

May changes [as of 5/29]	
C FUND	+ 3.46 percent
I FUND	+ 2.17 percent
S FUND	+ 3.95 percent

TSP to mail annual statements to participants

By Tim Kaufman
FederalTimes.com

The Thrift Savings Plan's 3.7 million participants will be mailed annual statements beginning next year that will summarize their investments and, administrators hope, encourage their involvement in managing their accounts.

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, which oversees TSP, voted unanimously at a May 22 meeting to approve the new statements. Preparing and mailing the statements will cost \$2.6 million the first year, and the figure likely will rise in subsequent years as postage rates increase and TSP adds participants, Executive Director Gregory Long said.

The new one-page annual statements, the first of which will be mailed in January, will provide a broad overview of each participant's account during the past 12 months. Included on the front of each statement will be the opening and closing balance, a percentage rate

of return on the account for the year, year-end balances for the past five years, a summary of how the account balance is divided among the various funds and a summary of how current contributions are allocated. The back page will provide more detail on these areas, plus additional information on outstanding loans and account beneficiaries.

The statement also will allow TSP to craft targeted messages to specific groups, such as participants who aren't investing in lifecycle funds or those who are nearing retirement.

Board members received a draft design of the new statements at the meeting May 22.

Most participants don't receive regular mailings from TSP. About 400,000 participants request and receive detailed quarterly statements in the mail, but most participants access these statements online. TSP will continue to mail quarterly statements to those participants who have requested them.

Long said there are four benefits of mailing annual statements. They are:

- Help educate participants about TSP and encourage them to evaluate their investment allocations.
- Ensure participants with inactive accounts are aware of their accounts and are making the best investment choices.
- Uncover fraudulent activity on accounts by increasing account awareness.
- Identify and correct instances in which TSP has bad mailing addresses for accounts.

In a recent participants' survey TSP conducted, 16 percent of participants said they rarely or never check their statements. In addition, nearly 10 percent of those surveys were returned as undeliverable, suggesting that TSP has bad addresses on as many as 370,000 participants.



I solemnly swear ...

Nine hundred and seventy-eight second lieutenants took their oaths during the Graduation Ceremony for the U.S. Military Academy Class of 2007 Saturday at Michie Stadium. This class entered West Point in the summer of 2003 and exited during the midst of the same war [GWOT], which in the 205-year history of the academy has only happened about a dozen times. [See story on page 8-9].

ERIC S. BARTELT/PV

INSIDE



AAA WINNERS,
page 15

\$20K Bonus, other incentives available for some Captains

By Army News Service

WASHINGTON [Army News Service] -- A new Critical Skills Retention Bonus of \$20,000 is available to more than 7,000 regular-Army captains who agree to remain on active duty beyond their initial active-duty service obligation.

The bonus is part of a "menu of incentives" targeting officers nearing completion of their initial active-duty service obligation who are willing to remain on active duty an additional three years. Other incentives include graduate school, military school, transfer of branch or functional area or post of choice.

The incentives will help the Army retain company-grade

officers with valuable experience, said Col. Paul Aswell, chief, Officer Division, Directorate of Military Personnel Management, Army G1. The Army is currently growing to increase capabilities and reduce stress over the long term. This has led to an increased need of nearly six thousand captains and majors since 2004, according to Aswell.

The branches considered critical for the purposes of the CSRB include: air defense, adjutant general, armor, chemical, engineer, field artillery, finance, infantry, military intelligence, military police, ordnance, quartermaster, signal corps and transportation corps. Officers originally commissioned in these branches are eligible for all incentives on the menu. Officers commissioned into the Army nurse

corps or medical science corps are also eligible for the CSRB.

Aviation officers are not eligible at this time due to their longer initial ADSOs, but the Army is working to draft an incentive program to offer them by year's end.

Eligible captains must have a date of rank between March 1, 2005, and January 1, 2007. Similar incentives will be offered to captains in other year groups, Aswell said.

The CSRB and other incentives are just part of the Army's efforts at eliminating the officer shortage, Aswell said. The Army has moved up the promotion to major from 11 years to 10, and is considering moving it to the 9th year of service. Aswell noted that earlier promotion

See BONUS on page 3

Team building tips for supervisors/managers

Submitted by Anne Ashley
EAP, Program Manager

One of the most powerful motivators for employees is to know that 'Leadership' cares. Employees vary in their occupational drive, goals and personalities.

Some are internally motivated -- requiring minimal supervision, while others require external incentives to display sustained optimal performance.

Many enjoy work which is void of micro-management, provides opportunity for self-direction, offers positive relations with co-workers and the satisfaction of knowing they've "done a good job" and that their work is "appreciated."

As a supervisor or manager, to consider incorporating the following in your management

"toolbox":

Offer yourself as a person -- remember, your employees are people first and workers second. Engage in some personal or non-business related interaction with them.

Try brief, casual, respectful exchanges or discussions about "how they are," "the latest restaurant you've tried" or "weekend plans you've made." In a word -- "connect."

Extend reassurances that "what they do matters" -- we are social beings and desire to be a valued part of a team or work group. Individual work can go unnoticed. As a leader, make sure that everyone's contributions are recognized.

Communicate -- employees want to feel "IN" on things. Provide

honest feedback and information about their performance and about the department's goals and priorities. Otherwise, employees will rely on -- or generate -- rumors which may damage productivity and morale.

Treat your employees as "individuals" -- take the time to make employees feel valued. Some revel in the spotlight of public praise, while others would cherish a handwritten complimentary note.

When you see it, say it - consider those quick and easy compliments that will let your employees know you've noticed: "I like how you handled that extra assignment without complaining!" "I got some good feedback about your work last week, keep it up!" "You're doing a great job, I

appreciate your dependability!" "Your work is exemplary!" "Our reputation's improved greatly!"

Focus on the positive and diminish the negative -- if there are areas of performance improvement needed, address them accordingly. However, focus on your employees' strengths and speak highly of them.

Foster an **"it's okay to make mistakes" attitude** -- all of your employees walked in their first day on the job determined to succeed. They didn't walk in planning to make mistakes. But mistakes do happen. How you handle them will deeply impact your team. If a mistake is set up as an opportunity for learning, the experience will be motivating.

Celebrate team victories --

there's nothing like a celebration after hard work to strengthen a team and acknowledge success. Plan a party, order pizza, announce casual day, plan to provide an hour or two "early off."

Develop your team -- send a clear message of gratitude, pride and confidence to your employees. Build on the "sense of belonging." A sincere "thank you" at the end of a shift goes a long way.

Offer your time -- check in with employees occasionally to find out how things are going and how the team is doing. Connect with them as people first.

For further information contact the Employee Assistance Program

SAPR-P

The members of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program are Col. Jeanette McMahan, Shelley Ariosto [Garrison], Maj. Samantha Ross [USCC], Maj. Kim Kawamoto [ODIA] and Lt. Col. Robbie Williams [Dean]. Community members can e-mail McMahan at Jeanette.McMahan@usma.edu for advice or to offer any recommendations on the program here. Cadets can also call the sexual assault support helpline at [845] 591-7215. West Point Soldiers and civilians needing assistance can call [845] 938-3369.

Weekly Sudoku by Chris Okasaki, D/EECS

			8					
		6			2	3		
		1	3	5	7			8
	6	2	1	4				5
	3	8				6	7	
9				3	6	2	8	
5			2	9	3	1		
		3	5			7		
					4			

Rules: Fill in the empty cells with the digits 1-9 so that no digit appears twice in the same row, column, or 3-by-3 box.

Difficulty: Easy

See Solution on Page 11

POINTER VIEW®

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Irene D. Brown
Chief, Command Info.
938-8366

Linda Mastin
Editor, 938-2015
Jim Fox
Asst. Editor, 938-8365
Eric S. Bartelt
Sports Editor, 938-3883
Kathy Eastwood
Staff Writer, 938-3684



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Local and National News

Senate panel moves to scale back Pentagon personnel system

By **Brittany R. Ballenstedt**
Govexec.com

A Senate panel approved language May 24 that would significantly limit the implementation of a controversial personnel system at the Defense Department and authorize a 3.5 percent 2008 pay raise for members of the military.

In a markup of the fiscal 2008 Defense authorization bill that began May 23, the Senate Armed Services Committee voted to repeal the existing authority of the Defense Department to move forward on the labor relations portions of its National Security Personnel System.

The House approved similar language two weeks ago. The Senate provision would permit DOD to continue developing a pay-for-performance system, as long as such a system is consistent with existing federal labor relations law.

In the 2004 Defense authorization act, Congress granted the department authority to create a new human resources system, based on the notion that the current system was too rigid and outdated to allow an effective response to modern threats of terrorism.

Federal labor unions have been lobbying the Senate to pass the

NSPS repeal language, especially after an appeals court ruled May 18 that the 2004 law grants the agency the authority to curtail the collective bargaining rights of employees until November 2009. That ruling reversed a district court decision that struck down the labor relations portions of the system.

At a briefing May 21, several unions outlined their plans to submit the case for full court review and they vowed to go to the Supreme Court, if necessary. Still, union leaders argued that completely overhauling the system would require a legislative change and expressed hope the full Senate will pass the NSPS repeal provision, despite a veto threat from the White House.

"It has always been our position that it would take a legislative fix to change a bad law," said John Gage, president of the American Federation of Government Employees, early last week.

The National Federation of Federal Employees praised the committee's action May 25.

"We don't think that Congress ever truly intended to eliminate

collective bargaining at DOD," said NFFE President Rick Brown. "This provision makes it clear that the Armed Services Committee wants collective bargaining rights for DOD workers left intact."

Meanwhile, the committee also approved a 3.5 percent pay raise for military members. That figure, which is half a percent higher than the raise proposed by the Bush administration, likely will give federal labor unions an edge in pushing for an equivalent raise for civilian federal employees.

This year's civilian federal raise is likely to be included in the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, expected to be marked up in June.

National Treasury Employees Union President Colleen Kelley praised the approval of the raise May 24, noting that the action is significant for civilian workers who have received pay parity with the

military in recent years.

"NTEU plans to work closely with members of the House and Senate to ensure a minimum 3.5 percent raise in 2008 for the federal

civilian workforce," Kelley said, "and will continue our work in securing bipartisan congressional support for this increase for civilian and military employees."



Congressman John Hall
JOHN PELLINO/DOIM MMB

The BOV's newest member
Congressman John Hall, [D] 19th district N.Y., was appointed as the newest member of the U.S. Military Academy Board of Visitors. The BOV is appointed under the provision of Section 4355 of Title 10, United States Code. It is the duty of the board to inquire about the academy's morale and discipline, curriculum, instructions, physical equipment, fiscal affairs and academic methods.

BONUS, cont. from page 1

points and higher rates reflect the Army's recognition of the higher experience level among today's company grade officers, and the value of their service.

"It takes the Army 10 years to grow a major," Aswell said, "To grow the active officer force, we must keep officers who in the past have left active service." He went on to say he is confident the new incentives will improve retention of company-grade officers on active duty to well-above historic rates.

"We've done a number of studies, including a very specific study last year on the value of a bonus to active-duty officers," Aswell said, "We're confident that the incentives we're offering will make a difference to those junior officers we really want to keep on active duty."

Casey addresses bonuses, stability operations

By Jim Garamone

WASHINGTON [Army News Service] -- Army officials will continue to monitor manning and may offer bonuses to mid-level officers and noncommissioned officers if needed, the Army chief of staff said May 11.

General George W. Casey Jr. told reporters that the service needs to come up with incentives for mid-range officers and NCOs to ensure

the leadership is in place for the force of the future. He also spoke about changes to the Army as a result of experiences in the war on terror.

Casey said active-duty and reserve-component personnel are meeting retention objectives. In recruiting, the active force and the National Guard are making their goals. The Army Reserve is missing its goal, but is expected to make it for the year.

"We will still monitor the

situation," Casey said. While incentives will be partially monetary, other aspects - such as funding graduate school - will be considered.

Casey said the 1990s outlook in the military against "nation building" has changed. He said Soldiers accept the move toward stability operations and reconstruction because of what they see in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"They recognize it is an integral

part of counterinsurgency strategy," Casey said. "It's not just the military [that wins counterinsurgency efforts], but it's political and economic and information."

The next step is whether the Army should organize units solely for stability operations and reconstruction. "I'm not sure yet," Casey said.

He said these really are not part of the core competencies of the Army, which is still configured to

fight and win the nation's wars. He said these competencies normally lie in other federal agencies.

"The question really is can we change the culture in the other departments so their folks can participate in areas like Iraq," or whether that's simply too hard and the mission should fall to the military, he said.

[Editor's Note: Garamone writes for the American Forces Press Service.]

Select Captains eligible for Army staff intern program

WASHINGTON [Military Report] -- Twenty basic-branch captains from year groups 2001 and later will be selected to participate in the 2008 Joint Chiefs of Staff, Office of Secretary of Defense and Army Staff Intern Program.

The internship is a three-year, three-phase master's degree program conducted by the Public Policy Institute of Georgetown University and Pentagon staff agencies.

Upon earning a degree, officers spend the second year assigned to the Joint Staff or Office of the Secretary of Defense and the third on the Army staff as lead action officers.

The program is not open to warrant officers or members of the following special branches: Chaplains Corps, Judge General's Corps and the various corps of the Army Medical Department.

Officers who want to compete for selection should contact their Human Resources Command assignment officer, who can assist in preparing applications.

The application deadline is Aug. 14.

Applications will be processed entirely at HRC. Selections will be announced in December and the Georgetown phase of the program will begin in May 2008.

While the program is targeted

at officers in year groups 2001 and later, HRC will consider captains from year groups 1999 and 2000 if they can meet normal career timelines as determined by their assignment managers.

Other basic eligibility criteria include:

- Must be branch-qualified at the rank of captain.

- Must have strong potential for future military service.

- Must have an undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

- Must hold a top-secret security clearance or have a personal security questionnaire pending investigation by the Central Clearance Facility

by Dec. 15.

- Must not be competing in the same fiscal year for any other Army-sponsored fellowship, internship, scholarship or be slated to participate in the expanded graduate school program.

- Officers who already have a master's degree can apply, provided their degree is not in

public administration, public policy, policy analysis or policy management.

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Army Chief of Staff stresses Family support

By Robin Brown

FORT MCPHERSON, Ga. [Army News Service] -- In a visit to Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem May 15, Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. emphasized his goal to support Army Families.

Casey is spending his first 60 days on the job framing initiatives. He will take the next 100 days to receive feedback from leaders, Soldiers and Families to calibrate whether the initiatives -- which include maintaining the continuity of Army modernization and increasing the quality of support to Soldiers and Families affected by deployments -- are the right areas of emphasis.

The responses from his tour will be presented to the assistant secretaries of the Army in charge of each initiative. They will prepare action plans and create necessary programs and budget systems, the general said.

Eighty-five to 90 percent of Soldiers are comfortable with the Army transformation, Casey said.

"There is great support for what the Army is trying to accomplish in terms of modernization and support to deploying forces, preparing the deploying forces and resettling those that deploy," he said. "We are in a consistent cycle of consuming and building readiness, and that will continue well past the time Army operations have ended in Iraq and Afghanistan."

But Families are stressed by the increase and pace of deployments, he added. "And we are starting to see the impact of five years of war on our Soldiers, Families, equipment and institution. ... We will raise what we do for Families another notch. Doing so will preserve the strength of the force."

The general said Family members have expressed to him that it's not new programs they want, but funding and standardization for programs that already exist.

Information must also be given to teachers to help them understand what children may be going through when one parent or both are deployed for extended periods.

"Combat is inherently brutal and difficult and it impacts humans in different ways," he said. "We have recognition and counseling programs we are working on to enhance and increase the level of support for Families and their Soldiers who are dealing with post traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury."

Casey served in Iraq as a commander for 30 months and insists the Army isn't stretched too thin. "We will give the Nation the Army it needs in 2020, while we meet our commitment today," he said.

Before arriving here, Casey visited two other Georgia installations -- Fort Benning and Fort Gordon. He visited San Antonio, as well.

[Editor's Note: Brown writes for the *Fort McPherson Sentinel*.]

Community Features and Photos

Community Scout builds memorial garden for volunteers

Story and photo
by Kathy Eastwood
Staff Writer

As with all potential Eagle Scouts, one of the necessary things they need to do is a community project. This is exactly what Eagle Scout hopeful Clay Cashion, a member of West Point Troop 23 here and a freshman at James O'Neill High School, did for the West Point community by building a small memorial garden near the Red Cross Center at Bldg. 2104 here.

"This project came about through Michele Strom, the director of the Red Cross here and Col. Mike Jones," Cashion said. "I wanted to put in a garden to honor our community volunteers. We put up a fence, did the paving, mulched and, put in two bushes and flowers. [My] mom helped me with the flowers."

Strom said there is still work to be done on the garden.

"We realized the garden doesn't have its own water source, but we have a hose now," she said. "The grass will be renewed as well and we plan on putting up a plaque with Clay's name and the names of our volunteers."

The promotion to Eagle Scout is a performance-based achievement whose standards have been well-maintained over the years and is the highest achievement in scouting. An Eagle Scout must fulfill requirements in the areas of leadership, service and outdoor skills. About five percent of all Boy Scouts achieve the rank of Eagle Scout according to www.scouting.org/factsheet/02-516.html

"I will be taking my boards June 13," Cashion said.

Eagle Scout boards determine if the Eagle project was successfully carried out, that the Eagle Scout



Colonel John Smith [left], academy professor in the English department here and the West Point Troop 23 Scoutmaster, stands with Clay Cashion, son of 2nd Regimental Tactical Officer Lt. Col. Jerry Cashion, and Col. Mike Jones, director of Admissions, in the volunteer memorial garden that Cashion built near the Red Cross Center, Bldg. 2104 on South Post in Highland Falls.

candidate demonstrated leadership, that the project was of value to an institution, school or community group and if the project followed the plan or if modifications were necessary to complete the project, according to www.eaglescout.org/finale/bor.html.

"He did a great job on this project," said Col. John Smith, Troop 23 Scoutmaster.

Delivery problems?

FOR PV HOME DELIVERY PROBLEMS CONTACT VALERIE MULLANE AT THE POUGHKEEPSIE JOURNAL AT (845) 437-4730 OR BY E-MAIL AT VMULLANE@POUGHKEE.GANNETT.COM.

A year later: '06 grad puts thesis to work in field

By Lt. Col. John M. Graham

First Lt. James Grossman [USMA '06] is training members of his battalion with expertise gained at the U.S. Military Academy. In a strange twist that has become common with USMA graduates, his undergraduate project turned out to provide a solution where there was none. A quick e-mail to the department of Behavioral Sciences & Leadership and he had a copy of his work and more support to follow.

"I had just been with the unit for a short time when we began preparing for deployment. One last minute addition to our training was that we needed to prepare for a new command and control system in Iraq. The system is called Command Post of the Future. No one in my unit had ever seen the system and we did not yet have it installed in our Tactical Operations Centers. The task was to get trained on the system while in garrison so we could use the systems in country," Grossman said. "Imagine my commander's surprise when I told him that CPOF was my senior thesis!"

More specifically, Grossman had designed the first online CPOF

trainer. The trainer was a thesis project completed by him, and classmates Brandon Kennedy and Seth Gulsby, who were all members of the Engineering Psychology program in 2006.

All of the project members are now officers in their respective units. A Web-based trainer is unique in that modules can be easily added as new training requirements and techniques emerge. The former cadets were able to create modules that addressed the most common problems for new CPOF users. Experienced CPOF users are then able to write and add new training modules as they figure out functions or techniques they want to share with others.

Command Post of the Future is a command and control visualization system that has revolutionized the way commanders share information. The new computer network allows commanders from battalion level and higher to feed real-time situational awareness into the system and have that information available in text and graphic representation immediately by fellow commanders and operations officers at all levels. Initially, the system was only in use by the First Cavalry Division, but

now, the CPOF is in use by all commanders in Iraq.

As a result, the number of trainers is far outnumbered by the number of new users. The cadet solution was a stop-gap measure, which allowed units to get familiar with the most common CPOF procedures without a formal instructor present.

Not satisfied to make an untested trainer, the former cadets designed a series of experiments to confirm their web system's usability. In a comparison between their Web trainer and a human instructor, they found no significant differences in Soldier learning. Armed with the knowledge that their product was equivalent to more costly forms of CPOF instruction, they sent their trainer to the Army for use.

Kennedy stopped by the Engineering Psychology Laboratory last week as well. Enroute to take command of his platoon in Vicenza, Italy, he picked up tips from this year's senior projects.

In particular, he received a briefing and links to an extension to the CPOF project by graduating



cadets Becca Garcia, Eric Edstrom and Vanessa Forbes. These new lieutenants spent the last year working on the Tactical Ground Report System. TiGR is focused on Battalion level and below patrolling and extends CPOF-like capability down to the patrol leader and squad leader.

The project development was a combined effort between Engineering Psychology, the Information Technology Operations Center and the Directorate of Information Management here. Through a grant from Project Management -- Battle Command, the ITOC has a small network of CPOF terminals.

"These terminals are an Army unique asset available for testing and project research by faculty, cadets and visiting researchers," said Lt.Col. Ron Dodge, ITOC Director.

To date, more than half-a-dozen cadet projects and five faculty projects are ongoing with collaborators from the N.Y. Fire Department, The Ohio State University and Carnegie Mellon University.

Interestingly, BS&L has had a strong link and legacy with the CPOF system. Lt. Gen. [Ret.]

Tom Garrett and Brig. Gen. [Ret.] Pat O'Neal, both former BS&L professors, were instrumental in designing the CPOF system.

Major Patrick Michaelis [1-7 Cavalry Squadron and also a former BS&L professor] helped implement CPOF and has been the guiding force behind TiGR.

And, of course, the three BS&L graduates built the trainer.

"It is not surprising that our best computer systems were designed, from the start, with an understanding of the human and the cognitive capacities of the Soldier in combat," said Michael Matthews, Ph. D., Engineering Psychology Program Director.

Grossman's unit is one of the newest Striker Brigades in the 25th Infantry Division. As company fire support officer, he has to always know where the friendly units are located and where civilian population centers reside. CPOF adds an additional layer of knowledge and situational awareness that will support his mission. However, despite the best technologies, the ultimate responsibility for good decision-making falls upon his shoulders as a leader and product of the U.S. Military Academy.

READY West Point: Preparing for an Emergency

Submitted by
Henry Cervantes
Emergency Plans Specialist,
DPTMS

Emergency events can occur quickly and without warning. Planning for any emergency requires considering all likely scenarios. If you are able to stay at home, electricity, water, heat, air conditioning, telephone service and transportation could be disrupted or lost for a considerable amount of time.

Most emergency management officials suggest having enough food, water, medications and other essentials on hand to last your family for three-to-five days. In other types of emergencies, you may have to evacuate your home or community.

In any case, it is important to develop a household emergency preparedness plan that includes:

- An Emergency Preparedness Kit.

- An Escape Plan that includes at least two emergency meeting places. Pick one right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, such as fire. Pick at least one other place outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.

- An Emergency Communications Plan.

Choose an out-of-town person to be your contact point for family members to call if you are separated. Make sure everyone has contact information including phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

- Information about school and workplace emergency plans.

Your Emergency Preparedness Kit. The basic items that should be stored in your home are water, food, first-aid supplies, an ABC fire extinguisher, clothing and bedding, tools, emergency supplies and specialty items. Keep the items that you would most likely need at home in one easy-to-carry container such as a trash can, plastic storage container, camping backpack or duffel bag.

Store it in a convenient place and put a smaller version in your car. Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Remember to change the stored water and rotate the food supplies every six months. [Place dates on containers.] Check the supplies and re-think your needs every year. Consult your physician or pharmacist about storing

prescription medications and maintain a list of your prescription needs.

- **Water.** Plan for one gallon of water per person per day. Water should be stored in a cool, dark place, in clean, airtight plastic containers.

- **Food.** Store a three- to five-day supply of nonperishable food per person. Foods should require no refrigeration, preparation, or cooking and little or no water.

- **First-Aid Kit.** Have a first-aid kit for your home and each vehicle.

- **Clothing and Bedding.** Assemble one or two complete changes of clothing per person, sturdy shoes or work boots, rain gear, blankets or sleeping bags, hat and gloves, thermal underwear and sunglasses.

Specialty Items.

- **Infants** -- formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk and medications.

- **Adults** -- medications, prescriptions, denture needs, eyeglasses and/or contact lenses and related supplies and personal hygiene items.

- **Entertainment** -- games,

books and several quiet toys for children.

- **Important Family Documents** -- wills, insurance policies, bank account numbers, contracts, deeds, passports, stocks and bonds, immunization records, important phone numbers, credit card accounts, Social Security cards and other personal family records.

- **Cash and coins.**

- **Tools and Supplies.** Keep the following items handy for all-around use: battery-powered radio and extra-batteries, flashlight and extra batteries, mess kits or paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, non-electric can opener, utility knife, plastic storage containers, waterproof matches, duct tape, rope, pliers, adjustable wrench, whistle, paper and pencil. For sanitation and personal hygiene: pack toilet paper, hand sanitizer, moist towelettes, feminine supplies, plastic garbage bags with ties, toothpaste, soap and liquid detergent.

Emergency Planning for Pets.

Whether you decide to stay put in an emergency or evacuate to a safer location, you will need to make plans in advance for your pets. Keep in mind that what's best

for you is typically what's best for your animals. Your pets emergency supply kit should include food, water, a first-aid kit, pet carrier, backup leash, collar and ID tag, favorite toy, treats and bedding.

If you must evacuate, take your pets with you if possible. Make a backup emergency plan in case you can't care for your animals yourself. Develop a buddy system with neighbors, friends and relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so.

Establish relationships with nearby neighbors before an emergency happens. Ask nearby family or neighbors you trust to check on your family during an emergency. Give your emergency contact and medical information to your neighbors and family. Create a contact list of your neighbors' information.

For further information visit the Department of Homeland Security Ready Web site at www.ready.gov or go to the local Red Cross office. Please send your comments or questions to Henry Cervantes, Emergency Plans Specialist, DPTMS at henry.cervantes@usma.edu.



Lean Six Sigma Green Belt graduates

New 2nd Lts. Pat Devine, [left] Maurice Dominguez, Wade Farrar, Leon Lee and Derek Price try on the green belts they received, along with their Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Certification, from Ronald E. Rezek [USMA '64], Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Army, during a ceremony May 23. The lieutenants used various LSS methodology tools in the "Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control" phases of their capstone Systems Engineering [SE400] project. The project recommendations will help the Cadet Mess Hall more accurately forecast cadet attendance at optional meals.

LESLIE GORDNIER/PAO

Story and photos by Eric S. Bartelt Sports Editor



Their motto rang true, "Always Remember Never Surrender," as 978 cadets made it through four grueling years at the U.S. Military Academy with their diplomas in hand after Saturday's graduation at Michie Stadium here.

Next stop for these highly motivated second lieutenants is parts unknown and their place in history in the fight against terrorism around the world.

Nearly 74 percent of the graduating class that entered the gates of West Point in the summer of 2003 got to taste the "Never Surrender" feeling and rocketed their white hats skyward toward a war-filled future.

America was already deep into Afghanistan due to 9/11, and would then invade Iraq a short three months before the Class of 2007 entered West Point. Troops are still there today.

"It's been rare in West Point history for a class to join during wartime and to graduate in the midst of that same war," said Vice President Dick Cheney, 2007 graduation speaker. "But this, too, is part of the story of the Class of 2007."

Cheney commended the graduates as being critical to deciding and winning America's war against terrorism as previous "Long Gray Line" graduates have

in past American wars.

"If there had never been a "Long Gray Line" I doubt America would still be a free Nation today," Cheney said. "You're trained and prepared for battlefield leadership to follow the path of many alumni who are already in the fight."

The vice president talked to the new second lieutenants and an audience of family members, staff and faculty and fellow cadets about not becoming complacent due to the consequences of 9/11.

He mentioned how the enemy attacked us hard and murdered several thousands of our citizens in New York and Washington, D.C., and part of the United States' vigilance and involvement in Iraq is to sully terrorist's attempts to establish a totalitarian empire using the world, specifically Iraq, as their battlefield.

"We are [in Iraq] because after 9/11 we decided to deny terrorists any safe haven," Cheney explained. "We are there because after we removed Saddam Hussein, we promised not to allow another dictator to rise in his place ... we are there because the security of this Nation depends on a successful outcome."

Cheney also addressed the current funding issues of the Global War on Terrorism and President Bush's commitment to give the troops what they need to be successful in the field.

"Last night [May 25], President Bush signed into law the war supplemental bill that we worked hard to achieve," he said. "Whatever lies ahead, the U.S. Army will

GRADUATION 2007:

"Always Remember Never Surrender"

have all the equipment, supplies, manpower, training and support essential to victory.

"I give you this assurance on behalf of the president," Cheney added. "You Soldier for him, then he will Soldier for you."

Cheney commended the all-volunteer force for enduring long deployments, the separation from Family and the loss of comrades to courageously carry out missions in the cold mountains of Afghanistan to the dust and heat of the Middle East desert.

He talked about how the single most reliable factor in the war is the skill and courage of the American Soldiers, and added that the academy has helped greatly in fielding leaders to help protect the Nation's freedom and ideals.

Members of the Armed Forces currently serve in 80 countries around the world, and 978 new second lieutenants will proudly display their class motto, "Always Remember Never Surrender," to the Soldiers they will serve.

"Always Remember Never Surrender, those are not idle words where more than 70 percent [of the new lieutenants] are going into combat arms and it makes everyone in this stadium all the more proud to witness your commissioning," Cheney stated. "We admire the Class of 2007 for the men and women you are to the officers you have now become."



U.S. Military Academy Class of 2007 members share a handshake after receiving their diplomas.



Three new second lieutenants, much like the 975 other members of the U.S. Military Academy Class of 2007, celebrate the end of their 47-month journey after the hat toss.



The U.S. Military Academy Class of 2007 send their white hats skyward and have a rush of adrenaline after the completion of the graduation ceremony Saturday at Michie Stadium.



A new second lieutenant takes time to point to his family members after receiving his diploma.



[Far Left] The Long and the Short of it, 2nd Lt. Jimmy Sewell, all 6'11" of him, towers over a fellow graduate.

[Left] A female 2nd Lt. hugs her tactical officer after receiving her diploma Saturday.

What's Happening

Car Show Saturday

The American Icons Car Show is Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Stewart International Airport in New Windsor, N.Y.

Presented by the Mid-Hudson Valley Corvette Association, the event will celebrate four American legends: the C5 Military Transport, the Mustang, the Viper and the Corvette.

The event will be at the Stewart Airport side at the 2nd Aviation Detachment area.

For more info., go to www.mhvca.org or call [845] 496-6027.

PWOC

Summer playground fun sponsored by the Protestant Women of the Chapel begins Wed. at the 5-Star playground [on post].

Everyone is welcome. We will meet from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Look for

the balloons and bring water and sunblock for your child.

WPWC

The WPWC Gift Shoppe, located next to the MWR Fitness Center, is open on the Web at www.shopthepoint.com and is open Wed. from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The Shoppe is always open by appointment by contacting Julie at 446-2950.

USO

The USO has served tens of millions of service men and women, their families and dependents.

The USO currently operates more than 130 centers worldwide, including 10 mobile canteens located in the U.S. and overseas.

For information on USO programs and services or how to support the troops in New York and the surrounding area, contact the

USO of Metropolitan New York at [212] 695-5590, ext. 241 or visit their Web site at www.usonyc.org. Information on USO programs and services world-wide can be found at www.uso.org.

Arvin CPDC hours change

The Arvin Cadet Physical Development Center will close at 4 p.m. June 9 due to a staff function.

ACPDC will be open beginning at 8 a.m. that day.

Boy Scout Yard Sale

Boy Scout Troop 118 of Cornwall, N.Y., will be holding their annual Yard Sale June 9 at the Bethlehem Presbyterian Church on Route 94 and Jackson Avenue.

This event is one of the Troop's main fundraisers. Come find some treasures at reasonable prices or rent your own space.

For more information or to reserve a space, call chairperson

Michelle Goldfrank at 534-8054.

The event will be held rain or shine from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mine Torne Road closures

Mine Torne Road will be closed at various times this summer during Cadet Summer Training.

Field artillery will be firing June 14-30 and July 1. On those days MTR will be closed from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Convoy training will be conducted July 5, 7 and 8, as well as from July 16 to 27 and from July 30 to Aug. 3 and Aug. 7 and from Aug. 9 to 11.

On these days MTR will be closed from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Vacation Bible School

West Point Vacation Bible School this year is June 25-29, from 9 a.m. to noon daily.

VBS needs volunteers in all areas: crafts, games, drama, kitchen, crew leaders, set up/clean

up, decorating and registration.

Call Jen Lyle to volunteer at 446-5542.

Registration runs until June 22 and forms are available at any church on post or at the Post Chapel Annex.

Call 938-2003 for more info.

BOSS resale lot moved

Are you looking to sell your automobile, van, truck, motorcycle, boat, trailer, or small motor home? Are you an Active Duty service member, DOD civilian, retiree or a family member?

For \$20 a month, the BOSS Resale Lot has slots available for rent.

The BOSS Resale Lot is now located on the left side of the Commissary parking lot.

All vehicles, boats, trailers and motor homes must be less than 24 feet.

For more info., call 938-6127/6497.

Keller Corner

Call 911 ...

If you need emergency care, go to the nearest hospital emergency room or call 911 for an ambulance. This simple rule applies to emergencies on and off West Point.

Clinical Breast Study

Female military health care beneficiaries between 30 to 45 years of age are invited to participate in an ongoing clinical breast study to evaluate a new non-invasive imaging technology for its ability to identify young women who may be at an increased risk for breast cancer. Contact Joyce Epstein-Ross FNP at 938-8387.

Did you know ...

that limiting excessive sun exposure during the first 18

years of life is probably the most important intervention that will decrease the risk of skin cancers later in life?

Reducing exposure to the sun between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., wearing protective clothing and hats, and applying a sunscreen with a sun protective factor [SPF] of 15 or above will diminish the risk of these highly preventable cancers.

Virtual Behavioral Health Clinic

KACH now offers a virtual behavioral health clinic to improve access to mental health care for adult and child military beneficiaries.

Stuart Mail, a licensed clinical social worker who specializes in adjustment issues, anxiety, depression, behavioral concerns and school related issues operates the new clinic and will provide mental health assessment and treatment for individuals and families.

If services requiring a psychiatrist are recommended, then arrangements will be made

for the patient to see a psychiatrist at Walter Reed through our Video Teleconferencing equipment.

A referral is not needed. Families may self refer.

The clinic is located at Community Mental Health, Bldg. 606, floor 3M.

To schedule an appointment, call the clinic directly at either 938-7593 or x3441, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

R-Day rehearsal volunteers needed June 29

Volunteers should be at Eisenhower Hall's Crest Hall no later than 9:45 a.m. June 29.

Parking is available at Eisenhower Hall, Gillis Field House and Buffalo Soldier Field.

The rehearsal starts promptly at 10 a.m. and concludes at approximately 1 p.m.

Lunch will not be provided; you are welcome to bring a snack and carry it in your bag along with a bottle of water if desired.

Volunteers must be between ages 14 - 55. It is guaranteed to be a fun-filled day you will enjoy for generations to come.

To register call [845] 938-2825/2826.

Command Channel 8/23

June 1 - June 8

Friday

9:30 a.m. Community Action Council [Live]
1 p.m. Army Newswatch
6:30 p.m. Graduation

Monday

8:30 a.m. Army Newswatch
1 p.m. Army Newswatch
6:30 p.m. Army Newswatch

Tuesday

8:30 a.m. Army Newswatch
1 p.m. Army Newswatch
2 p.m. Graduation
6 p.m. Army Newswatch

Wednesday

8:30 a.m. Army Newswatch
9 a.m. CAC Meeting [taped]
1 p.m. Army Newswatch
6 p.m. Army Newswatch

Thursday

8:30 a.m. Army Newswatch
1 p.m. Army Newswatch
6:30 p.m. Army Newswatch

June 8

8:30 a.m. Army Newswatch
1 p.m. Army Newswatch
6:30 p.m. Army Newswatch

Solution to Weekly Sudoku

3	7	4	8	6	9	5	1	2
8	5	6	4	1	2	3	9	7
2	9	1	3	5	7	4	6	8
7	6	2	1	4	8	9	3	5
4	3	8	9	2	5	6	7	1
9	1	5	7	3	6	2	8	4
5	8	7	2	9	3	1	4	6
6	4	3	5	8	1	7	2	9
1	2	9	6	7	4	8	5	3

NOW SHOWING

in the movie theater at Mahan Hall, Bldg. 752

Friday -- TMNT, 7:30 p.m., PG
Saturday -- Blades of Glory, 7:30 p.m., PG-13
June 8 -- Disturbia, 7:30 p.m., PG-13
June 9 -- The Invisible, 7:30 p.m., PG-13
June 15 -- Next, 7:30 p.m., PG-13
June 16 -- Spider-Man 3, 7:30 p.m., PG-13
June 22 -- Spider-Man 3, 7:30 p.m., PG-13

The theater schedule can also be found at www.aafes.com.

Fraud, Waste & Abuse Hotline

To report suspected Fraud, Waste and Abuse, call the Internal Review & Audit Compliance [IRAC] Office Hotline. Reports are confidential and callers do not have to identify themselves, but if they provide names, they can remain anonymous. To report suspected abuse of equipment/supplies accountability, travel/pay and cash accountability, call extension 938-8082. Please provide all pertinent information.

Summer uniforms

To ALL USMA and West Point organizations -- the following uniform changes are effective for the summer term:

- Effective until Aug. 19 the post-wide summer military uniform is the Army Combat Uniform [or service equivalent] except for STAP faculty and students.
- During STAP, the uniform for STAP faculty and students is Class B and cadet equivalent Monday through Thursdays; ACUs on Fridays.

DPW Notes

Housing Division Office Closure

The Housing Division, Bldg. 626, will be closed Monday until 1 p.m. to support the Field Grade Housing Draw and all day Wednesday for the Company Grade Housing Draw.

Housing Inspections scheduled for these days will occur as planned.

For information contact DPW Customer Relations, 938-4407.

Annual drinking water quality report

The Directorate of Public Works issued USMA's Annual Drinking Water Quality Report to inform the community about drinking water quality and to raise community awareness of the need to conserve our drinking water sources. The tap water at West Point continues to meet all federal and state drinking water health standards.

The report provides an overview of water quality in 2006. Included in the report is information about the source for USMA's drinking water, what the water contains and how it compares to NYS and Federal standards. Hard copies of the report are available at the Environmental Management Division, Bldg. 667, and the Housing Division, Bldg. 626 for public viewing.

The report can also be viewed online at www.usma.edu/dhpw by clicking on announcements.

Yard maintenance in housing areas

All residents are reminded that they are responsible for all routine yard maintenance tasks such as mowing, trimming, raking, re-seeding, filling in holes and divots and weeding.

Additionally, all flower beds and gardens must be free of weeds and over-growth. Residents must also clean up after their pets. All of the above is considered to be the "standard" routine yard maintenance and upkeep.

It is the resident's responsibility to ensure that this work is accomplished at all times, including when you are away from your quarters on leave or TDY.

It is this standard that must be obtained before you will be allowed to clear post with the Housing Division.

For information, contact DPW Customer Relations, 938-4407.

Contractor work at Buffalo Soldier Field

Work on new curbs, parking lights and drainage catches along the north and west sides of Buffalo Soldier Field is scheduled to continue until approximately July 6, weather permitting.

The work will begin on the north side grass area and will have little impact on personnel or parking in the area. Work on the west side [in front of Buildings 622 and 626] is expected to begin the following week and will eliminate approximately 50 parking spaces and four handicapped spaces.

The handicapped spaces will be temporarily relocated to alongside the current two handicapped spots in front of Bldg. 626.

Faster response times for air conditioning service calls

Recognizing the need for a speedier response to service calls to repair broken central air conditioning in family housing, the housing division of DPW has procured the services of Stelmar Design of Cornwall, N.Y., to provide service to all Army Family Housing central air conditioning units.

Stelmar Design is required to respond rapidly when called to establish an appointment to repair a broken air conditioner.

The procedure is the same for the resident: Call the service order desk at 938-2316 to get a service order number.

Be sure to leave a correct telephone number with the service order clerk.

The phone number is required for the contractor to reach you in a timely manner.

A representative of Stelmar Design will contact you. It is important that you rapidly return any messages left by the contractor and establish an appointment quickly to repair your air conditioner.

If you submitted a service order for your air conditioner during May 2007, it will be automatically transferred to the contractor within the week.

For information, contact DPW Customer Relations, 938-4407.

At Your Leisure

MWR Blurbs

Summer Reading Rodeo

The West Point Post Library will conduct a "Summer Reading Rodeo" from June 18 until July 28.

The program is open to all West Point community children ages 3 to 12. Registration will run from Wed. to June 15.

To sign up, stop by the Post Library, Bldg. 622 or call 938-2974.

Transition Assistance Workshop

The Department of Labor is conducting a Transition Assistance Workshop at Stewart ANGB Wed., Thurs. and June 8. Attendance at this workshop will fulfill your pre-separation requirement [DD Form 2648].

If you are interested in obtaining more information, or to register for this workshop, please contact Jeanne Dion at [845] 563-2062 or DSN:636-2062.

Future dates for DOL transition workshops being held at Stewart ANGB are Sept. 12-14 and Dec. 5-7.

Executive Transition Workshop

Register now for the upcoming Executive Transition Workshop being held July 9-11 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. [attendance is required at all three days of the workshop] at Army Community Service [Bldg. 622].

Seating is limited, so reserve your spot today.

Attendance at this workshop

will meet the requirement for Pre-separation Counseling [DD2648].

For more information, contact Jan Meert, ACS Employment Readiness Program Manager, at 938-5658 or janeatta.meert@usma.edu.

Financial readiness classes

Army Community Services is now offering a variety of financial readiness classes. Call Joyce Harris at 938-5653 for more information.

Father's Day Brunch

The West Point Club will host a Father's Day Brunch June 17 in the Pierce Dining Room. There will be two seatings -- at 10 a.m. and at Noon. For reservations and for more info., call 938-5120.

Army and Community Sports

WCAP awaits Army collegiate boxing champion

Story and photo by
Eric S. Bartelt
Sports Editor

The size of a person is not the truest measure of strength or heart, and at 5'3" Mike Benedosso's intangible measurements are limitless in all facets of his life, especially the boxing ring.

Plebe boxing is a must for all male fourth class cadets at the U.S. Military Academy. Through trial and error, athletes who aren't a part of a Corps squad team and have skills that would translate well into the boxing ring are given the chance to show their skills.

Benedosso's start came when Maj. Jerry Hart, former Army boxing coach, saw him in a plebe boxing class and took him under his wing.

"He taught me everything I needed to know in order to succeed in boxing," Benedosso said. "Through his actions and teachings, I learned what it's like to be a good officer and a good person outside the ring."

Hart, Ray Barone, Ph.D., and Maj. Eric Buller are boxing coaches

that through recent years have taken plebes with no previous boxing skills and worked with them on the fundamentals of building a boxer's stamina, hand/eye coordination and toughness to succeed in the ring.

Benedosso, who prides himself on his toughness, believes that it's his will that has created his success in boxing.

"Whether I'm getting beat up or winning, I'm not going to stop until the last bell," stated Benedosso, who fought a little more than 20 bouts in his collegiate career. "No matter if I'm hurt, tired or my stomach hurts too much, I'm not going to stop. I suppress those physical ailments and mentally override them. It's all in the mind.

"It's a mind game. I determine in the ring that I won't stop and my will will conquer any physical pain that I have," he added. "I don't stop until I'm sure that I've won and the judges have to give me the decision."

His will has made him one of the best boxers in his weight class. He won the Brigade Open three times at the academy -- four if you include the year he was

unchallenged -- and then the icing on the cake of his collegiate career was winning the Collegiate Boxing National Championship at 112 pounds in April.

He defeated an opponent, Air Force's Willie Lloyd, who had beaten him the two previous championships, and Benedosso felt all the sacrifices he made to achieve his goal was worthwhile.

"It was one of the greatest feelings I've ever had in my life. It wasn't so much because I won or got the belt against a strong opponent, but because it took so long to do it," Benedosso explained. "There was so much hard work and determination involved that in the end all the sacrifices that I made when my friends were going out for the weekend and I had to stay back to practice and box, all that hard work had finally rewarded itself and I will never regret anything that I ever did to achieve my goals."

The new second lieutenant, who will be a military intelligence officer, will first take a shot at the World Class Athlete Program.

Senior Ovi Iacob and Benedosso both auditioned for WCAP in January and sparred with members of the team. All-Army team coach and 2004 U.S. Olympic Boxing coach, Basheer Abdullah, sees great potential in Benedosso and wanted him to be a part of the team.

"They want Mike out there and they [Abdullah and USMA 2003 graduate/WCAP boxer Boyd Melson] said the fact that he won the semifinals match in the Eastern Boxing Trials and made it to the finals [proves] that he's qualified for the WCAP team," said Barone, Army boxing coach and Boxing Course Director.

Being on the WCAP team will give Benedosso a shot to train daily for a chance to maybe one day represent his country, not on the battlefield, but in the boxing ring in the Olympics.

"If Mike can focus strictly on the training aspect [as opposed to everything involved with being at the academy], and the Olympic coach sees it too -- he has something big to offer," Barone said. "He's the nicest guy in the world, but you put him in the ring and he's going to kill you. With his ability, and having a coach like Abdullah, who will have more time to focus on



New 2nd Lt. Mike Benedosso receives his oath from his brother, Anthony, who is a 2005 USMA graduate. His brother was on leave from Iraq to attend Mike's graduation ceremony.

his skills, will [help] make Mike a fantastic boxer."

Winning shouldn't be a surprise for Benedosso, as the Milford, Conn., native, comes from the same high school [Fairfield Prep in Conn.] as Little League World Series legend, Stanley Cup champion and current NHL player Chris Drury.

They both have an undying thirst for winning and it was that thirst for succeeding that helped Benedosso get through West Point.

"Besides my family, the academy has had the biggest impact on my life in forming who I am and my identity," Benedosso said. "I came here and adopted the idea of teamwork and sacrifice. I was inculcated with the values of West Point in Duty and Honor ... the biggest ideals that were instilled in me was self-sacrifice, determination and teamwork."

The philosophy major had a truly special day Saturday when his Class of 2007 graduated after four tough years, but, more importantly, he got to spend the day with his family, especially his brother, Anthony.

His brother, who is a 2005 USMA graduate, returned from Iraq on leave to participate in Mike's graduation and gave the oath to his brother during his bar pinning ceremony.

"I was introduced to the

academy by my older brother when he was here, because I didn't know what it was," Benedosso said. "I was surprised by it, liked what I saw with the great scenery and liked what it had to offer in terms of education, discipline and what it can provide for my future."

Of course, Benedosso's future is immediately shaped by the academy because it introduced him to boxing. Coaches Hart, Barone, Buller, Maj. John Kiel and Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Mays, according to Benedosso, all played a huge role in developing him as a boxer and for that he said, "I owe them a lot of gratitude."

Barone has seen a lot of great things from Benedosso already, but knows it is only the start of many great things to come for Mike as a boxer and an Army officer.

"What will make Mike a great officer is what I've seen from him from ages 18 to 22, and the level of growth, maturity and competence that I've seen in him is amazing," Barone said. "The hardest leadership is among your peers. They're all the same age and there's the 'I don't have to listen to you kind of thing.' But, Mike has the utmost respect of his peers, he leads from the front, so the transition to being a platoon leader I think, for him, will be phenomenal -- I think it will be too easy for him."

Lacrosse player followed family path to academy

Story and photo by
Eric S. Bartelt
Sports Editor

Out of the shadows of her parents comes a young, athletic, intelligent female who has much to offer the Army. Jennifer MacGibbon graduated from the U.S. Military Academy Saturday as one of five cadets whose parents were both graduates from the academy.

Following in her parent's footsteps wasn't that hard for MacGibbon, who grew up coming to West Point to see football games and watching her dad, Kevin, play in alumni lacrosse games.

To say that lacrosse has always flowed through her blood is an understatement, as her father was an All-American goaltender for Army. She played two years at her high school in Plano, Texas, and became the only senior Army women's lacrosse player in the Class of 2007 to play all four years.

The defensive wing midfielder started her last three seasons for Army and did a stellar job in transition from getting open for the goalie on the clear to finding the open attack on the offensive side of the field for the 7-5 team.

"She's very smooth," said Army head women's lacrosse coach Marie Johnson. "She always got the job done and was in control on the field. She could pass and catch on the run very well."

Johnson commended MacGibbon as being very mature, thoughtful and focused, and growing as a person since her first year at the academy. She sees her becoming a great officer.

"She sees the big picture and that helped greatly when our team lacked perspective," Johnson explained. "Jennifer always does the right thing and I don't know if that always makes you popular. It could be interpreted as bossy, but to me that's being responsible. Leading your peers is a tough business.

"She's 100 percent reliable and will get the job done as an officer," she added.

The road to graduation wasn't always easy for MacGibbon. As a plebe, she got into trouble for drinking, but eventually got over that momentary lapse in judgment.

"It wasn't the best experience, but it was definitely a life lesson and I took a lot away from it," MacGibbon said. "Your friends help you get through this place and they helped me get through that [incident]."

Another bump in the road was not being named captain of a team that she was the only four-year player of this season, but Johnson knows that not being named captain is another reason why she'll overcome anything to be a great officer.

"Not being named captain this year was a defining moment of what do you do," Johnson said. "She played lacrosse and focused on being a good lacrosse player and teammate.

"I think that says a lot about her and that's why I think she'll get the job done in the Army because it isn't always glamorous," Johnson added, "but you have to do it."

The future Adjutant General officer was proud to have played



Second Lt. Jennifer MacGibbon gets her bars pinned on by her dad, Kevin [left], and mom, Carol. Her parents were both 1980 graduates of the U.S. Military Academy. Her mom was a part of the first group of women to graduate from the academy.

four years with the lacrosse team and it helped her retain her focus on her Engineering Psychology studies.

"Lacrosse is what I looked forward to during the day -- where I could go and get that release from school, military duties and everything else," MacGibbon explained. "To me, I loved lacrosse practice because it was my escape for two hours [every day]."

MacGibbon, the oldest of three children, was born in Germany in 1984 when her parents were both stationed there.

Her dad was an infantry officer and her mom, Carol, was an engineer officer although both of her parents are no longer in the Army, they both served five years.

Her dad is now a vice president in the manufacturing business and her mom is a substitute school teacher after being a stay-at-home mom.

Her parents, both 1980 graduates, were a very important influence on her becoming a West Point graduate.

"They always taught me to do the best that I can in all aspects of my life and to never give up because with West Point you need to have that sort of attitude to get through here," MacGibbon stated.

MacGibbon's mother was part of the first group of women to enter USMA and then graduate in 1980.

She's honored that her mother went through the same things she did, but also knows that her mother's plight was much harder because of the time in history that she walked the academy grounds.

"When I find myself going through the indoor obstacle course or something out at Camp Buckner, I think to myself that my mom did this too," MacGibbon stated. "When you're growing up you don't think of your mom getting down and dirty and rolling around in the mud. It's a positive thing that my mom went to West Point. It's definitely inspiring.

"I look up to her because being in the first class of women, not only did she have to fight what women had to fight here to graduate, but even more so that there were only 112 that started out and only 62 or 63 made it through all four years,"

she added. "The stories that she has told me have definitely opened my eyes to things."

Her mom was beaming from ear-to-ear because of her daughter's accomplishment. She is also proud of all the graduates who made it through these long four years at the academy.

But, she didn't want to take anything away from what her daughter accomplished just because she also graduated from West Point.

"We're very proud of her and we try to separate it from us coming here because she's a different person," Carol MacGibbon said. "Everyone who comes here has to stand on their own two feet from the day they get in. We didn't want her to come here because we did, we wanted her to come here because she wanted to be here and be an officer."

Now, MacGibbon will get her chance for the at least the next five years to be an officer. Initially her Army career will take her to the 326th Engineer Battalion at Fort Campbell, Ky., after she completes the Basic Officer Leadership Course and her branch Officer Basic Course. It is something that the 22-year-old is excited to be a part of -- being an Army officer.

"It's something I've been training for these past four years," she said. "I think everyone needs

See LACROSSE on page 15



New 2nd Lts. Meghan Venable-Thomas [left] and Nick Hill [photo above] share a chuckle just before the hat toss. Second Lt. Milan Dinga [right photo] celebrates after the hat toss Saturday at Michie Stadium.

PHOTOS BY ERIC S. BARTELT

Army Athletic Association Trophy Winners

All-American baseball players Nick Hill and Milan Dinga and record-setting track and field star Meghan Venable-Thomas each received the U.S. Military Academy's highest athletic honor May 25, accepting the Army Athletic Association Trophy at the Awards Convocation at Eisenhower Hall.

The prestigious Army Athletic Association Trophy is awarded to the male and female cadet who displayed the "most valuable service to intercollegiate athletics during a career as a cadet." This marks the 103rd year of the AAA Trophy, which was first awarded to football player Horatio Hackett in 1904. Hill and Dinga rank as the first athletes from the same sport to share the award, while Venable-Thomas prevailed as this year's women's winner.

LACROSSE, cont. from page 14

a little bit of a challenge in their lives to push themselves to the limit. This is a great opportunity for me."

MacGibbon, whose fondest memory at the academy was scoring a goal in a win against Air Force her sophomore year, will have another special memory [June 2] when she will marry a 2006 USMA graduate, 2nd Lt. Nicholas Barry.

Through exams, lacrosse and graduation, her wedding has been at the forefront of her mind as she has been planning it for many weeks. She shed many tears graduating from the academy Saturday, but also knows that this may be the biggest moment of her life.

"A lot of people have asked me, 'what are you more excited for, graduation or the wedding?'" MacGibbon said. "Although I know I couldn't get married until I graduated, I'm definitely more excited about the wedding. Not to downplay graduation at all because it is a great accomplishment, but I'm excited to think about putting on my [wedding] dress and walking down the aisle, too."

Until then, the special moment in her life was getting her second lieutenant bars pinned on by her parents. She will be wearing her

grandfather's bars [he served during World War II] and one of her parent's bars.

"It makes me proud to wear them and that they would want me to wear them," MacGibbon said. "It's great to have something passed down to me. It was the same when they gave me their Airborne wings,

I wore them proudly and I try my best not to lose them."