

Up and Down the Hill

Serving the Fort A.P. Hill Community

Soldier of the Year Competition Brings out the Army's Best

By Christopher B. Joyner
Fort A.P. Hill Public Affairs Officer



Taking top honors, Sgt. Marco Garced, U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch, Germany approaches Objective Bravo. (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)

From there, the soldiers tactically moved to the objective while encountering U.S. casualties along with local nationals seeking assistance or causing mischief.

Role players participating in the exercise wore the traditional clothing and head dresses often found in Iraqi and Afghan culture, two areas where American combat forces are currently deployed. Some of the participants had combat experience while others didn't. The scenarios faced during the competition were put together to test soldiers in their warrior capabilities if they are faced with combat.

Step it up

Snuggly attached to the hip, it looks like a pager or even a cell phone. Yet it makes no sound. The short leash is designed to keep it from getting lost but it's with you everywhere you go. It counts your steps and can tell the difference from when you're walking or working up a sweat. If you don't have one, you're not in the click.

If you've not guessed what the item is yet, you're probably not in the group. The walking group; that is, and the device is a pedometer.

"We expected 15 or 20 people but got more than 90", said Catherine "Catie" E. Foster, health educator for Caroline County. Fort A.P. Hill has 101 participants in the program. A program developed by the Virginia Department of Health, participants track their health progress by setting goals to walk more throughout the summer. Blood pressure, height and weight are examined when participants begin the plan. Measurements are taken that help hip mounted pedometers calculate total distance covered throughout the project. "The goal is to increase steps by 10 percent each week", said Foster. The program will end in the fall and blood pressure, height and weight calculations will be taken again.

Some of the highest steppers in the Fort A.P. Hill community are Becky R. Blanton, Lt. Col Michael S. Graese and his wife.

Fort A.P. Hill, Va. – Soldiers from across the Army gathered here in mid July to compete for Soldier of the Year "Best Warrior" honors and a chance to represent themselves and their units in this prestigious designation.

The field of 29 soldiers competed on multiple Warrior Tasks and was scored on their proficiency and leadership abilities.

"Competition is more intense at Fort A.P. Hill", said Sgt. Kenneth L. Speegle of Tusculum, Ala. Speegle, a truck driver 88M assigned to Redstone Arsenal recently reenlisted for six years. According to Speegle, the ethnic diversity and different types of people in the Army played a large role in his reenlistment. Speegle pointed out that competitions like the Soldier of the Year are unique opportunities for him to continue experiencing the diversity of the Army while being seriously challenged.

Soldiers competing culminated their experience in a multi-faceted battle sequence at Objective Bravo. Competitors were transported

via Blackhawk to an area approximately one mile from the objective. From there, the soldiers tactically moved to the objective while encountering U.S. casualties along with local nationals seeking assistance or causing mischief.

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Catherine E. Foster checks the progress of Judith Collins. (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)

Fort A.P. Hill - elite demining testing site for world community



Mines like this one have rendered a large portion of Ecuador unsafe. (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)

and a total of 128 mined areas totalling 621,034 square meters were identified. These areas were estimated to contain a total of 10,910 mines of which 10,843 are anti-personnel mines and 67 are antitank mines. Thus begins the formidable task of removing the sleeping weapons of war. That is where Fort A.P. Hill comes in.

In mid July, representatives from Ecuador tested demining techniques at Fort A.P. Hill through the Department of Defense Humanitarian Demining Research and Development Project. Lt. Jose Luis Arocu of the National Demining Command of Ecuador and Viviana Meza of the Ecuador Foreign Affairs Ministry both looked on from the protection of a bunker while multiple tests take place.

The tests conducted at Fort A.P. Hill use commercially available equipment to render



Because mines are deeply buried in the ground, equipment use during testing mimicks actual usage in Ecuador. (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)

mines unserviceable. Through considerable research involving the specifics of the Ecuadorian mine hazard, the most feasible technique involves using rock crushers to pulverize rocks and soil known to contain a mine. The rock crusher chews apart the detonator and explosive compartments of the mines and reduces them to a pile of rubble. Researchers with the project acknowledge the rock crushers were never intended for this use, but they offer a practical solution to a dangerous problem. The tests conducted at Fort A.P. Hill examine if the method will work.

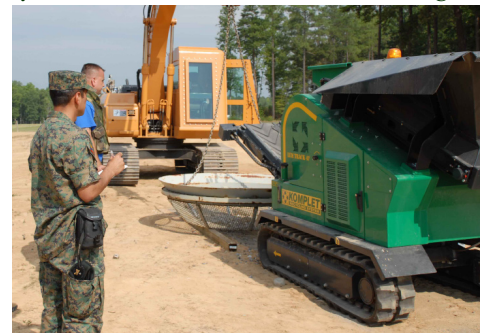
“We have beaches that are still mined where kids unknowingly pick up mines like they’re toys” said Aroca. “Sometimes people will try to take them apart or toss them as toys”, he added. Aroca and Meza offered a story of one Ecuadorian who was killed trying to open a mine using a blow torch. “Education programs exist but they are not always effective and there are many mines that remain in unknown locations”, said Meza. According to Aroca and Meza, many people encounter mines without knowing what they’ve found sometimes displaying the mines as keepsakes around their homes and above their refrigerators. “I see lots of cases of mutilation with small children, I feel very proud to serve my nation in this job”, said Aroca.

“Basically the crusher breaks apart the mine rendering it safe”, said Mel L. Soult, senior officer of the Fort A.P. Hill Demolitions Range. “We’re using equipment easily purchased on the civilian market. The rock crushing equipment pulverizes rocks and any other debris it encounters. Because the equipment is heavy duty enough to deal with massive boulders it makes it ideal to withstand a blast”, added Soult. Fort A.P. Hill provides the facilities so US humanitarian agencies can work with multiple foreign countries to develop safe cost effective techniques to destroy mines. More than two dozen countries have participated in demining projects tested at Fort A.P. Hill.

Imagine visiting someone’s home and find an Anti-Tank AT mine sitting atop their refrigerator. Sound incredibly ridiculous? Well, not if you live in Ecuador along the Peru border where nearly 67 thousand citizens living in 43 communities are impacted by mines according to an Executive Summary of the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Foreign Affairs Ministry of Ecuador.

According to the summary, mines were placed all along the Peru and Ecuador border during an undeclared war between the countries beginning in 1995. The undeclared war waged until October 1998 when both nations signed a peace accord bringing an end to territorial disputes between the neighbors. The peace accord ended the violence and brought forth a plan to identify areas of both countries mined during the

battle. Both turned over information



Lt. Jose L. Arocu of the Ecuador Army takes notes during a test at Fort. A.P. Hill (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)

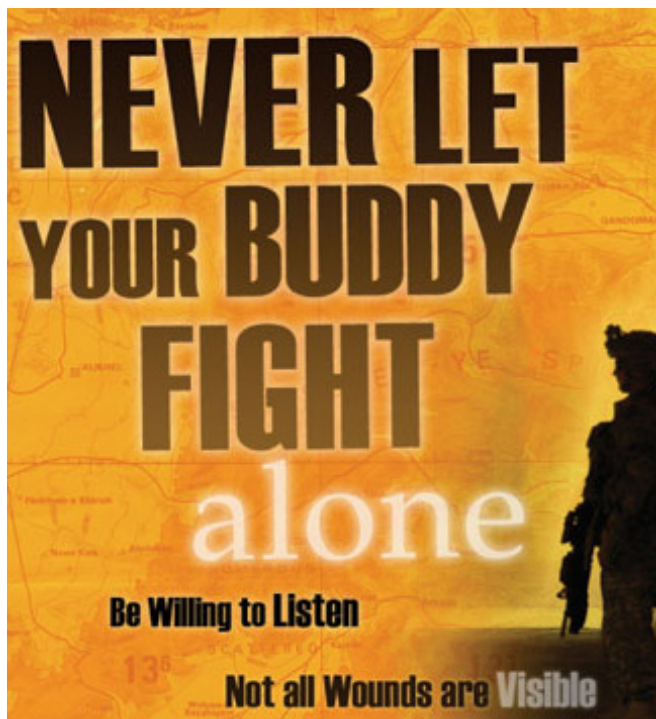
information

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The designed end result produces pulverized safe mine components that are completely safe. (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)

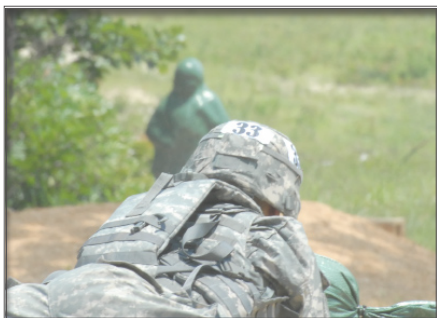
September is Suicide Prevention Month



Suicide prevention, like all leadership challenges, is a Commander's program and every leader's responsibility at all levels. The success of the Army Suicide Prevention Program rests upon proactive, caring and courageous people who recognize the imminent danger and then take immediate action to save a life. Active engagement of everyone can help to minimize the risk of suicide within the Army to stop this tragic and unnecessary loss of human life. Suicide prevention is everybody's business in The Army.

Debbie Moore is the Suicide Prevention Program Manager for Fort A.P. Hill. Throughout September, Moore will bring suicide awareness to our organization. It's everybody's responsibility to watch our buddy.

Around the Hill



Spc. Wilson Alvarado, 152nd MP Platoon, Military District of Washington MDW, takes aim at a 100 meter target during the Soldier of the Year competition. *(Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)*



National Guard soldiers train in combat scenarios using the Engagement Skills Trainer. *(Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)*



A bat hunts for insects just before dark in August near Game Check. *(Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)*

Warriors that normally conduct operations at sea, find Fort A.P. Hill an positive alternative. Right: Navy Seamen from the USS George H.W. Bush train on Range 21 in early August. Their ship is in harbor so sea based firing is unavailable. Left: Aircrews from the U.S. Coast Guard assist special response teams training at Fort A.P. Hill. *(Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)*



Adjusting your thermostat can save energy and can put money in your pocket.

The hot months of 2008 likely will be remembered as the summer that brought us the Staycation. Gas prices soared past \$4 per gallon causing many people to shun their trips to the beach in lieu of a chance to stay at home.



It does save fuel costs pretending your backyard is a secluded beach in Bermuda, but you may want to make certain you're not trading off that fuel cost savings for a high electricity bill.

Napping beside your backyard begonias does have a high allure, but your increased time around the home will likely impact your normal summer electricity bill. If you can tolerate a slightly higher temperature in the home, you can expect to see a lot more green in your wallet according to Troy Smith, environmental specialist at Fort A.P. Hill. Smith suggests a tiny adjustment in your thermostat could translate to huge savings in your pocket book. For every one degree you adjust the thermostat higher you save up to 3 percent on cooling costs according to Smith. Smith cites figures from the U.S. Department of Energy for his information. By maintaining the thermostats at 76 degrees, compared to 72 degrees, the Army is saving up to 12 percent on cooling costs.

Check out your thermostat when you get home today. That small tweak could transform into enough money to supersize the next time you're in McDonald's.

You can be Indiana Jones for a day

By John Mullin
Cultural Resources

Fort A.P. Hill has a unique and storied past. Artifacts found on this installation indicate human history spanning thousands of years. Historical sites at modern-day Fort A.P. Hill include Native American camps, colonial-period settlements, Civil War-era camps and numerous 19th and 20th century home sites. This installation is committed to identifying and preserving the historical value of this land.

The Cultural Resource Program of the Environmental Division, Directorate of Public Works, promotes community involvement in the study of regional history at Fort A.P. Hill through public outreach projects and events. Skilled and unskilled researchers can participate in projects that are designed to identify, catalogue and preserve the cultural value of finds on the installation.

Recently a project that incorporated this type of public involvement was conducted at a historic farmstead here. The house site includes a brick cellar and other house features and is located in an area that will be developed for military training. This particular site was known for years but not examined or preserved properly.

A team of 18 archaeologists, including a college student, amateur archaeologist and professionals participated in the research of the homestead. The formal National Register of Historic Places exploration consisted of historical research and hands-on archaeological excavations at the site. Additionally, the Environmental Division held an Introduction to Transit and Total Station Survey thereby using the site as an opportunity to teach surveying skills.

This most recent investigation identified the home as the former Carter family farmstead. The site was not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, but the work completed provides Fort A.P. Hill an opportunity to completely understand the history of this land.

Additional public outreach projects are being planned for other historic sites at Fort A.P. Hill. Fort A.P. Hill will host a National Public Lands Day project on September 27. The goal of the project is to restore a portion of Mill Creek to conditions similar to those John Smith would have encountered in this area during his second voyage of exploration in 1608.

Anyone interested in participating in the National Public Lands Day project, or other upcoming cultural resource projects, should contact Cultural Resource Manager John Mullin for details. Phone 633-8761

Did you Know?

The Mill Creek project on September 27 needs volunteers to help:

1. remove trash and debris
2. remove invasive and non-native vegetation
3. plant native plant species common prior to 1608
4. assist with the stabilization of portions of stream bank and existing trail through the placement of gravel, erosion control matting, and vegetation.

Additionally, the project will include the creation and erection of an interpretive sign that will document the history and culture of Native Americans in the region. A sign will be installed during a ceremony that will be held in October in association with Virginia Archaeology Month.

H a i l s a n d F a r e w e l l s

W e l c o m e

The following have joined Fort A.P. Hill's staff since July 15, 2008.

Daniel Oliver – A four year active Marine comes to us from Fort Belvoir. Oliver has served as a firefighter for approximately a decade. Notably, Oliver served on Operation Noble Eagle in the aftermath of 9/11. Oliver served at the Pentagon during Operation Noble Eagle.

Icebreakers: Talk to him about the Marines

Christopher Joseph – A former rigger in the Navy, Oliver comes to us from the Navy District of Washington. Trained in parachute rigging, Joseph spent most of his Navy time teaching water survival. Joseph has been a firefighter for more than a decade in some capacity. He is accompanied by his wife and two children.

Icebreakers: Talk to him about firefighting.

F a r e w e l l

Sheila G. Rivera retired August 2 with over 30 years of Federal Service. “Sheila was a unique individual who contributed immeasurably to the success of the Directorate of Public Works”, said Steven A. Weatherby. According to Weatherby, Rivera the “go-to” person for all Integrated Facilities System (IFS) actions and assisted all DPW personnel with computer hardware or software problems. Weatherby also noted how Rivera willingly volunteered her time to installation activities. Others noted specific appreciation for her volunteer actions in teaching numerous classes on how to access the Thrift Savings Plan, Army Benefits Center, etc. “Her knowledge and expertise has gone with her and the installation will miss that.” added Weatherby.



Sheila G. Rivera receives the US Army Certificate of Appreciation presented by Lt. Col. Michael S. Graese during Rivera's Retirement party in July (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)

Employee Recognition



Heroes of the Hill

Ben Allen receives mentoring from Lt. Col Graese outside Tuckers Tavern (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)



Alfred Spurlock takes on cooking duties for John Hall's birthday. (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)



Rickhard Harris hard at work at the TMP Fuel Point (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)



Randy Jones prepares the Engagement Skills Trainer so new hires can experience EST scenarios. (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)



Delaware National Guard Aviators instruct Fort A.P. Hill Firefighters on the specifics of UH-60L equipment. Fort A.P. Hill Firemen receive orientation on all equipment operating on the installation so they can properly respond in the event of an emergency. Firemen are oriented to hazards when approaching a troubled aircraft, how to retrieve someone trapped and safety equipment stored on the equipment. (Photo by Christopher B. Joyner)

Time to hit the books

Fall brings on the college semester for some of our summer hires. Here's where some are heading. Continue to make Fort A.P. Hill proud.



M o r a l e W e l f a r e & R e c r e a t i o n

Community Activities Center

Headquarters Area
 Building 106
 804-633-8219/8335
 DSN: 578-8219

Hours of Operation

Monday thru Friday
 0600- 1900
 Saturday and Sunday Recreation Room
 Pool Tables, Vending Machines, Air Hockey, Foosball, Ping Pong and Satellite Television.

F e a t u r s

Hammer strength Room
 Free Weight-style equipment

Life Fitness Life Circuit
 Strength training fitness machines

Cardio Room
 Treadmills, Exercise Bikes, Fitness Training

Internet Café
 Internet computers are available for free usage in the front of-
 fice during CAC operating hours

Information, Ticket and Tours
 On hand King's Dominion amusement park tickets, Richmond International Raceway, access to single and group local attractions, tickets, and tours.

Outdoor Recreation

Game Check—Bldg 390
 DSN 578-8244 Commercial (804) 633-8244
 Open September – Jan 15, April – mid May.
 Some of the Atlantic regions best hunting is here at A.P. Hill along with outstanding fresh water fishing!!! No hunting equipment rental available on Post.

Car Wash
 Located behind the CAC
 Car Wash is \$1.00, Vacuum is \$0.75
 Change is available at CAC

Picnic Area
 Located on Fort A.P. Hill Drive,
 The picnic area offers restrooms, shelter, softball field, and a volleyball field for recreational events.
 Please contact front desk for availability

Champ's Camp RV Park
 Nestled in Archer Camp and named after General A.P. Hill's horse Champ, this RV Park offers 49 full-hook up sites, as well as a service center equipped with showers, latrines, laundry services, wireless internet/ D-TV (Inside RV service Center) and game tables. Monthly discounted Golden Age Passport discounts are available.

Champ's Camp RV camper rentals. Two 30' fully equipped camping trailers, sleep six and two 27' fully equipped camping trailers, sleep four are available for reservation. 30' camper daily fee is \$35.00 and the 27' camper daily fee is \$25.00. Units are located in Champ's Camp and are not allowed off post. For reservations call 804 633-8219.

Kings Dominion

If you've never screamed for your life plunging to earth at 70 mph, now's your chance. Kings Dominion Themed Amusement Park nestled just off I-95 is exactly 17 miles from the north gate of Fort A.P. Hill. Supplied with ticket's that are far below park gate prices, the Fort A.P. Hill Community Activities Center can get you in the park for \$29. You'll have to pay \$10 for parking, but having your vehicle close by has its advantages.

I enjoyed a day at the park in August and have some suggestions. Store a cooler in your vehicle packed with drinks and sandwiches. Kings Dominion has a very liberal readmission policy that allows you unlimited trips out of the park. A quick hand stamp as you exit will allow you back in the park. Kings Dominion encourages families that choose to picnic in the parking lot to the extent of providing picnic areas outside the park. Bring plenty of sunscreen. Lines can be long on some rides and you don't want to ruin your fun with a burned face. Lastly, drink lots of water. The excitement of rides will likely elevate your breathing

All the fun you can stand
\$29
 Warning: Your idea of fun may differ greatly from mine. Not responsible for incredibly wet and wild laughter and family fun.
 and cause you to dehydrate quickly.

C o m m a n d e r ' s N o t e s

Team mates,

It has been another action-packed summer at Fort A.P. Hill. I hope everyone had the opportunity to enjoy well-deserved leave and quality time with your family and friends. As we head into Labor Day and the completion of the 101 Days of Summer, kudos to all of you for keeping you and your family safe.

As we transition into the late summer and fall, it will be, as usual, eventful. The IMCOM Commanding General is scheduled to visit the installation. I look forward to his visit and allowing him to experience the quality and quantity of effort you each provide day to day to meet our vision and support Warriors. The Installation Planning Board, the Haunted Hayride, the Army Soldier Show (combined with a Community Covenant ceremony) and the dedication of the Faulkenburg training facility will all occur in the next 70 days.

Of course, our primary focus continues to be providing the best training and support to our Warriors. I firmly believe you are unsurpassed in this category and am proud to be a part of the Team. Take care of yourself and your families, look out for your Team mates, and please, treat each other and the Warriors training here with the utmost respect.

Hooah!!

LTC Graese

Up and down the Hill is the official Newsletter for Fort A.P. Hill and is produced by the Fort A.P. Hill Public Affairs Office. This newsletter is for the internal distribution of information for the Fort A.P. Hill community. Please direct any concerns to Chris Joyner, FAPH Public Affairs Officer at christopher.joyner@us.army.mil or 804 633-8324.