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Army alters re-up policy

Retention | Window changes
to four months Saturday

By ADRIENNE ANDERSON
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Focusing on the needs of the Army versus a "grow the Army" mentality, Staff Sgt. Bill Cunningham said Soldiers should be aware of new changes in the Army Retention Policy that take effect beginning in fiscal 2012, which begins Saturday.

Cunningham, a career counselor for the Maneuver Center of Excellence, said the new re-enlistment window policy is unlike what has been in effect during the last 10 years. It essentially decreases the window of re-enlistment for Soldiers.

The new policy, he said, aligns the retention mission with the Army's strategic initiatives and will occur in two phases.

Phase One affects Soldiers with an ETS date between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30, 2012. Cunningham said Soldiers who fall within this date range will have a four-month window for re-enlistment Oct. 1 through Jan. 31.

The second phase, Cunningham said, will focus on the fiscal 2013 population and is slated tentatively to begin in March and end Sept. 30, 2012 — the end of the fiscal 2012. Those with an ETS date occurring during the second phase will be able to re-enlist during Phase Two.

As a result of the changes, Soldiers need to "pull the trigger" when their window for re-enlistment opens because there will not be as much time, he said.

"Leaders at all levels will need to take a much more active approach with the coming changes," Cunningham said. "The force is reshaping due to (the potential) decrease in worldwide missions and the budget. Soldiers need to look at the big picture and keep themselves informed as to what's going on with 'Big Army.'"

» RETENTION, A6



CHERYL RODEWIG

Officials at the McGinnis-Wickam Hall dedication ceremony cut the ribbon Friday. Maj. Gen. Robert Brown said, "This building has been known as Infantry Hall or Building 4. Today, we are going to change that, and we're going to reflect the uniting of Armor and Infantry here at Fort Benning. As we dedicate this building and honor the memories of Spc. McGinnis and Cpl. Wickam, we recognize that these Soldiers are representative of the very foundation of our Army — like the brick and mortar that solidifies this building, making it as strong and sturdy as it is."

Headquarters building named for Medal of Honor recipients

By CHERYL RODEWIG
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More than 500 people gathered Friday to witness the dedication of the Maneuver Center of Excellence's new headquarters. McGinnis-Wickam Hall was named in honor of Spc. Ross McGinnis and Cpl. Jerry Wickam, Medal of Honor recipients representing the Infantry and Armor branches, respectively.

Maj. Gen. Robert Brown,

MCoE commanding general, said the most significant part of the day was the building's official renaming.

"This building has been known as Infantry Hall or Building 4," he said. "Today, we are going to change that, and we're going to reflect the uniting of Armor and Infantry here at Fort Benning. As we dedicate this building and honor the memories of Spc. McGinnis and Cpl. Wickam, we recognize that these Soldiers are representative of the very

foundation of our Army — like the brick and mortar that solidifies this building, making it as strong and sturdy as it is."

'Tremendous honor'

McGinnis, a native of Pennsylvania, entered basic training at Fort Benning within days of his high school graduation. While deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Infantryman was fatally wounded when his convoy was attacked and a

grenade was thrown into his vehicle.

"He made a conscience choice to save his fellow Soldiers — threw himself on that grenade in that humvee, saving the lives of all those others present," Brown said. "At just 19, to make that choice is incredible."

"He chose to offer his life in exchange for the lives of the men he served with. He was a hero when a hero was needed. Age didn't matter, nor did time

» HALL, A5



KRISTIN MOLINARO

Spcs. Jon Walden and Colin Eikenhorst, A Company, 1st Battalion, 29th Infantry Regiment, operate a 50-H Phoenix Sense Through the Roof Unmanned Aerial System Thursday via a remote control from a rooftop at McKenna MOUT Site. The \$8 million miniature helicopter contains multiple sensors to detect occupants within a compound.

AWE brings 4G smartphone technology to virtual battlefield

By JENNIFER GUNN
MCoE Public Affairs

The same technology that powers high speed commercial cellular networks will be driving the voice, video and mission command capabilities for Spiral G during the Army Expeditionary Warrior Experiment here Oct. 17-Nov. 4.

Although the Army has predicted for some time that smartphones will play an important role in the Soldier's job, it is yet unclear just how large a role theirs will be. During recent years, IT engineers at the Signal Center of Excellence at Fort

Gordon, Ga., have been pumping out iPhone and Android apps to satisfy today's tech-savvy Soldiers.

When it comes to information flow on the battlefield, AWE's use of 4G as the vehicle to support tactical operations may provide insight into how an unprecedented amount of information available to the Soldier level can help shape the fight.

"What we're doing here is validating a data and information projection concept and not a data transport technology," said Maj. Philippe Persaud, lead technical integrator for AWE and telecom systems

» AWE, A7

World War II vets lay wreath

By VINCE LITTLE
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About 90 veterans from The Battle of the Bulge descended on Columbus and Fort Benning last week for their annual reunion.

The group gathered at the Main Post Cemetery on Wednesday for a wreath-laying ceremony to honor and remember those killed, captured or wounded during the largest and bloodiest campaign fought by the Americans in World War II. The battle unfolded through the densely forested Ardennes mountain region of Wallonia in Belgium, as well as France and Luxembourg on the western front.

Waged Dec. 16, 1944, to Jan. 25, 1945, it stood as the last major Nazi offensive against the Allies, a last-ditch attempt by Adolf Hitler to split them in half in their drive toward Germany and destroy their ability to resupply themselves.

"We were annihilated in The Battle of the Bulge," said Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Inc. National President J. David Bailey, then a corporal with the 422nd Infantry Regiment, 106th Infantry Division. "We got completely caught by surprise. There was no air support, and our supply lines were cut off."

"My unit withstood the enemy for three days. Most of the men were taken prisoner,"

» BATTLE OF THE BULGE, A6

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and elements of the
Army Marksmanship Unit

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Warrior Training
Center initiates new
Master Gunner
Course to prepare
Soldiers, Marines.

» A4

COMING UP, DON'T MISS ...

FOOTBALL: Doughboys square off against LaGrange OCT. 5

SHARPSHOOTERS: Recap of International Sniper Competition OCT. 5 >>

STOWERS: School remembers Medal of Honor recipient OCT. 5



Tom Burgess, who served with A Company, 345th Infantry Regiment, 87th Infantry Division, in World War II, salutes Wednesday during a wreath-laying ceremony for the Battle of the Bulge at Fort Benning's Main Post Cemetery.



Battle of the Bulge

From A1

wounded or killed. I'm one of the lucky ones who made it out."

An estimated 600,000 U.S. troops were involved in the battle, according to historical accounts. The Americans suffered nearly 81,000 casualties, while 100,000 Germans were killed, wounded or captured.

During World War II, retired Army Col. Doug Dillard was a sergeant with the 82nd Airborne Division's 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion, which fought near Rochlinval, Belgium, in The Battle of the Bulge.

"My unit was almost totally destroyed. We had 98 Soldiers left after the last day," he said. "This ceremony is very meaningful for us. We're trying to perpetuate the history and honor of our veterans who were killed."

Dillard traveled from Bowie, Md., for the four-day reunion, which began Sept. 20. It marked the organization's 30th official gathering, and he was expected to be elected its new executive vice president.

Wednesday's ceremony featured a seven-man firing party and 21-gun salute. A

bugler played Taps as Bailey and Dillard laid the wreath alongside two Fort Benning drill sergeants.

Bailey, who traveled from the D.C. area to attend, said most of the veterans are now in their 80s and 90s. Every year on Dec. 16, they also get together for three days in Washington.

"The Battle of the Bulge is considered the greatest land battle in history," Bailey said.

"It also had the largest number of casualties for a single battle. It's important for us not to forget their sacrifice."

Retention

From A1

Soldiers who have low line scores in an over-strength MOS may find it difficult to qualify for another MOS. Therefore it is important for Soldiers with low line scores to start working on raising those scores or risk being limited in their options.

Initial term, mid-career and careerist Soldiers will still have options, provided they are qualified. Depending upon which group a Soldier falls in, determined by number of years in the service, and whether they are in a balanced, over- or under-strength MOS, options available are regular Army re-enlistment, indefinite re-enlistment, Army training re-enlistment, current station stabilization, overseas assignment and CONUS station-of-choice.

Cunningham said bonuses are still being given, depending on eligibility, but are decreasing all the time.

"With money being tighter ... (the Army) is looking for ways to tighten the budget," he said. "Soldiers need to contact their career counselors as soon as possible."

For updated information about the implementation of the new retention policy at Fort Benning, visit www.facebook.com/MCoE.Retention.

Want to hear the Maneuver Center of Excellence Band?

Visit Wetherby Field Friday. Concert starts at 7:30 p.m. and a free movie begins at 8:30.

