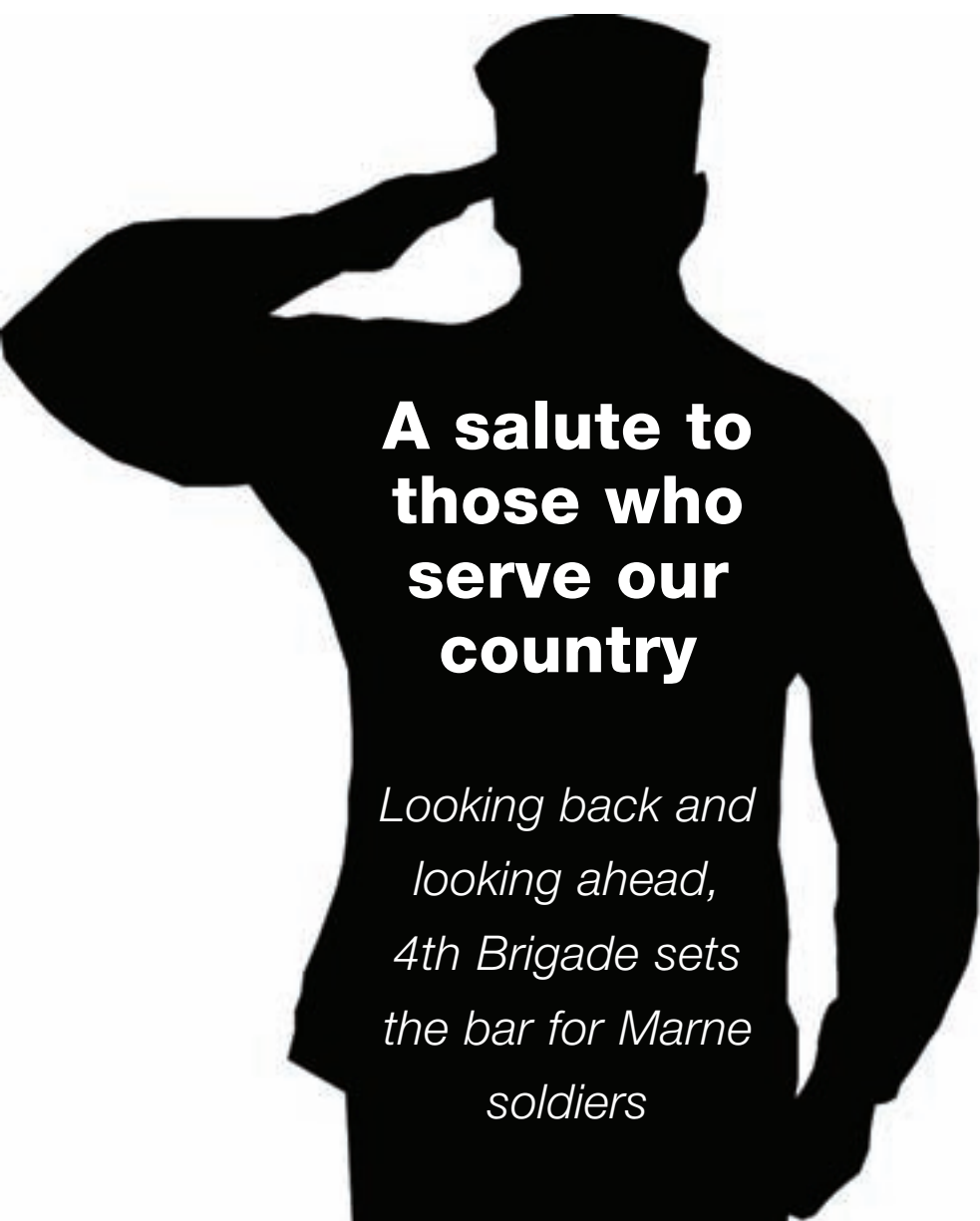


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Special commemorative edition • Section A



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looking ahead,
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the bar for Marne
soldiers*

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Soldiers recognized for valor during deployment

Sgt. Robert Sacco and Spc. Glen Ballough receive Army Commendation Medals

By Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4th Brigade Combat Team,
3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs

Every day in theater brings a soldier the opportunity to exemplify Army values, and 4th Brigade soldiers were no exception during their year-long deployment to Iraq. Two infantrymen with B Company were recognized for their efforts to defeat an enemy attack May 10 and each were awarded the Army Commendation Medal with Valor in front of their peers.

"This formation is full of heroes," Col. Lou Lartigue, commander of the 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, said when he addressed soldiers with the 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, later that month.

Sgt. Robert Sacco and Spc. Glen Ballough shared the story of how they came to be recognized for doing what their training had prepared them for.

"I was pulling air guard and I noticed a man standing on the edge of the road with

his hand in a bag," said Sacco, a Haverhill, Mass., native who was on patrol from Camp Taqaddum to Camp Ramadi with other members of the Habbaniyah Police Team.

"Most people normally carry a bag from the handle, but he actually had his hand completely submerged into the bag. I knew something wasn't right," he said. Sacco watched as the man removed a grenade from the bag and threw it at the fourth vehicle. Sacco fired back, though with unintended results.

"I missed," he laughed.

"The guys still give me a hard time about that." The grenade detonated on the fourth vehicle and the attacker turned and ran.

"As the dust settled, we engaged again," he said.

Ballough, a Lake Mary, Fla., native who was the gunner in the second truck, helped Sacco engage the enemy and defeated the insurgent who almost claimed their lives.

"At that point in time, the training just takes over," said Sacco, who explained that his attention to detail was learned behavior from experience and from sharpening infantry skills at Fort Stewart. Both Sacco and Ballough were assigned to the 4th Battalion, 64th Armored Regiment, 4th

Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division and deployed together in 2007.

"We took a lot of contact, but never from an RKG-3 (grenade)," said Sacco, who also explained that the threat of violence is now much lower during Operation New Dawn.

"But you can't take anything lightly," Ballough said. "You have to be ready at all times. The enemy wants you to think that there is (no longer a threat), but there still is."

Two Combat Infantryman Badges were awarded to Pfc. Alex Wenrick and Cpl. Justin Stanley, and nine soldiers received the Combat Action Badge for their actions during the same incident.



Army Commendation Medal with Valor

Leaving Iraq in the hands of its people

By Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4th Brigade Combat Team,
3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs

AL ANBAR, Iraq — The return of soldiers of the 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division to Fort Stewart has coincided with the closure of three U.S. military installations they occupied during their yearlong tour.

The base closures are part of the current plan to remove American forces from the country by the end of this year, leaving the security of Iraq in the hands of its military. Members of the 28th Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division signed for Camp Khalid on May 8, and the camp's former U.S. tenants with 4th AAB joined the rest of their team at Al Asad Air Base.

On May 12, 80 soldiers rolled out of Camp Tariq, after the 2nd Brigade, 1st IA Quick Reaction Force Division signed for the compound. Infantry soldiers who've spent the past 11 months at the small outpost say its closure was bittersweet.

"We've built this place up since we arrived here," said Staff Sgt. Nacoma Williamson, a Sheffield, Ala., native. Williamson's soldiers constructed fighting positions, a gym, an entry-control point and a stage and set up defensive barriers upon their arrival in July 2010.

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Mrnak said his company was tasked with teaching basic soldier skills to Iraqi army members during the deployment.

"We brought them to the range, showed them how to shoot, taught them things like am-

bush techniques, patrols, team movement, security and vehicle searches — on a weekly basis," said Mrnak, a Twin Lakes, Wis., native. "They (now) understand checkpoint (operations). They know how to zero their weapons, among other things. It seems like they've learned a lot from us. They put their own spin on things, but they are ready to do this job on their own."

Williamson, who deployed to the Al Anbar province during the Iraq invasion in 2003, said base handovers like Camp Tariq are noted successes for both the United States and Iraq.

"I know America wants us to come back home, but we're here to help make a change for this country, and now we can say we have," he said.

Soldiers from B Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment transferred Camp Taqaddum on May 16 to Iraqi army soldiers of the 8th Brigade, 1st IA Div.

"This is all part of the future of re-posturing in Iraq," said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Shoemaker, commander of 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, who was on hand to witness the milestone at Taqaddum. "But we're not saying goodbye. This is not the end of our partnership or our friendship (with the IA)."

Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Barnes, the battalion sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, told his soldiers they have contributed to their nation's history and helped with the development of Iraq.

"This is all because of your hard work and efforts," he said. "You can all be proud."

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Jen Alexander McCall

The combined headquarters building is part of a 457-acre, \$315 million 4th Brigade complex. Designed to accommodate 3,500 soldiers and 950 wheeled vehicles, the complex is the largest construction project at Fort Stewart and one of the largest military construction projects for the Army Corps of Engineers' Savannah District. Nearly \$191.8 million in construction took place on the site in 2010. Components of the complex include a physical-fitness center, company operations facilities, tactical equipment-maintenance facilities, barracks and a dining facility.

4th Brigade complex readies for move-in

By Jen Alexander McCall
Coastal Courier correspondent

The bricks are in place, green rooftops are glinting in the summer sun and the finishing touches nearly are complete at the new 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team complex just north of Fort Stewart cantonment on Highway 144.

4th IBCT Rear Detachment Commander Lt. Col. Michael Todd said the new complex can house up to 1,438 soldiers.

"The brigade will maximize the capacity available with the number of single soldiers assigned," Todd said.

Soldiers will be welcomed into one of 20 barracks buildings, each housing 72 individuals in suite-style ac-

commodations. Suites include private single rooms and shared kitchenettes, washers and dryers.

Todd said Family Readiness Group volunteers and groups such as Operation Welcome Home in South Carolina have been busy supplying baskets with basic necessities to help soldiers feel more comfortable in their new homes.

The relocation of the brigade includes the movement of its equipment and vehicles.

"Initially, flatbed trucks will be used to move equipment containers to the new brigade complex, then later in July tactical vehicles will move to the tactical equipment maintenance facilities, or motor pools, once we draw them," Todd said.

"Everything the brigade needs to fulfill daily operations ... when completed, are all on one 400-plus-acre site, and all of the facilities are easily within walking distance of one another."

— Will Abrams, chief of the Directorate of Public Works Technical Services Branch

The initial set of the brigade's vehicles, roughly 90, as well as the remainder of the brigade's vehicles will be driven to their new TEMFs, minus some engineer equipment that will be hauled on trailers.

"Since we are an infantry brigade combat team, we don't have tracked vehicles such as M1 Abrams tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles or M109A6 Paladins," Todd

added. Designed with a light brigade in mind, the new complex also is special because it is the first contiguous brigade complex to be built at Fort Stewart, according to Will Abrams, chief of the Directorate of Public Works Technical Services Branch.

"Everything the brigade

needs to fulfill daily operations — from the combined brigade-battalion headquarters to the company operations facilities, motor pools, dining facility, the physical fitness facility and the medical clinic — when completed, are all on one 400-plus-acre site, and all of the facilities are easily with-

in walking distance of one another," Abrams said.

"We had the opportunity to design and build everything a brigade needs, from physical training and training areas to daily operations and support facilities, into one complete secured site."

Abrams said he looks forward to hearing feedback from soldiers who are moving to the complex.

"It has been a true honor and a privilege to be able to work on this project since the first shovels went into the ground, through to the closing out and turnover of these facilities to their new owners, the 4th Brigade," he said.

See COMPLEX / page 5A


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Photos by Jen Alexander McCall

The 4th Brigade's new complex includes barracks buildings (top), a dining facility (above left) and a gym (above right). The new complex can house up to 1,438 soldiers in suite-style accommodations.

Complex

Continued from page 4A

"I can honestly say that this is a beautiful well-built facility, and I can't wait to see reactions and hear the soldiers' comments as they take occupation of it after serving our nation proudly overseas. They deserve nothing but our gratitude and the best facilities we can provide them with for the training and completion of their missions, and I think we came pretty close."

There also are plans for a fire station and an AAFES mini-mart at the corner of Highway 144 and Vanguard Road, Abrams said.

The complex's access control point opened April 18. Fort Stewart leaders have lowered the speed limit along the Highway 144 corridor that runs past the 4th IBCT's complex to 35 mph in January as an early move to prepare drivers for the increased traffic and soldier presence.

The 457-acre, \$315 million complex began in 2009. Designed to accommodate 3,500 soldiers and 950 wheeled vehicles, the complex is the largest construction project at Fort Stewart and one of the largest military construction projects for the Army Corps of Engineers' Savannah District.

Nearly \$191.8 million in construction took

place on the IBCT site in 2010. Components of the complex include a physical fitness center, company operations facilities, tactical equipment-maintenance facilities, barracks, a headquarters building and a dining facility.

Two additional contracts were awarded in 2010 for the physical fitness center and a Soldier Family Care clinic. The physical fitness center is scheduled for completion in the fall and the clinic in summer 2012. Crews are expected to finish most of the components of the complex this month in time for the 4th Brigade Combat Team to move in upon return from deployment.

Like all Army construction, these Fort Stewart/HAAF projects have incorporated environmentally friendly features, according to the Corps. These "green" buildings are expected to satisfy Silver rating criteria established by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system, in accordance with the U.S. Green Building Council standards.

The IBCT complex will come with a Silver LEED rating when completed, Army Corps engineer Troy Funk told reporters in 2010.

"We have several contractors who are kicking around to get it pushed up to Gold status," he said. "Every contractor wants to have the first gold or platinum (military) contract."

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After 4th Brigade completes its 10-day reintegration training and returns from block leave, an emphasis will be placed on fundamentals like physical-fitness training, which contributes to soldiers' overall readiness, rear detachment commander Lt. Col. Michael Todd said.

After deployment, brigade soldiers on

By Jen Alexander McCall
Coastal Courier correspondent

The 4th Brigade may have just begun settling into life back home, but these soldiers and their families already are looking ahead to what's next.

In the past couple weeks, Marine soldiers and their families have been attending reintegration courses hosted by division agencies to help them settle back into a groove while also making sure they are prepared to apply themselves to the daily demands of the Army.

Brigade soldiers began arriving June 7 and continued their return through this past week. Lt. Col. Michael Todd, 4th Brigade's rear de-

tachment commander, said after the soldiers' 48-hour pass, they started the 10-day reintegration training (RIT) process.

"RIT is designed to assist soldiers and their families in transitioning from being separated from each other and the soldier living a high operational tempo in Iraq to life back at Fort Stewart with their families," Todd said.

In Iraq, 4th Brigade soldiers partnered with and helped strengthen Iraqi security forces, improving ISF capabilities for providing internal and external security.

Daily tasks focused on assisting the ISF in building a foundation that would support intelligence shar-

"(The 10-day reintegration training process) is designed to assist soldiers and their families in transitioning from being separated from each other and the soldier living a high operational tempo in Iraq to life back at Fort Stewart with their families."

— Lt. Col. Michael Todd, 4th Brigade's rear detachment commander

ing, logistics and counterterrorism targeting, Todd said.

"We worked hard to create positive interactions between the Iraqi army and Iraqi police so they could work together to create a secure and safe environment for the citizens of Al Anbar province," he said.

Brigade soldiers also provided security, and ensured freedom of movement for the Al Anbar provincial

reconstruction team (PRT) — a State Department asset — so the PRT in turn could manage multiple reconstruction projects within Al Anbar province.

Now back at home, these soldiers hopefully will build new, personal goals around family and individual finance; mental and physical fitness; and administrative processes to ensure their

Army records are up-to-date.

Todd said the second day of the reintegration process targeted family-related topics by opening training and classes to spouses. This segment came in addition to family sessions that were sponsored and hosted by brigade units and Army Community Services prior to the return of the brigade.

To further ensure families feel connected to their soldiers' units, each battalion will host a family-oriented social event, similar to an organizational day, before block leave begins July 2.

"Soldiers will have the opportunity to take leave for the entire month of July," Todd said, though some may take less of the chargeable leave if they so choose.

Come August, it's back to work for the soldiers, who will begin operating under the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process, "which is designed to

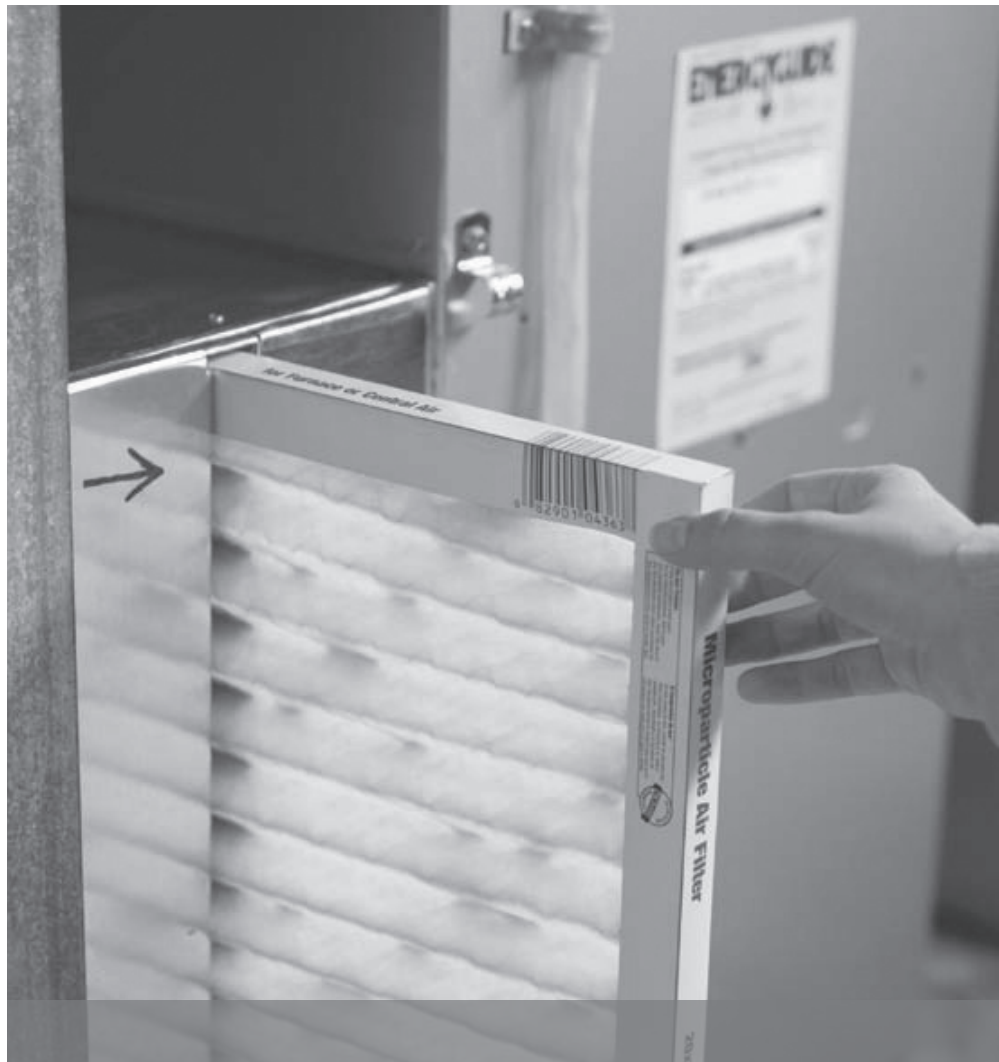
See BRIGADE / page 7A

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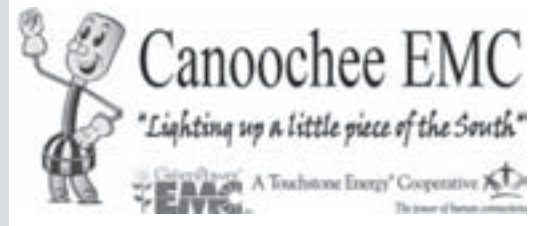
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Brigade

Continued from page 6A

take a combat brigade like the 4th IBCT and regenerate all facets and areas of the brigade," Todd said.

This regeneration encompasses personnel, equipment and training; many soldiers will leave the brigade following a stabilization period, while newly arriving soldiers will be assigned to and integrated with their units. Equipment will arrive back from Iraq or from Army Reset and Left-Behind programs.

"This fall, we will begin training individual and small-unit collective tasks like weapons marksmanship training, MOS and specialty schools, drivers training, combat lifesaver training and small-unit live-fire exercises, just to name a few," he said.

"Additionally, in an effort to get back to fundamentals, one of the biggest focuses of the brigade will be physical fitness training, as that is one of the most important components of a soldier's overall readiness."

The emphasis on fundamentals across the board reflects the goals laid out by division commander Maj. Gen. Robert Abrams upon his arrival at Fort Stewart. Abrams said in April that division soldiers now will focus on training for "any contingency," which requires a mastery of basic skills.

Todd added that this training will integrate mission-specific skills that can better equip soldiers to meet the demands of virtually any scenario.

"The mission (for 4th Brigade) will shift dramatically from performing our deployed mission in Iraq to one of training and preparing for future contingency operations and (or) deployments," he said.

While training is set up to prepare for any possibility, currently no deployments are on the horizon for members of the 4th IBCT, he said. "Until it is determined where and when we are deploying to next, our brigade will focus on taking care of our soldiers and family members and on equipping and training our brigade."



In the fall, 4th Brigade will begin training individual and small-unit collective tasks, including weapons marksmanship training, MOS and specialty schools, drivers training, combat lifesaver training and small-unit live-fire exercises, according to Lt. Col. Michael Todd, the brigade's rear detachment commander.

Photos by Denise Etheridge

WELCOME HOME MESSAGES



Lt. Vance

To my husband, my hero and best friend. Welcome home Honey, I have missed you dearly, thank you for all your selfless service to me and your country, God bless you honey.
*With love from your wife,
Mrs. Banji Vance*

Welcome home Spc. Henley!!
We missed you daddy/husband/soulmate!!!
Jessica

Happy Father's Day Daddy!
You are the best daddy in the world and we love you. We are so glad you are home!
Happy Father's Day!
Love, Tamara and Elijah

Daddy Sgt. Jonathan Duncan
I love you Daddy and am glad you are home! There needs to be another man in the house. These women are driving me crazy!
Cayden Duncan

SGT Jonathan Duncan
We are very proud of you. You have been and always be our hero and knight in shining armor. We love you with all our hearts and are EXTREMELY happy that you are home safe. Hugs and Kisses.
Momma, Cassidy, Delaney, Reilley and C.J.

Hurry Home Spc. Bova!!!
Daddy, we can't wait to have you home. Momma and I have really missed you! We love you! Always and Forever!
Desiree Bova

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Spouses take the reins during deployment

Army wives reflect on year apart while preparing for upcoming transition period

By Jen Alexander McCall
Coastal Courier correspondent

Overseas, soldiers are tried and tested with virtually every conceivable deployment scenario. Back at home, a soldier's family faces challenges of its own and, more often than not, does a commendable job rising to the occasion.

Stephanie Hutchison bid farewell to her husband, Spc. Douglas Hutchison, last year when he deployed with the 4th Brigade's Special Troops Battalion.

"This was my first deployment," said Hutchison, who has been married for two years. "There were a lot of times where it was really rough, but now looking back, it honestly wasn't all that bad."

Natalie Richards, whose husband, Staff Sgt. Aaron Richards, also deployed with the 4-3 BSTB, looked back on previous deployments to help her prepare for this one.

"We've been through two deployments, to Iraq and Kosovo, and two dependent-restricted tours to Korea," she said.

"Our children were already prepared from the last yearlong separation, though it didn't make it easier on them. However, they had an idea of what life would be like without their father present."

Richards said even though milestones like birthdays were missed, their father kept in touch through frequent phone calls, emails and Skype conversations.

"We explained that this was Daddy's job, and in their eyes he is a superhero who not only protects them but also helps protect many other families."

Tips for a successful homecoming

- Make time for your family. Hold off on visits to relatives and limit time with friends until you've settled into a comfortable routine at home.
- Take time to talk with your spouse or partner.
- Ease back into the relationship and your family.
- Expect that intimacy may be awkward at first. Go slowly.
- Watch your spending.
- Expect your children to test the rules now that both parents are home.

Source: military.com

Hutchison said she and her husband took every opportunity prior to deployment to be together, and she leaned on her family back home to help cope with the time away from her husband once he deployed.

"I made a lot of trips to see family in Indiana," she said. "I think seeing them for a couple weeks every couple months really helped me."

Hutchison added that although she understands that the mission of Family Readiness Groups is to help spouses of deployed soldiers get through their time apart, she found her strength in self-sufficiency.

To keep life moving along, Richards said it was important to keep a routine and spend plenty of time with her children.

"I made sure that we did as many things together as possible. Just because a parent is not physically present doesn't mean that life should be placed on hold. Swimming lessons, soccer practice and dragging them to family functions and on-post events is part of how we stayed busy."

Hutchison also found comfort in the frequency of communication she was able to have with her husband while he was away.

"Oh my, the communication was more than I expected it to be," she said. "For the first couple months we really were not able to talk to each other besides exchanging emails maybe once a day, but after that we were both ... instant messaging nonstop."

Now that the men are stateside, Richards and Hutchison are beginning their preparation for adjusting to life with their significant other in close proximity.

"For our family, in order to reintegrate Daddy back, we start the first two or three weeks with no responsibility on his part (as far as discipline goes)," Richards said. "His role is to spend time with the kids and catch up on their newfound interests."

"Arguments will transpire — that is something to be expected — but if you ensure that these disagreements do not take place in front of the children and are focused on in private, it is beneficial for the security of a family unit."

Hutchison anticipated a smoother transition to having her husband home day in and day.

"I really do not think that there will be much adjusting that will be made, but I may be wrong!" she said.



Denise Etheridge

4th Brigade wives welcome home troops June 7. From left are Melissa Stevens, Michele Lewis and Krystal Johnson. Lewis said the trio would attend every 4th Brigade homecoming until their soldier husbands returned later in the month.

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Stewart MWR packs the summer with activities

Staff report
 editor@coastalcourier.com

There's no reason to be bored this summer with the host of activities sponsored by Fort Stewart's Office of Morale, Welfare and Recreation. These events and destinations are found right in the Marne Division's backyard and throughout Georgia.

One of the most anticipated events every year is Fort Stewart's July 4 celebration. "Worth Fighting For," July 1-4, features appearances by R&B artist Fantasia and country group the Zac Brown Band.

June-August activities

June 22: Youth center summer trip Star Castle & Lunch, Savannah
 \$20 per person, lunch included.
 For youth grades 6-12.
 Reservations: 767-4491

June 29: Youth center summer trip Frames & Games, Pooler
 \$20 per person. For youth grades 6-12.
 Reservations: 767-4491

July 2: Summer Waves Jekyll Island
 \$20 per person (includes transportation and admission).
 Reservations: 767-2841

July 6: Youth center summer trip Pooler Fun Park
 \$20 per person. For youth grades 6-12.
 Reservations: 767-4491

July 13: Youth center summer trip: Dave & Busters, Jacksonville, Fla.
 \$30 per person. For youth grades 6-12.
 Reservations: 767-4491

July 16: Riverboat sightseeing cruise Savannah
 \$25 for adults; \$20 for children 3-12.
 Reservations: 767-2841

July 20: Youth center summer trip Splash in 'Boro, Statesboro
 \$20 per person. For youth grades 6-12.
 Reservations: 767-4491

July 23: Emerald Princess II cruise Brunswick
 \$15 active duty; \$20 all others.
 Reservations: 767-2841

July 29: Youth center summer trip: Carowinds, North Carolina
 \$35 per person. For youth grades 6-12.
 Reservations: 767-4491



Aug 6: CYSS dolphin-watching trip
 Free; cancellation charge of \$5.
 Open to registered youth in grades 4-12.
 Reservations: 767-2312

Single soldiers are the BOSS

At Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield, 50 percent of the soldiers in the 3rd Infantry Division are single. The Marne Division recognizes the recreational needs of its single soldiers and relies on the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program to help single soldiers make the most of their time off. BOSS activities also include quality-of-life and community-service opportunities.

Upcoming events include a skydiving trip to St. Marys and a trip to Six Flags in Austell.

July 2: Skydiving St. Marys
 Cost: \$160 without video or \$200 with video
 Reservations: 767-9917

July 15-17: Six Flags Austell
 Cost: \$110
 Reservations: 767-9917



Above: Fort Stewart is known for its 4th of July festivities. This year's celebration July 1-4 will include appearances by R&B artist Fantasia and the Zac Brown Band, a country group.

Left: Fort Stewart's Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program will offer a skydiving trip July 2 in St. Marys. The cost is \$160 without a video or \$200 with a video. To make reservations, call 767-9917.

Photos provided

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Fort Stewart leadership breaks ground to provide better services

New facilities include WIC clinic, Richmond Hill Medical Home

Staff report
 editor@coastalcourier.com

While the 4th Brigade was working hard to provide security and safety for the people of Iraq, Fort Stewart officials worked hard to provide better services in new facilities for soldiers and their families.

In Richmond Hill this spring, Winn Army Community Hospital opened the doors of a community-based primary-care clinic for active-duty family members living in the area. Richmond Hill Medical Home is expected to employ seven primary-care providers and one psychologist to care for more than 8,000 family members. By law, eligibility for care at the clinic is restricted to active-duty family members. Those registered with TRICARE Prime will not have to re-register.

“Our goal is to have the right provider providing the right care at the right time, using the right venue that’s best for our families by making primary-care services easier to access — making it more convenient for our patients,” Winn Army Community Hospital Commander Col. Paul R. Cordts said in a news release.

“Furthermore, the creation of this clinic acknowledges that we have listened to our beneficiaries and are focused on patient-centered care. Many of our families may have unmet demands for primary care, reside off post and would benefit greatly from obtaining primary-care services closer to where they live.”

The Richmond Hill clinic is among 17 clinics the Army is opening near 14 Army installations across the United States and Hawaii. Family members have the option of transferring their enrollment from Winn Army Community Hospital, Tuttle Army Health Clinic at Hunter Army Airfield and the TRICARE network to

the Richmond Hill Medical Home.

On Fort Stewart, Liberty County Health Department and Army officials broke ground in February for a new WIC clinic to serve mothers and their children living on post. The federally funded Women, Infants and Children program provides supplemental food, nutrition education, social services and health referrals to income-eligible pregnant and postpartum women, infants and children ages 5 and younger, Coastal Health District spokeswoman Sally Silbermann said.

Liberty County Health Department Administrator Deidre Howell described her vision of the new WIC clinic, complete with concrete pavers and shady trees in the clinic’s future expanded parking lot.

“There will be more green space,” Howell said. “We’ll have islands with trees in the parking lot. It gets really hot here in the summer, and our mothers have to put their babies into hot cars. This way, the trees will give the cars some shade and cut down on that heat.”

Silbermann said that once completed, the new 3,024-square-foot WIC clinic will house office space, a nutrition-education room, a breastfeeding room, a laboratory and two waiting rooms.

Former 3rd Infantry Division Deputy Commander Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Phillips called the new clinic “an expression of the community’s care for individuals.”

Howell said the health department serves an average of 2,200 WIC clients each week, and many of them are military spouses and dependents.

“We are very fortunate to take advantage of the opportunity for infrastructure funding from USDA and the approval and support of Fort Stewart to build a state-of-the-art clinic



Denise Etheridge

In February, Coastal Health District officials, Fort Stewart leaders and Liberty County Chamber of Commerce representatives broke ground on a new WIC clinic on post.

in a beautiful environment,” Coastal Health District WIC Coordinator Tonya Scott said in a news release.

WIC clients connected to Fort Stewart can visit the WIC clinic at the health department on Highway 84 in Hinesville while the new WIC clinic is built. Howell said the new clinic is expected to open later this month.

Wounded soldiers in need of specialized care at a central location are the focus of the Warrior Transition Battalion, and last November officials broke ground for new barracks to serve the 300-plus soldiers being served by the WTB.

The 144,000-square-foot, four-story barracks will be completed in 2012 and is another facet of the WTB’s innovative efforts to improve rehabilitation efforts and encourage successful recovery for wounded service members.

These efforts reflect the

See SERVICES / page 11A

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Services

Continued from page 10A

Army's renewed commitment to helping wounded warriors heal and prepare them to transition back into the Army or civilian life, Phillips said at the barracks' groundbreaking ceremony.

The new barracks will house more than 240 wounded warriors and will be within walking distance of the battalions' headquarters, the hospital and the assistance center, WTB Commander Lt. Col. William Reitemeyer said. He said the WTB campus also will have a walled trellis, walled garden and wheelchair course.

"It's the same setup as at Walter Reed," Spc. Jason Myers said. The 30-year-old wounded warrior said he liked the Warrior Transition Unit campus at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and thinks having the same type of layout at Fort Stewart will greatly benefit sick and injured soldiers here.



In March, soldiers gathered before the official opening of the Richmond Hill Medical Home. The clinic, at 2451A Highway 17, occupies leased space that formerly housed a Harvey's/Food Lion store in the Ways Station shopping center.

File photo



Denise Etheridge

A rendering of the new Warrior Transition Battalion barracks on Fort Stewart was unveiled in November during a groundbreaking ceremony near Winn Army Community Hospital.

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Photo provided

Soak up the sun

Coastal Georgia offers plenty of summer fun

By Frenchi Jones
Coastal Courier correspondent

The Coastal Empire is a land rich with history and resources, from the sea islands of the Lowcountry to the cobblestones of Savannah to the marshes of the South Georgia coast. Take every opportunity this summer to experience some — or all — of what the I-95 corridor has to offer.

Residents and visitors alike can enjoy leisurely outings like fishing, hiking and historic tours, all within a short drive of post.

The Medway River in eastern Liberty County is one of many in the region that are considered a true fisherman's delight. Families and friends can pull out the poles and the nets and relax while waiting to snag “the big one,” or they can set sail from St. Simons, Jekyll or Sea islands for a daylong deep-water fishing adventure.

Staying cool on a hot summer day is possible in Georgia, if you

know where to look. Indulge in the local history with stops on the historic Liberty Trail, including the colonial-era Midway Museum and the Geechee Kunda Museum in Riceboro, or give in to the heat and splash your way through the day at Summer Waves Water Park on Jekyll Island.

Keep moving through the summer on land, sea and inland waterways with open saddle opportunities at Bluff Creek Stables, dolphin-watching tours on Tybee Island and whitewater rafting and kayaking. All are family friendly and sure to entertain time and again.

History buffs could spend the entire summer immersing themselves in local legend, starting with Fort Pulaski and Fort McAllister, which mark Coastal Georgia's important role in the milestones that made America, from the Revolution to the Civil War.

Whatever your inclination, Coastal Georgia holds enough variety for all. Get out and about this summer and take advantage of all it has to offer.

See SUMMER / page 3B



Photo provided

Top: A surfer takes advantage of the nice weather and some good waves just as the sun sets along Tybee Island's south beach. Tybee recently was honored as one of America's “Best Beaches for Families.” Above: Staying cool on a hot summer day is possible, if you know where to look. In addition to Tybee Island, check out the beaches on Jekyll and St. Simons islands.

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Jen Alexander McCall

In the city of Hinesville as well as the rest of Liberty County, several businesses opened, closed and relocated while 4th Brigade soldiers were deployed to Iraq.

In Liberty County, life changes — as usual

By Jen Alexander McCall
Coastal Courier correspondent

While the soldiers of the 4th Brigade plugged away at their daily tasks in Iraq, life in Liberty County moved at a steady pace with some changes now and then. Residents welcomed new faces and said goodbye to longtime friends. Businesses opened, closed and relocated, and government facilities expanded.

Out on the town

• Restaurants come and go in Hinesville, and some simply look for room to stretch their legs. Longtime dining establishment Vann's left its old location on Gen. Screven Way and found a new home inside the restaurant space at the EconoLodge off Highway 84. In its old location is a new eatery, Hinesville Steak House. This restaurant caters to a grown-up crowd; the restaurant allows smoking, so only patrons 18 and older may dine.

• Shoney's, a popular breakfast spot, never did reopen its doors, but all-day eatery Ruby Tuesday's now offers a weekend breakfast brunch to pull in the late-morning crowds.

• A popular Chinese food restaurant on Highway 84, China Super Buffet, recently packed up and moved to its new home next

to Bealls. The popular restaurant now offers a hibachi grill for patrons.

• Speaking of Bealls, the outlet store departed its former store space on Gen. Screven Way and now draws customers in the shopping center also occupied by Big Lots and Save-A-Lot grocery store.

• Goody's returned to Hinesville after a brief absence, filling the space left behind by Peebles and becoming neighbor to USA Discounters

• On E.G. Miles Parkway, nightclub Revolutions reopened its doors to local partiers, attracting business from military and civilians alike. At the same time, The Coliseum on Highway 84 closed its doors, but the owner is promising a new venue soon.

Business

• Firth Rixson, a U.K.-based company that established a closed-die forgings facility in Liberty County's Tradeport East business park, held a grand opening early this year and has been hiring at a steady pace. The foundry features a closed-die forging process for aerospace industry parts.

See CHANGES / page 5B

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Changes

Continued from page 4B

- All Is On Enterprises and A Timeless Memory joined the business community this year, offering residents a one-stop shop for multiple, popular services. Owners Anthony and Allison McDaniel provide a hair salon, tax service and photography studio.

- Elaine Boggs Realty Group, a fixture in the local real-estate market, opened the doors to its new office building on Gen. Screven Way near Highway 84. Boggs has worked for Coastal Georgia residents for more than 20 years.

- Coastal Home Care has established a presence in Hinesville with its fourth branch. The private home-care provider's services include companionship, home-making, errands and personal care.

Government

- Two years after putting its plan into motion, Liberty County opened the doors to its new justice center on Main Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. The \$20 million facility houses courtrooms, judges' chambers and offices for some county services.

- The finishing touches are going up on Hinesville's new city hall building, next door to the Hinesville Police Department on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive downtown. Officials broke ground last June on the 48,327-square-foot, three-story building, which carries a price tag of \$7 million. Officials said they expect the construction to be complete by the end of the year.

- Members of countywide governments gathered at Jekyll Island in late May to swap ideas and share input on helping Liberty County grow and improve over the next several years. Hot-button topics that hit the top of the list included transportation, poverty and water quality-availability.

- Speaking of transportation, Liberty County officially launched its city transit system last fall after several years of planning. Liberty Transit buses run throughout the central Hinesville area and on post. Information on the bus system, including schedules and routes, can be found at www.libertytransit.org.

- Statewide changes made during 2010 and early 2011 will affect local residents — many of these focus on driving habits and conditions.

- One of the most discussed changes has been the texting law that Gov. Sonny



The three-story, \$20 million justice center on South Main Street houses courtrooms, judges' chambers and offices for some county services.

Perdue signed into law just before the brigade's deployment in 2010. The law, which bans texting while driving, went into effect last July, though state patrols waited until August to begin enforcing it.

- Georgia also has a new law increasing age requirements for children in car safety seats; the change follows revised federal guidelines. Previously, children ages 1 and older could face the front in the rear passenger seat while restrained in a car seat, but now the age for forward-facing children is 2. Additionally, children must be restrained in an approved car/booster seat until age 8, unless they are more than 4 feet, 9 inches tall. This law goes into effect July 1.



Hinesville's new 48,327-square-foot, three-story city hall features porcelain tile, oak floors and maple wainscoting inside the building while an outside balcony wraps two sides of the building on the second floor. The \$7 million project is funded with SPLOST dollars and a loan.

Denise Etheridge

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Check out the hot buys of 2011

By **Frenchi Jones**
Coastal Courier correspondent

While you were away, techno geeks and car manufacturers were at play — all for the consumer's benefit. Now that you're back, relax and enjoy what the shopping world has to offer.

Cars

• The auto world has been abuzz with performance and style news, from budget-friendly to budget-busting. The head-turning 2011 BMW 550i features a turbo-charged engine and high-tech features. It's a balance between breaking the bank and breaking the mold, but for car-lovers, it could be worth the pinch.

• Adrenaline junkies have a high-energy, cost-effective option in the 2011 Chevy Camaro. The convertible will woo drivers with a turn-by-turn navigation system and hands-free wireless technology.

• Family guys and gals or heavy haulers are catered to by the Suzuki Grand Vitara, a budget-friendly SUV with safety features like side curtain airbags.

• A responsible luxury ride at a moderate price is a remarkable achievement, one reached by Lincoln with its MKZ Hybrid. The midsize sedan relies on an electric charge up to 47 mph before the fuel is tapped into, and it runs 700 miles on a single tank of gas, according to Lincoln specs.

Electronics

• Need an excuse to buy that 3D television your spouse wouldn't let you get for Christmas? Samsung's wireless 3D glasses

will get you one step closer. Their frames sport an N.V.G. look, and your vision definitely will have you seeing from all sides of life.

• Smartphones are getting smarter and so are their makers. The Motorola Atrix has been called the top gadget at the 2011 Consumer Electronics Show. This smartphone-P.C. hybrid can be used as a computer once plugged into a dock.

• Everyone's raving about the new iPad 2, but many critics predict Hewlett-Packard's PalmPad will beat out its Apple contender with its 4G capabilities and four different sizes.

• Want to be a part of the action and smell it, too? The Game Skunk, scheduled to be released this year, lets you smell the sweat of your virtual enemy or the burning rubber as you make your way down a virtual racetrack.

• Need a reader with Blackberry app-transfer capabilities? Plastic Logic's Que e-reader is the size and width of a piece of notebook paper, yet it won't get lost in the shuffle thanks to its high-resolution screen and computer-processing intuition.

• Gain full control of your driving experience with the AppLink, which will allow you to drive completely hands-free when it comes to your gadgets. This motor-vehicle application has voice-activated capabilities that will turn your music on and roll your windows up and down for you so you can keep your eyes on the road.

See **BUYS** / page 7B



Photo provided

From budget-friendly to budget-busting, the top cars of 2011 include the BMW 550i, Chevy Camaro (pictured), Suzuki Grand Vitara and Lincoln MKZ Hybrid.



Photo provided

The "must-have" electronic of 2011 is the Samsung 850 LCD series television. It's been rated the No. 1 electronic with its superior black levels and its interactive menu feature. Samsung also offers wireless 3D glasses, which are compatible with the company's newest LCD and plasma HDTVs.



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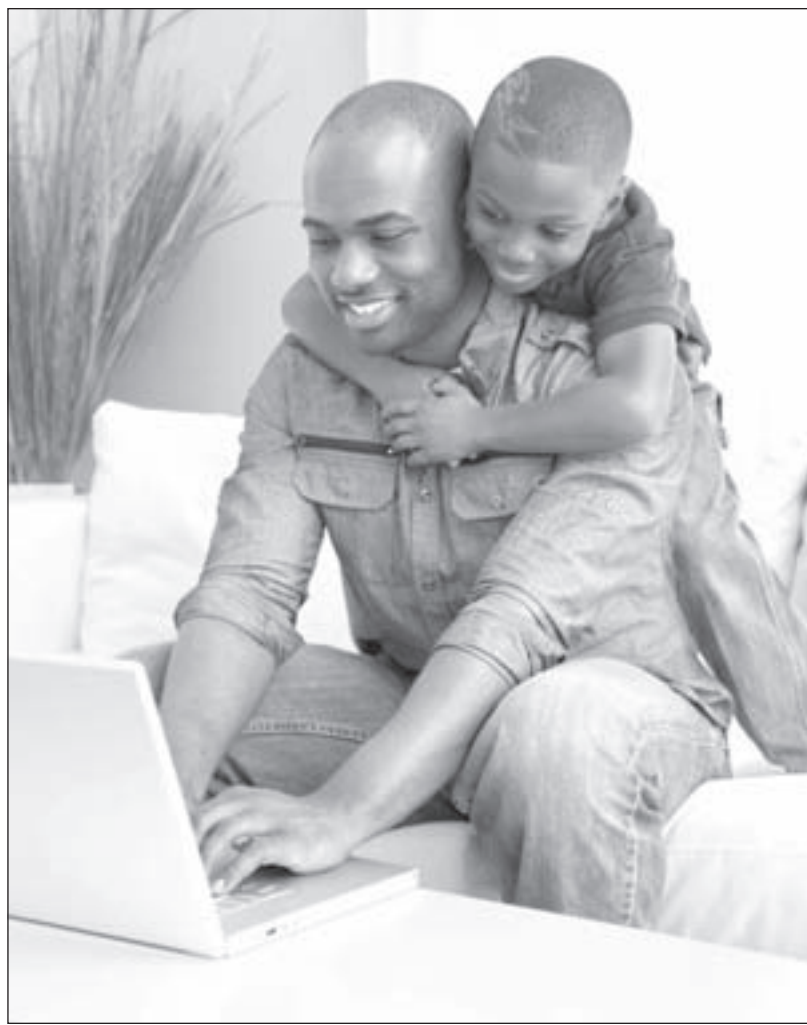
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Above: In the home-appliance department, top buys include side-by-side refrigerators that meet Energy Star standards and energy-efficient induction cooktops, which speed up cooking time and allow for easy cleanup.

Right: The newest class of laptops combine the best of tablets with advanced security features. Check out pcworld.com for a more in-depth look at the best ultraportable, all-purpose and desktop-replacement laptops as well as the most popular netbooks available on the market right now.



Buys

Continued from page 6B

- Forget about a notebook — Intel's Ultra-book is what has laptop enthusiasts raving these days. It measures less than 0.8 inches thick. It anchors a class of laptops that combine the best of tablets with advanced security features.

- With hurricane season already here and meteorologists promising an active season, you may want to pick up the American Red Cross Self-Powered Weather Radio. It comes equipped with a radio, clock and USB port, and it cranks out enough power to charge your cell phone.

- The "must-have" electronic of 2011 is the Samsung 850 LCD series television. It's been rated the No. 1 electronic with its superior black levels and its interactive menu feature.

Home appliances

- Long deployments can mean loads of laundry waiting to be cleaned. Don't get hung out to dry; check out Kenmore's line of high-efficiency washers and dryers with Kenmore Connect, a built-in repair technology that sends information about the high-efficiency models directly to a technician so you don't have to wait too long for help.

- Nothing's better than a hot meal — except, of course, for a hot meal that's ready in a jiffy. Induction cooktops continue to be popular for their energy efficiency, which comes in part from their task of heating just the pan and nothing else. Cooking enthusiasts get a hand in cleanup because there are no coils or drip pans to scrub after an adventure in gourmet cooking.

- The newest refrigerators are being built with an eye toward smaller kitchens. Although counter-depth models save floor space by going up instead of out, they tend to have less interior room. Best bets are models that meet Energy Star standards, and they come in all price ranges. Side-by-side and freezer-drawer models continue to draw buyers.

Home décor

- Looking to update your living room? The trends of 2011 come in affordable, accessible pieces. Retro styling, including bold colors and patterns (think avocado green and bubble prints), make waves with shoppers even today. Outdoors comes indoors with wicker and rattan, but soft lines and cushiony comfort still are found in casual and formal seating.

Information and product ratings for this article were taken from auto.aol.com, top100gadgets.com, howtogeek.com, huffingtonpost.com, gamification.com, pcworld.com, time.com, technologizer.com, askmen.com and smartershopper.com.

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Month of the Military Child — April 2011

Fort Stewart celebrates its young patriots



Shawn Brown of Role Model Productions kicks off the Month of the Military Child activities April 1 at the Fort Stewart youth center. Liberty County schools were closed for spring break, allowing children in first through fifth grades an opportunity to move to the beat and enjoy physical-fitness activities during the process. This highly energized motivational speaker used his unique style of entertainment to help school-age children feel good about themselves.

Photos provided

Youth treated to trips and special events, including Wildlife Jamboree



Photos by Elvia Kelly/Fort Stewart Public Affairs

Left: Ninth-grader Anne Cross views the habitat of the endangered red cockaded woodpecker as her teammates listen to Larry Carlile, supervisory wildlife biologist at the Fort Stewart Fishing and Wildlife branch, on April 1 at Holbrook Pond. Above: From the Department of Public Works' Fishing and Wildlife branch, a specialist shows the students the skull of a buck at the Outdoor Wildlife Jamboree on April 1 at Holbrook Pond.



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Keep your family emotionally, financially fit

By Jen Alexander McCall
Coastal Courier correspondent

Few things carry a soldier through the hot, dusty never-ending days of deployment more than the thought of coming home to a loving, happy family. Sometimes, though, the stress of a deployment takes more of a toll than soldiers or spouses can handle by themselves.

Fort Stewart's Army Community Services office provides members of the military with assistance through Military & Family Life Consultants. MFLC assistance is designed to help families cope with reintegration issues, ongoing daily challenges and more in an anonymous, confidential setting. Consultants can help with marriage and relationship issues; parent, child or sibling issues; or even challenges with communication, stress and anxiety.

ed counseling access line that's open 24 hours a day to help families schedule sessions; members of the 4th Brigade can call 912-318-9283 or 912-432-0013.

The perks of hazard pay aren't lost on many soldiers, but that extra cash can be a blessing or a burden depending on your attitude toward financial fitness. For military families who have found themselves spending too much too fast or who have more bills than money to pay them, ACS offers resources to help them get back on the right money track.

When soldiers need help making sure bills are paid and the pantry is full, ACS provides assistance through Army Emergency Relief. AER provides interest-free loans to cover emergency travel, rent, deposits and critical medical and dental care, among others. In extreme hardship cases, grants also may be available.

To address long-term finan-

cial fitness, ACS provides a comprehensive financial readiness program. Certified counselors help establish spending, savings and investment plans, and they help soldiers improve personal financial skills.

The end of a deployment often means new orders for soldiers, and preparing themselves and the family for a PCS move requires accomplishing many tasks in a short period of time. Army Community Services' Relocation Readiness Program answers just about every relocation-related question one possibly might have.

Details from each post are different, but the goals of this readiness program are universal. For families leaving the Mame Division, Fort Stewart's outbound assistance features planning booklets as well as individual consultations to discuss relocation issues, like moving pets and children, and what to expect from overseas moves.

Faith community reaches out to military families

Fort Stewart is a cherished part of the greater Coastal Georgia community, and many churches in Bryan County and Liberty County actively reach out to these families through ministries that meet their unique needs as individuals and families.

The following churches offer outreach programs, Bible studies and ministry opportunities with a specific focus on military personnel and dependents.

Richmond Hill

First Baptist Church

- Homefront Heroes (Bible study group for Army wives)
- Contact: Kathryn Jordan at khschumpert@bellsouth.net or Military Director Stan Jordan at stanton.f.jordan@gmail.com; 756-2916
- www.richmondhill.org/Military_ministry

Hinesville

First Baptist Church

- Offers a military ministry
- Contact: Bob Sprinkel, 876-2687
- www.fbchinesvillega.com

First United Methodist Church

- Pastoral counseling from combat veteran
- Contact: FUMC main office, 368-2200
- www.HinesvilleMethodist.com

Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist

- Footprints (Deployed Soldier and Military Family Ministry)
- Helps support the ongoing commitments and sacrifices of our U.S. military here and abroad. Soldier and family support is extended to all through communications, ministry aids and care packages
- Contact: Deaconess Celestine Graham, 876-6464
- www.mtzionministries.net

Live Oak Church

- Offers help to families coping with deployment and reintegration
- Contact: Live Oak main office, 876-8769
- http://liveoakchurch.org/soldier.php

Bethesda Church

- Offers military-friendly counseling
- Contact: Bethesda main office, 368-6121
- http://theamazinglife.com

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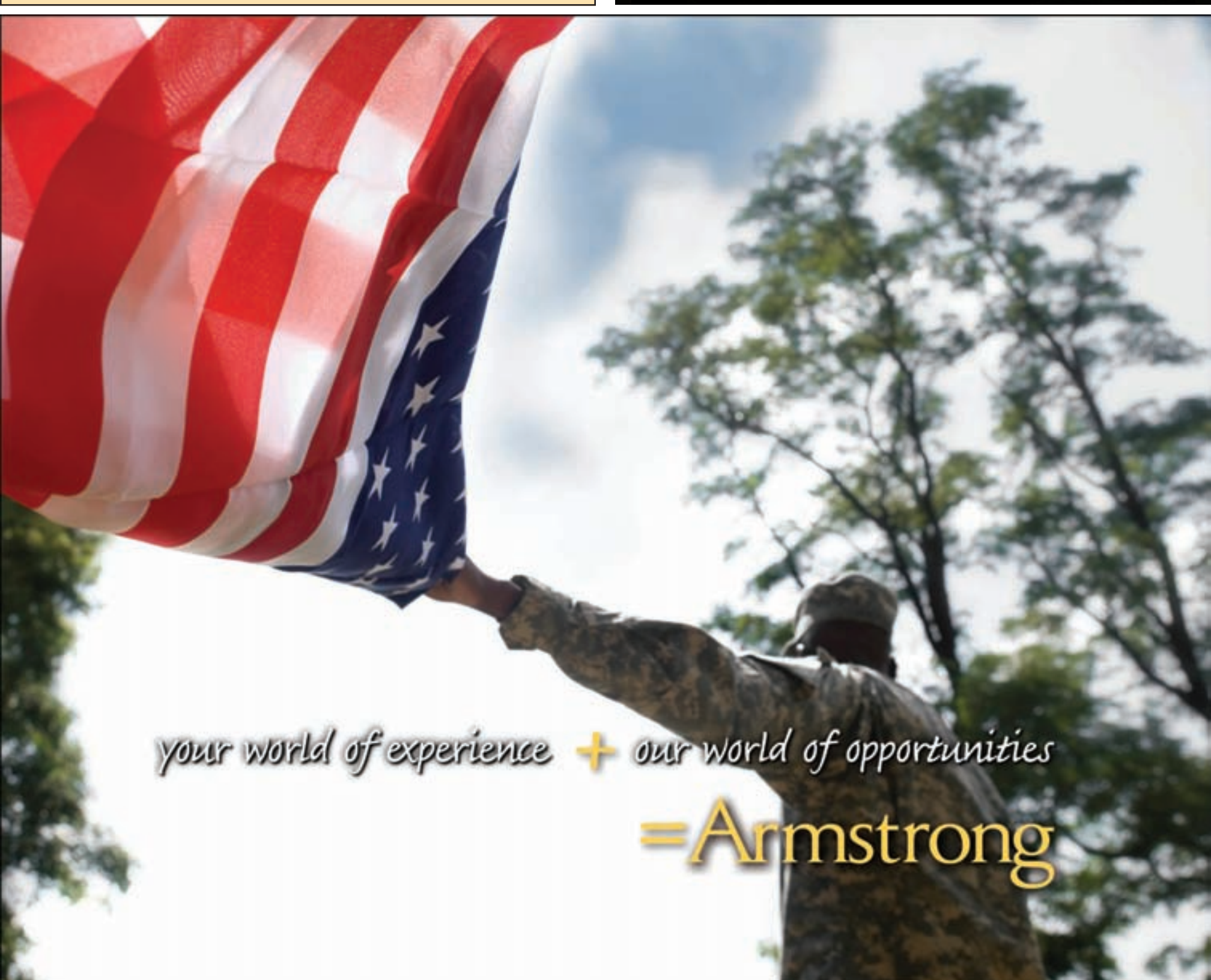
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Welcome home, 4th Brigade

Family and friends greet loved ones during a welcome-home ceremony June 7



Photos by Lewis Levine

Left: Tina Bean greets her son, Spc. Glenn Whitten, as family members look on. Right: Staff Sgt. Tarnisha Shepard hugs her two children, Rion Sellers and Makalah Shepard.



Lewis Levine

Staff Sgt. Steve Shepard hugs his wife, Staff Sgt. Tarnisha Shepard.



Denise Etheridge

Family members embrace during the welcome-home ceremony.



Lewis Levine

Spc. Glenn Whitten hugs his aunt, Melissa Smart.

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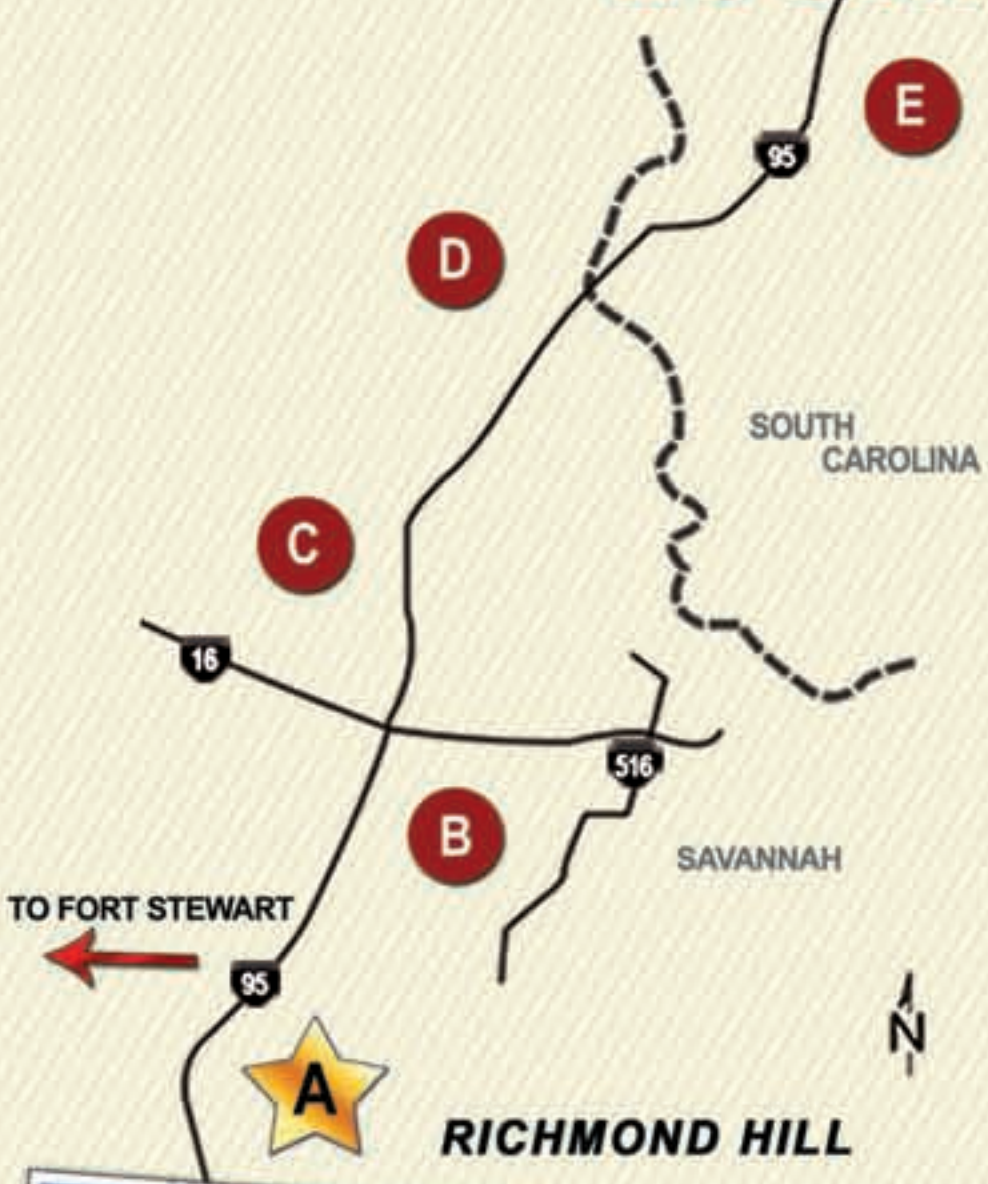
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