



# Fort **BLISS**

**GARRISON COMMAND NEWSLETTER**

**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2013**



# DAYLEY'S UPDATE

This last two months have seen some unusual challenges and great successes for the Fort Bliss Garrison.

To begin with, Fort Bliss experienced an unusual amount of rainfall for this desert community. It was due to the immediate and excellent responses for several Garrison directorates that allowed us to resolve every challenge from the storms quickly and without incident.

In this issue of our bi-monthly newsletter, you will read about some of the great efforts being made by our Directorate of Mobilization and Deployment to clean up and present Fort Bliss as the first-rate installation it is.

This past month saw the last German celebration of Oktoberfest on Fort Bliss. The German airmen have become a valued part of our community over the last several decades and it is with a heavy heart that we watch them go.

We have some outstanding people across our installation. People that consistently shine in the ways they assist the Soldiers and families of our community. We honor them monthly as our Fort Bliss Champions.

All across Fort Bliss, we are leading the way in providing the best Army home for our Soldiers and their families. From improving the housing for our single Soldiers, ensuring we offer the best education opportunities to our community to leading the Army in its Net Zero Fort Bliss continues to go great things.



Col. Brant V. Dayley  
Fort Bliss Garrison Commander

## Meeting single-Soldier housing needs on Fort Bliss

Barbara Lehman  
Department of Public Works, Housing Division

Single Soldier housing continues to provide support to units requiring additional short-term bed spaces. Buildings 2903, 11144 and 11152 were transferred to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division while B11147 was signed over to Combat Aviation Brigade, 1AD to house re-deploying Soldiers (geographical bachelors.) Soldiers can stay in these facilities for up to 45 days. This allows them time for re-integration into the unit, block leave and time to find permanent economy housing.

The CONUS Replacement Center mission has dramatically increased and Fort Bliss will have its first surge in October. Two buildings have been designated for this mission, but it will take 18 months to complete the required renovations. In the interim, B2901 and B2905 have been transferred to Directorate of Mobilization and Deployment and B2903 will be transferred to them by mid-October.

SSH recently completed two inspections of Warrior Transition Unit facilities. The first was completed under the guidance of the Inspector General. This annual inspection is mandated by the Department of Defense and is meant to ensure all Wounded Warriors are residing in adequate quarters and that facilities are made adequate to accommodate for any special needs.

The second inspection is mandated by IMCOM and ensures that the Department of Public Works has made repairs or set projects in place for government-owned facilities to meet the needs the Wounded Warriors. At Bliss, SSH inspections resulted in 67 discrepancies identified, with over half of them corrected on the spot. Service Orders were submitted for minor repairs and all work was completed in less than thirty days. Bottom line - the housing needs of Wounded Warriors are being met!



Soldiers from the 4/1 AD STB and contracted laborers worked long hours and over the weekend to clean up Fort Bliss' infamous "Snake Pit." (Photos by Sgt. First Class Danny Robinson, DoMaD S-4 NCO.)

# Snake Pit Clean Up

Ashley M. Alameda  
DoMaD Public Affairs

The "snake pit" is an area on East Bliss, near the loading docks of the rail head. It is used for storage by the S-4 section of the Directorate of Mobilization and Deployment and the Unit Movement Branch.

"The snake pit is comprised of three different sections," said clean up detail non-commissioned officer in charge, Sergeant First Class Danny Robinson. "You have the bunkers where they stored the weapons, the connexes for the Unit Movement Branch, and there was this area over here," he said as he motioned to an empty area of desert land. The desert land

had become an unofficial dumping ground for abandoned vehicles, unwanted and inoperable equipment and trash that was left over the past decade.

DoMaD's S-4 non-commissioned officer in charge, Master Sgt. Craig Walker, had a detail of Soldiers tasked to clean the snake pit a few times a week over the past year to try to eradicate the mess. When he took on the assignment, the area had around 25 abandoned vehicles. He unloaded nine of them to the Defense Logistics Agency. "It's a slow process," said Walker.

**"Just north of the Arrival/Departure Airfield Control Group lies a desolation unlike any other on Fort Bliss. A place affectionately referred to as the 'snake pit.'"**

**-CPT David Boone, DoMaD S-4  
Actions Officer**

The bunkers at the snake pit were previously used to store weapons for National Guard and Reserve units that mobilized through Fort Bliss before a deployment. The area came under scrutiny recently after reports of radioactive material buried there over forty years ago.

The situation brought attention to the entire area, sparking inquiries about the accumulating piles in the snake pit. Garrison Command and DoMaD decided the clean up was a high priority mission and gave a three week suspense date to complete.

Capt. David Boone was assigned the daunting task of cleaning up the snake pit, "When this project came down, in my mind I thought 'How am I going to start this? How many phases am I going to break this into?' because it is an enormous project." He is grateful to the entire S-4 section at DoMaD for its willingness to help with planning and execution, "Everyone pitched in. Everyone lent a hand."

Garrison and DoMaD Command's involvement was a key factor to the success of this task. "When all the right players get involved, it's easier to get things done with everyone on post," said Walker.

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Soldiers worked long hours and through the weekend to clean up the various items left at the Snake Pit.

## Snake Pit Clean Up continued .....

He credits S-4 officer in charge, Lt. Col. Terrence Brookins, DoMaD Sgt Maj. Gabriel Jimenez, DoMaD Deputy Director Mr. Doug Vogel and Garrison S-3 Sergeant Major Terry Constantine for making sure the clean-up crew had the tools they needed to get the job done.

DoMaD's S-4 section began clean up on July 17th. Civilian contracted laborers assigned to DoMaD were present to operate the heavy machinery. Fox Company, 2/43 Air Defense Artillery also lent a helping hand by providing six Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks to haul the vehicles in a large convoy to DLA.

Eleven Soldiers from Charlie Company, 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division Special Troops Battalion were part of the detail due to their unit being on Red Cycle. "It was a huge combined effort," said Boone. The 4/1 AD STB Soldiers or "Red Cycle Soldiers," only required to work during the week, volunteered to work through the weekend to complete the mission. S-4 Staff Sgt. Rey Crespo appreciates their efforts, "Thank you to all the units that helped make it happen. The guys volunteered to work the weekend, when they did not have to."

DoMaD's S-3 section came out on the weekend as well, providing pizzas one day and a barbeque for the team the next. Everyone worked twelve hour days and completed the task in seven days without any injuries or heat casualties.

DoMaD and Fort Bliss turned in over 29,200 pounds of scrap metal to DLA for recycling, at 35 cents per pound, saving over \$10,000. The 13 abandoned vehicles were estimated at \$26,000 each. Once sold, the funds go to Fort Bliss general funds. DoMaD's S-4 Section still has 10-12 connexes with remaining equipment that will be reallocated to units and organizations on post.



The Snake Pit before the week long clean up.  
(Photo by Sgt. First Class Danny Robinson,  
DoMaD S-4 NCO.)



## Army Continuing Education System

Team ACES is excited to announce that the University of Maryland University College is now offering hybrid courses at Fort Bliss, Texas. Fort Bliss is the first military installation outside the Maryland/DC area to offer UMUC hybrid classes to service members, their families and veterans. The courses will focus primarily on Cyber Security and Computer Network and Security. These programs were chosen because of their high demand and applicability to prepare students for the world of information technology. Additionally, UMUC will offer general education courses for students interested in satisfying their general education requirements. The UMUC is honored to offer classes at Fort Bliss and looks forward to assisting Service Members, their Families, and Veterans in meeting their education goals.

### Team ACES leads the way in on-post course offerings!

The Fort Bliss Education Center conducted more than 1,000 on-post post-secondary courses in FY12, which was more than any other installation in the United States Army. Congratulations to the Education Center along with the following schools:

- El Paso Community College
- The University of Texas at El Paso
- Park University
- Webster University
- Excelsior College
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- The University of Maryland University College



1.35MW Solar Photovoltaic Array near 1st Armored Division Headquarters.

# Fort Bliss leading the way in Net Zero

Fort Bliss has continually reshaped the plan and approach to Net Zero since selection as a Net Zero Pilot. The efforts and successes to date reflect the difficulties and road blocks encountered in each facet of Net Zero. Fort Bliss is securing the subject matter expertise to forge a team to provide a comprehensive Conservation and Net Zero Implementation Plan that will tie all efforts together in a roadmap that can be used across leadership tenures.

Conservation has been a recurring theme for energy and water. Our efforts under the Energy Savings Performance Contract program have reflected our desire to etch out every possible savings. This program will be pivotal to achieve the Net Zero goals at Fort Bliss. The Energy Initiatives Task Force has been challenged with the regulatory rules for retail electricity in this part of Texas as well as obstacles presented with Waste to Energy and external waste on Army land.

Net Zero Water is also a daunting challenge, but our efforts and assistance from ASA and PNNL have identified many opportunities to reduce and reuse water.

Waste diversion maximization is the name of the game for Net Zero Waste and our recycling activities are pushing in that direction.

The near future is critical for Fort Bliss. The success of the large scale renewable energy projects and finding a funding mechanism for the large scale reclaimed water projects is the lynchpin for the success or failure of the Net Zero Energy and Water goals. Net Zero Waste will hinge on maximizing waste diversion and ultimately contribution to the Waste to Energy process. Additionally, the underlying conservation efforts are the binding ties for the Net Zero goals and overall sustainability.

## Net Zero Goals and Best Practices at Fort Bliss

### ENERGY

- RCI Contractor completed the residential mock billing and moved to live billing in Nov 2012. A third of homes conserved enough energy to qualify for rebates.
- Completed energy audits of 46 buildings totaling over 2 million sq. ft. under the Energy Engineering Analysis Program.
- Approved its fifth ESPC Project bringing the ESPC total to over \$40 million with annual savings of \$4.8 million.
- Nearing completion of the 1.35MW Solar Photovoltaic Array near 1AD HQ. The facility should be online by May 2013.

### WATER

- Approved its first Water project under ESPC Project 5 retrofitting 13000 sinks, 7000 showers and 9000 toilets.
- Completed its PNNL Water Balance report and found that irrigation was responsible for over half of its potable water usage. We are using this info to prepare reclaimed water projects

### WASTE

- Set and achieved a \$1 million in recycling profits that has helped raise the post's waste diversion rate.
- Auditing recycling and waste dumpsters for contaminants at facilities to rank & recognize best & worst recycling units.
- Created "I'm A Hero, How About You?" program to spotlight across the installation civilians and Soldiers who have gone above and beyond in recycling.
- Started a new program called BYOB (Bring Your Own Bag) to reduce number of single-use plastic bags.



# Germans host final Oktoberfest



Members of the Schuhplattler Group, perform Holzchacker Tanz or the Wood Chopper's Dance Sept. 20 during the 2013 Oktoberfest held here. The dance is one of the most famous of the Schuhplattler dances, where six men alternately chop and saw into massive logs. Photo by Virginia Reza, Fort Bliss Public Affairs

Daniela Vestal  
Garrison Public Affairs

Last weekend marked the end of a 41-year-old tradition as the German Air Force celebrated its final Oktoberfest on Fort Bliss.

Tickets for the weekend-long event sold out in less than two hours, a record for the event. Hundreds of patrons were left in line empty-handed, leading many to scour internet exchanges for tickets or attend the free family day Sunday.

For those lucky few with tickets, the excitement was nearly uncontainable as festival-goers began lining up early Friday afternoon to secure the best tables in the tent.

Near the front of the line stood a group of siblings who have been making their way to the Fort Bliss Oktoberfest for 17 years.

One of those siblings, Rene Valdez, drove from Albuquerque, N.M., that very morning in order to join up with four of his five brothers and sisters to attend.

"I came down for the atmosphere – the beer, the food and fun with friends," he explained, adding that 2013 marked his second Oktoberfest. His sister Susan Douglas, her-

self a longtime Oktoberfest attendee, introduced him to the event, Valdez said.

"The first time I came was 17 years ago," Douglas said. "I have been coming ever since. I may have missed one or two, but I have been to at least 15."

Douglas said she frequently attends events at the Soldatenstube – the German club on post – and has a deep admiration for the German Soldiers and the many ways they give back to the German community.

"They are just so much fun and so kind," Douglas said. "We come to drink beer, but also to be around the people. It's important to me that they are always reaching out and helping the people of Juarez. It's always made me want to be around them."

Another sister, Cynthia Aguilar, said excitement for the festival has been building within the family. Her siblings have even been practicing Bavarian schuhplattler dancing, she said.

"They (Valdez and Douglas) watched European Vacation with Chevy Chase to learn the dance," she laughed.

As the family crowded around, comfortably finishing each other's sentences and answering questions a

group, they talked about time they spent in Germany as children, while their father was stationed there.

"I like watching the traditional costumes," Aguilar said. "It keeps that time (when we were children in Germany) alive."

"I still remember how to count to ten in German," Valdez broke in, before happily proving it with the rest of the members of his family.

The tight-knit family was jovial and effusive, sharing their happiness – and shots of flavored liquor – with those in line around them. Their energy and high spirits were not unusual; everyone present had smiles on their faces and seemed content to wait their turn for entrance to the festival.

The convivial atmosphere came as no surprise to Helmut Dobler, director of the German Air Force Schuhplattler dance group. He and his group perform at Oktoberfests throughout the area, from Fort Huachuca, Ariz., to Fort Sill, Okla. He said he believes the festival at Fort Bliss is most authentic to the spirit of the original Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany.

"There's a special dynamic between the crowd and the (dancers)," Dobler. "Everything is contained in one tent so that there is a point where the spirit gets to a high level and it stays that way. That is what is unique about the Oktoberfest here."

The festival spirit was high, indeed. In a crowded tent with a long line for food, people were happily chatting in line, filling their steins with beer and greeting new and old faces in the crowd.

Many of the party-goers spent time in Germany, whether as service members or dependents, and enjoyed experiencing the German culture stateside. Many others are from the El Paso community, and had no other experience with the German people or culture.

Juan Gonzalez attended his first Oktoberfest in 2012, in order to learn



about the German culture firsthand. The Fort Bliss Oktoberfest is different from many other festivals, which can sometimes be about cheap beer and booths selling cheap souvenirs.

"This is about the craft – the process," Gonzalez said. "I drink their beer and I share in the history of the German people."

German Lt. Col. Stephan Lawrenz has been the chief organizer of the Oktoberfest for the last four years. He and his team began planning for the event in November.

When he took on the position in 2008, he thought it would be "a nice party." He was soon surprised by the impact the Oktoberfest had on Fort Bliss, which was evident in the number of people who wanted to buy tickets, and how important it was to them to be able to participate.

"People just love this part of the German culture," Lawrenz said. "The Bavarian stuff, the Oktoberfest, the celebration – people just love it."

Every year, planning and executing the Oktoberfest brought new challenges and plenty of hard work for the hundreds of Soldiers volunteering.

Each Oktoberfest, Lawrenz and his team were faced with new challenges. The responsibility is huge and the work is daunting; Lawrenz remembered one year where the beer did not arrive from Germany until 10:30 p.m. the night before the event.

"I will never forget that," Lawrenz said. "The day before the Oktoberfest ... until 10:30 at night, I was still without beer. Imagine if there was no beer! There would be no Oktoberfest."

The dedication of the German Soldiers organizing the event was due in large part to the bond the team members developed while working together on the festival, Lawrenz said.

"Most of the team has been together with me for four years," Lawrenz said proudly. "Nobody complains about the hours or the work. For example, in the last two weeks we had heavy rain and we couldn't do anything. We lost two days and we had to catch up overtime (starting at 5:30 a.m.), and nobody was complaining."

The feeling is echoed by team members, as well. German Master Sgt. Carsten Wald has volunteered for the last three years. He initially joined because he wanted to do his part, but kept coming back to be a part of the team that executed such an important community event. "It's fun getting to know the guys here," Wald said. "It's a good feeling when I come on Saturday with my wife and see all the people having fun."

That sense of pride seemed to carry through to every German community member who volunteered for the event.

"We have a lot of Soldiers from Bavaria, and they want to get it right," said German Lt. Col. Nils Wetzel, deputy commander of the German Air Force Air Defense Center. "We put a lot of love in the details."

Regardless of the hard work and long hours that went into making the Oktoberfest a success, the volunteers

will miss putting on the event.

"I will miss it," Lawrenz said. "It's a lot of work, a lot of trouble. At the end of the day, you have to be a bit mad and love to do it."

The German Air Force has been a part of the Fort Bliss community since 1956. In 2011, the German government began a restructuring of its armed forces and the German Air Force Air Defense Center was slated to return to Germany.

Acceptance of the move has been a hard pill for many to swallow, both for the German Soldiers who have spent much of their careers and lives at Fort Bliss and consider this to be their second home, and for the El Pasoans who have grown to love the German community here.

"We love El Paso," said Dobler. "The weather is beautiful and everybody is friendly when we go out. They treat me like a relative – it is like coming home."

The German Soldiers have already begun phasing out, and there are fewer available to keep up with a military mission that has not diminished with their numbers. Although everyone wants to keep the Oktoberfest going, the reality is that there are not enough German Soldiers left to do so.

"This is the last Oktoberfest," said Lawrenz. "We can't do it anymore."





# CG gets a glimpse of improvements to McGregor Range

Claudia R. Kennedy,  
DoMaD Public Affairs

Fort Bliss Commanding General and 1st Armored Division commander, Maj. Gen. Sean B. MacFarland, visited McGregor Range Sep. 11 to see how the 2216th Mobilization Support Battalion with the Directorate of Mobilization and Deployment have been working to improve the quality of life for Soldiers in the isolated base camp.

With the support of Garrison commander Col. Brant V. Dayley, the Department of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security and the Fort Bliss Morale, Welfare and Recreation, some of the major improvements include the opening of a new dining facility, expansion of the gym, revamping the old movie theater and expanding the MWR complex.

Leadership of the 2216th MSBn and DoMaD gave MacFarland an overview of their roles and responsibilities at the operational range training complex.

MacFarland took a tour of the 2216th's footprint. He started his tour by visiting the barracks, the new maintenance bay, and the gym.

"As far as physical fitness goes, we've doubled the size of the gymnasium," said Lt. Col. Craig W. Cox, 2216th MSBn commander. "With no cost, we acquired more equipment and expanded the gym into a clamshell tent next door."

The additional gym equipment was acquired from DoMaD Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander, Maj. Daniel Gray. About two years ago, a Navy unit here donated the equipment to the basement of the billets in building 1013. With Milam Gym being close by, Soldiers would go there instead. So the equipment will get more use at McGregor.

"We're not done," said Cox. "We've got a bid in to put in an athletic field by the dining facility. There was a company out here the other day playing flag football on the rocks. The field will give them a chance to do unit PT and any other sport." Cox says they are currently in the works of getting a volleyball and basketball court installed as well.

The MWR complex has some new additions. They brought in six high quality mountain bikes that can be checked out. The 2216th is working closely with MWR to double their space. The ping pong and billiards will be in a separate room so more seating can be put in for the different sporting events shown in the Tumbleweed Tavern.

The theater has been refurbished with surround sound and a DVD player. The first movie is scheduled to play this week. Movies



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Thomas Twombly, right, ammunition supervisor with 2216th Mobilization Support Battalion, explains daily operations of the ammunition supply point to Maj. Gen. Sean B. MacFarland, left, Fort Bliss commanding general and 1st Armored Division commander, at the DoMaD ammunition warehouse at McGregor Range Sep. 11.

will be played every Thursday and Friday night, and they plan to show the Superbowl and have other special events there. The space is also used to hold briefings.

MacFarland ate lunch at the new dining facility, which can now hold 522 people compared to the old DFAC that only held 300. Staff at the dining facility presented a cake to MacFarland welcoming him to the facility and another dedicated to 9/11.

After lunch, MacFarland visited the ammunition warehouse. DoMaD provides all the ammunition for all mobilizing National Guard and Reserve Soldiers. In addition, when the ammo support point goes down, the ammunition holding area also supports active duty units who are firing.

MacFarland's last stop was at Westbrook Base Camp, which is currently closed. "We're very economical," said Col. John F. Dorney, DoMaD director. "If there's no reason to bring it (Westbrook) up, we don't, and it saves a lot of money. By closing the Westbrook dining facility, we save 10,000 dollars a day."

Dorney explained that when Westbrook is back up, they will bus Soldiers to the new dining facility. DoMaD also manages the shuttle service at McGregor. They have a bus motor pool that moves service members around the ranges. "By creating the bus motor pool in McGregor, 1.2 million dollars is saved a year on fuel, hours and maintenance," said Dorney. "It all comes down to cost saving."

Because of all the budget constraints, DoMaD has been finding new ways to perform their mission at a lower cost. "When we started this mission in 2009, our budget was at about 90 million," said Dorney. "Now, we can do the same mission at about 40 million while supporting 1st AD on flight operations, quarterly medical readiness in the Soldier Resilience and Readiness Center, and the down range base camps and Mayor Cells."

MacFarland seemed impressed by DoMaD's efforts. "That's fantastic," said MacFarland. "All those efficiencies are great." Cox said the improvements were a combined effort from different entities. "We have a lot of support from Garrison," said Cox. "Col. Daley has given us the green light to come up with ideas and make it happen, and MWR is fully behind the effort."

# Fort Bliss Champions

Pictured clockwise from top: Jorge Zalce;  
DPW Business Operations & Integration Di-  
vision; Karen Kusko; Raul Rodriguez; Juan  
Cardiel; Munyaquita Brown

