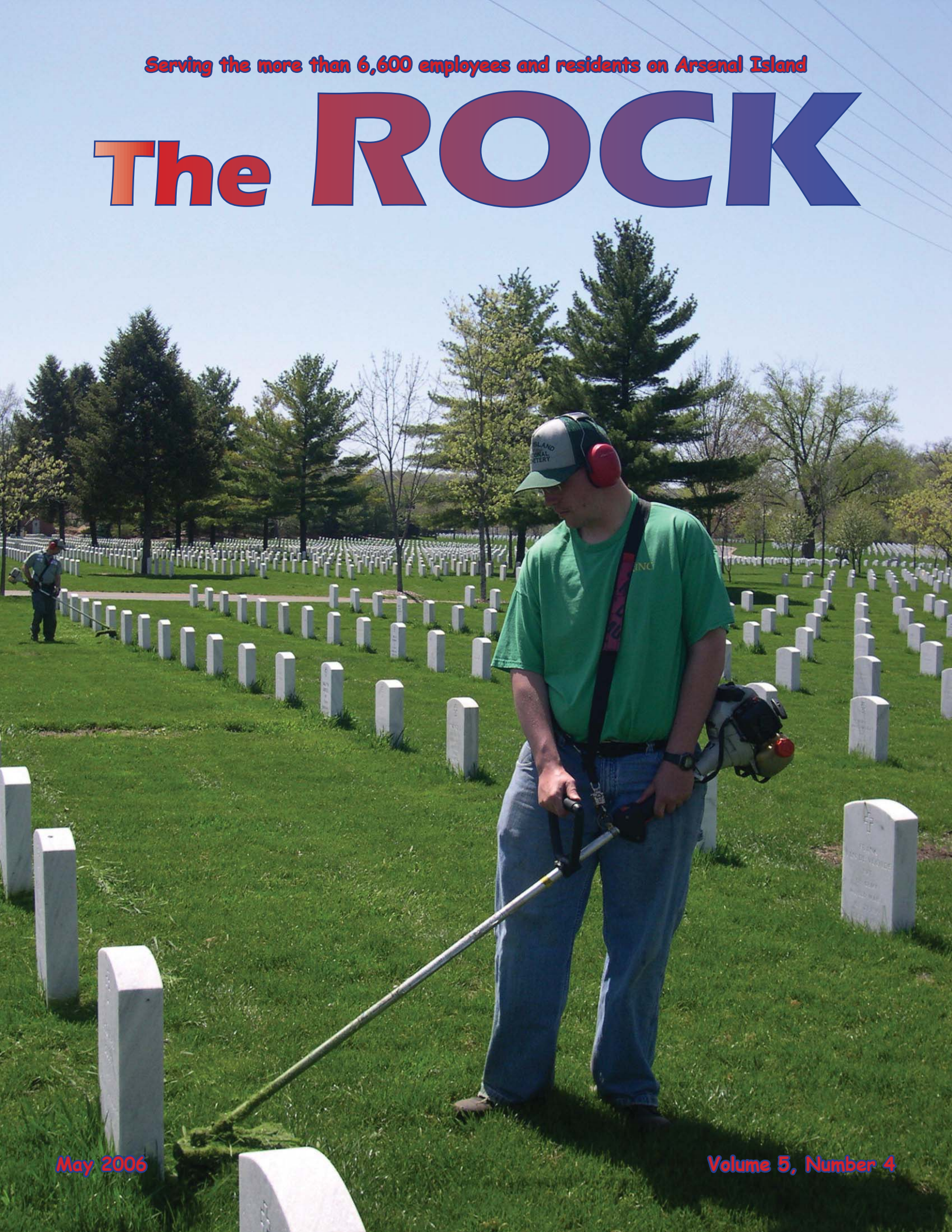
Serving the more than 6,600 employees and residents on Arsenal Island

# The ROCK



May 2006

Volume 5, Number 4

# A holiday that shouldn't be forgotten

When the Civil War ended in 1865, many Americans in both the North and the South simply wanted to forget that it had ever happened. This was understandable, given the terrible loss and suffering caused by that conflict, and the human impulse to put the most painful parts of our past behind us as quickly as possible. But forgetting the war meant forgetting the courage and sacrifice of the thousands of soldiers who had given their lives in battle, and this went against another basic part of our humanity – the part that calls us to be thankful, and to pay respect and honor to those who have earned it.

So, in the spring of 1866, individuals in several communities in the North and the South went to cemeteries where the Civil War dead had been buried. They brought the fresh-cut flowers of spring with them, and they placed these flowers upon the graves, a simple tribute expressing remembrance and gratitude, a visible gesture of undying respect.

The story goes that residents of Columbus, Mississippi, went to decorate the graves of fallen soldiers on April 25, 1866. The cemetery was a resting place for both Confederate and Union dead who had fallen in the bloody Battle of Shiloh. Though these Mississippians intended to decorate only the graves of Confederates, some were disturbed by the sight of Union graves, bare of flowers and badly neglected. These graves, too, were spruced up and decorated, an acknowledgement of shared sacrifice and humanity, an act of peace and reconciliation at a time when the bitterness of war still lingered.

From these grass-roots efforts, a national holiday known as Decoration Day was born. Decoration Day later became Memorial Day, and its meaning expanded beyond the Civil War to include honoring all those who died in all of America's wars and conflicts.

One of the many reasons that Memorial Day is so special is that it truly is a people's holiday. Its origins lie not in grand proclamations by public officials, but in heartfelt deeds by ordinary Americans who were doing what they knew was right and proper. It does not honor a famous individual or a single historic event, but rather many thousands of individuals who gave their lives over the course of America's history – and who, by so doing, kept our nation strong and free.

Maj. Gen. Jerome Johnson

> "In this, the spring of 2006, let our hearts be filled with the same spirit that came upon those who decorated the graves of the fallen 140 springs ago."
>
> – Maj. Gen. Jerome Johnson
> Commanding General

Today, we are once again gripped by war, and the recent casualties of war lie at rest in our cemeteries. In this, the spring of 2006, let our hearts be filled with the same spirit that came upon those who decorated the graves of the fallen 140 springs ago. Let us go forth in humility and express our deepest appreciation for our honored dead - just as they did. Let us always preserve the true and original meaning of Memorial Day, and let us always esteem the courage and sacrifice symbolized by this very special day.

# Employees continue to work while fighting cancer

**Charles Cervantes**
EEO Specialist

When fighting the battle against cancer, more and more federal employees are staying on their jobs and now more than ever agencies need to accommodate them. Supervisors have to abandon the mindset of years ago that cancer meant inevitable death or inability to work any longer.

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, if managers and employees continue to think this way, they may be in violation of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Agencies must not assume there will be long absences or employees will not be able to perform their duties anymore. Today, many continue to work during their treatments, and when the employee asks for time off and the supervisor doesn't take time to consider it, that is when the agency can get into trouble. The important thing to remember, though, is the employee has to "make the request," to start the process.

Another point to remember; because an employee has cancer doesn't automatically qualify them as being disabled. The U.S. District of Maryland ruled against an individual who had throat cancer. The individual had a good to excellent prognosis and could not show he was substantially limited in a major life activity.

People respond differently to cancer treatments, some recover more quickly than others, and according to the EEOC, it's not a good practice to harass employees on how much time they will need or when they are going to return to work.

Side effects of cancer treatments are something that may need to be accommodated, especially depression. Depression can affect an employee who does not want to eat, can't eat, or affects their sleep pattern. This in turn may affect a major life activity, falling under the Rehab Act of 1973.

*(Source: EEO Advisor, LRP Publications March 2006. The Island of Hope cancer support group meets on the Arsenal. For more information, call (309) 782-3049.*

# Remembering those who gave their lives

Some see it as the start of summer, while others see it as a much needed day off from work. In the midst of all these meanings, we lose sight of the true meaning of Memorial Day. It is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service.

Even though there are discrepancies as to its actual beginning, Waterloo, N.Y. was declared the birthplace of Memorial Day in 1966 by the U.S. Government, but the first official recognition was issued by Gen. John Logan on May 5, 1868.

It doesn't matter who started it or where. The important thing is that we recognize the sacrifices and efforts of our military, past and present.

When I was 19 years old in 1966, I was drafted into the Army during the Vietnam War. Being an Army brat, I knew what was expected of me and I was proud to take the oath as a soldier in the U.S. Army and serve. I had always been taught to respect the people serving in military service, because they were putting their lives on the line for me and everyone who calls America home. And now I was a soldier performing that honorable duty for my country.

As with everything in life, time brings change. The military of today have different obstacles and enemies than yesteryear, but the dangers remain the same. Since the beginning of the current Global War on Terror, more than 2,500 military have been killed and more than 17, 300 have been wounded in action. They have made the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our way of life. During World War II alone, more than 400,000 Americans died in defense of freedom.

Alan G. Wilson

Most children don't understand what it means to wear the military uniform, but we as adults need to teach them to respect those who wear it because they are doing a very honorable thing for their nation. As they grow older they realize that the liberties we all enjoy today result from the service of men and women in the military.

Remember freedom is not free. We live in the greatest country in the world and our men and women in uniform defend our freedom and way of life sometimes with the ultimate sacrifice.

Don't forget about those who have given their lives for America. Take a few minutes wherever you are on Memorial Day and thank our military forces, past, present and future, for their service. If you can schedule it in your activities on May 29, the Rock Island National Cemetery will have a Memorial Day Ceremony at 10:45 a.m. to honor our nation's fallen heroes.

## EEO Complaint Process by the numbers

**100** - Percentage of employees who are entitled to utilize the EEO complaint process.
**8** - Number of bases covered under Title VII (7) Race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age (over 40), disability (mental and physical), and reprisal.
**45** – Number of calendar days (after an incident) to contact the EEO office to file a pre-complaint
**30** – Number of days an EEO counselor has to do the fact finding in a complaint
**60** – Number of days a pre-complaint may be extended if an individual elects to utilize the ADR process.
**15** – Number of days a complainant has to decide if they want to file a formal complaint.
**180** – Number of days for an OCI investigator to complete their investigation.

To set up an appointment with an EEO counselor, call (309) 782-2548.

*(On the Cover) Anthony Leiter, summer hire at the Rock Island National Cemetery, trims the grass around the headstones.*
*The Rock Island National Cemetery will have a Memorial Day Ceremony May 29 at 10:45 a.m. There will be no parking at the cemetery except for individuals who are wheelchair-bound. Parking for all others will be behind Memorial Park. Buses will be transporting people from the parking lot to the cemetery.*

*The ROCK* is an unofficial publication for members of the Rock Island Arsenal community. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Garrison or the Department of the Army. The editorial content of *The ROCK* is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Garrison -- Rock Island Arsenal. Contributions to *The ROCK* are welcome. Postal address: Garrison Manager, Rock Island Arsenal, RIA-PA, Rock Island, Ill. 61299-5000. E-mail address: RIA-PA@ria.army.mil Phone: (309) 782-1121. Printed circulation: 3,000. *The ROCK* is available on-line at: www.ria.army.mil.

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Staff Writer

# Women share life lesson during history program

**Gale Smith**
Garrison Public Affairs

Words of wisdom and inspiration filled the Baylor Conference Room in Building 104 on March 30 as women leaders from across the installation and throughout the Quad Cities came together to celebrate Women's History Month.

Keynote speaker, Evangelist Deborah Mercer of Clarksville, Tenn., focused on the month's theme of women as builders of communities and dreams. She said, "Feed encouragement. Encouragement spreads like wildfire."

She also discussed how she overcame tough times in her life through her faith in God and the strength and encouragement of fellow women. "Going through tough times makes you what you are today. It prepares you to give back to others and to your community. You can make it. Don't give up."

One of Mercer's major accomplishments is her foundation of Youth, a non profit organization that bridges the generation gap by bringing young and mature women together to discuss life's challenges and how to successfully handle them.

Susan Skora, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Great River Bend, said that "connecting people who care with the opportunities to give, changes the future forever."

Her public foundation does just that, serving thousands of people who share a common concern – improving the quality of life in a 12-county Illinois/Iowa service area.

Some of the speakers discussed mentors that had significantly impacted them. Dr. Elaine Winter of the Christian Family Care Center said that a chance meeting with one mentor, Betty Frieden, author of the Feminine Mystique, changed her life. She realized that she wanted a path with a heart. She now works with victims of domestic violence. "Fear and violence prevent these abused women from achieving their dreams. We're working to revitalize those dreams."

Pam Fisher, the owner of Two Rivers Massage and the entrepreneur of the group, encouraged the audience to "find what you love to do and go out and give it a try." She discussed some of the lessons she has learned as a business owner and said, "You are all a success story waiting to happen."

Wisdom from her parents inspired Cindy Fisher of the Child Advocacy Center and molded her career. They taught her that "part of living in a community is giving back to that community." She stressed that we should "always leave things a little better than you found them."

Diana DeMeyer, a social worker for Army Community Service, also gained inspiration from her family. In her case her mother was her mentor and instilled strong family values and work ethic. "Empowering yourself and others is what it is all about," she said.

The major theme of achieving success continued with Bonnie Sparks from St. Ambrose University and Denise Ormsby from A.D. Huesing Corporation. Sparks said that "everyone can bloom where you are planted." Ormsby challenged the audience: "Don't be intimidated. Go for it," and "The sky's the limit."

Penny Dixon, Rock Island Arsenal Army Community Services Officer, shared how she over came the challenge of spina bifida to succeed in her career and as a single parent.

"Never feel sorry for yourself," she stated, "Learn to learn and work hard!"

Diana Balmer, the first female chief of staff for the Army Field Support Command, headquartered on the island, encouraged everyone to "work hard, show respect and earn every penny." She also recommended that people move around to a variety of organizations and volunteer for special project and studies in order to expand their horizons. But above all, she emphasized, "Keep a sense of humor."

The final speaker, Kristine Wallace from The Women's Connection, shared the guidance and inspiration she has received throughout her life from a variety of women, including compassion, how to be tactful, how to use your personality to your advantage, how to handle conflict by "just doing it," and learning that you can "laugh at work."

The Women's Connection is a Quad Cities organization that allows women to network and gather information about a variety of subjects, including health, finances, and lifestyles.

All of the women who spoke at this event, and many of the attendees, are builders within their communities, on the Arsenal and throughout the Quad Cities. They are following their dreams, inspiring others to follow theirs, and, in doing so, working diligently to make our communities a better place.

*(Editor's Note: This event was sponsored by the Garrison EEO Office.)*


Sistemood Ministries and Sistemood

# *Forward* with Lean Six Sigma

**by Shevaun J. Lassiter**
The ROCK Staff Writer

A nine-member Rapid Improvement Team from RIA Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center has figured out a way to decrease the set-up process for the M119A2 Howitzer by more than 50 percent. The RIE team is suggesting that the manufacturing facility group parts they build by similar tools used in their manufacturing. The suggestion also reduces the number of tools needed from 375 to 53.

For one week, the M119 Set Up Reduction Lathes Lean event pulled together programmers, machinists, a tool designer and a material handler to work on improving the set-up process of one of their largest workloads to date. Using the Lean/ Six Sigma approach, the team looked at every aspect of the set-up process for the M119A2 Howitzer. They began by walking through the factory to get a complete view (Current state) of all the steps of set-up beginning with the material storage area and ending with the new lathes machines, which actually make the parts the team is studying.

Methods and Standard's Jon Farrell and Programmer Joe Ramsey handled breaking down the more than 300 pieces and parts of the saddle, cradle and trailer of the weapon under the guidance of team leader Steve Naber and Lean event facilitator Charles Kraft. Measurements, dimensions and tools used were determined by Ramsey, Naber and Kraft while Farrell created a spreadsheet on Excel to clearly lay out the tools used by machinists like team members Joe Hoegerl and Dan Hankins. The painstaking process took almost two days to complete. The number of tools needed to complete the pieces for the saddle, cradle and trailer of the M119A2 Howitzer surpassed the targeted reduction of 65 percent.

Wayne Stevers, material handler, was instrumental in reorganizing the new lathes area where seven new HAAS machines sit waiting to begin manufacturing parts for the M119A2 Howitzer. Stevers operated a fork lift in the teams efforts to redesign the HAAS lathes area. The only licensed fork lift operator, Stevers moved tool boxes, crates, steel drums and other items that cluttered the area. Other members of the team assembled new storage units against the wall of the factory.

"I was glad to help. Some of the things that were [in the Haas area] didn't need to be," Stevers said.

Before the reorganization of the HAAS area, a forklift had some difficulty getting through to deliver new material and machinist were cramped in the small space designated for the area in Building 212. The reorganization has not only removed debris but it has also reorganized the floor and made operations easier for machinist who can clearly see where additional parts may be. Wasted time, energy and material may be drastically reduced by the new layout. Overproduction is less likely now that HAAS machinists can see what they have already manufactured the day before.

Col. Elliott, the deputy commander and several directors of RIA-JMTC attended a walk-thru of the area after the layout redesign. Naber explained the importance of the redesign to them and emphasized the amount of time saved because of the new efficient set up. Directors had the opportunity to look over the HAAS machines and to handle a new tool the team has suggested for purchase.

"We can basically cut setup time down to less than an hour with the way we have worked things out," said Kraft.

Prior to the event, set-up could take almost four hours. The team was able to find ways to reduce time because of the tool grouping they had done on the first and second days of the event and the redesign on the following days.

The adjustment to the new time frame, if implemented, might be difficult for seasoned machinists, but Hankins and Hoegerl agreed that it is possible.

"I think if we start reducing the time in small amounts it could work," said Hoegerl.

On the final day of the event, the team presented their findings and their successes to several other Lean teams, department directors and co-workers. They surpassed all of their targets, each target with the potential to save RIA-JMTC money and improve production drastically.

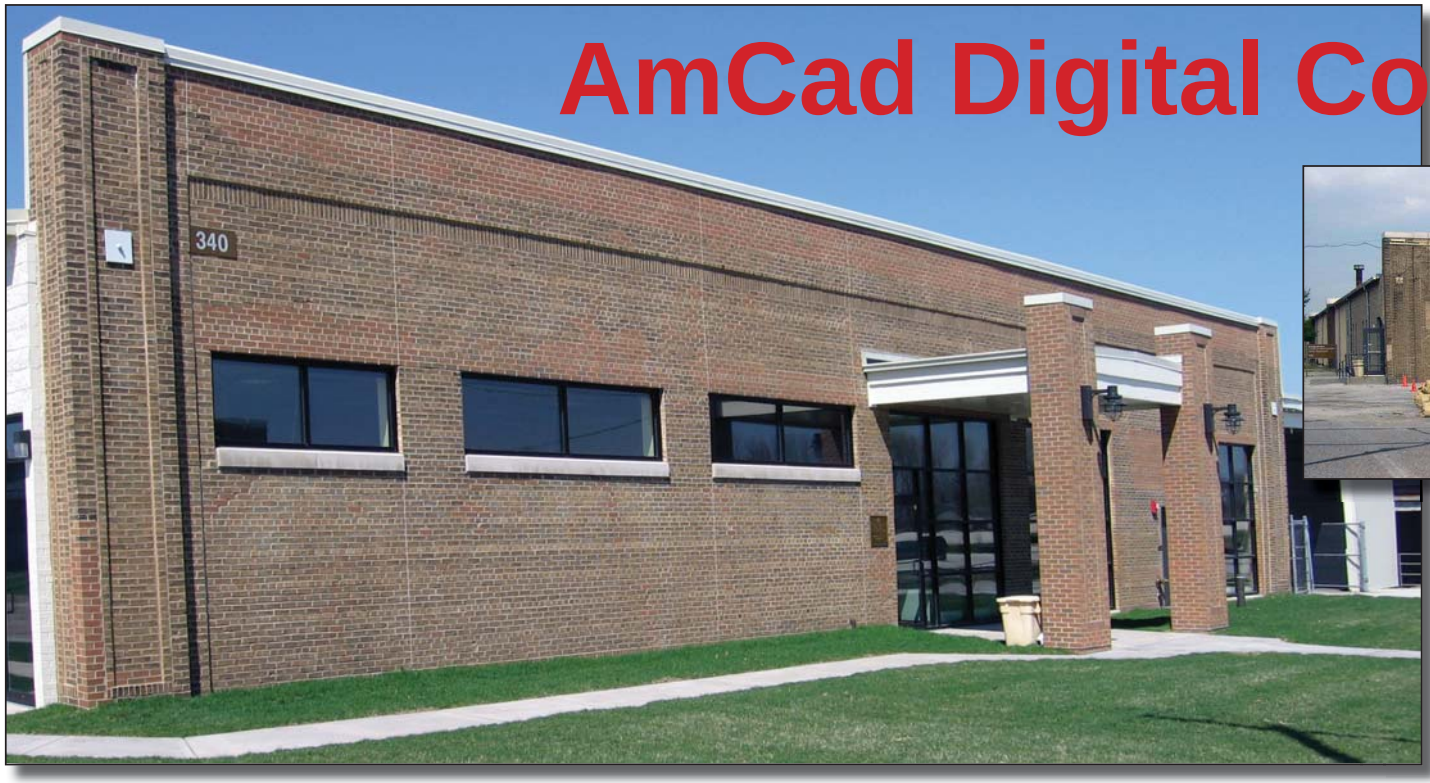
"We did a good job of doing the work and getting things done. I think the results show the kind of hard work the team put into the event," said Naber.

Courtesy photo

## Put it on paper!

Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center management and labor unions signed a commitment statement to establish a Safety Collateral Duty Program within JMTC. Program volunteers will be trained in the OSHA General industry course and will complete safety inspections and follow up to expand worker protection. (Left to Right) Diane Scott, President, AFGE Local 2119; Darlene Norton, RIA JMTC Safety Risk Manager; Col. J.B. Elliott, Commander RIA JMTC; William Olsen, Acting Vice President, AFGE Local 15 and Nancy Carlson, Safety and Occupational Health Specialist, Garrison.

# AmCad Digital Conversion



Courtesy photos

(Left) The exterior of Building 340, AmCad Digital Conversion's renovated building on Arsenal Island. (Right) Building 340 before renovations started in 2005. (Below left) An interior view of the north wall before renovation. (Below right) A view of Building 340's north wall after renovation was completed. The doors from the original building were kept in the renovated building's design. Bldg. 340 was originally built in 1919.

## ASPI tenant has grand opening

*(Rock Island Arsenal Development Group)* Rock Island Arsenal's largest Arsenal Support Program Initiative tenant held its grand opening April 26.

Steve Fiers, president of AmCad Digital Conversion officially opened a $2.5 million expanded facility on Rock Island Arsenal.

AmCad Digital Conversion is a leading provider of document imaging/micrographic products and services. ADC specializes in small document scanning, engineering and large format scanning and microfilm scanning services, web-based retrieval systems and consulting services. ADC has become a premier outsourcing partner to county governments, manufacturers, hospitals, banks, and non-profit organizations.

The expansion to Rock Island Arsenal was necessary because of the company's growing business. The company currently employs 65 people at their new facilities on RIA. Projections are to add up to 50 people within five years. ADC moved its existing operations in Rock Island to remodeled facilities on RIA.

Friers said the Arsenal will provide three levels of security for his business- guarded entrances, a secure building perimeter and a document vault with separate security. RIA police, fire and hazardous material unit support also appealed to Fiers.

AmCad Digital Conversion, formerly Advanced Document Conversion, announced earlier this year a merger with AmCad, LLC, a document and records management solutions provider for the public and private sector. ADC now operates as a wholly-owned subsidiary under the name AmCad Digital Conversion, LLC, and will continue to do business as ADC.

The Rock Island Arsenal Development Group, the Quad City Development Group and ASPI worked with Friers to select a site on the Arsenal for the business.

ADC now occupies 20,000 sq. ft., with an option for an additional 30,000 sq. ft. Friers projects his cost of operation over the next 15 years will be much less on the Arsenal, as compared to investing on his own in new construction.

"It's a great fit for us," Friers said, adding that efforts by representatives of QCDG, RIADG and the Arsenal have made the process streamlined and enjoyable. "I think we've been blessed with how this has worked out."

# Asian Pacific Islander Month

May is Asian Pacific Island Heritage Month. *The ROCK* would like to recognize employees of Asian Pacific Island heritage.

KHOUNLO

### *Bounkham Khounlo*

Originally from Laos. He moved to the United States in 1975.

***Job Title:*** Quality Engineer in the Joint Munitions Command

***Duties:*** Oversees Ammunition Stockpile Reliability Assessment Program and Ammunition Malfunction Investigation, and represents JMC QA in Configuration Control Board.

***Length of federal service:*** He started his career as an Army Materiel Command intern at Red River Army Depot, Texarkana, Texas, 21 years ago.

***What do you like most about your job?*** I like my job that's why I've stayed here 20 years. I like working with the ammunition issues and with the people in my organization.

***What would you like people to know about your heritage?*** "We are friendly people. In our culture you are taught to respect the elders. I only live three hours from my parents. I'm concerned about their welfare. I often make trips to see them. In my culture families are very close. The family is the key for our culture. Take care of your family, your elders."

***Hobbies or special interests:*** "I used to have hobbies, but not anymore. I'm busy with my children's activities. I do like action movies and comedies."

***Family:*** Wife and three children.

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### Col. Jyuji D. Hewitt

***Job Title:*** Deputy Commander/Chief of Staff of the Joint Munitions Command

***Duties:*** To integrate the staff requirements needs of the JMC commanding general and the eight subordinate installations, ammunition plants and depots to provide ammunition to our warfighters.

***Length of military service:*** 28 years

***What do you like most about being in the military?*** Every job has been interesting. In 28 years, I've worked at several levels from tactical to strategic in planning and supporting our soldiers in the defense of our nation. For me, being a commander is most interesting. I served as a commander at the compnay level, battalion level at the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant and at the brigade level when I commanded the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant after 9-11.

McAllester AAP is where our DoD industrial base manufactures bombs for our Air Force and Navy. My challenge was to safely increase production of bombs to support the war at a pace which paralled the levels of production during the 1960s. McAlester AAP is also the Army's largest ammunition depot and during this period we were extremely busy shipping ammunition to support our troops.

HEWITT

***What would you like for people to know about your heritage?*** "I believe that every culture has uniqueness that adds to our nation. It's that uniqueness, when blended with other cultures that makes us a stronger nation."

***Family:*** Married for more than 25 years and has two sons.

***What is the one bit of advice you would give your children that would help them throughout their lifetime?*** Stay balanced physically, mentally and spiritually. Always apply the Golden Rule.

***What advice would you give to the Army's military and civilian workforce?*** "We are a service organization here to serve our nation's sons and daughters. We should do that with a self-less service attitude."

***Hobbies or special interests:*** Golf. "I'm not good at it, but I like it."

**REMINDER:** ***The deadline to submit articles for the July issue of The ROCK is June 2. You may e-mail submissions to ria-pa@ria.army.***

# Army listens to workforce suggestions

**Sharon Lampert**
Garrison Army Suggestion Program Manager

May is Rock Island Arsenal's Army Suggestion Program "Good Ideas Month" for FY 2006 and is a great month to submit a suggestion. Normally, when a suggestion is submitted, and accepted into the program (if it has a clearly stated problem, solution and benefit), the submitter receives a gift thanking them for their suggestion. During the month of May 2006, an extra bonus gift will also be awarded to the suggestion submitter.

In FY 2004, the Department of the Army introduced a web based database for submitting ideas into the ASP; the internet address is: https://armysuggestions.army.mil. When using the link, you will be prompted for your Army Knowledge On-line (AKO) login ID and password to access the site. This database is available for use by any U.S. Army military or civilian employee or their dependents, with a valid AKO account. If you do not have an AKO account or you need to request a new login or password, go to the AKO website: http://www.us.army.mil/portal/portal_home.jhtml under either "Register for AKO" or "Lost Password".

The USAG-RIA is also introducing an informational website for use by all RIA employees. The site includes tips for suggesters and evaluators, information about the program, and a photo gallery of our thank you and award items. You can reach this information at: https://home.ria.army.mil/sites/aiep/aiep.htm

What is a Suggestion? An employee, group or team idea that is processed through the ASP that describes ways to do a job better, faster, safer and/or cheaper by:

- Improving the way we do things, material we use, productivity.
- Improving our end products.
- Improving morale or working conditions.

Issues concerning the following are not eligible for consideration by the ASP:

- Housekeeping practices Personal comfort.
- Minor Safety (major changes are accepted).
- Complaints about Government policy and practices.
- Recommending a study be conducted.
- Minor changes to publications/forms (major changes are accepted).

When submitting a suggestion, make sure you:

- Describe the problem (way things are currently done) completely and logically.
- Describe your proposed solution fully and logically (optional: may describe what prevents you from making the change right now).
- Describe the benefits in as much detail as possible - include estimated implementation costs and cost benefits if possible.
- Describe only a single, explicitly identified problem or topic (do not submit more than one problem on a single suggestion – submit another suggestion for another problem).
- Provide definitions for any technical terms and acronyms used .
- If you know what office or activity should evaluate your idea, include that under "Recommended Evaluating Office," to help expedite processing of your suggestion.

What can you receive for a Suggestion? When your suggestion is accepted into the program for consideration of implementation, you will receive a non-monetary gift. If submitted in May 2006, you will receive a bonus gift also.

Proposals can produce tangible benefits (i.e. monetary savings), intangible savings (i.e. quality of life improvements), or both. Generally, cash awards are equal to 10 percent of the verified tangible benefits produced by the proposal

For an approved suggestion, you may receive up to $25,000

For questions/concerns and help with preparing or submitting suggestions, please contact the Garrison ASP Suggestion Coordinator at (309) 782-0233. For Army Field Support Command ASP, call (309) 782-4587 and for TACOM LCMC RI call, (309) 782-0836.

Courtesy photo

## Keeping it safe!

Jerry Neff Sr. from Jerry's and Sparky's Cycling Shop installs a reflector on a bike March 30 during Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center's Bike Safety Accessory Installation. Seventy-six bikes were installed with safety equipment such as reflectors, bells and lights.

# Pentagon Channel adds video podcasting to product line

*(American Forces Press Service)* The Pentagon Channel has added video podcasting to its line of products that distribute the channel's military news and information to the nation's men and women in uniform.

"We work hard to communicate with the men and women of the department around the world," Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld said.

"I am pleased that we are using video casting and other increasingly important technologies to reach our global audience with all the news and information available on the Pentagon Channel."

The channel's video podcasting line-up includes:

- "Around the Services in Brief," the daily military news and information show;
- "RECON," an in-depth look at real-world military operations, missions and events; and
- "Around the Services Reloaded," a weekly round-up of news and information important to servicemembers stationed around the world.

In addition to its new video podcasts, the Pentagon Channel will continue to audio podcast and stream a live webcast of the channel at pentagonchannel. mil. "Leveraging technologies like video and audio podcasting allows us to communicate relevant and timely military news and information to our men and women of the U. S. military, anywhere, anytime - it's a great capability," said Brian Natwick, general manager of the Pentagon Channel. Video podcasting is a method of publishing video broadcasts via the Internet, allowing users to subscribe to a feed of new files. There is no cost to subscribe, and broadcasts are delivered straight to the subscriber's computer desktop. Files can be viewed either on a PC or on a mobile video device, such as a video-enabled iPod. The Pentagon Channel broadcasts military news and information for and about the 2. 6 million members of the U. S. armed forces -- active duty, National Guard and Reserve. Broadcasting 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the Pentagon Channel helps ensure that U. S. forces remain the best informed in the world. Today, the Pentagon Channel is available on-base to the more than 1 million service members who live and work on the 312 military bases, camps and installations in the United States that currently receive it. Also, the channel is available to the 700,000 servicemembers and their families serving overseas in 177 countries via the American Forces Radio and Television Service. The Pentagon Channel also reaches more than 12 million households through commercial distribution on satellite and cable systems nationwide. DISH Network, Verizon FiOS and divisions of Comcast, Time Warner, Cox, Charter, Mediacom, RCN, Armstrong, Midcontinent, Knology, GCI, and a number of smaller cable companies and local access channels in communities around the country carry the Pentagon Channel.

For more information on video podcasting, as well as to view the Pentagon Channel streamed live, visit www. pentagonchannel. mil.

# Congratulations!

MITCHELL

The Rock Island Arsenal Garrison Fire & Emergency Services Division is proud to introduce the new Assistant Fire Chief for Company 2, James E. Mitchell.

Mitchell has been with the RIA Fire Department since 1991, starting as a fire fighter.

In addition to his position at RIA, he continues to serve on his hometown fire department in Coal Valley, Ill.

# Audio Visual Support Center

**The Audio-Visual Department run by E.L. Hamm & Associates in Bldg. 108 has undergone some changes. In order to better serve you, the customer, the Photo Lab and Graphics area have merged together to form the new Audio-Visual Support Center. The new center will be located in the old Graphics area located in Bldg. 108 2nd floor, east wing.**
**All phone numbers will remain the same. Graphics can be reached at (309) 782-1438 and Photo Lab at (309) 782-1441. We're also on the web at https://home.ria.army.mil/sites/elhamm**

**We're approaching our 20th year of service to RIA and look forward to many more years to come.**

# Asian Pacific Island Heritage Month Event

**When:** 9 - 11:00 a.m., May 22
**Where:** Baylor Conference Room

**Speakers:** Col. Jyuji Hewitt, JMC Command Group and Jan Masamoto, President and CEO of JTM Concepts

## Mental Health

# *Mind and body go hand-in-hand*

**Leah Hyde**
Employee Assistance Program

May is Mental Health Month. The Employee Assistance Program has joined the National Mental Health Association's annual campaign to promote mental wellness and overall health. This year's theme is "Mind Your Health," which focuses on the mind-body connection. Being healthy not only pertains to physical health, but also mental health. Mental health and physical well-being go hand-in-hand.

The EAP offers a few practical steps that we all can take in the pursuit of a healthy work and life balance. It's not necessary to wait until you have a problem, take advantage of this valuable information on any step along the way. EAP's mission is to help employees and families improve the quality of their life – to keep life in balance. Some recommendations to help you reach that goal include:

### At Work

**Set manageable goals each day.** Being able to meet priorities helps us feel a sense of accomplishment and control. Make a "to do" list and take care of important tasks first and eliminate nonessential ones. Ask for help when necessary.

**Be efficient with your time at work.** When we procrastinate, the task often grows in our minds until it seems insurmountable. So when you face a big project at work or home, start by dividing it into smaller tasks. The less time you can spend procrastinating, the more time you can spend productively or with friends and family.

**Take five.** Taking a break at work isn't only acceptable, it's often encouraged by many employers. Small breaks at work or on any project will help clear your head and improve your ability to deal with stress and make good decisions when you jump back into the grind.

**Communicate effectively.** Be honest with your boss and colleagues when you feel you're in a bind. Don't just complain, be a problem solver. Offer solutions and suggest alternatives. Looking at a situation from someone else's point of view can also reduce your stress. In a tense situation, either rethink your strategy or stand your ground, calmly and rationally.

**Give yourself a break.** No one's perfect. Allow yourself to be human and just do the best you can.

### At Home

**Divide and conquer.** Make sure responsibilities at home are evenly distributed and clearly outlined - you'll avoid confusion and problems later.

**Don't over-commit.** Do you feel stressed when you just glance at your calendar? If you're overscheduled with activities, learn to say "no". Shed the superman/superwoman urge!

**Get support.** Chatting with friends and family can be important to your success at home, or at work, and can improve your health. People with stronger support systems have more aggressive immune responses to illnesses than those who lack such support.

**Stay active.** Aside from its well-known physical benefits, regular exercise reduces stress, depression and anxiety, and enables people to better cope with adversity, according to researchers. It will also boost your immune system and keep you out of the doctor's office. Make time in your schedule for the gym or take a walk during lunch - have some fun!

**Treat your body right.** Being in good shape physically increases your tolerance to stress and reduces sick days. Eat right, exercise and get adequate rest. Don't rely on drugs, alcohol or cigarettes to cope with stress - they only lead to problems.

**Get help if you need it.** Don't let stress stand in the way of your health and happiness. If you are persistently overwhelmed, remember EAP is here to help.

Staffed by professional, Master's level counselors, the EAP provides confidential, free consultation, and counseling to military and civilian personnel and their family members. If you feel that your life has gotten out of balance, call to set up an appointment at (309) 782-HELP (4357). The EAP office is located on the first floor of Building 110, Southeast Wing. Hours of operation are 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

*(Leah Hyde is an Employee Assistance Counselor with the Employee Assistance Program.)*

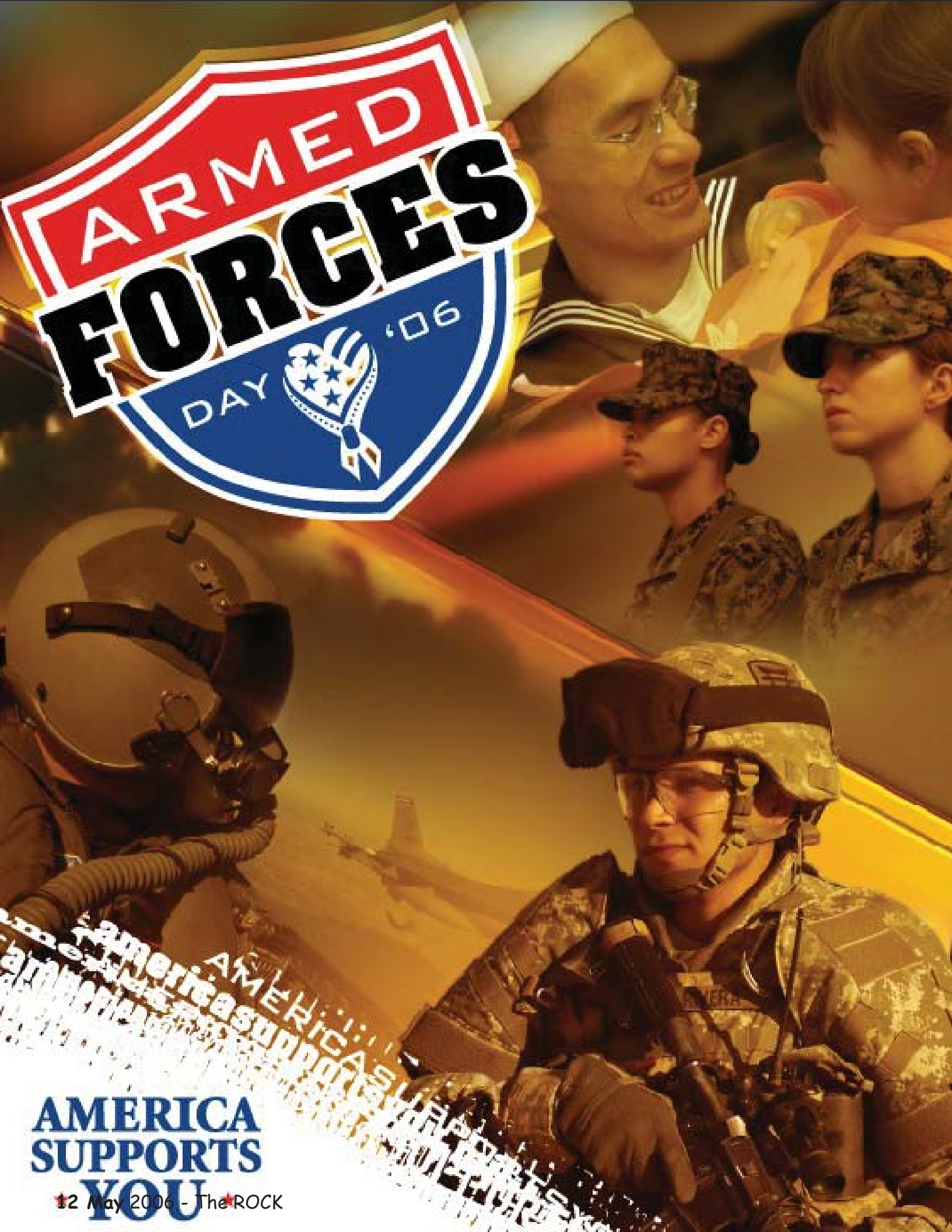
# *VIP award nomination period opens*

*(The National Military Family Association)* The National Military Family Association is now accepting applications for the Very Important Patriot Award. The program recognizes exceptional volunteers worldwide whose outstanding service contributes to improving the quality of life in their military and civilian communities.

Each year NMFA presents five Very Important Patriot (VIP) Awards, five Awards of Honor, and five Awards of Merit. Each of the five VIP recipients will receive $1,000 and a trip for two to Washington, DC to receive their award. The recipients of the Award of Honor will each receive a check in the amount of $500, and the Award of Merit winners will each receive a check for $250.

Due to the challenges of the current pace of military operations, volunteers are playing an increasing role in providing support and stability in their communities. NMFA and the VIP Award sponsors want to recognize those volunteers whose selfless actions have made a lasting impact on their community. Any active duty, National Guard and Reserve, or retired service member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, their family members, and survivors are eligible to be nominated. Nominations will only be accepted online at www.nmfa.org/vip now through May 19.

For more information and nominating instructions, please visit our website at www.nmfa.org/vip.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