travel takes them all over Europe to perform for various audiences. Some active duty military musicians even deploy to provide “a touch of home” to servicemembers that are away from their loved ones.

The quartet’s visit to the SMS band students accomplished Helston’s task of encouraging the students to aspire to higher heights in their instrument. Building music appreciation and pleasure in playing, or “music culture,” is something, Helston said, that is helped along by professionals such as the clarinet quartet.

“There’s the potential here— it just needs to be tapped,” he said, and hosting visits from professional musicians is one of the first steps.



From left, Tech. Sgt. Igor Poklad, Master Sgt. Gail Tucker, Senior Airman Denise Cardona-Santos, and Staff Sgt. Becky Scharz with the United States Air Force in Europe clarinet quartet play a classical music piece for the Schweinfurt Middle School band students Feb. 20.

Equal employment opportunity: ‘A function of leadership’

By Mark Heeter

A special visitor carried a special message from Washington to Schweinfurt Feb. 19.

Lawrence Self, director of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management for the National Institutes of Health, offered managers and supervisors in the USAG Schweinfurt a lesson in leadership.

“EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) is really a function of leadership,” Self said to the assembled leaders of the garrison. “If the leaders aren’t involved, if they are not

committed to this EEO process, then you have nothing.”

Self, who worked with the Army for 14 years earlier in his career, made clear that the responsibility for creating positive and effective work environments rests squarely on leaders’ shoulders.

“It has to work from the top down. It’s not one of those programs that can work from the bottom up,” he said.

“If the employee feels that they can trust their manager, if they feel that the confidence level is there, that that manager is technically proficient, and that manager will take care of them, they love coming to work,”

said Bennie Howse, USAG Schweinfurt EEO officer.

Educating leaders and developing them to deal with employees fairly is nothing new to the government service or the Army, according to Self.

“EEO’s been effect since, I would say, back in the 70s. And the Army has been in the forefront in this process. They truly, truly have. There’s no doubt about that,” he said.

“At one time, that was the thought process,” he said, of the notion that EEO only addressed concerns of women and minorities. “Then it becomes almost a cultural thing.”

Managing and leading within

the parameters of EEO laws and regulations is something Self called a “soft skill.”

“We have to continue to keep this in front of (leaders). This is one of those soft skills. But that’s fine,” Self said.

Howse, who has known Self for more than 20 years and was instrumental in bringing the guest to Schweinfurt, noted a few critical points for leaders to follow.

“Treating everybody fairly is key. Being consistent in decision making is crucial— defining tasks based on that mission, and not on one of those non-merit principles,” such as race, ethnicity or gender, he said.



Gunpowder, fate, support: Suicide ‘survivor’ shares story

**USAG Heidelberg release --
Name withheld by request of author**

HEIDELBERG, Germany - The worst taste in the world is the gunpowder residue at the business end of a shotgun. Not so much because of the taste itself, but the reason why you’re tasting it.

My now ex-wife and I had filed for divorce two days earlier and a loaded shotgun in my mouth was the best solution I could devise to express my deep sadness.

Whether sheer clumsiness, divine intervention or an unconscious moment of self-preservation, I lived despite pulling the trigger.

I was blessed - my little finger received the hammer strike instead of the firing pin - sparing my life. That was nine years ago.

I’d lie if I said I haven’t thought about taking my life since that cold November morning. Between a great team of Soldiers and the nearest chaplain, I was able to talk through my feelings and my options.

Ultimately, taking your own life should never be an option on the table, no exceptions. Unfortunately, 143 Soldiers made the wrong choice in 2008, which is the highest number since 1980 when the Army began tracking the figure.

In response to a growing rate of suicide, the Army began using the ACE Suicide Intervention Program in 2008:

Ask your buddy - Have the courage to ask the question, but stay calm, and non-judgmental. Ask the question directly.

Care for your buddy - Remove any

means of self-injury. Control the situation in a calm way and actively listen to your friend’s concerns.

Escort - Never leave your friend alone.

In the garrisons, Soldiers can find a chaplain. Family Life chaplains are trained counselors who work with Soldiers on a wide range of issues. Go to Army Community Service, where Military and Family Life Consultants can help. Personnel at the local medical center can also get you to a counselor.

When deployed, go to a medic, an aid station, or a chaplain. The best advice I can give to anyone who thinks they have run out of options: start talking. The more trusted people you talk to, the better your chances of getting help and surviving.



Bucky Covington, American country music singer, holds the microphone out to the audience to sing along to one of his songs. Covington, a finalist from the fifth season of the television show “American Idol,” came to USAG Schweinfurt Feb. 21 to perform a country music concert at the Finney Fitness Center. (Photo by Sandra Wilson).

RANGE

and Headquarters Company, USAG Schweinfurt.

The staff of the shooting club welcomed nine members of the community with smiles, coffee, and breakfast. After a briefing of how the competition would be conducted, the group divided into two teams as they awaited their turn to fire off shots.

The competition comprised of a 25 meter free standing M9 pistol shooting, a sports pistol target shooting, and a free standing machine pistol shooting. Gunners were scored on their best ten shots from each event. Awards were presented to the winning team.

“It’s a new experience, so I’m excited for the chance to do something fun and different. It’s fellowship with the German community and a good way to get out and enjoy a different culture,” said Spc. Jessica Simpson, lab technician at the health clinic, noting that this was her first time at the range and she looked forward to shooting different weapons.

“This is a big event ... we’re real proud to be here. It’s important because we’re making cohesion with our partners and the German (police),” said Sgt. Jose Aviles of 1st Battalion 77th Field Artillery.

Arno Rooler, director of the Schutzenhaus, and Roland Sturmer who also helped coordinate the event, expressed their excitement about the community involvement and hope to continue the partnership and further the bond.

“We’ve had Soldiers here before, but not during Aschermittwochschiessen,” said Rooler, explaining that “Aschermittwochschiessen” is simply a shooting event on Ash Wednesday, an exciting occasion for club members.

Sturmer added that someday they’d like to come to Schweinfurt for an event. But for now, especially with the club’s 100th anniversary coming up, they encourage anyone to make the trip to enjoy a day at the range.



Donated wheelchairs bring Iraqi smiles

**Story and photo by Capt. Stephen Short
172nd Infantry Brigade**

AL HILLAH, Iraq – The handicapped people of Babil Province, Iraq have more challenges to face than most anyone else, but life became a little easier for them when they received new wheelchairs donated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at the Babil Rehabilitation Center Feb. 19.

Guests from the community, the Iraqi government, and several aid organizations from the United States gathered at the center to present the new wheelchairs to 25 of the neediest disabled patients from the area.

“There are 2,000 total wheelchairs that will be distributed,” said Capt. Pam Foley, U.S. Army Civil Affairs at the Regional Embassy Office, explaining that 1,500 wheelchairs are called “Rough Rider”, which are the rugged terrain wheelchairs and 500 wheelchairs are the standard type used for recovery in hospitals.

Disabled individuals in the community will receive the 1,500 “Rough Rider” wheelchairs while the hospital will receive the remaining standard type wheelchairs.

The rehabilitation center has a wheelchair committee, which selected the neediest disabled persons from a list of 6,000 names as recipients of the new wheel chairs.

Disabled guests went one-by-one to receive their new wheelchair from distinguished guests. For some, this was their first time using a wheelchair.

Grateful wheelchair recipients presented

flowers as tokens of appreciation to leaders in the community as they departed the stage smiling.

Governor of Babil, Salem Saleh al-Maslamawi, addressed the guests and



A Babil Province child is helped into his new wheelchair he received at the Babil Rehabilitation Center Feb 19.

thanked all of the contributors to the ceremony.

“We have high hopes that the Americans and other officials in Iraq that are committed to alleviating suffering will pull together our efforts to end their suffering,” al-Maslamawi said.

The governor went on to state the daily problems of the disabled, such as housing, eating and moving.

“I believe that anyone who helps these handicapped people will be rewarded from God, and I thank all the staff from the bottom of my heart in this center, from the highest administrator to smallest employee for all the efforts they have exerted, and we

hope they continue on their path of giving,” al-Maslamawi added.

Statistics show that there are nearly 8,000 disabled men, women and children in Babil Province, which are coping with amputations, spinal cord injuries, cerebral palsy, brain injuries and developmental disabilities.

“Twenty-five percent of these people require wheelchairs as a minimum treatment requirement, therefore the donation of wheelchairs will go a long way toward helping the disabled of Babil Province interact with the world around them and to lead productive lives,” said Lt. Col. Doil O’Steen. O’Steen, commander of the 413th Civil Affairs Battalion, who went on to say that the wheel chair project is only part of the long and close partnership the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) has with the provincial council and the director general of health to address the needs of Babil’s disabled.

Bringing 2,000 wheelchairs from the United States to Iraq was not easy and required several organizations to be a part of the plan.

“The PRT of Babil recognized the need for wheelchairs here, and we at International Relief and Development decided to fund the shipment costs to bring the wheelchairs here,” said Wayne Tolme, Project Director of International Relief and Development in North Babil.

“It is just great to be here,” added Foley with a smile, “The wheelchair donation project has been in planning for about six months,” he said.

SANBORN Soldiers to use during the hot months in Iraq.

“The Kiwanis club really is the main sponsor of the community support,” Sanborn said, explaining how they set up call-ins so that the community could hear directly from Soldiers in the war and family members, with their challenges living overseas.

Sanborn and his community continued their mission of support by hosting holiday parties in Schweinfurt for family readiness groups and also by making it possible for the Soldiers to celebrate Christmas in Iraq. When the Dagger Brigade redeployed, a winter festival was put on for the entire community sponsored by Sanborn and his home town.

In addition, airline mileage and money was donated for Dagger families and wounded Soldiers in the states to reunite with the

brigade in Schweinfurt and attend a memorial ceremony.

Support continues to the Blackhawk Brigade in similar ways and in new ways with things like the storytellers concert which will take place at Schweinfurt Elementary School March 5.

“We have all this huge support network that we’re tied into in America. That means a tremendous amount to the families here in Germany,” Buchanan said. “Gil gives us a lot of support ... It really makes our job easier as the rear detachment, because it’s not just us supporting them.”

To Sanborn, the opportunity to give back is pure enjoyment.

“Never having served in the military, and regretting it as an adult, I wanted to find a way to somehow make some small compensation for that,” he said. “It gives me great pleasure. For me, it’s a hobby.”



COMMUNITY PARADES THROUGH TOWN

Schweinfurt organizations celebrate Fasching



Numerous organizations from the Schweinfurt community participated in the Fasching parade in Ebenhausen Feb. 22.

Clockwise from above: Romeo Gonzalez, of School Age Services (SAS), throws candy at the crowd. Marissa Ixtlahuac (left) and Aolani Mayo hold the flags to lead the group of Schweinfurt Girl Scouts down the street. Jerry Prost (front) and Zachary Auvil proudly hold the flags as they lead the Schweinfurt Boy Scouts. SAS joined the festivities with a distinguishing sign leading the pack of eager children dressed up for the parade. Alex Garcia (left) and Corrado Tuccitto of Schweinfurt's Boy Scouts get ready to throw out candy to the crowd of onlookers.



Concluding the Fasching festivities, Conn Outdoor Rec and Ledward Library bused enthusiastic participants to see the parade weave through the city of Schweinfurt Feb. 24. Part of the parade were a pool of women strutting in celebration. (Photos by USAG Schweinfurt PAO)





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MIDDLE WEST REGION
OF YOUR LIFE

TRIP 'N with BOSS

March 14
Lego Land
Depart: 6 a.m.
Return: 8 p.m.
Free transportation;
Bring Euro for entry fee.

March 28
Neuschwanstein
6 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Cost is €37 for
transportation, plus
€9 entry fee to castle

Finney Rec Center / BOSS Trips
Conn Barracks, Bldg. 64
09721-96-8476
DSN 353-8476

Youth Sports & Fitness

Baseball & Softball

Registration

Register by
March 13

Cost: \$25 for Bambinos (ages 3-5)
\$46 for ages 6-18

Participants must have current CYS Services registration and sports physical.

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Central Registration
Ledward Barracks, Bldg. 224, The Commons
Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
09721-96-6517 or
DSN 354-6517

U.S. Army
Child, Youth & School
Services

ONE DAY SKI AND SNOWBOARD TRIP

Wasserkuppe / Rhoen

February 28 & March 7

8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Cost: \$25
\$15 if you bring your own equipment

For more information, contact Outdoor Recreation at 09721-96-8080 or DSN 353-8080.

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Cost includes transportation. Lift ticket not included.

Performances:
March 5-7 & 12-14 at 7 p.m.

SCHOOL HOUSE ROCK! LIVE!

To reserve tickets, contact:
Garland Travis
09721-96-6225, 0162-296-2776, DSN 354-6225
email: garland.travis@eur.army.mil

COMMUNITY THEATRE
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ABRAMS
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