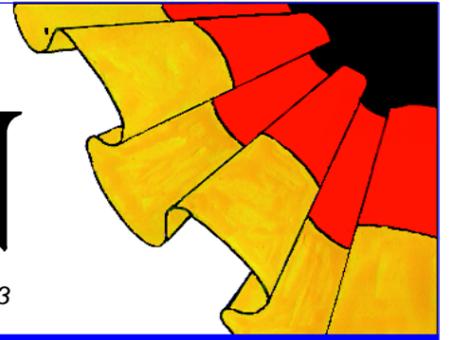


THE CITIZEN



Vol. 32, No. 23

The 6th Area Support Group Newspaper

November 18, 2003

Stuttgart, Bad Aibling, Oberammergau and Garmisch, Germany

SOCEUR snares flag football crown

Upsets previously unbeaten Marine squad en route to season-ending tournament title

Story & photo
by Hugh C. McBride

As the National Football League approached its season's midpoint, the 6th Area Support Group's own "gridiron greats" brought playoff intensity to Panzer Kaserne during the community's two-day unit-level flag football championship tournament.

"March Madness doesn't have anything on this," said 6th ASG Sports Director Bryant Searcy. "This is where it's at."

Ten teams from the 6th ASG (nine representing Stuttgart-area units and one from Bad Aibling) squared off in a hard-fought single-elimination tournament Nov. 1 and 2.

"All the Stuttgart [unit-level] teams participated in the tournament, and we invited the winner of the Bad Aibling leave to come up here and play, too," Searcy said.

When the dust and the mud finally cleared shortly after 4 p.m. Nov. 2, Special Operations Command, Europe had claimed the championship trophy.

Not to discount its title-game victory over U.S. Air Forces in Europe Mission Support Squadron, but SOCEUR's biggest win may have come in the semifinal round, when it handed the previously-undefeated Marine Corps Forces Europe team its first loss of the 2003 season.

"That was a big upset," Searcy said. "MARFOREUR was the only undefeated team [during the regular season], but SOCEUR played a great game."

For the runners-up from USAFE MSS, the frustration of their season-ending loss was tempered by the realization that they had advanced farther than their regular-season record indicated they would.

**6th Area Support Group
Unit-Level Flag Football
Championship Tournament**
(Panzer Kaserne, Nov. 1 and 2)

1st Place
Special Operations
Command, Europe

2nd Place
U.S. Air Forces in Europe
Mission Support Squadron

3rd Place
6th ASG Medical/Dental Clinic

*SOCEUR defeated USAFE MSS,
26-6, in the title game.*

*Medical/Dental beat
Marine Corps Forces Europe,
24-13, in the consolation game.*

"MSS hung in there and played solid throughout the tournament," Searcy said.

The next opportunity for unit-level athletes in the 6th ASG is basketball, which begins in December.

For information about participating in or officiating any area unit-level sports, call the 6th ASG Sports & Fitness Office at 430-4512/civ. 0711-680-4512 or e-mail searcyb@6asg.army.mil

For more photos of the flag football tournament see page 15.



Much like this pass during a first-round contest Nov. 1, the 6th ASG unit-level flag football championship tournament was hard-fought and up for grabs until the very end.

INSIDE THIS EDITION



← **Pages 6 & 11**

Learn how to keep yourself and your vehicle fit during a cold German winter.

Page 13 →

Stuttgart honors America's veterans with a Nov. 11 ceremony on Panzer Kaserne.



Thorns 'n Roses

From community submissions



Roses to:

The Stuttgart Health Clinic and Pharmacy for the professional, prompt and courteous service I received after I let my heart medication run out.

Led by Lt. Col. Robin Benckart, the clinic staff went above and beyond "current retiree policy" to get me back to normal – on a Friday afternoon, no less.

The 6th ASG Youth Services sports staff for an outstanding job during the YS soccer season. The staff members' dedication and hard work made the season a very successful one.

Not only did they have many soccer fields and schedules to prepare for games, but they also prepared the Panzer football field for Patch High School's homecoming game. Rain or shine, they got the job done and always made sure our children had the best possible fields to play on.

The Patch residents who showed their Halloween spirit and came through for all the trick-or-treaters. Thanks also to AAFES for the free homemade cookies in the food court – a very nice touch.

E-mail comments to citizen@6asg.army.mil or fax them to 421-2570/civ. 0711-729-2570.

CORRECTION

The advertisement for the Great American Smokeout Fun Run/Walk on page 2 of our Nov. 4 edition contained an incorrect date. The event begins Nov. 20, 7:30 a.m., at the Patch Barracks Fitness Center.

THE CITIZEN

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www.stuttgart.army.mil

It's never just a number

By Richard M. Arndt

Commentary

As the body count of U.S. service members killed in Iraq continues to climb, I fear the American public will begin to see those brave souls as mere numbers in a tragic tally.

The stories that air on the evening news seem remarkably similar: a rocket-propelled grenade here, a sniper's bullet there. It all becomes familiar, even expected after a while.

I know the families don't expect it, because in 1996, I had the task of informing a couple that their son, an Army noncommissioned officer, had been murdered.

The call came at 6 a.m. Saturday. I shook the sleep from my head as I showered and shaved, and I was already starting to get nervous as I donned my Class As. How was I going to face this family?

I still remember the words of the casualty affairs NCO on duty as I picked up the briefing packet in his office: "You're going to do this just fine, Sergeant Arndt," he said. "This is a fellow NCO's family. He needs you to do this."

A long drive later, I pulled into a short driveway leading to a small, single-story house. A neighbor was working on his car in the driveway next door.

He eyed me up and down, and asked, "Their son's alright, isn't he?" When I

Every time I hear about a service member killed in Iraq, I remember Mrs. Smith. I remember the horror, the profound sadness and the sympathy in her eyes.

didn't respond, he turned visibly pale. "Oh no..." he said.

I knocked on the door with my hat in my hand and my heart in my throat. The door opened, and a 50-something lady looked out at me. She knew when she opened the door what my presence meant.

The look of horror on her face made me stammer as I asked, "Are you Mrs. 'Smith?'" She nodded, a tear forming in the corner of her eye. "I have news about your son," I said. "May I come in?"

The rest of the words I said that day are a blur. I remember Mrs. Smith's sobs and tears, and Mr. Smith's stoic resolution to be strong for his wife, even as his heart was breaking. I remember my own tears as I struggled futilely for words that would help ease this family's grief.

As I was explaining what the Smiths could expect over the coming days, Mrs. Smith looked at me suddenly, and asked if I knew her son. When I told her that I did not, her eyes filled with tears once more as she leaned forward and hugged me. "You poor thing," she said. "What

an awful thing to have to do."

I was shocked. I had just told this woman that her son was dead, and she was feeling sympathy for me for having to be the one to break the news. I struggled for a response.

"It's my duty, Ma'am," I managed. "It's the least I can do for your son."

She leaned back and looked at me. "Thank you," she said.

Some moments in life you never forget. Every time I hear a news report about a service member killed in Iraq, I remember Mrs. Smith. I remember the horror, the profound sadness, and the sympathy in her eyes.

For those who haven't known a Mrs. Smith, those news reports may seem like numbers. Those who have seen the human side of the reports know that they're not. I can only hope that the American public knows the difference, for the sake of all our service members – and their mothers.

Arndt is editor of the Belvoir Eagle newspaper at Fort Belvoir, Va.

ON THE STREET

What is the best way for the United States to honor its military veterans?

(For full coverage of Veterans Day in Stuttgart see page 13.)



Angela Cross
(Civilian)

"Make sure they have the benefits that they deserve."



Master Sgt. Rodney Amotte
(Air Force)

"Get to know those who served and are serving."



Bertha Sanders
(Civilian)

"Remember their beliefs in making this country better and stronger."



Fred Wildi
(American Legion)

"Support them openly. Show them you're there and you care."



Lt. Col. William Robinson
(Army)

"Take a minute to think about those who sacrifice their lives to keep our country free."



Adriana Poole
(PHS student)

"They risk their lives for us and they deserve all their benefits."



Master Sgt. Max Klinger
(Army)

"Support the troops wherever they are – especially in times of conflict."



Sgt. 1st Class Harry Campbell
(Army)

"Wear an American flag lapel pin and put a yellow ribbon around a tree."



Drivers who continue to ignore parking regulations on Stuttgart-area installations should prepare to be "seeing pink" on a more regular basis, as parking violators will be receiving citations.

Illegal parkers face penalties

Story & photo by Melanie Casey

Drivers who choose to violate the 6th Area Support Group's parking policies not only risk citations and points against their drivers' licenses, but they also may get "the boot."

Since taking command July 25, 6th ASG Commander Col. Gwendolyn Bonéy-Harris has heard concerns and received numerous complaints from community members frustrated by the parking challenges on Patch Barracks and other area installations.

"I understand the long-term parking issue in the Stuttgart military community," Bonéy-Harris said. "It is important we take steps to continue improvement of quality of life for all of our service members, civilians and their families. So we're exploring new ways to help ease those daily parking challenges.

"I know enforcement of the policies may be hard to swallow for some residents, but until long-term solutions to the parking situation are executed [the 6th ASG has plans to relocate certain community facilities to Panzer], we must do what we can to mitigate the current problems."

Enforcement begins soon

Illegally parked vehicles will continue to receive warnings until the end of November, said Art Richard, 6th ASG Provost Marshal's Office operations officer.

Beginning Dec. 1, though, the PMO will begin to enforce parking regulations more strictly – and owners of ticketed vehicles will have points assessed (one for each ticket) against their U.S. Army, Europe, drivers' licenses.

Local nationals who violate the parking policy will receive citations and also risk losing the privilege of driving on post, Richard said.

Areas of attention

Richard stressed that PMO personnel will pay particular attention to timed parking spaces on Patch Barracks.

This includes spaces in Washington Square, along Finance Row, and in the Commissary, Post Exchange and PXtra parking lots.

Spaces designated as handicapped parking will also be monitored more closely, said Richard.

"In order for a driver to park in a handicapped space legally, he or she must either be the person for whom the handicapped decal was issued or be accompanied by that person," Richard said. "If not, then the driver is taking that slot away from someone who is [handicapped]."

Drivers who blatantly violate the parking policy, such as creating a space where there is none, or parking on a sidewalk or in a crosswalk, risk having their vehicles' tires "booted" with a vehicle immobilizer, Richard said.

These vehicles could then be towed – at the owner's expense – to either Kelley Barracks or Panzer Kaserne.

No easy solution

"We know that some community members may be inconvenienced by the measures we are putting in place," Bonéy-Harris said, "but this is in the best interest of the entire community and won't be perfect for everyone."

Richard said solutions to the parking situation on Patch include using the duty bus, public transportation or carpooling.

Also, residents who live and work on Patch are asked to walk to work whenever possible.

"We ask everyone for their patience and thank them for their understanding as we set out to improve the quality of life for the entire Stuttgart military community," Bonéy-Harris said.

News & Notes

Area agencies set holiday hours

■ The **Patch Barracks Commissary** will be open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on the following Mondays: Nov. 24, Dec. 22 and Dec. 29.

■ The **Kelley Bowling Center** will be closed Nov. 24; Dec. 24, 25 and 31; and Jan. 1.

Holiday mailing deadlines

Community members are advised to mail Christmas packages from Europe by the following deadlines:

■ Space-available mail (SAM) parcels: Nov. 20

■ Parcel airlift (PAL) parcels: Dec. 4

■ Priority parcels and first-class letters: Dec. 11

■ Express mail: Dec. 18

BOSS to take Thanksgiving trip

Stuttgart's Better Opportunities for Single Servicemembers and Outdoor Recreation are sponsoring a Thanksgiving weekend ski and snowboarding trip to Austria Nov. 27 to 30.

The trip is open to all individuals over the age of 18 and includes transportation, two nights lodging, a two-day pass and equipment.

Instruction is available for an additional fee.

The first 20 people to sign up for this trip will receive a discounted booking price of 230 euro. The regular price is 250 euro per person.

For more information or to register call Desmond Thompson at 430-4512/civ. 0711-680-4512.

Native American Heritage Month

The 6th Area Support Group and 52nd Signal Battalion are co-hosting the following Native American Heritage Month events:

■ Nov. 22, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Native American Pow-wow, Patch High School gymnasium

■ Nov. 24, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.: Lunch celebration (including food samplings, traditional dances and guest speaker), Patch Community Club

For more information call Sgt. 1st Class Carey Williams at 421-2892/civ. 0711-729-2892 or e-mail williamsc@6asg.army.mil.

Health Clinic expands services

Effective Monday, Nov. 17, the Stuttgart Health Clinic will have additional clinical and administrative personnel to enable sufficient appointments to meet the needs of the Stuttgart Military community and return services to standard levels.

Prompt implementation of the staffing increase will ensure the Stuttgart Health Clinic continues to meet its mission of providing timely and high quality primary care to all our active duty service members, civilian employees, family members, and retirees in the Stuttgart community.

Staffing shortages, as previously publicized, were a result of recent deployments and personnel losses. The clinic and its patients will see immediate relief from this shortfall, which resulted in a lapse in available, local, on-post services for some segments of our population.

The community should be aware that plans to augment clinic staff are being swiftly implemented and include the hiring of two general medical officers, a social worker, a registered nurse, two nursing assistants, an optometry technician, two patient liaisons, two administrative support assistants.

Europe Region Medical Command and the Heidelberg MEDDAC are committed to supporting the Stuttgart Community and Health Clinic to ensure the best possible care for all beneficiaries in the Stuttgart Area, and regrets any recent inconveniences caused by the short curtailments.

For details call 430-8615/civ. 0711-680-8615.

Grant applications available

The German American Women's Club is accepting applications for grants to be awarded from the proceeds of the 2003 Pfennig Bazaar. Applications, which must be submitted by Dec. 22, are available at Army Community Service (Patch Barracks, building 2307).

For more information call Colleen Kohler at 430-5138/civ. 0711-680-5138 or e-mail kohlerc@eucom.mil.

Army Post Offices, community mailrooms set holiday hours



Patch APO

Open Mondays to Fridays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.,
and Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon.

Panzer Kaserne and Kelley Barracks APOs

Open Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon (through Dec. 23).

Robinson Barracks APO

Open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 to 4 p.m.

Community mailrooms

Open Saturdays, Nov. 22 and 29, Dec. 6, 13 and 20, 1 to 3 p.m.

Also open Dec. 24, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

2003 CFC-O donations down

Annual campaign helps better lives, eases burdens of those in need

by Melanie Casey

The Combined Federal Campaign needs you. Donations so far this year are not as high as organizers had hoped they would be, said Bob Rainbolt, CFC-Overseas project officer and administrator for the 6th Area Support Group.

As of Nov. 1, the 6th ASG had received \$30,000 in contributions and pledges. Headquarters, European Command, had received \$125,000, Rainbolt said.

Last year, the 6th ASG collected more than \$70,000 and Headquarters, EUCOM, garnered \$400,000.

This year's campaign ends Dec. 10.

Those wishing to donate can do so with a one-time cash or check donation or payroll deduction.

CFC-O contributors can choose from more than a thousand charities, all of which are listed on the Web site (www.cfcoverseas.org) or they can

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.

Aesop

6th Century B.C. Fabulist

donate to the community by marking "FSYP" on their pledge cards.

To donate, see your unit coordinator or call Rainbolt at 421-4395/civ. 0711-729-4395 or Lt. Col. Chris Farley, project officer and administrator for Headquarters, EUCOM, at 430-7333/civ. 0711-680-7333.

For more information visit www.cfcoverseas.org.

A CFC success story

The Denson family always contributed to the Combined Federal Campaign, never thinking about how much a participating charity would support them in a time of need.

That is, until Jan. 11, 2002, when baby Abigail came into the world 12 weeks premature and weighing only 10.7 ounces.

She was the fifth-lightest recorded baby in the world. The doctors at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center had little hope for her survival.

During the three months that baby Abigail was in the neonatal intensive care unit, Army Staff Sgt. Wayne Denson from the 596th Maintenance Company commuted from Darmstadt until a participating CFC agency stepped in and provided accom-

modations close to the hospital for him and his family. "It was like a home away from home. Nothing was too much trouble," said Denson, "it was a huge burden lifted off our shoulders."

Happily, Abigail was able to leave Landstuhl Medical Facility and is making remarkable progress. "People don't understand how much these organizations give until they're in a position where they need it themselves," says Denson.

"You can't help but want to support the CFC when you see it being utilized. I am even more inclined to donate and help other people who are experiencing hardship now that I have experienced it first hand."

-www.cfcoverseas.org

What your donations can do

Here's a look at how monthly contributions to the CFC-O can make a world of difference:

\$50

Buys one veterinary kit to help a village's livestock.

\$31

Purchases medicines to treat 1,000 adults and children for three months.

\$20

Can deliver a waiting child out of an institution and into the arms of a loving family.

\$10

Feeds a child for 30 days

\$8

Supplies a doctor with one surgical kit to assist earthquake victims.

source:
www.cfcoverseas.org

Thanksgiving celebrations in Stuttgart

◆ **Annual Kappa Alpha Psi Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner**, Nov. 23, 2 to 6 p.m. in the Patch Community Club, free.

◆ **Traditional Thanksgiving Feast**, Nov. 26, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Panzer Dining Facility, \$5.25.

◆ **Thanksgiving Day Feast** catered by the Black Stallion Inn, Nov. 27, noon to 4 p.m. in the Swabian Special Events Center with a culinary show and entertainment, \$5.25.



TSP season

The Thrift Savings Plan is in season until Dec. 31.

What is TSP?

TSP is a government-sponsored tax-deferred savings plan for federal employees, including service members.

For details visit www.tsp.gov.

Is your vehicle ready for winter weather?

Preparation key to avoiding cold-weather tragedies

6th Area Support Group Safety Office Release

Winter driving can be inconvenient and annoying, but most of all it can be dangerous. However, being prepared can help minimize the special risks associated with cold-weather driving.

The following tips can help get both you and your vehicle through the snow and safely into spring:

Where the rubber meets the road

- Don't get caught unprepared by the first snowfall: Put snow tires or at least all-season tires on all four wheels. The minimum tread depth should not be less than 1/6 of an inch or 4 mm.

- Chains may be required for some alpine passes – if you are planning a winter trip, check the route to see if they will be necessary.

- Remember: in icy conditions even the best tires are of little help. In the worst winter weather, drive with extreme caution – or not at all.

See and be seen

- Check that all of your vehicle's lights are in good working order and that headlight beams are adjusted correctly.

- Clean the lights regularly. In rain, snow and slush lighting power can be reduced up to 75 percent by the accumulation of dirt and grime.

- Make sure your wiper blades are cleaning properly, with no smearing or stripes on the windshield.

- Clean both the outside and inside of the windshield. The effects of cigarette smoke and dirt particles on the inside can reduce visibility by one third.

- Be sure the windshield washer is adequately filled with freeze-resistance solution.

Emergency kits can be difference between life, death

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration advises drivers to equip their vehicles with safety kits and note the following tips to increase the odds of surviving in case of accidents or breakdowns.

Vehicle safety kit:

- Flashlight
- Jumper cables
- Abrasive material (sand or kitty litter)
- Shovel
- Warning devices
- Snow brush and ice scraper

Passenger safety kit:

- Food
- Water
- First-aid kit
- Medication
- Blankets
- Cellular telephone

Advice when stopped or stalled:

- Stay with your vehicle.
- Don't overexert yourself.
- Display bright warning devices.
- Be sure the exhaust pipe is clear.
- Run the car only long enough to remove the chill.

- Before driving, ensure that all windows and lights are completely clear of snow and ice. (No "porthole driving!")

- Remove all snow from the roof of the vehicle, to prevent motorists following you from being confronted and endangered by a sudden snow flurry from your roof.

Fit to drive

- Perform a fitness assessment on your vehicle to ensure it is up to the challenges of winter driving.

- Get an engine tune up.

- Switch to winter-grade oil (if you aren't already using all-season-oil).

- Check your car's battery, ensuring that it is in good condition, its connections are good and its terminal points are not corroded.

- Use anti-freeze that is not only strong enough to prevent freezing, but fresh enough to prevent rust.

- Be sure all fluids (including oil, brake and hydraulic) are at proper levels.

Fighting the fog

- Fog can affect perception, causing the illusion that vehicles in front of you are farther away than they really are.

- As soon as you see fog, increase the distance between your vehicle and the one you are following.

- Slow down.

- Use low-beam headlights and rear fog lights.

- Turn on your wipers and defroster to remove moisture from the windshield.

- Use the right edge of the road or painted road markings as a reference – never rely on the rear lights of the vehicle in front of you.

- Turn off the car radio and open the driver's window a little to listen for other vehicles.

- If visibility is extremely limited, pull off the road, turn on your hazard flashers and wait until the weather has cleared.

Remember, the key to winter driving is that it is better to arrive late but safe, rather than not at all.

Staying fit helps beat the 'winter blues'

Physical activity during the winter has many benefits

By Mildred Green

During the winter, as the days get shorter and colder, and many people may feel restless and have increased cravings for holiday sweets. Depression may even set in.

Experts agree that the cold winter months are usually when individuals lose interest in staying fit and indulge in those holiday desserts, which can quickly turn into extra pounds.

However, according to recent releases from the Mayo Clinic and Center for Disease Control, there are many reasons for staying fit during winter.

Increase your energy

Exercising during the cold winter months not only helps fight depression, but it also makes people feel better, increases energy and improves sleep, according to the Mayo Clinic release.

The clinic advises people to try to exercise 20 to 30 minutes a day, but emphasizes that this exercise does not have to be strenuous (and can even include cleaning house or even walking in the mall.)

"Whatever you choose," said a Mayo Clinic specialist, "balance the four main types of exercise – endurance, strength, balance and flexibility."

Reduce risks for illness

The Center for Disease Control reports that regular physical fitness can significantly improve the quality of one's life – including reducing susceptibility to illness and lowering one's odds of premature death.

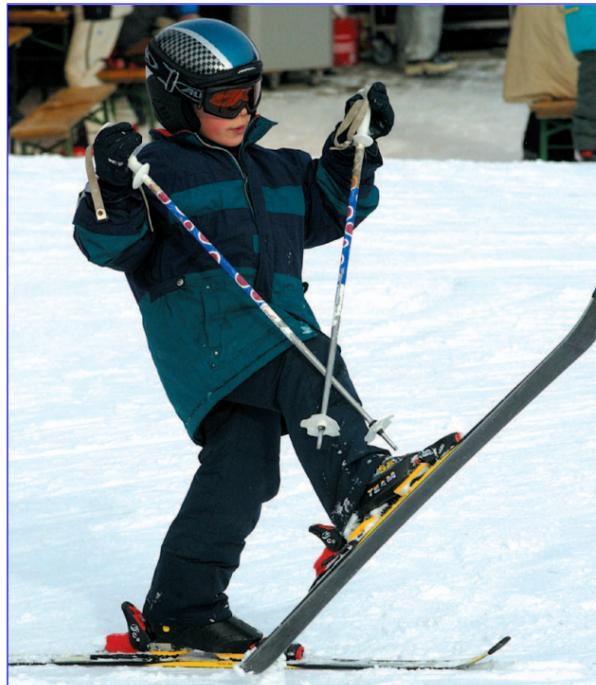
The CDC reports that regular physical activity can provide an individual with a greater chance of avoiding the following illnesses:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Colon cancer.

Exercise also helps people control their weight and helps muscles, bones and joints remain healthy and strong.

"Resist the instinct to overeat and store up for winter, get plenty of natural sunlight and exercise regularly to stay fit and keep your metabolism renewed," said Robin Vitetta-Miller, of shape.com.

Miller added that exercise is "crucial" to preventing unwanted winter weight gains.



Hugh C. McBride

A ski trip can allow the family, including the little ones, to partake in physical activity while having fun in the snow.

Stay fit without leaving post

Whether exercising indoors or outdoors this winter, there are a variety of places to go in the 6th Area Support Group.

In Stuttgart, fitness centers are located on Patch Barracks, Panzer Kaserne, Robinson Barracks and Kelley Barracks. In Garmisch, the Mueller Fitness Center is on Sheridan Kaserne.

In addition to weights and work-out machines, the centers offer several fitness classes and a knowledgeable and helpful staff.

Those who enjoy the outdoors can take advantage of the numerous walking and biking paths in the area. If skiing or snowboarding is more your speed, take advantage of the mountains nearby.

By focusing on the big picture and exercising through the winter, the Mayo Clinic believes people will have the ability to shed more of those extra holiday calories and also be in better shape when spring arrives.

Stuttgart Fitness Schedule

Monday

- 6 a.m., Step Extreme - Patch
- 9 a.m., Jazzercise - Patch
- 5:30 p.m., Kickboxing - Patch
- 6 a.m., Step Circuit - Kelley

Tuesday

- 11:30 a.m., Cardio/Sculpt - Patch
- 5:30 p.m., Yoga - Patch
- 6 p.m., Body Sculpting - Kelley

Wednesday

- 6 a.m., Kickboxing - Patch
- 9 a.m., Jazzercise - Patch
- 5:30 p.m., Kickboxing - Patch
- 6 p.m., Step Circuit - Kelley

Thursday

- 9 a.m., Body Sculpting - Patch
- 11:30 a.m., Kickboxing - Patch
- 5:30 p.m., Yoga - Patch
- 6 p.m., Step Circuit - Kelley

Friday

- 6 a.m., Cardio Sculpt - Patch
- 9 a.m., Jazzercise - Patch

Spinning classes pick up again in January. A belly dancing class will begin Dec. 3, 7 to 9 p.m. and a women's self-defense class is scheduled to begin in January.

To learn how to work with equipment, develop an exercise program, or find a personal trainer, contact Patch Fitness Coordinator, Cory Doubek at 430-5386, 5424/civ.0711-680-5424.

For more about winter activities visit the Armed Forces Recreation Center-Europe Web site at www.afrcurope.com or call 440-2575/civ.08821-72981.

Garmisch Fitness Schedule

Burke Center

Monday

9 a.m., Yoga

Wednesday

5:45 p.m., Yoga

Mueller Fitness Center

Monday

5:30 p.m., Cardio boxing

Tuesday

5:30 p.m., Spin
6:45 p.m., Pilates

Wednesday

Noon Express Fit
12:30 p.m., Spin

Thursday

5:30 p.m., Body sculpting
5:30 p.m., Spin
6:45 p.m., Pilates

Corps changes assignment policy for Okinawa-bound Marines

By Sgt. Jason Anderson
United States Marine Corps

Headquarters Marine Corps has changed the assignment policy for tour lengths for Marines going to III Marine Expeditionary Force or Marine Corps bases in Japan.

The standard will now be a 36-month tour with family members or a 24-month unaccompanied tour.

The phase-in plan will occur over several years, with full implementation expected by 2008. Details of how the policy change will occur are being finalized by Manpower Policy in Quantico, Va.

Officials expect some adjustments will need to be made during the process to ensure the transition is smooth and minimally disruptive to service members and the support infrastructure on Okinawa.

Although the policy change will not increase the number of Marines assigned to III MEF or MCBJ, it will likely increase the number of family members.

"We are committed to developing a common sense phase-in plan that will be sensitive to the welfare of Marines and their families," Hagee said. "We will ensure that the supporting infrastructure such as schools and housing can accommodate an incremental family member increase."

This policy change does not affect assignments under the Unit Deployment Program, which makes up about 30 percent of Marines serving within III MEF.

Marines currently assigned to Okinawa will not be affected. The criteria for who will receive orders under the new policy is still being finalized.

"As this policy change is being phased in, Marines with dependent family members will be given the option of accepting 36-month tours to III MEF or



Gunnery Sgt. Blair A. McClellan

An Okinawa-based Marine trains Bangladesh Army personnel in non-lethal tactics. Changes in Corps policy may require Marines assigned to Okinawa to spend two to three years there.

MCBJ accompanied by their family members," said Maj. Larry Bauer, military assignment policy analyst. "Only those who elect unaccompanied orders will be assigned for a 24-month tour."

Numerous quality-of-life initiatives and better living conditions have occurred on Okinawa over the last 16 years. These include improved housing and a full range of professional, social, travel, education and recreational opportunities. As a result, life for Marines and their families there has improved dramatically.

In addition, the increased Cost-of-Living Allowance provided to members serving tours with family members has significantly eased the financial burdens incurred by living overseas.

Congress creates DoD National Security Personnel System

Legislation reforms Pentagon's decades-old employment policy

House Armed Service Committee
Press Office

Congressional negotiators have concluded work on legislation to create a National Security Personnel System for civilians in the Department of Defense.

The provisions creating the NSPS are contained in H.R. 1588, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004, which was agreed on Nov. 6 by House-Senate conferees. The legislation sets policies, programs and funding levels for the nation's military.

"The legislation is a key step in Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's effort to transform the Pentagon into an agency better able to meet today's diverse national security threats," read a joint statement by Congressman Duncan Hunter (R-CA), head of the Armed Services Committee, and Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA), chairman of the Government Reform Committee.

"The new system will bring the Department into the 21st century and allow [the DoD] to recruit the best and the brightest civilian employees," they added.

The National Security Personnel System established in this bill will provide the secretary of defense agility in hiring, firing and promoting a more responsive workforce.

Specific provisions include the following:

■ **Merit-based system** – The bill establishes a system that includes hiring based on merit, fair treatment without regard to political affiliation, equal pay for equal work, veterans preferences and protection for whistleblowers.

Employees will be involved in developing the new system, which will be prescribed by regulations issued jointly by the secretary of defense and the director of the Office of Personnel Management.

■ **Collaborative processes** – The new system ensures the inclusion of employee representatives in planning, development, and implementation of a new human resources management system.

A separate process to ensure that employee representatives participate in a new labor-management relations system.

■ **Performance management system** – The new system includes a fair, credible and transparent employee performance appraisal system that provides for adequate training and retraining and ongoing performance feedback.

■ **Staffing flexibilities** – The bill gives the secretary of defense addi-

“The legislation is a key step in Donald Rumsfeld's effort to transform the Pentagon into an agency better able to meet today's diverse national security threats.”

Duncan Hunter and
Tom Davis

U.S. Congress

tional flexibility in establishing qualification requirements, recruitment and appointments to positions.

The secretary also has greater influence over assigning, transferring or promoting employees and reducing staff and grade levels.

■ **Increased SES pay caps and pay pool protection** – The bill increases the cap on total annual compensation for Senior Executive Service employees to the level of the vice president's total annual compensation.

■ **Appeals process** – The bill establishes an independent review process that will ensure fair treatment in appeals regarding employment-related decisions.

■ **Early retirement program** – The bill creates a program under which up to 25,000 employees a year will be eligible for voluntary early retirement annuities, separation pay to leave the service voluntarily, or both, for purposes of reducing or restructuring the workforce.

■ **Hiring of experts** – The bill authorizes the secretary to hire up to 2,500 highly qualified personnel with uniquely critical technical, scientific and management skills at appropriate pay for up to five years.

■ **Rehired annuitants** – Similar to existing authority permitting retired military personnel to work for the federal government without any offset to their retirement pay, the bill extends such authority to rehired civil servants who join the DOD civilian workforce.

■ **Alignment** – The bill provides that allowances and benefits to civilian employees working in particularly hazardous or specialized activities overseas are comparable with those of the Foreign Service and the Central Intelligence Agency.

'A noble idealism and a sincere capacity for devotion' Stuttgart salutes America's military veterans

Story & photos
by Hugh C. McBride

Eighty-five years to the moment after the weapons of World War I officially fell silent, members of the Stuttgart military community gathered on Panzer Kaserne Nov. 11 to remember America's military veterans and to show their support for the service members engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom and other elements of the global war on terrorism.

"Today we pause to remember and thank the men and women who know [the price of freedom] only too well," said 6th Area Support Group Commander Col. Gwendolyn Bonéy-Harris, featured speaker at the 11 a.m. event at the Panzer flagpole.

"From the forests of Belleau Wood to the streets of Bosnia, and from the bloody beaches of Normandy to the scorched desert of Afghanistan and Iraq, American service members have paid the price of freedom with a courage and an honor that embodies all that is right about the United States of America," she added.

Virtue in service

Sponsored by American Legion Stuttgart Post 6, the ceremony included remarks by various Legion members and the placing of a wreath by Bonéy-Harris and special guest retired Col. Robert Lewis, a veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Legion Post 6 President Fred Wildi, who served as the event's master of ceremonies, spoke about the effect of military service on "our minds and our hearts as well as our bodies.

"Out of blood and sweat we learned of purpose, sacrifice, tolerance, bravery and discipline," Wildi added. "These are solid foundation stones upon which a great nation was built. In our continuing quest for an honorable world peace we must cultivate these virtues."

Noble idealism

Post 6 Vice Commander Tina Talley echoed the theme of the value inherent in military service.

"If there be glory in war, it is the almost incredible spirit which it engenders," Talley said. "Let us honor those veterans who carry into ordinary affairs of life a noble idealism and sincere capacity for devotion."

Sgt. Maj. Larry Reeb, who stood

[Throughout history] American service members have paid the price of freedom with a courage and an honor that embodies all that is right about the United States.

Col. Gwendolyn Bonéy-Harris
6th ASG Commander

A brief history of Veteran's Day

November 11 is the anniversary of the 1918 armistice that ended World War I after four years of conflict.

In November 1919, President Woodrow Wilson issued his Armistice Day proclamation, the last paragraph of which set the tone for future observances:

"To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory."

In 1938, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill making the day a legal holiday in the District of Columbia.

The name of the holiday was changed to Veterans' Day by act of Congress May 24, 1954.

source: www.patriotism.org
(excerpted from "All About American Holidays" by Mayme R. Krythe)

in formation throughout the ceremony with fellow members of the Panzer-headquartered 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), said events such as this ceremony were especially important in times of war.

"The most important thing Americans can do for their troops is show their support for them," Reeb said.

Also participating in the Nov. 11 ceremony were representatives of Boy Scout Troop 154 and Cub Scout Pack 44.



Sgt. Maj. Larry Reeb of the Panzer Kaserne-based 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), salutes the flag during Stuttgart's Nov. 11 Veteran's Day ceremony.



Members of Boy Scout Troop 154, who stood in formation throughout Stuttgart's Veteran's Day ceremony, salute during the playing of "Taps."

For more about Veteran's Day:

www.va.gov/vetsday

www.vfw.org

www.patriotism.org

'Angel Trees' return to Stuttgart

Around Nov. 21, "Angel Trees" will appear in the following locations:

Help brighten a local child's Christmas

Army Community Service
Patch Barracks PX and Commissary
Kelley Barracks Commissary
Robinson Barracks CX

Remember those in need over the holidays

For more information call Nancy Piper at 430-5312/civ. 0711-680-5312

The *art* of after-school care

YS homework, art programs enrich students' afternoons

Story & photos by Maria Higgins

After a long day at Patch High School, eighth grader Rose Crane heads across post to the Youth Services center.

While scores of other teens blow off steam on the YS's skateboard ramps or at its pool table, Crane hunkers down in one of the relatively quiet study rooms for a few more hours of algebra, geography, or whatever homework is demanding her attention.

Crane, who loves this time of day, is going to see her efforts start to pay off soon – and not just on her report card.

She is earning points toward prizes for participating in a special "Power Hour" homework program and for using the services of Patricia Tyson, a dedicated homework/computer teacher hired by the YS to help teens get on top (or stay on top) of their schoolwork.

Meanwhile, just a thick divider wall away, another group of teens descends upon the colorfully cluttered lair of Wil Seda, who leads the YS's new art program.

An outlet for artists

Kids who hang out with Seda won't score any points. *Pointers*, yes – tips from the talented ex-infantryman on how to tweak their latest clay creation, perhaps, or how to cleverly shadow a drawing that's been days in the making.

The atmosphere on Seda's side is decidedly rowdier, but the accomplishments are no less significant.

Students' finished projects line the walls, competing with Seda's prized pieces for attention.

More than a few students have seen their artistic endeavors grow beyond the pages of heavily doodled notebooks to take shape as actual works of art, thanks to Seda's encouragement.

Jemmie Collins, 6th Area Support Group YS program manager, confirmed the success of both programs, and said she hopes more parents will steer their sixth-through-12th graders Tyson's and Seda's way.

"About 50 or 60 students a day come to the [YS] center for various activities like com-

'I'm hearing [parents] are happy that someone is giving kids a little more learning after school.'

Jemmie Collins
Youth Services

puter lab and open recreation," Collins said.

She estimated that the homework and Power Hour program sees about 10 to 15 "regulars," while Seda can count on seeing a half dozen drop-ins at any given time.

'A little more learning'

Feedback from parents, said Collins, has been excellent. "I'm hearing how they're happy that someone is giving kids a little more learning after school," she said.

Master Sgt. Sheila Williamson is one such fan. Her son, Seth, "ordered me" to tell somebody how wonderful Patricia Tyson is," Williamson said when she relayed praise to Collins.

"He says she goes out of her way to help the students and is very nice and very smart," Williamson said. "It's not often we hear good things about homework, but she's one of those nice things, so thanks!"

Should parents themselves need any help understanding their offspring's assignments, Tyson is available to break it down for them as well.

Crucial to getting kids to come regularly, she said, is establishing a comfortable rapport with each teen – as is being sure to inject as much fun and enjoyment into homework time as possible.

To this end, Tyson offers incentive problems that students can solve each day to earn even more points toward pizza and ice cream sprees, calculators and other rewards.

The trick, she said, is to do so "without really giving them extra work – just things that will add to and reinforce their school curriculum."

Getting kids to spend enrichment time with Seda, Collins acknowledged, doesn't require extra incentives. The fun nature of art, together with Seda's easy-going accep-

tance (not to mention occasional guitar playing) are enough of a draw themselves.

Collins, Seda and Tyson are just waiting for more students and parents to get the picture.

For more information call Jemmie Collins at 430-8214/civ. 0711-680-8214 or e-mail collinsj@6asg.army.mil.



[Top] From a lump of clay to a work of art: One of the 6th ASG Youth Services' after-school programs gives students hands-on training in sculpture, drawing and other forms of artistic expression.

[Bottom] Wil Seda, contract art instructor, discusses the finer points of a project with students at the Patch YS.

Patch High advisory committee needs community input

The Patch American High School Advisory Committee is an elected board of students, parents and faculty who meet monthly to discuss concerns and offer advice to the PHS principal.

The SAC doesn't make school policy; it is an advisory board that represents the views of students, parents and teachers. It also keeps the community's leadership aware of its issues through participation in Installation Advisory Committee meetings.

To be effective and representative, the SAC must know the views of students, parents and teachers. SAC urges everyone to let them know the issues important to you.

Students, parents, and faculty members are invited to attend SAC meetings held the third Wednesday of every month at 3:30 p.m. in the PHS Media Center.

Community members may drop written suggestions in the SAC box in the PHS office or call Steve Beatty at 0711-680-8472.

Parents' Night Out

Drop the kids off at Patch Youth Services
Dec. 5, 6:30 to 11 p.m.
and enjoy some time to yourself.

This special night is open to
all children registered with CYS.

For reservations call any CYS facility
or 430-7480/civ. 0711-680-7480.

6th ASG Unit-Level Flag Football Tournament 2003



For tournament story see page 1.

EUCOM J-2's Jason Benson stretches for a pass during a first-round game Nov. 1.



photos by Hugh C. McBride

[Above] Sandwiched between two SOCEUR defenders, USAFE MSS's A.J. Brooks makes a ballet-like catch in the championship game.



[Left] Brooks slices through the Medical/Dental Clinic defense during the flag football tournament's semifinal round.

[Right] Though running plays occasionally paid off, the key to success during the tournament was a team's ability to pass the football.

