

Parking on Patch challenging for next couple of months

By USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Construction, a training exercise and bazaar events will require the blocking of hundreds of parking spots during the next couple of months on Patch Barracks.

The construction of the Stuttgart Elementary parking lot to the left of the Stuttgart Health Clinic has caused the blocking of the parking area (shown in photo) for the next two years. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new school will occur on March 1.

Swing space for temporary working areas for EUCOM will close off parking areas near the Patch Library.

The EUCOM Austere Challenge exercise will require the blocking of a number of parking spots on Washington Square as well as around the Rogers Building Bld. 2307. Parking spots at the Swabian Event Center will be blocked in support of Austere Challenge.

From March 13 until 24, a number of parking spots around the Patch Gym, Husky Field and Bankers Row will be blocked in support of the Spring Bazaar, which will be held on Husky Field, March 22-24.

Along with the parking spots blocking, traffic patterns on Patch streets could be altered to accommodate the construction, exercise and bazaar, so caution should be taken while maneuvering around and finding parking spots on Patch Barracks.

Ban puts restrictions on diesel vehicles in Stuttgart

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

As part of the Clean Air Act, the City of Stuttgart implemented a traffic ban for all diesel vehicles with a Euro emission standard 4 / IV and lower beginning Jan. 1. The City of Stuttgart will assess the current measurement and may extend the traffic ban to include Euro emission standard 5 / V diesel vehicles beginning in 2020.

Stuttgart military community members residing within the Stuttgart City limits will have a transitional period until March 31 before the ban takes effect on April 1.

More than 600 diesel vehicles are registered in the USAG-Stuttgart footprint. Unfortunately, there is not an easily identifiable way to determine the Euro emission standard for a U.S. specification diesel vehicle. For many Euro-spec vehicles registered through U.S. Army Europe, owners can locate the respective Euro standard on a data plate inside the passenger, or driver, doorframe.

If determining the Euro emission

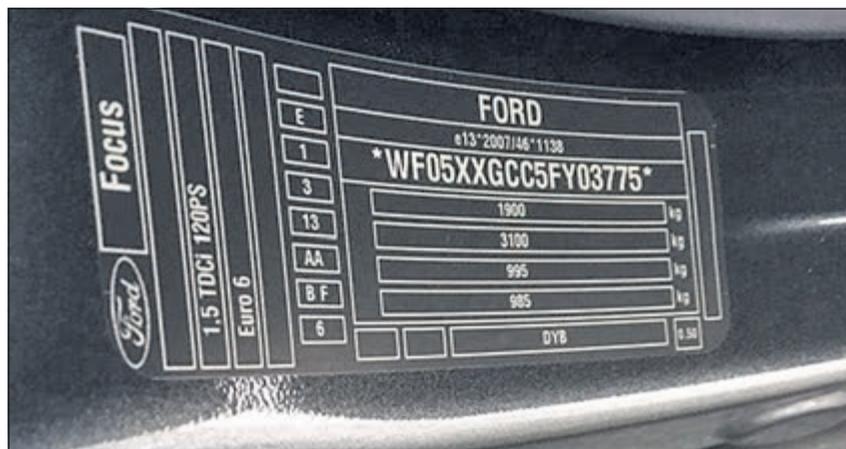


Photo by Theodore Shulze, USFLO

standard is not feasible through the above-listed method, vehicle owners are encouraged to contact their local dealer or vehicle manufacturer to provide the information (year, make, model, and Vehicle Identification Number).

"We are working on ways to help diesel vehicle owners to determine the emission level of their American made diesel vehicles," said Col. Neal A. Corson, USAG Stuttgart commander.

There are exemptions that apply to specific driving conditions. Exemptions include: Commercial deliveries, public transportation and official government vehicles, such as transportation motor pool and military vehicles.

One of the confusing aspects of the imposed diesel ban is many Americans believe it pertains to the green circular environmental sticker they have on

their windshields.

This environmental sticker defines fine particle emissions (Feinstaub) regardless of fuel type and is recognized across Germany.

Although the general information about the diesel ban is located on the city's website at www.stuttgart.de/en/diesel-ban in English, the application process for an exemption is only in German. The Ministry for Transportation Baden-Württemberg and the District Government Stuttgart have strict and clear guidelines to implement the diesel ban - all part of Stuttgart's and the EUs Clean Air Act - so there is not much room for exemptions, other than what's stated on the official website and/or individual circumstances, such as shift work, i.e., if an employee has no way of getting to work via public transportation, there might be an exemption, but only during the respective shift (i.e., night shift).

"We are looking at various assets such as the Army Community Service, who have translators who can assist in the process," Corson said.

USAREUR Vehicle Registration announces change

Registrar of Motor Vehicles
U.S. Army Europe

The U.S. Army Europe Registrar of Motor Vehicles recently announced changes to the vehicle registration process in Germany.

Effective Jan. 11, there is no longer a requirement to annually register vehicles more than 10 years old. Now

all vehicles can be registered for two years.

"We updated the regulation (U.S. Army Europe Regulation 190-1, Driver and Vehicle Requirements and the Installation Traffic Code for the U.S. Forces in Germany) to become more compliant with the German traffic laws," said Shawn Driscoll, deputy registrar. "This affects all

members of the U.S. military, civilians and family members assigned to Germany."

In accordance with German Law, the update removed specific registration limitations for privately owned vehicles that were more than ten years old. While the previous edition limited those vehicles to a one-year registration, the update changes the

registration limit to two years. All vehicles may now be registered for either one or two years at a time.

Please direct any questions concerning this update to your local Field Registration

Station or the USAREUR RMV customer service office at usarmy.sebach.usareur.list.rmv/cust/svc@mail.mil.

Army seeks housing feedback to shape future

By U.S. Army Assistant Chief of Staff
for Installation Management

WASHINGTON - Residents of family housing owned and leased by the Army can again rate the quality of their housing and housing services.

Administered by CEL & Associates Inc., the survey was emailed to approximately 10,000 residents living in Army-owned and Army-leased housing worldwide on Jan. 15, from ArmyHousingSurvey@celassociates.com.

The survey's purpose is to receive firsthand accounts of what Soldiers and families find important when living in Army-owned on-post and leased family housing.

The housing survey is used to identify areas in housing operations that are successful or need improvement, where funding could have the most effect and are identified as top priorities to residents, and ascertain areas of success for the garrison housing office, according to Lt. Gen. Gwen Bingham, Army Assistant



Photo by USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Chief of Staff for Installation Management.

"Your feedback about your experiences while residing in Army-owned or leased housing is critical to shaping the future housing and services provided by the Army," Bingham said.

CEL & Associates emailed an initial housing survey in 2018 to 9,957 residents living in Army family housing,

with 2,025 residents responding (a rate of 20.3 percent). Army housing officials want to increase participation in the 2019 survey.

A higher response rate will give Army officials a more accurate depiction of Soldiers' and their Families' satisfaction with Army family housing and the services offered by garrison housing offices, housing officials said.

"All surveys are confidential. Your frank feedback about your experiences in Army family housing may help to shape future housing programs and services and help guide future decisions that could impact generations of Soldiers and families," said Lt. Gen. Bradley A. Becker, Installation Management Command commander.

The Army wants maximum outreach and participation to measure residents' satisfaction with housing accommodations, as well as the services they received from the Army Housing Office.

Residents of the Stuttgart military community who haven't yet received an email with the survey link, which should've arrived by Jan. 18, should contact call the Stuttgart Housing Office weekdays, 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. (11 a.m. Thursdays) at 431-2285/2420 or 07031-15-2285.

The survey is open through Feb. 14. Residents of privatized Residential Communities Initiative housing will be surveyed in March.

Army CAC Certificate Reduction, Realignment Plan

Provided by Office of the Army
Chief Information Officer/G-6

The Common Access Card (CAC) Certificate Reduction and Realignment Plan modifies the certificates on the CAC to streamline authentication functions under one certificate.

The plan entails modifying the certificates currently stored on the CAC as follows:

- Remove the ID certificate
- Realign the email-signing certificate to perform signature functions only
- Activate the Personal Identity Verification (PIV) authentication certificate to perform all authentication functions

What are the current and past efforts of the Army?

The Army has chosen to lead the way and implement the transition

ahead of the DOD mandate. This proactive approach will ensure mission readiness by preparing Army personnel and IT resources (e.g., networks, systems, applications, etc.). Approximately two-thirds of all Army CAC holders will meet the following conditions and will be required to activate their PIV authentication certificate.

- CAC was issued prior to February 24, 2018.
- CAC has an expiration date of after the Army transition deadline of March 31, 2019.

The DMDC RAPIDS Self-Service ID Card Office Online provides instructions to activate the PIV authentication certificate no later than March 31, 2019.

Important note: Replacement of CACs will occur through the normal life cycle purpose. Users are not required to obtain a new CAC for the

sole purpose of having an activated PIV authentication certificate.

What are the continued efforts planned by the Army?

The Army will continue to provide additional information on the DOD CAC Certificate Reduction and Realignment Plan, transition timelines and actions Army users and system owners must take to successfully realign and reduce CAC certificates across the Army.

Why is this important to the Army?

The Army CAC Certificate Reduction and Realignment Plan streamlines authentication functions under the PIV authentication certificate and

improves operational effectiveness and the Army's cybersecurity posture.

The plan will expand, deepen and operationalize interoperability across the DOD and other U.S. Federal government agencies to seamlessly integrate system access and information sharing. Immediate, on-demand access to information ensures the force is ready to fight tonight and maintains an operational advantage against near-peer adversaries.



The Citizen

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Army Emergency Relief wants no Soldier left behind financially

By Susan A. Merkner

Installation Management Command

The Army Creed of leaving no Soldier behind on the battlefield also applies to helping others in the Army Family with their finances when needed, according to Army Emergency Relief.

AER, the Army's own nonprofit organization that provides financial assistance to active and retired Soldiers and their Families, is reaching out to all Army personnel with dual messages: the organization is available to help during a financial challenge, and donations are appreciated when times are good.

Retired Army Lt. Gen. Raymond V. Mason, director of Army Emergency Relief, said financial stability boosts Soldiers' resiliency.

"If a Soldier is distracted by money issues, then he or she is not fully focused on their MOS training, their unit mission, and if they are deployed into combat that distraction could be a danger to themselves and their buddies on their left and the right," Mason said. "We want Soldiers to be laser focused in combat, execute their mission and come home safely to their loved ones. So AER is really all about combat readiness."

Mason and retired Army Command Sgt. Maj. Charles E. Durr Jr., AER chief of assistance, visited Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Jan. 23 to meet with Lt. Gen. Bradley A. Becker, commanding general of Installation Management Command, and Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McGuire, IMCOM deputy commanding general and an AER board member.

AER helps Soldiers and Families get back on their feet through interest-free loans, grants and scholarships when monetary needs arise, and also provides budgeting and financial counseling.

In 2017, AER provided \$69.7 million in total assistance to 43,734 Soldiers and Families.



Photo by Susan A. Merkner, IMCOM Public Affairs

Retired Army Lt. Gen. Raymond V. Mason, director of Army Emergency Relief (left), and retired Army Command Sgt. Maj. Charles E. Durr Jr., AER chief of assistance, review AER educational materials at IMCOM headquarters Jan. 23.

Durr said AER's Quick Assist Program empowers company commanders and first sergeants to respond quickly to Soldiers' short-term financial needs by allowing them to approve certain types of short-term assistance within specific guidelines.

"Soldiers are encouraged to contact their company commander or first sergeant first when a need arises," Durr said. "Their command team can respond quickly, addressing the need at the local level."

Other options for seeking assistance are Army Community Service offices at local installations, other military aid societies, or the American Red Cross if the Soldier lives 50 miles or more away from a military installation.

AER leaders say the most frequent needs are money for car repairs, housing deposits and monthly rent, homeowners or renters insurance, minor home repairs and many more. Another common situation involves the death of a family member, which may necessitate extra funds for travel, rental car, hotel and food.

Durr said that when Soldiers die while on active duty or a retired Soldier

passes away their survivors may need a "bridging strategy" to help them financially until they can apply for and receive benefits.

"Often a Soldier's death leaves the Family without financial resources until the benefits are received," Durr said. AER provides assistance to surviving spouses and children to help bridge this gap.

Mason said nearly constant deployments in the past two decades and the economic downturn of 2008-09 also generated requests for assistance, as did the 35-day government shutdown which ended Jan. 25.

The organization made several changes to its program guidelines for this year:

- Expanded assistance on dental care for dependents.
- Added grants for cranial helmets and children's car seats.
- Raised the cap on funerals for dependent spouses.
- Added new grant assistance for passports and special medical needs equipment.

Educational scholarships for spouses and dependent children based on need also are available through AER. The organization awarded more than \$8 million in scholarships in 2017.

Its goal is to inform 100 percent of Soldiers about AER programs and benefits, and offer Soldiers the opportunity to join the legacy of "Soldiers Helping Soldiers." Mason stated, "It's not the dollar amount a Soldier donates, it's more about the Soldier's awareness of AER and helping their teammates."

Mason said less than 10 percent of the Army contributes to AER for various reasons. "Our Army has been very busy over the past 18 years of combat. Additionally, prior to 9/11 most leaders would spend two to three years at one installation. With the demands of OIF/OEF, leaders have not spent that amount of time; they arrive at a post, train-up for their combat mission,

deploy, come home, re-integrate and PCS to another post. The current generation of Soldiers grew up with multiple deployments, frequently serving on the battlefield with units that were not part of their home station chain of command. All this churn had the unintended consequence of 'breaking' the bonds and knowledge of Soldier/Family programs like AER."

To help increase donations, AER launched a fundraising partnership with Army and Air Force Exchange Service and engages with corporate military affinity groups and American civilian citizens. The organization also encourages Army leaders to communicate with their troops about financial resiliency.

The Army's Financial Readiness Program provides educational and counseling programs in personal financial readiness. Topics covered include debt management, money management, financial planning, insurance and information on Department of Defense programs.

Mason said financial training is needed because most of today's Soldiers are married and many have children, which requires a family budget and wise financial decisions. "On the financial skills side, we can help give them the tools they need to navigate individual and family money challenges."

The Department of Defense is preparing guidance to the services to execute financial training at key touchpoints in a Soldier's career, Mason said, including life events such as relocating for a permanent change of station, getting married, having children and receiving a promotion.

AER's motto is "Soldiers Helping Soldiers."

"AER is there for you," Mason said. "So when you're in good shape financially, I encourage you to donate ... you're directly helping your battle buddies."

Black History Month

There are a few events coming up in recognition of February's African-American History Month, also known as Black History Month.

A Black History Month program in the Kelley Theater, 12-1 p.m., Feb. 7, is the next Equal Opportunity observance. Specifics were not available at press time. However, the singers and dancer are confirmed.

Patch Elementary School will hold a school assembly is at 8:40 a.m. and host an evening Black History Gala at 5:30 p.m., Feb. 28. During the day, PES will have its annual Black History performance

for the school and another performance in the evening for the parents and Stuttgart military community members. This year's theme is "From African to African American." Students will learn about Africans coming to America and about some of the culture and traditions that they brought with them; many of these traditions are still part of the African American culture.

During the Evening Gala, PES will incorporate the theme of diversity of several cultures. The PTA will also have a presentation about diversity for the parents and students.



Photo by John Reese, USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs.

Air Force Ch. (Capt.) Brandon J. Stewart, 86th Airlift Wing, Ramstein Air Base, quotes Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during a fiery speech at the Swabian Special Events Center, Patch Barracks, Jan. 22. "We're waiting for everyone else to make this world great ... start looking at yourself, and ask yourself, what is it that you can do to heal our society back together?" Stewart asked. The U.S. Africa Command also held an MLK observance, Jan. 25.



Photo by John Reese, USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Garrison EEO manager Carolyn Becks discusses equal employment opportunities with Frank Rosario, garrison EEO counselor, at the Emergency Operations Center in the headquarters building during an exercise, Dec. 18., 2018

EEO and EO explained

By Carolyn Becks, Manager
USAG Stuttgart EEO

The USAG Stuttgart footprint is a diverse community. Discrimination in the Army can be detrimental to mission accomplishment because it destroys morale and productivity. With the challenges we face throughout the world, Soldiers and civilians of all races, color, sex, religion, national origin, age (40 or older), disability, reprisal or genetic information, must work together to serve our country in support of the Army's mission.

What's the difference between EEO and EO?

It is important to understand that civilian Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and military Equal Opportunity (EO) are separate programs that deal with harassment and unlawful discrimination, and they function independently of each other. EEO is for civilian matters, and EO is for military matters. The EEO program provides services to current civilian employees, former

employees, and applicants for employment in accordance with Army Regulation 690-600. EEO is the Law IAW 29 Code of Federal Regulations part 1614. The EO program provides services to military personnel and their families in accordance with AR 600-20.

In short, EEO and EO are independent programs governed by different regulations.

EEO is a principle that asserts that all employees should be given the opportunity to work and advance based on merit and ability without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age (40 or older), disability, reprisal (prior EEO activity), or genetic information.

The mission of the USAG Stuttgart EEO Office is to administratively process complaints of discrimination against the Army, develop and execute Management Directive 715 strategic initiatives that enhance our ability to achieve a model EEO program, and work with general officers and senior civilian leaders throughout the commands to ensure an environment free of unlawful

discrimination. Additionally, we are committed to incorporating the principles of merit, fair treatment and equality of opportunity into the garrison footprints daily business practices.

What is the EEO complaint process?

The EEO complaint process is designed to address issues of discrimination based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, reprisal (protected EEO activity), or genetic information, to include adverse employment actions.

To initiate an EEO complaint, individuals must contact the EEO Office within 45 calendar days of the date that they were discriminated against or 45 calendar days from the date that they became aware of the alleged discrimination.



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The ABCs of EEO and EO

For questions regarding EO, please contact Sgt. 1st Class Pierre Boynton, garrison EO adviser, at 431-3756, or Master Sgt. Deonda Clarke, EO Adviser, US Africa Command, at 421-5042.

For questions regarding EEO, please contact Carolyn Becks, EEO Manager, at 431-3355 or 07031 153355, or email usarmy.stuttgart.id-europe.mbx.eeo@mail.mil.

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SLC's Tax Center now open for business

Story and photos by John Reese
USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

The Stuttgart Tax Center opened on Jan. 28 and is now available to prepare 2018 tax returns for eligible active duty service members and dependents, DoD/DA civilians and dependents, military retirees and dependents, and contractors with legal services privileges with total gross incomes of under \$54,000.

Capt. Robert Duffie, the Army attorney who leads this year's team of IRS trained and certified tax preparers, reminds potential clients that with few exceptions, there are no appointments. Clients are received on a walk-in, sign-in basis. The center uses a mixture of volunteer military and civilian certified tax preparers.

"We have excellent volunteers this year. They're all professionals and they've all given up a lot to support our mission of trying to help the service members, civilians and retirees of the USAG Stuttgart military community," Duffie said. "This year we're really focused on the junior enlisted members who will benefit from this service the most."

Some of the delay in getting taxes done is awaiting additional tax documents, such as college expenses,



Capt. Robert Duffie, attorney and officer in charge of the Tax Center, introduces his team to Col. Neal Corson, commander, USAG Stuttgart, Jan. 28.

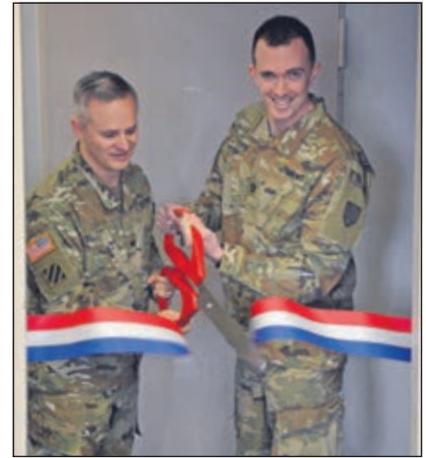
student loan statements, additional 1099s, etc. Duffie explained the distinction of the traditional April 15th tax filing deadline and the overseas extension: April 15 is the day any due taxes must be paid to avoid interest and penalties, whereas June 15 is simply the late filing deadline.

"As soon as you know you have all of your tax documents, come to us and, if there's something missing, we should be able to identify that for you," Duffie said. "But until you have everything, we won't be able to actually prepare the return. Once you have everything, come on by as soon as you can, because you really don't want to put it off. June 15 is the extension to file, not to pay, so if you anticipate owing money, the IRS can assess interest and penalties against what you owe. Those can be kind of

costly, depending on the amount."

Find the entrance to the Tax Center where? On Kelley Barracks, Building 3312, the same building as the Law Center. At the top of a stairway encased in scaffolding and plastic sheeting. Just follow the arrows to the Tax Center sign-in and waiting area.

The Stuttgart Law Center, Bldg. 3312, Kelley Barracks, is still in the throes of a lengthly construction project that includes the addition of an elevator. The front entrance is still closed off; the back door can be found by climbing a metal stairway enclosed in plastic sheeting that keeps the construction dust and the elements to a minimum. Once inside, take a left away from the interior construction and follow the many arrows indicating where to go to sign in for tax preparation-if



Garrison commander Col. Neal Corson, left, and Stuttgart Tax Center leader Capt. Robert Duffie cut the ceremonial ribbon, officially opening the center for business, Jan. 28.

you've ever signed in for legal services at the SLC, it's that waiting room. The tax center itself is in the opposite direction, to the right after entering.

Taxing Questions?

Contact the Stuttgart Tax Center at 421-421-1420 or 0711-729-1420, or email usarmy.stuttgart.21-tsc.mbx.tax@mail.mil.



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NEWS BRIEFS



FPCA now available

On Jan. 16, garrison voting assistance officers began distributing both electronic and paper voter registration/ballot requests, better known as the Federal Post Card Application. Submitting an FPCA to your state local election official will register eligible voters to vote, update their mailing address, and request an absentee ballot for all state and federal elections to include primary elections. US citizens overseas must register to vote via absentee ballot annually. Every service member and eligible family member should register and exercise their right to vote. Electronic versions of the application can be found online at fvap.gov.

Cold road warriors

IMCOM Europe road conditions, school closures, delays and weather warnings should be updated by the Installation Operations Center by 5:30 a.m. each morning. The webpage is linked under Road Conditions on the USAG Stuttgart mobile app and under Roads & Schools on the garrison website. The garrison does not track or report on off-post roads. Listen to AFN Radio in the morning, or check the state of Baden-Württemberg road advisories page at: SVZ-BW.DE, select: "Straßen-wetter" on the map key for local road conditions

where you live. With the current weather conditions going from sunny to snowy, it might be a good time register for AtHoc. To sign up from your CAC-enabled computer, visit www.stuttgartcitizen.com and search AtHoc.

New garrison website

IMCOM is streamlining websites across the Army to have a unified look and help personnel find information easier. USAG Stuttgart's website recently transitioned to the new website. The new site is now live and the mobile app is updated, however, as old links online are identified, the garrison is working to update them. Bookmark the new website link: home.army.mil/Stuttgart.

CYS recruiting fair

A Child and Youth Services recruitment fair for CYS program assistant positions takes place Feb. 12, 3-6 p.m., at Army Community Services, Bldg. 2915, Panzer Kaserne. Call 593-7023 or 09641 70 593 7023.

USO movie night and Valentine's cookies

Sign up to see "Beauty and the Beast," 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., Feb. 12, through Eventbrite link found on USO Facebook page or website. Popcorn and drinks will be provided, and some lucky viewers will go home with a copy of the DVD. Guests should bring pillows, blankets, and any other comfy-cozies that would make the night great. Then, on Feb. 14, share a little sugar to express your love on a cookie or rice crispie treat canvas at the USO's Valentine's Day Cookie Bar. And FYI, the USO Center will be closed on President's Day, Feb. 18.

Safe and secure

The Installation Safety Office has moved to Bldg. 2948, rooms 302, 301 and 320, Panzer Kaserne. Its updated phone numbers are 431-3832/3132/3133/3134; the USAG Security Office, also in Bldg. 2948, moved to Rm. 303. Its new phone numbers are 596-2008/2013 or 0611143-596-2008/2013

Tech Expo

The 52nd Strategic Signal Battalion again hosts the annual Tech Expo, Feb. 12, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., in the Patch Barracks Fitness Center. Visit www.federalevents.com/stuttgart.

Bring the whole family

The new in-processing schedule for families is held Thursdays, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., and spouses and children are welcome to attend. Newcomers who have arrived recently and were previously unable to attend in-processing classes are also encouraged to attend. There is planning

in progress to include child-care soon. Call 431-2599 or 07031-15-2599.

"I cannot tell a lie ..."

The Patch Commissary will be closed Feb. 18 for the Washington's Birthday/President's Day, the celebration of Washington and Lincoln's birthdays (combined) federal holiday. The Panzer Commissary will be open its regular house, 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m.



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the "Training with Industry Program." As these positions are competitive and program dates are preset, officers must be high quality and available to PCS between late June and August 2019. Gain the skills, procedures and operating business rules of industry and return these lessons learned and best practices to the career field. Completed packets are due to APAC by Feb. 28. Call 301-677-7283 or 301-677-7292.

New 405th website

Information of interest for garrison customers is now available on the 405th Army Field Support Battalion new website. For driver's license and testing, visit www.afsbeurope.army.mil/Logistics-Readiness-Centers/LRC-Bavaria/Transportation-Division/Drivers-Testing/; for vehicle inspections <https://afsbeurope.army.mil/BASOPS/BASOPS-Maintenance/>

Vehicle-Inspection-Copy/; and for personal property and POV shipping, www.afsbeurope.army.mil/Logistics-Readiness-Centers/Personal-Property-and-POV/. USAG Stuttgart may link to www.afsbeurope.army.mil/Logistics-Readiness-Centers/LRC-Stuttgart/.

"Counsel will approach the bench"

The Stuttgart Law Center will be closed, Feb. 11-12 an inspection, and on Feb. 15-18 for the President's Day four-day federal holiday weekend.

A tisket, a tasket

The Stuttgart Community Spouse's Club has some additional information regarding its upcoming Basket Auction & Team Trivia Event, March 1. In addition to the event, it's also requesting basket do-



nations for a Silent Auction. Organizations, groups and clubs across the garrison are encouraged to get involved. The last day to turn in basket donations is Feb. 21. Feel free to get creative, but no baskets of alcohol, please. Participants are encouraged to wear their favorite team attire. For more information, email scsc.memberprograms@gmail.com or visit www.stuttgart-spousesclub.com.

Taken the survey yet?

Response has been low for the survey conducted by the Department of the Army asking residents living in Army Family Housing to provide candid feedback. The survey asks residents to rate their satisfaction with their home and the services provided by the garrison housing office. The survey ends Feb. 14. Only one survey per household will be accepted. If you haven't already received the survey

link, contact the Stuttgart Housing Office weekdays, 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. (11 a.m. Thursdays) at 431-2285/2420 or 07031-15-2285. All surveys are confidential. The frank feedback about experiences in Army Family Housing may help to shape future housing programs and services, and help guide future decisions that could impact generations of Soldiers and their families.

New meeting location for CAP

The Civil Air Patrol-Stuttgart Flight now meets at Stuttgart High School (Bldg. 3018), Panzer Kaserne, Tuesdays, 6-8 p.m. The CAP is for community members aged 12 and up who are interested in aviation and service to the country. Call 0170 7027412 or visit www.stuttgart-CAP.com or www.gocivilairpatrol.com.

Volunteers needed to help retirees at the RSO

Volunteers are needed to run the Retiree Services Office and to be on the retiree council. Call 431-2010 or 07031-15-2010.

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Top 10 reasons vehicles fail inspection

By 86th Vehicle Readiness Squadron

From cracked windows to auto decals, here are the top 10 reasons why your vehicle might fail inspection.

1. Engine/Transmission/Power Steering Fluid Leaks

The vehicle will be rejected if there is evidence of an excessive leak or an ongoing slow leak of oil, anti-freeze or saturation of the underbody of the vehicle. If there is evidence of a slow leak, the undercarriage must be cleaned and re-inspected to verify whether or not there is still a slow leak. Excessive leaks are immediate failures.

2. Worn Tires

The tread depth of the vehicle tires must be at least one-sixteenth of an inch (1.6 mm) over the entire tread of the tire. Inspectors will use a tread-depth gauge at any two adjacent major grooves at three areas spaced equally around the outside of the tire to test the depth. Tires will be rejected if the side walls or thread area are dry rotted. Tires with any cords exposed will be rejected and render the vehicle "Unsafe to Operate."

Although not required for inspection and registration, German law requires winter rated tires during snow and icy conditions. It is recommended to have these tires installed on your vehicle before arriving. If your tires have the M+S symbol on the sidewall, then you have mud & snow tires and meet the requirement.

As of Jan. 1, 2018, new tires will need to carry the three-peak mountain snowflake symbol on the sidewall in order to count as winter tires. Tires with only the marking M+S will no longer be acceptable. However, tires manufactured prior to Jan. 1, 2018 are allowed under German law until 2024. Most tires have a manufacture date imprinted on them, usually a four digit number, the second two are the year the tire was made.

Germany's road rules set out that vehicles must be suitably equipped for the conditions they drive in, the tires with the marking M+S was enough to meet this requirement when it snows or if roads are covered in ice. This is no longer the case.

Here are possible fines you can receive for not having the appropriate tires on your vehicle:

- €60 fine for unsuitable tires
- €80 fine for causing obstruction of traffic due to unsuitable tires
- €100 fine for causing hazardous situation due to unsuitable tires



Photo by Bardia Khajenoori, USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

€120 fine for causing an accident due to unsuitable tires

Plus, points on your license may be assessed.

3. Lights/lenses

Headlights must be aimed correctly. The inspectors will verify correct adjustment using an authorized special tool. All lights must be securely mounted and function properly. All lighting must be the correct color, position and intensity in compliance with regulation AE 190-1. Damaged or cracked lenses (brake, headlight, tail light, etc.) will be rejected. All lighting housing assemblies should be free of moisture and water. After-market lighting located around the windshield, behind the front grill or underneath the vehicle is prohibited. Painted or tinted lights or lenses are not acceptable. Spotlights on the rear or facing the rear of the vehicle are prohibited. All other spotlights must be covered by a black cover.

4. Brakes

A brake-test machine will be used

to verify proper brake effort and imbalance. Also, a visual inspection of all visible brake components will be conducted. Dry-rotted brake hoses and excessively corroded metal brake lines or any brake components to include brake rotors will be rejected. Brake lines and hoses improperly installed or kinked are prohibited.

5. Chips and cracks in the windshield

Glass in the front, rear or side windows may not have cracks that impair or distort the driver's vision. Windshields with cracks or fracture damage in

the passenger windshield-wiping area over one inch long (2.5 cm), or star-shaped fractures over one-half inch (12.5 mm) are not allowed. Any chips or cracks in the driver's side windshield wiping area are not allowed. If crack exceeds maximum allowed measurements or does not meet AE 190-1 standards, the window must be replaced no matter if it was previously repaired

For more information, contact the USAG Stuttgart Installation Safety Office in Bldg. 2948, rooms 302, 301 and 320, Panzer Kaserne, or call 431-3832/3133/3134.

For questions regarding vehicle inspection, contact the 405th Base Operations Maintenance Division at 475-5045, 09641-83-5045. To make an appointment for vehicle inspection visit stuttgartcitizen.com/appointments or download the USAG Stuttgart mobile app.

Read part two in the March issue of The Stuttgart Citizen.

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Fasching in Germany peaks Feb. 28 to March 5

By Teri Weiss and Carola Meusel
USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Fasching will be celebrated Feb. 28 to March 5, with feasts, parades, music and many “foolish” events. For most Germans, it’s a time when citizens let off steam and live it up during the week before Ash Wednesday, when the 40-day Lent before Easter begins.

The main events and parades peak during the traditional Fasching week, starting on Schmotziger Donnerstag (Greasy Thursday) or Weiberfasching (women’s carnival).

On Weiberfasching, women have the right to freely cut off men’s ties with scissors and kiss any man they wish to during the day. It’s also an opportunity for women to enjoy a girl’s night out and symbolically take control for a day.

The Swabian word schmotzig means lard or grease and refers to the opulent food eaten during Fasching, such as Fasnetsküchle (Fasching doughnuts).

The remainder of the Fasching week is Fasching Saturday and Sunday, Rose Monday and Fat Tuesday.



Weil der Stadt photo by Stuttgart military community member Stephanie Salomaa

During the evening of Fat Tuesday, the “Fastnacht,” represented as a witch in southern Germany, is buried in a casket and the wild days end at midnight.

This year’s Greasy Thursday / Women’s Fasching will be celebrated Feb. 28.

Bad Cannstatt’s Kübeles—market Fasching guild will set up the Narrenbaum (fool’s pole) at 6:30 p.m. downtown at the Marktplatz, followed by a parade starting at 7 p.m.

Neuhausen celebrates Greasy Thursday with the Hexentanz (witch’s dance), Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. at Schlossplatz.

During the event, Neuhausen’s Fasching fools storm the town hall and force the mayor to hand over the keys to the city. In order

to celebrate this symbolic event, a huge fire is lit.

During the various Fasching parades in Southern Germany, Narren (Fasching fools) with wooden masks in the images of witches, devils and grotesque animals can be seen in many towns. In Swabia and Southern Germany, the costumes are called Häs. Be on the lookout for Narren who either ruffle your hair, paint your face, take away a hair band or give you a piece of candy.

This year, most street parades will be held between March 3 and 5.

(Editor’s note: Read more about Fasching in the full article on www.stuttgartcitizen.com.)



Rottweil photo by Stuttgart military community member Lisa Bond

Fasching Parades

- Böblingen: March 4, 1 p.m.
- Rottenburg am Neckar: March 3, 1:30 p.m.
- Neuhausen: March 3, 1:30 p.m.
- Weil der Stadt: March 3, 2 p.m.
- Hechingen: March 5, 1:30 p.m.
- Rottweil: “Narrensprung” (fool’s jump) March 4 at 8 a.m.; and March 5 at 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. (at Rottweil’s historic downtown area).
- Stuttgart: March 5, 2 p.m.
- Hofen: March 5, 1 p.m.

Other events

- Bad Cannstatt: “Närrischer Wochenmarkt” (weekly market with Fasching entertainment and music), Feb. 28, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Marktplatz.
- Bad Cannstatt: “Rathaussturm,” Fasching fools storm the historic town hall, Feb. 28, 6 p.m.
- Bad Cannstatt: “Kübelesrennen” (Fasching marathon with “fools” of the “Kübelesmarkt” Fasching guild), Feb. 28, 7:30-9 p.m. at Marktplatz. On Feb. 28 (“Schmotziger Donnerstag”), various restaurants and bars in downtown Bad Cannstatt offer music and Fasching parties until 2 a.m.
- Stuttgart: “Monster-Guggen-Konzert” (concert), March 4, 5:30-10 p.m. at Rathausplatz in front of Stuttgart’s city hall (Rathausplatz, 70563 Stuttgart).
- Bad Cannstatt: Närrisches Tribunal (Fasching Fools’ Tribunal) / Schnurren Schnitzelbänk on Marktplatz in Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt, March 4, 5:45 p.m.
- Bad Cannstatt: Geizgrufen at Marktstrasse, March 5 at noon, followed by a children’s parade at 2:30 p.m. through the downtown area. The procession to end the Fasnet, or Fasching time, will start at 11:45 p.m. with Fasching fools taking the straw puppet Hesekeel, symbolizing the Fasnet, or Fasching, from Marktstrasse to Wilhelmsbrücke to burn and drown the puppet. This tradition is called “ver-brennsäuft” in the Swabian dialect.

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Financial fitness impacts security clearances

By Army Community Service
USAG Stuttgart

The Department of Defense has been directed to continuously monitor the financial status of service members and federal employees with security clearances.

A person who is able to access classified information can have their background reviewed at any time, including an automated review of their credit file, to see if they have a history of failing to meet their financial obligations, being in excessive debt, or having a high debt-to-income ratio (gross monthly income that goes towards paying debt). Derogatory information can affect your DoD security clearance, ultimately

impacting your military career, unless you can prove that you were the victim of identity theft, fraud or a mistake.

Additionally, you have to prove that you are currently living within your means and are making a good faith effort to resolve your unpaid debts.

In order to safeguard your credit record and prevent issues with security clearance, below are some tips:

1. Check your credit report

You are entitled to a free credit report every 12 months from each of the three major consumer reporting companies (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion) at annualcreditreport.com. You can also visit your Financial Readiness Specialist at Army Community Service building 2915 on Panzer Kaserne, who can obtain and provide a review of your credit report as well as offer helpful hints to avoid financial challenges.

Be aware that other websites may promise free credit reports but require you to sign up for free trials that

eventually will charge you or try to sell you other products services you may not need.

2. Set up a fraud alert or security freeze on your credit reports

Contact each credit agency and ask them to put a freeze on your credit reports. A freeze prevents prospective lenders from accessing your credit file unless you lift the freeze for that lender or for a specified period of time. This may be especially important during life changes such as a new marriage, separation, or divorce. Special alerts are also available to active duty service members who

are assigned to service away from their usual duty station. This alert notifies the credit reporting companies of your military status and limits new credit offers while you are away.

3. Monitor your credit score

Numerous credit reporting services provide free credit scores. In addition, service members and spouses can get a free credit score/report courtesy of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Investor Education Foundation.

4. Call in reinforcements!

Do not delay; promptly dispute any item on your credit report you know to be inaccurate. Attempt to clear it up with the company that reported the information and with the major credit reporting companies. You can also submit your complaint to Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) online or call 00-1-855-411-2372.

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Norovirus outbreak impacts US military facilities in Germany

By Michelle Thum
Regional Health Command Europe

Multiple U.S. military installations in Germany are experiencing an increase in norovirus cases, as a result of significant norovirus activity being reported.

Norovirus is the official name for a group of viruses that cause the stomach flu. Healthcare and childcare facilities are particularly susceptible to these viruses due to the ease of transmission, the small amount of infective material needed

to spread the disease, the short incubation period, and the fact that the virus can live in the environment for a long time unless adequately cleaned.

“Symptoms of norovirus include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach cramping. Those symptoms typically come on very quickly but usually only last for one or two days,” said Col. Rodney Coldren, Chief of Public Health Command Europe’s Preventive Medicine Services.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control the greatest health risk from norovirus is severe dehydration, especially in young children, the elderly, and people with other illnesses. Symptoms of severe dehydration include decreased

urination or very dark urine, rapid breathing, rapid heartbeat, dizziness, lack of energy and fainting. Parents of children in diapers may notice a decrease in the number of wet diapers, although this may be hard to notice with frequent diarrhea.

“If you or a family member are experiencing norovirus symptoms, drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration,” Coldren said. “If dehydration occurs, seek care from your primary care provider or local Emergency Room immediately.”

Because norovirus is more persistent than other viral causes of gastrointestinal infections, Coldren recommends staying home from work or school for at least 48 hours following any episode of vomiting or diarrhea to prevent the spread of the infection.

There is no vaccine to prevent norovirus and because antibiotics fight bacterial infections, not viruses, they are ineffective in treating the illness, according to the CDC.

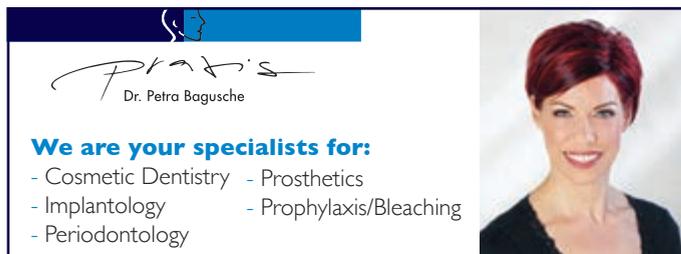
People can become infected after consuming foods or liquids contaminated with norovirus, having direct

contact with an infected individual or touching surfaces containing the virus. Symptoms can appear as early as twelve hours after exposure to norovirus, according to the CDC.

What to do if you contract a norovirus

Symptoms of norovirus include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach cramping. Those symptoms typically come on very quickly but usually only last for one or two days. To prevent norovirus from spreading:

- Practice proper hand hygiene -use soap and water as alcohol-based hand sanitizers alone do not kill norovirus
- Wash fruits and vegetables and cook seafood thoroughly
- When you are sick, do not prepare food or care for others
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces
- Wash laundry thoroughly



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SHS students address real world issues at PRAMUN

By Evonna Moody
Stuttgart High School

While most Stuttgart High School students were heading to their first period class, 32 students were traveling to Prague to participate in PRAMUN, an international Model United Nations (MUN) conference for high school students, Jan. 9.

MUN is an academic simulation of the parliamentary procedure, diplomacy, and international cooperation of the United Nations. Specifically at PRAMUN, there are 11 committees with topics ranging from the Rohingya crisis to water security in the Nile River basin. At the conference, students represented the delegation of Ivory Coast, Peru and Russia. Additionally, three students were Chairs, meaning they held a leadership role of facilitating debate in each of their respective committees.

Maddie Haggard, senior, said that chairing the Historical committee taught her “how to be a better leader.”

There is a consensus among faculty and staff at SHS that the MUN program is highly valued. MUN teacher and sponsor Kurt Hickey



Photo by PRAMUN Media Staff

SHS senior Connor Hughes and sophomore Bettina Wagner look over resolutions presented in the Historical Committee.

described the program as beneficial for students as it “compromise, and critical thinking.”

This year, Assistant Principal Dr. Heather Ramaglia chaperoned the MUN conference and observed the

outcome of the hard work and research students put in throughout the past semester.

“If these students are the future of our nation, our future looks very bright,” Ramaglia said.

(Editor’s Note: Evonna Moody is a senior at Stuttgart High School and PRAMUN participant. She is a part of the Career Practicum program and is interested in international relations and journalism.)

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- **Thursday, February 19th, 2019** (11 a.m. - 2 p.m.)
@ Patch Community Club
- **Wednesday, February 20th, 2019** (11 a.m. - 2 p.m.)
@ Kelley Club

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RBES, PTSA recognized nationally as a School of Excellence

National PTA
News Release

Robinson Barracks Elementary School and its PTSA were recognized by the National PTA and RBES PTSA as a 2018-2020 School of Excellence for their commitment to building an inclusive and welcoming school community where all families contribute to enriching the educational experience and overall well-being for all students, Feb. 1

“Research shows that when families and schools work together, students do better in school and schools improve,” said Jim Accomando, president, National PTA. “Robinson Barracks Elementary School and RBES PTSA have worked hard to strengthen their family-school partnership and create an environment where all families feel welcomed and empowered to support student success. We are pleased to recognize them as a National PTA School of Excellence.”

National PTA’s School of Excellence program helps PTAs become partners in identifying and implementing school improvement initiatives based on PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. Schools that exhibit improvement at the end of the school year are honored as a National PTA School of Excellence, a distinction that spans two years.

“Over the last two years, I’ve watched Robinson Barracks PTSA become a model unit,” said Kristin DeLuca, president, European PTA. “The board members have shown a commitment to leading by example; as a result, this community demonstrates the best that PTA has to offer. I am pleased to count myself as a member of this unit.”

RBES and RBES PTSA are one of only 278 schools and PTAs nationwide recognized as a 2018-2020 School of Excellence.

“It is of the greatest priority of our RBES PTSA to ensure that we work together with our parents, our school administration, teachers and community to provide the best possible educational experience for our children. Family engagement is a shared responsibility that we take very seriously, and we are honored to be recognized as a National PTA School of Excellence,” said Sabrina Wilson, president, RBES PTSA.

To celebrate their achievements, National PTA presented the school and PTSA with a National PTA School of Excellence banner.



Photo by Sabrina Wilson, president, RBES PTSA
Awarded to RBES Feb. 1, this National PTA banner is now on display at the school to recognize the excellence of the teachers, staff and students.



Robinson Barracks Elementary School, photo by USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Excellence education
 For more information about the National PTA School of Excellence program, visit PTA.org/Excellence.

**USAG-Stuttgart Religious Support Office
Religious Special Service Schedule
March – April 2019**

Catholic Lent and Holy Week Services

March 5 – Shrove Pancake Dinner, 5:30 p.m., Panzer Fellowship Hall
March 6 – Ash Wednesday, 1:30 p.m., Patch Chapel; 5:30 p.m., Panzer Chapel
March 8 – April 12 (Every Friday) Stations of the Cross and Soup Supper, 6 p.m., Patch Chapel
March 27 – Confession and Lenten Dinner, 5:30 p.m., Panzer Chapel
April 18 – Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord’s Supper with Washing of the Feet and Adoration, 6 p.m., Patch Chapel
April 19 – Good Friday Stations of the Cross, 4:30 p.m., Patch Chapel; Good Friday Service, 5:30 p.m., Patch Chapel
April 20 – Easter Vigil, 8 p.m., Panzer Chapel
April 21 – Easter Sunday (regular services), 9 a.m., Patch Chapel; noon, Robinson Barracks Chapel; 3 p.m., Patch Chapel

Jewish Services

March 20 – Purim, 6:30 p.m., Panzer Jewish Prayer Room
March 24 – Purim Carnival, 12:30-5 p.m., Patch Fellowship Hall
April 19 – Passover, 6 p.m., Panzer Annex (If attending, please send an email to: info@stuttgartjewishcommunity.com)

Protestant Services

March 6 – Ash Wednesday, noon, Patch Chapel
April 19 – Good Friday Service, 6 p.m., Robinson Barracks Chapel
April 21 – Easter Sunday (regular services)

All regular scheduled services will take place at their normal times and locations. For more information contact the RSO at 431-3079 or usarmy.stuttgart.id-europe.mbx.rso-events@mail.mil

What if you could change your world in 60 seconds?

Ch. (Col.) James R. Boulware
USAG Stuttgart Garrison
Chaplain

The Stuttgart military multi-faith community is invited to sign up and be a part of Pray60, a community call to people of any faith or denomination to spend 60 seconds a day in prayer for 60 days.

Because it is an individual commitment, any participant may pray anytime and anywhere throughout the 60 days.

2 Chronicles 7:14 says “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and

heal their land.” Pray60 is designed to build a sense of unity within our community and resiliency within our families.

Some people pray more than 60 seconds, but for everyone, Pray60 is an opportunity to be part of a community-wide prayer team. In the past, families, co-workers and religious groups have teamed-up during this time of prayer.

Pray60 focuses on building spiritual unity and resiliency within our USAG Stuttgart communities. Some of the particular things participants enjoyed about Pray60 last year were:

- “A Spirit-led program that is greatly in need of

- continuation.....in prayer”
- “It was positive to think about all the different groups do to make our base a community”
- “Feeling I was contributing to the unity of the Stuttgart community in Christ”
- “Knowing that our community was praying together and not just me.”

It only takes 60 seconds
Sign up by visiting www.surveymonkey.com/r/StuttgartCommunity and receive regular words of encouragement, a reminder prayer bracelet and a community prayer calendar.

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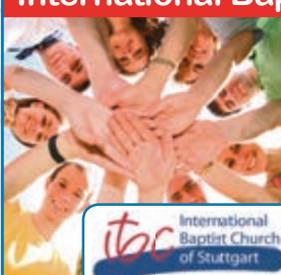
We would love to hear from you. Please contact us. We will be happy to meet you and enjoy some time of fellowship.

Come join our ministry on Sunday's at 16:00 (4:00pm).



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Denver Broncos bring football, cheer to Stuttgart youth

By Holly DeCarlo-White
USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

The Denver Broncos hosted football and cheerleading clinics with more than 130 youth in attendance at Patch Middle School, Jan. 29.

Stuttgart was the third stop on the Armed Forces Entertainment tour featuring players Charles Adams, Orlando Franklin, Reuben Droughns III, Miles the team mascot and several of the Denver Broncos Cheerleaders.

Present and future garrison community cheerleaders learn a pom-pom drill in the Patch Middle School gym, Jan. 29.

“The Denver Broncos Cheerleads and alumni players is a wonderful partnership opportunity between Armed Forces Entertainment and Family & MWR,” said Corrie Schwab, operations officer, Stuttgart FMWR.

“We were excited to bring these professional athletes to our community to share their passion for fitness with our youth. This was a great opportunity for our youth to find out what it takes to become a professional athlete as well as have a little



Stuttgart youth mingle with members of the Denver Broncos cheer squad, Jan. 29.

fun,” Schwab said. Since 2003, members of the Denver Broncos Cheerleaders have toured military bases in Egypt, Cuba, Iraq, Afghanistan, Italy, Guam, Hawaii, Kwajalein, Japan and Australia performing their 90-minute show to boost the troops’ morale and thank them for their

service to our country. “It was really fun, we always like to come and hang out, especially with kids that are overseas, its fun to bring a little bit of home to them and see them really have fun and shine,” said cheerleader Jozie LaViolette. This was the first time the team has visited Stuttgart, and third stop



Photo by Holly DeCarlo-White, USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs
Bronco alumni players teach Stuttgart youth gridiron tactics on a frozen Patch Middle School field, Jan. 29.

on their tour through Germany which concludes Feb. 4 at Büchel Air Base.

Future football players learn skills from Denver Broncos alumni on a frozen Patch gridiron, Jan. 29.

“We are really looking forward to visiting each base, being able perform, and meeting the people that we appreciate and go unseen for all the hard work that they do every day,” LaViolette said.

CYS Sports, Fitness winter season in full swing

Story and photo by Tom Hlavacek
Child Youth Services Sports

The Child Youth Services sports and fitness winter program is underway with activities offered in boy’s and girl’s fitness, basketball, bowling, cheerleading and wrestling.

Most of the activities will be conducted for up to eight weeks. The fitness programs are designed to reach a wide range of age groups and have outreach participation with the Child Development Centers. Diverse programs are available for any child elementary through high school ages

interested in having fun and learning the fundamentals of total fitness. Classes offered include weight training, home school fitness, plyometric, and elementary fitness. And the best news? All of these fitness classes are free.

In basketball, teams are set for youth ages 4-15. Leagues for all ages are currently practicing and will play in an 8-week format depending on the number of teams in each league.

Twenty-plus youth bowlers have already signed up for the “Learn to Bowl” program, Thursdays after school, conducted at the Galaxy Bowling and Entertainment Center, Panzer Kaserne. Learn to Bowl began Jan. 17.

A free running program is currently underway at Patch Middle School.

Cheerleading is a fun program and there are three teams. Teams will perform cheers at various events



The long distance between the players and the hoop doesn’t deter the CYS basketball youth league.

throughout the community for CYS basketball games.

Another successful ongoing program is wrestling. Practice has started. Two mini-meets will be

conducted—watch for announcements. A traveling league for the older wrestlers will be conducted Feb. 23-March 16. That final meet will be hosted in Stuttgart.

Want to know more about CYS sports?
Call 431-2617/2597 or 07031-15-2616/2597, or email usarmy.stuttgart.id-europe.mbx.youthsports@mail.mil



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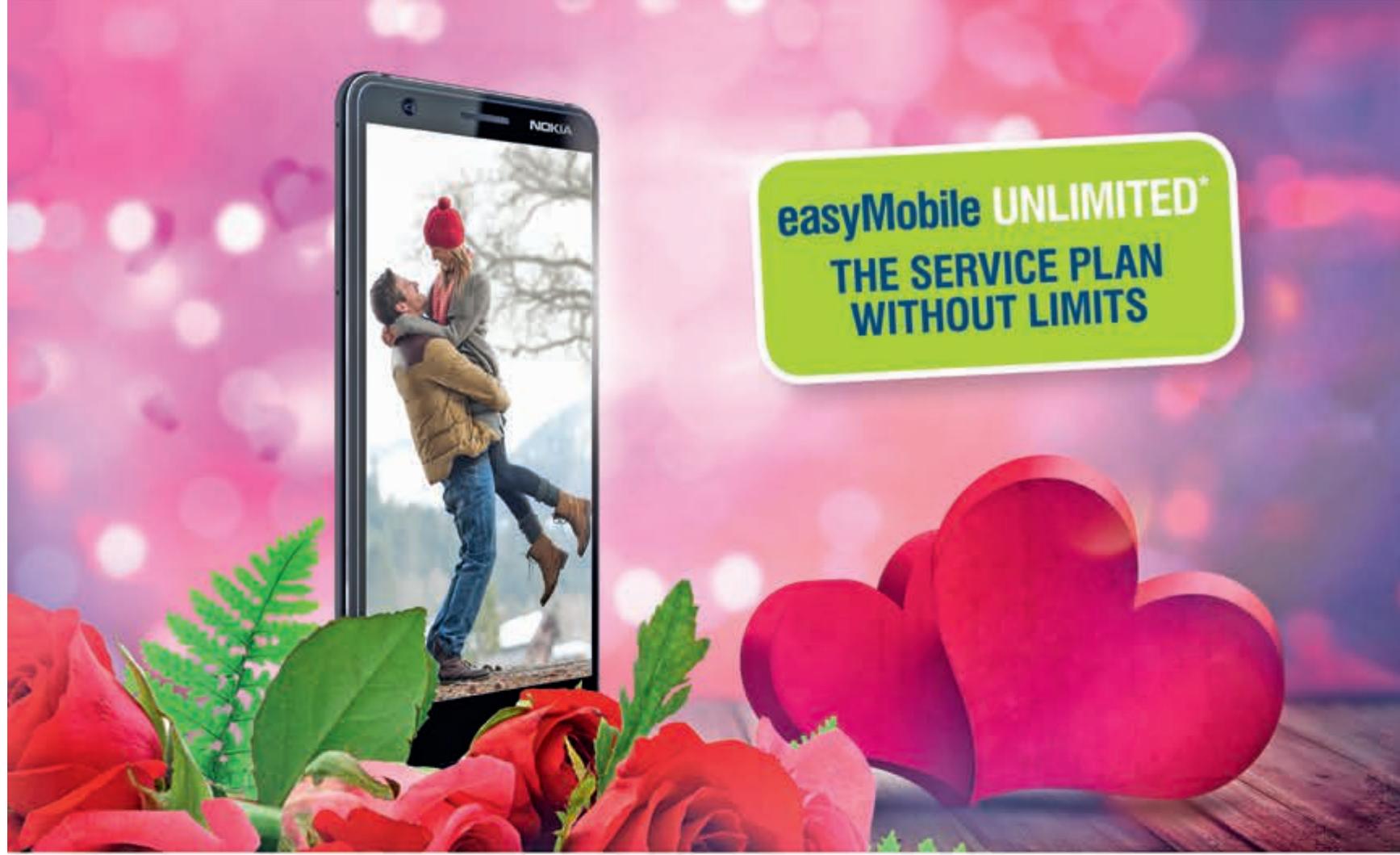
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