

INSIDE



Last ride

A Stryker named the 'General Lee' gets its Soldiers home safely.

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Wildlife

Biologists study Western gray squirrels at Fort Lewis.

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Survivor

Local hotel owner was saved by U.S. troops during World War II.

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Hills climb

The Hill family triumphs in the second race of the Triple Threat Triathlon series.

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ON THE WEB

Video news

For the latest video news about Fort Lewis Soldiers, see the Northwest Guardian's Web site, nwguardian.com. New this week is a slide show on the 2-12 Field Artillery in Iraq.

NOTICE

Family fun

All enlisted families are invited to a monthly family fun day at the Enlisted Spouses Building July 28 from 1 to 4 p.m. Come enjoy yourself with families and friends. For more information, e-mail ftlewisesc@yahoo.com.

Program offer: home ownership

Equity Residential will allow housing residents to turn BAH payments into cash for home purchase

More online
For more information on builders that take part in the program, go to www.equityapartments.com.

By Andrea Hauser Chapman
Northwest Guardian

It can pay to live on post. Not just by saving on utilities or in time and gas avoiding a long commute. While those benefits can save some money, residents can also save for their own homes while paying their Basic Allowance for Housing every month. Fort Lewis residents are automatically enrolled in a Rent-to-Own program sponsored by Equity Residen-

tial, which manages housing on Fort Lewis. Through the program, Soldiers can receive a coupon worth 15 percent of all the BAH they paid while living on post, said Carly Jackson, outreach coordinator for Equity. The program is available to all Equity tenants, both on- and off-post, and the coupon can be used toward the purchase of a home or condo built by a participating builder. Since Equity is a nationwide company, Soldiers can use the coupon in virtually any state.

During the past year, Jackson has been highlighting the Rent-to-Own program during the Welcome Brief she helps give to incoming Soldiers and their families. She's hoping Soldiers will take advantage of the opportunity — one not found at most Army posts.

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Rent-to-Own Savings for Soldiers

Pay Grade	BAH	Coupon total after 3 years
E1-E4	\$1,039	\$5,610
E5	\$1,160	\$6,264
E6	\$1,294	\$6,987
W1	\$1,295	\$6,993
W2	\$1,415	\$7,641
W3	\$1,526	\$8,240
O1	\$1,175	\$6,345
O2	\$1,291	\$6,971
O3	\$1,522	\$8,218

"This is the first real leadership training to get everybody on the same sheet of music." Staff Sgt. Matt Wood

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE



Photos by Jason Kaye

Soldiers from 4-23 Inf. practice close quarters battle during a live-fire exercise on Range 26. "We're out here clearing rooms as part of the MOUT piece," said 2nd Lt. Price D. Smith.

Soldiers from 4-23 Inf. engage targets during live-fire training on Range 26. The exercise was a chance to review techniques and for new leaders to network and learn from each other.



Stryker Soldiers step up training with live-fire exercise

By Don Kramer
Northwest Guardian

Violence, surprise and control were the day's training goals July 10 for the Army's newest Stryker leaders.

With two brigades from the 2nd Infantry Division leading surge operations in the belts north of Baghdad, the latest-activated of three Fort Lewis-based Stryker brigades stepped up its training last week.

The 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment of the 5th Infantry Brigade completed a train-the-trainer phase of room-clearing drills with a live fire exercise on Range 20.

"We're out here ... clearing rooms as part of the MOUT (military operations in urban terrain training) piece," said 2nd Lt. Price D.

Smith, the executive officer of B Company, 4-23 Inf.

The brigade stood up in November 2006, with its battalions beginning individual marksmanship skills training five months later in April. The drills represent full launch into collective training for the Tomahawks of 4-23 Inf.

"There are a lot of individual tasks that get put together for that collective piece," Smith said. "When they're entering a room, they have to be excellent in their marksmanship skills to engage a very small target that could be on the floor or standing up, it all comes together — the foot movement, the fundamentals of firing. It's coming together."

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MP unit prepares for its third deployment

By Don Kramer
Northwest Guardian

After giving a leg-up to four sister companies in their preparations for deployment over the past eight months to Iraq and Afghanistan, the Dragon Fighters of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 504th Military Police Battalion will soon join them in theater.

The headquarters of the most-decorated military police battalion in the Army cased its colors Monday at Soldiers Field House for its third deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Basically we're looking at a command and control mission," said battalion executive officer, Maj. John W. Turner, "and also for the FOB (forward operating base) we'll coordinate ... security in that area. It's kind of a remote area so we're out there on our own."



CSM Floyd A. Thomas, left, and 504th MP Battalion commander, Lt. Col. James H. Mullen, case the colors Monday in preparation for the Dragon Fighters' third deployment to Iraq.

Don Kramer

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Phony casualty reports prey on fragile emotions

By Rachel Young
Northwest Guardian

Several reports of suspicious phone calls have surfaced in recent months from military spouses. Most have been false reports of deployed Soldiers sustaining wounds down range.

The goals of these phony casualty calls has been anything from exploiting the spouse's fragile emotional state to attempts at identity theft.

The Fort Lewis policy requires that someone from the Department of the Army make the official notification of injury.

Who to call
To report a suspicious phone call, call Force Protection at 966-7303, 966-7320 or 966-8909 or e-mail DESzfusioncell@lewis.army.mil.

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