The tradition of the Social Sciences Run continued in a virtual environment April 16. The SOSH Paper, which is the signature writing assignment in the required Introduction to International Relations course, is a rite of passage for cadets in their third year at the U.S. Military Academy. Over the years, cadets have found creative, unusual and comedic ways to submit hard copies of their papers. In years past, the culminating event has been a parade of “panic-stricken” and costumed cadets dashing from the cadet area to Lincoln Hall to turn in their papers. This semester, cadets aired live videos, posted videos and submitted pictures to Microsoft Teams from their homes as a way of continuing the SOSH Run tradition in the remote environment.

Remote SOSH Run

SEE INSIDE FOR MORE COVID-19 INFORMATION

USMA PAO continues to provide the www.westpoint.edu/coronavirus page and has released coordinated external messages on USMA Facebook and Twitter pages.
President to speak at West Point Graduation

By West Point Public Affairs Office

WEST POINT, N.Y. — President Donald Trump will serve as the commencement speaker at the U.S. Military Academy’s Class of 2020 graduation ceremony June 13 at West Point. This will mark his first visit as graduation speaker. “We are honored to host the Commander-in-Chief as we celebrate the many accomplishments of our graduating class,” said Lt. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, 60th superintendent of the USMA.

The size and scope of the graduation ceremony will be determined by safety considerations for cadets and the entire West Point community. The academy leadership is conducting a thorough analysis and plan for the safe return of the Corps of Cadets.

“West Point continues to receive tremendous support from Army leadership during this unique time in its history and looks forward to commissioning the newest cohort of lieutenants into the ranks of the Army Officer Corps,” Williams said.

For updates on academy operations, restrictions or cancellations go to www.westpoint.edu/coronavirus.

Aviation professional development goes virtual

Submitted by the Department of Civil and Mechanical Engineering

Just as academics and other aspects of cadet life have gone virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the professional development program designed to prepare first class cadets to transition to the aviation branch has had to adjust this semester.

Led by the branch representative Capt. Jonathan Lunde, Department of Military Instruction, and supported by the President of the Black Knights chapter of the Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA), Col. Rich Melnyk, the Department of Civil and Mechanical Engineering, the branch has and will conduct several virtual events to support cadet development.

The first event was a discussion led by 1st Lt. Alaina Kappner, Class of 2017. Kappner is a fixed-wing aviator and currently deployed leading an intelligence task force. She spoke about the career path of a fixed-wing aviator in the Army and opportunities in the intelligence community.

The next meeting was led by Maj. Matt Brown and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Zealand Shouse, both experimental test pilots at Redstone Arsenal in the Army’s Test and Evaluation Command. They spoke and answered questions about the Naval Test Pilot school and opportunities in the Acquisition Corps as a test pilot.

Future sessions include a meeting with recent graduates who are stationed at Fort Rucker, Alabama, to help cadets understand the demands of flight school and answer questions about inprocessing and housing since flight school is a PCS move for new lieutenants.

The branch is also scheduled to hold a virtual sendoff on Friday featuring guest lieutenants. Since flight school is a PCS move for new graduates, the demands of flight school and answer questions about inprocessing and housing since flight school is a PCS move for new lieutenants.

This will be a great opportunity to hear from a senior aviation officer and someone who holds a key position in the aviation enterprise. The sendoff will also provide a chance to recognize the top cadet in the branch, Class of 2020 Cadet Haley Watson. Normally, she would have been recognized at the AAAA Summit in Nashville, Tennessee, and by a representative of AAAA at the actual sendoff event but both had to be canceled.

Watson, originally from Missouri, was a standout in cross county and track, and served as a command sergeant major for Cadet Leader Development Training/Cadet Field Training I. During the academic year, she earned the Fulbright Netherlands and Schwarzman scholarships.

The team plans to host one additional forum with recent graduates from around the force that represent the different airframes and missions in Army Aviation.

This effort is being coordinated by 1st Lt. Austin Lachance, Class of 2017, and will help cadets better understand the roles they will play as junior officers and be informed when they have to select airframes during flight school.

The aviation community at West Point and the network beyond the academy is a strong one and is dedicated to providing the best possible mentorship, advice and support to the future leaders in the branch.

According to Melnyk, the level of support provided by the staff and faculty around the academy was recently recognized when AAAA named the Black Knights Chapter the best chapter for 2019 in its class.

Even in this virtual environment, the team strives to remain above the best.
Keller Corner: Update on Coronavirus

Keller Appointment Center having some issues; backup numbers provided

By Robert Lanier
KACH Public Affairs Specialist

The Keller Army Community Hospital’s Appointment Center has been experiencing intermittent “server issues” due to the high volume of traffic during Team West Point’s COVID-19 response.

Our technicians continue to work on those issues in an effort to maintain the availability of the appointment center. The Keller Army Community Hospital Appointment Center is available from 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday by calling 845-938-7992 or 800-552-2907. If you have trouble getting through to the appointment line, call the individual clinics. Appointments can be scheduled, canceled or changed by calling the individual clinics for your care.

You can also use Secure Messaging (https://www.tolsecuremessaging.com) to send a message to your primary care providers, or the Nurse Advice Line by calling 1-800-TRICARE, Option 1, or via the NAL website at https://mhsnurseadvice.line.com.

Primary care clinics can be reached at:
• Red Team: 845-938-4114;
• Blue Team: 845-938-5959;
• Mologne Clinic: 845-741-9834;
• Ortho/Podiatry: 845-938-4733;
• Physical Therapy: 845-938-3324;
• Optometry: 845-938-2206;
• Multi-Specialty Clinic: 845-938-6624;
• Occupational Health: 845-938-3055/2676;
• Audiology/Hearing Conservation: 845-938-4118.

We thank you for your patience and understanding while we work to resolve these intermittent issues with the appointment line.

For a one-stop shop of all updated coronavirus information, Keller Army Community Hospital notifications, how to stop the spread of COVID-19, federal/state/local guidance and the U.S. Military Academy and Army Garrison West Point webpages, visit https://kach.amedd.army.mil/West-Point-COVID-19-INFO/.
West Point professors help U.S. Army North model COVID-19 impact

By Brandon O’Connor
PV Assistant Editor

As the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army move into the “what’s next” stage of COVID-19 planning, they will have the help of three U.S. Military Academy professors who are working to model the outbreak and inform future planning.

Lt. Cols. Nick Clark, an assistant professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences, Michael Washington, an assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry and Life Science, and Chris Fuhriman, an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering, have been at Fort Sam Houston, Texas since early April to help U.S. Army North in its COVID-19 response efforts.

By combining their expertise in statistics, geography and biology, the three academy professors are building daily models of where the virus currently is, what the hotspots are and where it may be going next. ARNORTH is coordinating the distribution of medical supplies throughout the country and the forecasting models help ensure the right supplies go to the right places.

The models are also used to inform decision making by commanders throughout the country of how to respond and what they can expect the results of those responses to be, Clark said.

“We did something as a society,” he said. “We socially distanced. We made changes to our behavior. Now the important part is quantifying what that actually accomplished, because this isn’t going away.”

Clark initially began modeling the virus as part of the planning team at West Point. After academy leadership saw the benefit of the modeling, he said he was in essence loaned to ARNORTH to help inform the decision-making Army-wide.

Washington, whose expertise is clinical microbiology and immunology, joined the team in Texas to apply a biological component to the model. His role is to take the raw data produced by Clark’s model and make sure it matches what they know about the virus itself and how it can be expected to behave.

He said the key is to compare COVID-19 to other similar coronaviruses instead of unrelated diseases such as the 1918 flu. By inputting what they know about the virus into the models, they are working to forecast where the next hotspots may be so the correct resources can be allocated to those areas.

“All viruses behave differently depending on their genetic structure and various properties that the viruses have,” Washington said. “The mathematical models can predict what will occur based on numerical data that we get from various sources. My role is to ensure that matches what we know of the virus itself.”

After Clark and Washington work together to develop the model, Fuhriman takes the charts and plots the data onto maps that can be easily digested by decision makers.

“It’s important to know where those hotspots are,” Fuhriman said. “Nick’s models based on Mike’s input can produce those areas that are hotspots. Then I take that data and show it visually and sometimes that helps commanders to see a little bit better.”

Developing the models is a constant process as they are only accurate until the next set of data comes in, Clark said, so they are watching the news on a daily basis and inputting the latest data sets into the model. Each iteration of the model is a combined effort of the three researchers who use their differing areas of expertise to forecast and map the impact of COVID-19 throughout the country.

“It’s going back to what makes interdisciplinary research good and beneficial. We’re in constant communication with one another,” Clark said. “We’ve kind of broken down the barriers. I don’t think any of us view us as you have the statistician, you have the geographer, you have the biologist. There is not a product that comes from me that I haven’t vetted through them first, or likewise.”

Although the time requirements of producing the models has forced them to have other members of their departments teach their courses for the remainder of the semester, all three professors said participating in the real-world application of their fields is something they can bring back to the classroom.

“It’s kind of neat to come in and to get out of the classroom setting for a minute and apply the specific tools of geography to an exact problem,” Fuhriman said. “That’s been really interesting to come in and see how that works. I feel like I could take some lessons learned here back to the classroom at West Point and say to the cadets in our geography classes, ‘Hey, this is one of the things that you might be asked to do at some point down the road.’”

The role of West Point is to educate future leaders of the Army and a byproduct of that mission is that the academy brings together experts in a wide variety of fields who can then be used as a resource to apply their knowledge to problems such as COVID-19.

“I think this shows the value of West Point as a resource of intellectual capital within the U.S. Army because we have the largest concentration of Ph.D.s, professors and experts in various fields all located in one place and we’re available to deploy to locations like this to help support operations throughout the big Army,” Washington said.

The three will be in Texas until about May 20, but they said they expect the work to continue even after they return to West Point.
For Army West Point esports, COVID-19 is business as usual

By Brandon O’Connor
PV Assistant Editor

On March 11, moments before tipoff, the NBA game between the Utah Jazz and the Oklahoma City Thunder was postponed due to concerns related to COVID-19.

After it was announced that Rudy Gobert, the Jazz’s starting center, had tested positive for the virus, the postponement turned into a tidal wave of cancellations that spread throughout the country. First, the NBA season was suspended indefinitely. Then every professional sports league in the country followed with their own suspensions of play or postponements.

The wave found its way to the banks of the Hudson River as the U.S. Military Academy canceled sports for the rest of the academic year cutting short spring sports seasons, while ending wrestling and other sports just before their national championship tournaments.

The same wave caused the academy to indefinitely postpone the return of cadets from spring break leaving them spread throughout the country.

With sports at every level canceled and more free time on their hands thanks to being at home, Class of 2020 Cadet Nick Basile and his teammates on the Army West Point esports team saw an opportunity to fill the void with content.

Basketball, hockey and baseball season may have been impacted by COVID-19, but social distancing in a room all by themselves was a moment gamers had been preparing for, and frankly, dreaming about for years. With no requirements other than a computer, fast internet service, a microphone and an opponent, the esports season was able to continue as traditional sports went into hiatus.

“It was kind of like a joke amongst all of my friends. They’re telling us to sit at home and not do anything and not go out and we’re like, well that’s kind of what we do anyways on a Friday night,” Basile, the captain of the esports team, said. “We want to play video games. We saw this opportunity and all the other sports aren’t working, but our league is still going. We’re still part of the Collegiate Rainbow Six League. We’re still going with that. The content does not stop for Army West Point esports.”

The West Point esports team became an official club at the academy in January and joined the Collegiate Rainbow Six League. The league includes about 140 collegiate teams that compete in head-to-head matches of Tom Clancy’s Rainbow Six Siege.

The season had already started before the COVID-19 pandemic and has continued even as other sports have shutdown. In recent weeks, West Point has played matches against Oklahoma State and Ole Miss with competitors playing from their own homes and communicating via voice chat and a Discord server.

“We almost knew right away (that we could continue playing) because we know this is the nature of esports,” Victor Castro, the officer-in-charge of Army West Point esports, said. “We know we live in the digital domain. We know the only thing we depend on is internet connection and ... the capability of what they brought with them.”

Basile said it took some work to get everyone set up in their new reality as they figured out what equipment they had, the capabilities of their home internets and adjusted to their new schedules during remote learning. Once the kinks were worked out, they hit the ground running, he said, and they have been streaming on Twitch three times a week on average.

The team has also used Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube to reach a wider audience and continue to promote West Point while other teams cannot.

“The team has been awesome,” Basile said. “I couldn’t have asked for a better group of people to start this team with and get things going. They’ve been great at keeping up on the content and keeping things moving. We’ve stayed motivated, despite all this. They all saw this possibility and this opportunity where Army West Point esports can step into the light and we’ve all capitalized on it. It’s been great.”

Along with their normal collegiate matches and streams of Rainbow Six, Counter-Strike and Call of Duty, the team recently hosted a Call of Duty Modern Warfare tournament for the West Point community. Twenty-nine duos competed in the double-elimination tournament and the semifinals and finals were streamed on the team’s Twitch. Castro said duos made up of current cadets and alumni as well as professors and their families competed.

“We had a ton of interaction on our Twitch chat, which was really cool to see people interacting, talking about the games and commenting.” Basile said of the response to the tournament. “We had a huge boost in social media followers across all of our platforms. We also had a big influx into our Discord community, which is awesome. We love seeing people come into the server. We have a whole bunch of people in there talking now.”

The team also recently played against the Army esports team in an exhibition match and with the help of Army Marketing they became a Twitch partner last week. The partnership allows them to have more features on their streams and there are plans for Twitch to feature the team on its homepage, which will raise the team’s profile exponentially.

Basile said they have already seen the amount of people tuning into streams roughly double in recent weeks. And, much in the same way the Army esports team was created as a recruiting tool, Class of 2022 Cadet Colin Jones, the West Point club’s social media manager, said they have been able to reach prospective cadets through their streams. Along with talking to prospective cadets in their chats on Twitch and Discord, members of the team will invite them to play alongside them and then answer questions they have about the academy over voice chat while playing.

“A lot of these high schoolers are getting interested in playing esports at the academy, and they’ll message us on Instagram or Twitter and say, ‘Hey, how do I join the team?’” Jones said. “That gives us a good opportunity to say reach out to the admissions office.”

To see the latest streams from the Army West Point esports team visit them at Twitch. Tv/ArmyWestPointEsports.
Dean’s Book Club doesn’t let distance stop the discussion

By Brandon O’Connor
PV Assistant Editor

When the Dean’s Book Club at the U.S. Military Academy was started during the fall 2017 semester, the goal was to bring cadets, staff and faculty together from throughout the academy.

Each meeting was hosted at the West Point Club and would start with a roughly 30-minute lunch period, before moving into an hour-long discussion of the chosen book. Attendees were encouraged to sit with people they didn’t know and strike up a conversation. Cadets may end up sitting with professors from academic departments they had no exposure to, or maybe even share lunch with Brig. Gen. Cindy Jebb, the dean of the academic board.

The book club was able to hold its first meeting this semester at the academy but plans for additional meetings were uprooted due to COVID-19.

Much in the same way professors were forced to adapt to remote learning, the organizers of the book club had to look for a creative way to continue the discussion. They found the answer via Microsoft Teams and on April 10 held the semester’s second book club meeting with about 30 people attending virtually from their own homes.

One book is chosen each semester and they typically hold three to four meetings with different presenters each time. Sometimes, a professor will lead the discussion. Other times it is led by a cadet, or they take a tour relevant to the topic being discussed. On multiple occasions the author has come to discuss his or her book and answer questions.

This semester “Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity” by Katherine Boo was selected as the topic of discussion during the book club. The book recounts life in the Annawadi slums of Mumbai, India. The virtual discussion was led by Richard Wolfel and Amy Richmond, who are both professors in West Point’s Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering. Wolfel studies slums in India’s megacities while Richmond’s research focuses on Africa. They each presented for about five minutes, Wolfel said, before opening the floor up to questions.

“To me the big value is understanding how everything connects together, which is one of our missions in the core curriculum for sure,” Wolfel said. “I’m a firm believer in interdisciplinarity and learning across disciplines and taking a question and looking at it from multiple perspectives. Being able to talk to a chemist, for example, and get their perspectives really makes me think about things in a very different manner than I would as a geographer.”

Col. Chris Mayer, associate dean for strategy and initiatives, who organized the club’s meeting, said the discussion was fostered by some people participating by turning on their videos and asking questions while others asked questions in the chat function of Teams. Because there was no lunch this time, the meeting lasted about an hour, he said.

The books chosen for the club come from varying genres and have included, “The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks” by Rebecca Skloot, “I. Robot” by Isaac Asimov and last semester’s book “Educated: A Memoir” by Tara Westover. Mayer said “Behind the Beautiful Forevers” was suggested by a member of the staff and selected because understanding megacities and urban environments is a point of focus within the Army.

“I think a lot of people don’t know much about India and I think most Americans don’t understand life in a megacity or in a slum in India,” Mayer said. “I think that really opened their eyes to what’s out in the world beyond what we’re used to and to a country like India, which is obviously a world player and will continue to be and is the world’s largest democracy.”

The April 10 meeting was the last of the semester for the book club, which will return in the fall with a new book to discuss.
Suicide mortality and coronavirus disease 2019

Information provided from https://health.usnews.com/conditions/articles/social-distancing-and-suicide-risk

In response to COVID-19, our winning strategies may have adversely impacted our psycho-socio-economic status. Social isolation, economic downturns, mental health challenges, illnesses, death and national anxiety are all factors that could be associated with increased risk of suicides. Often people at risk for suicide are distant and isolated from a social network and socially disconnected from others.

Historically, we know that in times of a negative economic impact that suicide rates will rise. National anxiety can lead to bouts of depression and substance use, and research has proven that health problems especially among the elderly raises the risk of suicide.

To help mitigate these life-threatening factors, researchers believe the following efforts can play a great role in mitigating the risk of suicide:

- Emphasizing physical distance, not social distance—connecting from a distance, talk to a loved one, tell them how you are really doing and address your feelings and thoughts.
- Telemedicine for mental health—the use of modern technology, makes it easier for us to seek help online.
- Increased access to mental health care—peer support, creatively thinking of ideas and things to do that may mitigate feelings of being “cramped, locked in.”
- Distance-based suicide prevention—online church services, sending letters and cards, connection through visible gestures.
- Suicide prevention resources—National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK).

We are currently in one of the most stressful and frightening times many of us have ever experienced. COVID-19 has changed the way we think, socialize, work, shop, educate our children, and practice our spirituality among many other things. If you find yourself experiencing extreme stress, suicidal thoughts, panic, depression, anxiety there are places you can call for help.

For emergency assistance please call the following 24 hour numbers:

- 911 or 3333 on Post
- KACH Emergency Room 938-4004
- Orange County Mobile Crisis Unit 1-888-750-2266
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)
- USAG West Point Employee Assistance Program has sessions by appointment at 845-938-1039

Our community like the rest of our Great Nation is experiencing a time of uncertainty and anxiety. We are told things will get worse before they get better. No one knows for sure how this crisis may affect anyone, everyone will process it in their own way. So, this seems to be a good time to remind everyone there is help for you. If you or someone you know finds themselves in a suicidal crisis. Please reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. They are a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline- 1800-273-8255 (TALK)

AS THE WORLD FEELS OUT OF CONTROL, WE CAN ALL BENEFIT FROM TAKING CONTROL OF THINGS WHERE WE CAN.

If you are feeling lonely ... Keep in touch with friends and loved ones while practicing social distancing, using technology such as Face Time, Zoom, Google Meet, TEACH etc. It is so great to see the faces of the ones we love. Kids can see friends a play games this way too!

Feeling stuck inside your home .... Get outdoors, go for a walk, ride a bike, take a hike. Just be mindful to wash your hands and practice social distancing.

Frustrated you can’t get to the gym .... Try a new workout in the home, find a video of something new maybe yoga, with its stress relieving benefits, or planking, or burpees!

Feeling disconnected from your spirituality .... Attend an on-line service, prayer meeting or seminar. Read a spiritual book, journal, connect with the blessing we see every day in nature and in the good deeds we witness. Say thank you to one of the many Soldiers, Medical Professionals, Police, countless other first responders.
Coronavirus FAQ updates

Q: Why did they stop taking temperatures at the gates?
   • Our use of temperature screenings at West Point did not prove worthwhile in identifying suspected COVID-19 cases, often giving faulty readings (probes are supposed to be used indoors).

Q: What kind of open air outdoor play is allowed for kids?
   • Open air plays presents significantly less of a risk than any other within our travel radius, as widespread community spread of COVID-19 is occurring throughout the Hudson Valley, Northern New Jersey, New York City and Long Island. Individuals coming from outside of our radius (OCONUS travel) still pose an unknown risk that must be assessed through secondary questioning.

Q: How do I renew my TMP Vehicle Dispatch?
   • Anyone that has a TMP dispatch that will/expired can send/scan a copy of their original 1-189 to Michael O’Shea and he will have it extended. Request extensions until at least the end of the following month.
   • Contact Michael O’Shea, Transportation/Maintenance Division Chief, Transportation Motor Pool at 845-938-2291 or email michael.osh.ea.civ@mail.mil.

Q: How do I calculate my PPE burn rate?

Q: How do I renew my USID card?
   • Cards which expired on or after Jan. 1, 2020 are authorized for continued benefit use through Sept. 30.
   • The minimum age for initial USID card issuance is increased from 10 to 14 years of age.

Q: What are the mask/face coverings requirements?
   • All individuals on the West Point Military Reservation, and all personnel assigned to, but physically away from West Point, will wear masks or cloth face coverings when they cannot maintain six feet of social distance in public areas or work areas (this does not include personal residences).
   • Public areas include, but are not limited to, the Commissary, PX, Shopette, Keller Army Community Hospital, and offices.
   • This policy applies to all Service members (including cadets), DA Civilians, family members, retirees, DA contractors, and employees of private organizations.

Q: Why do they ask certain questions at the Access Control Points? (at ACPs Thayer and Stony)
   • The questions at our ACP initial and secondary screening points reflect our current operating environment. It is one in which no specific hot spots can be identified as posing a greater risk than any other within our travel radius, as widespread community spread of COVID-19 is occurring throughout the Hudson Valley, Northern New Jersey, New York City and Long Island.

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Q: How do I calculate my PPE burn rate?

Q: Need help with MS Teams / MS Office 365?
   • Go to help.westpoint.edu.

Q: When will you provide information to people about when they can expect to receive CYS Spring Sport refunds?
   • MWR has officially canceled CYS Spring Sports and is currently providing refund information on the MWR website.

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COVID-19: MWR facility and program updates

The following services remain OPEN (until further notice):
- Dog Parks—Please limit groups and cleanup after yourself.
- West Point Bowling Center—Open 11 a.m.-7:30 p.m. Monday through Sunday. Food delivery and pick up only.
- (NEW) Round Pond Recreation Area—Permitted fishing and passive recreation only, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

The following services are closed or cancelled (until further notice):
- MWR Administrative Offices.
- Army Community Service—Recommend using MilitaryOneSource.mil.
- Arts & Crafts—Classes are cancelled. Virtual classes are available via the Arts & Crafts Facebook.
- (NEW) Auto Skills—Important note from New York State DMV: All NYS motor vehicle inspections expiring after March 31 have been extended until further notice.
- BOSS.
- (NEW) CYS (All programs)—All Youth Sports and Instructional programs for the Spring season are canceled. CYS staff is currently refunding/giving household credits in accordance with IMCOM guidance.
- MWR Fitness Center.
- Intramural Sports.
- Leisure Travel.
- Morgan Farm—Staff on-site to care for animals. All pet kenneling reservations canceled through April 30.
- Outdoor Recreation—All reservations canceled through April 30.
- Special Events:
  - Brewfest 2020 (April 17) has been canceled.
  - Doggie Dash 3k/5k (April 18) postponed, new date TBD.
  - Tronsrue Marksmanship Center—Closed, all classes are cancelled.
- West Point Club:
  - Dinner-To-Go is closed.
  - All events canceled through April 30.
  - All personal reservations canceled through April 30 (but is subject to change)
- West Point Golf Course.

COMMUNITY FEATURED ITEM

West Point Tax Center closed and IRS extension
The West Point Tax Center is officially closed. However, the IRS has extended the federal income tax filing and payment deadlines.
In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the IRS is automatically extending the federal income tax filing and payment deadlines until July 15.
This extension applies to all taxpayers, including individuals, trusts and estates, corporations and other non-corporate tax filers as well as those who pay self-employment tax.
Taxpayers do not need to file any additional forms or call the IRS to qualify for this automatic federal tax filing and payment relief.
Please note, the extension does not apply to state income tax filings or payments. Check with your state of residence for state income tax filing and payment deadlines.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LRC CIF appointments for retiring, ETSing military personnel
Due to COVID-19, all military personnel who will be retiring or ETSing and require clearing through the Logistics Readiness Center West Point Central Issue Facility (CIF) will be required to make an appointment by phone.
To make an appointment, call 845-938-4562 or 845-938-1835.

West Point Commissary face mask coverings
The West Point Commissary continues with its mission of serving Soldiers, family members and veterans during the many challenges brought on by the need for social distancing amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.
Among the measures, employees are following the CDC recommendations on wearing face masks, and the Defense Commissary Agency recently mandated that all customers will be required to wear a face covering as well. Customers will not be allowed in the commissary without a face mask.
As an added precaution during the COVID-19 pandemic, the commissary will discontinue the use of reusable bags at the registers. This action is being taken with your health and safety in mind.

Logistics Readiness Center message
We regret to inform the community that the SMURF buses are indefinitely suspended due to lack of drivers.
The Transportation and Maintenance Division will continue to provide a bus for handicapped patrons from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. To call for that service, call 938-4468 or 938-2018.
The taxi service was suspended at the beginning of the current COVID-19 crisis in an effort to mitigate the spread of the virus. We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

Legal Assistance Office information
Have a legal question? For example, are you wondering how you can legally terminate or extend a lease?
- Contact the West Point Legal Assistance Office. The Legal Assistance Office’s physical location is closed in response to COVID-19.
- Limited services are available by calling 845-938-4541.
- Leave a voicemail with your name, phone number and brief message describing your situation. You may also email marilyn.shenton@westpoint.edu for assistance. Messages are reviewed every two hours during normal business hours. Please allow one duty day before calling again.

RiverFest canceled
Cornwall-on-Hudson’s RiverFest committee is disappointed to announce that RiverFest will not happen this year due to the coronavirus pandemic. Following discussion and a virtual meeting, the RiverFest committee decided that current trends and social distancing guidelines will not allow for the gathering to go forward as scheduled June 7 at Donahue Park in Cornwall-on-Hudson.
RiverFest, a celebration of the Hudson River and scenic Donahue Park held the first weekend in June, has been a Hudson Valley tradition for more than 20 years.
“We are disappointed that we cannot hold the festival, but look forward to bringing it back, better than ever, in 2021,” said festival chair and co-founder, Wynn Gold.
For details, contact Wynn Gold at 914-475-2582.

MOVIES at MAHAN
Theatre schedule at Mahan Hall, Bldg. 752.
Movies canceled until further notice.
(For movie details and updated schedules, visit http://www.aafes.com/exchange-stores/Movie-Guide/showtimes-West-Point.htm.)
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): 10 Tips for At-Home Quarantine or Self-Monitoring

If you have been directed to quarantine or self-monitor at home because of possible COVID-19 contact:

1. Stay home from work, school, and away from public places. If you must go out, avoid using public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.

2. Monitor for symptoms and take your temperature twice daily. If you develop symptoms or a fever, then call your healthcare provider immediately.

3. Get rest, stay hydrated, and exercise if possible. If you are able to exercise, do so in your home or yard. Avoid the gym or other locations where you may come into contact with others.

4. If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider ahead of time and tell them that you have been exposed to COVID-19.

5. For medical emergencies, call 911 and notify the dispatch personnel that you have been exposed to COVID-19.

6. Take everyday actions to prevent the spread of germs.
   - Clean your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
   - Cover your cough/sneeze
   - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

7. As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people and pets in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.

8. Avoid sharing personal items with other people in your household, like dishes, towels, and bedding.

9. Clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.

10. Make the best of your time at home by teleworking if you’re able or catching up on reading, exercising, or other hobbies.

For current COVID-19 information:

The Military Health System Nurse Advice Line is available 24/7:
Call 1-800-874-2273 option #1
or visit https://www.health.mil/?Am-A/Media/Media-Center/NAL-Day-at-a-glance

Public Health
U.S. ARMY PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Protect Yourself and Your Family

- Stop shaking hands and hugging
- Ensure you have enough food, medication, and other items to last at least 14 days—don’t forget to gather supplies for babies and pets as well
- Do not travel to areas experiencing active disease transmission
- Observe local guidance on movement restrictions, and access requirements for military installations
- Seek guidance from employers and unit leaders about changes to work practices (e.g., telework) and training events
- Prepare for travel restrictions and cancellation of public gatherings, such as school, religious, and other community activities; make alternative arrangements for childcare
- Comply with medical orders for self-isolation or quarantine

For current COVID-19 information:

The Military Health System Nurse Advice Line is available 24/7:
Call 1-800-874-2273 option #1 or visit https://www.health.mil/1-A/Health/Media-Center/NAL-Day-at-a-glance

Pet Disaster Preparedness Kit

West Point Coronavirus information updates
USMA PAO continues to provide the www.westpoint.edu/coronavirus page and has released coordinated external messages on USMA Facebook and Twitter pages.

For more information, contact the West Point Public Affairs Office at paoinformation@westpoint.edu.
Scouts earn Eagle status, help beautify West Point

By Eric S. Bartelt
PV Managing Editor

During this time of isolation and social distancing, there are limited options to what you can do when you walk out your door as COVID-19’s stranglehold on the country’s movement and leisure choices is impacting everything.

At West Point, however, if you are out for a brisk walk or exercise of some variety, there are a couple of locations you can venture to and enjoy nature and the scenery.

The Mrs. Frances Streck Prayer and Reflection Garden along the creek adjacent to the West Point Post Chapel and a series of trails in and around Fort Putnam, which now better connect the north and south portions of West Point, are two such places to appreciate and experience.

Within the past year, both locations have seen improvements with small construction projects of two Boy Scouts from Boy Scouts of America Troop 23 at West Point.

The garden now offers a place of serenity and solitude when children and adults gather. Meanwhile, the trails in and around Fort Putnam now offer much cleaner paths, cleared of dangerous logs and debris, with more trails to walk. New trail blazes help hikers know where they are within the trails while getting in touch with nature on the West Point installation.

Scouts Braden Vannmeter and Michael Cameron Greifenstein each committed to a project to help them earn Eagle Scout, and with their foresight and the help of many people from original concept to completion their projects came to fruition.

The Mrs. Frances Streck Prayer and Reflection Garden

Frances Streck has been a loyal attendee of the West Point Post Chapel since 1948. In May of last year, a few months before her 95th birthday in early August, Michael C. Greifenstein’s dad, Lt. Col. Michael “Griff” Greifenstein, chief of West Point’s Department of Public Health at Keller Army Community Hospital, was approached by the former chaplain of the Post Chapel, Chaplain Barron Wester, and told that Streck’s family was interested in a “garden-esque” project for her upcoming birthday. The family, Michael C. said, mentioned that making it an Eagle Scout project would add meaning to it.

“At first, I was a little hesitant and unsure about making this my project, as I had another idea in mind,” Michael C. said. “But, after Chaplain Wester gave a sermon about the multi-generational church and how each generation provides for each other within the church, I committed wholeheartedly to this project.”

The 15-year-old who attends James J. O’Neill High School and has been involved in scouting for 10 years now, has to ramp up the brainstorming efforts for his Eagle Project because of the short timeframe to finish it by August.

“The original concept took roughly a month to develop, although the concept that was proposed to us by a volunteer at one of my workdays ended up being the concept we went with,” Michael C. said. “The new concept took roughly a week to develop.”

Once the concept implementation went into motion, Michael C. said, it required multiple tools to include, but not limited to, reciprocating saws, power shovels and rakes as well as 80 bags of concrete and a stand mixer. In total, 35 volunteers, including himself, Michael C. said, were involved in the construction of this project with a total of 231-plus man-hours logged.

“We also procured a park bench that could be inscribed with a message dedicating the garden to Mrs. Streck,” Michael C. said. “We also required food and drink that was provided by my parents to keep the volunteers nourished and hydrated.”

Michael C. gave many thanks to the people who were pivotal to making his project possible because without them, he said, it would not have been achievable. He mentioned Col. and Mrs. Greg Ebner, his troop’s Eagle advisors, Assistant Scoutmaster Steve Monaghan, Chaplain Wester and Michael’s parents.

Each played a big role in the completion of the project as the Ebners placed Michael C. on the right path and showed him what he needed to do, how he could do it and the resources available to him. Wester helped coordinate the times they could work at the church and helped brainstorm some of the layouts for the project.

Monaghan, who is a union concrete worker in New York City, helped consult from the original concept of using timber and mulch to a concrete slab instead.

“Monaghan played a huge role in gathering supplies needed for the concrete work, including the concrete itself, which was donated by the construction company he works for,” Michael C. said. “I don’t know if my project would’ve turned out half as well as it did (without his help).”

And, of course, his parents, who he said were his biggest supporters through the process, played a big role in making sure his project was successful.

The construction phase of the project lasted about two-to-three weeks, but the actual construction only lasted three days with the deadline being tight to meet the church and the Streck family’s timeline, Michael C. said. Then, there was the added challenge that he had Boy Scout Summer Camp for a week in the middle of the project, which added some consternation to finishing the project.

“Managing the stress of having to produce this project in under two months wasn’t always easy to deal with,” Michael C. said. “Although, I learned how to overcome that stress and work to make sure my product was the best it could be for my beneficiaries.”

Michael C. had his Eagle Scout Review Board March 11 and now is on his way to earning his Eagle Scout rank, which allows him to reflect on the project and earning the Eagle Scout title.

“I couldn’t be happier with the result of my project of making it a permanent fixture at the West Point Post Chapel and Reflection Garden along the creek,” Michael C. said.

See EAGLE STATUS, PAGE 13
EAGLE STATUS, cont’d from Page 12

project,” Michael C. said. “I still remember coming up to the chapel to water the plants and seeing a family using the garden and thinking about how my project truly became an addition to the community. The Van Winkles (Mrs. Streck’s daughter’s family) all constantly thanked me on the day of the dedication and kept mentioning how much they loved the garden … this project has not only drawn me closer to my church family, but also Mrs. Streck and the Van Winkle family.

“I am beyond grateful for every person on the trail to this landmark in my life,” he added. “Personally, I’m the happiest knowing that I’m the first in my family to achieve this honor.”

Fort Putnam trail improvements

When Braden Vanmeter began his Eagle Project, his idea was to do it at the Youth Center on post. However, after a conversation with Phil Koury, the West Point arborist, he was told his original idea was not possible. Instead, Koury recommended working on the trails near Fort Putnam instead, and Vanmeter decided to go with that idea.

Vanmeter said he took a month to work through the concepts, which began after his initial meeting Sept. 18.

“We had a couple of other meetings (after the initial one) to mark the trails and to go over what work was required to be completed,” Vanmeter said. “I had my workday, which is when I actually blazed the trails, on Oct. 19, and finished the trails that day. Then, on Oct. 24, I put up the blazes (trail markers) with Mr. Koury’s Capital Projects Team.”

Once the day of labor arrived, Vanmeter said it required two leaf blowers, several rakes, a chainsaw, two pairs of hedge trimmers, two pickaxes and the help of several Boy Scouts and adults to make it all happen.

“It took us about eight hours, once we started (on the ground), to finish all the trails,” Vanmeter said. “It took me about 13 hours from the start of the construction phase to actually completing the full project. I started off with Mr. Koury by marking the trails with checkerboard ribbon, to mark where they would go. After my workday, I had to put up the blazes (trail markers).”

After his project was complete, Vanmeter said he was most appreciative toward Ray Kimball, who helped plan his project. He also credited his dad, Jody, who pushed him to do his work as the deadlines approached.

Also, the Capital Projects Team, which includes Koury, were helpful, supportive and guided the expectations of the project in accordance with U.S. Army Garrison West Point, and Scoutmaster Michael “Griff” Greifenstein, who has been a big supporter of the scouts and pushed Vanmeter to continue toward his path to Eagle and to be a better scout, Vanmeter said.

The 15-year-old James I. O’Neill High School student has been a scout for nine years and had his Eagle Scout Review Board March 11. With his Eagle achievement now in his back pocket, he had time to reflect about the fruits of his labor on the Fort Putnam trails.

“I am very proud of what I have done,” Vanmeter said. “My project allows the community to have a place to be in nature and to get out and get some exercise. People can now take advantage of the trails since they are big enough for social distancing.”

And his thoughts about receiving Eagle Scout and the road ahead?

“I’ve finally made it to my goal,” he said. “I am proud to see all the hours of work that I’ve put in pay off. I am going to give back to my troop by continuing to participate in troop activities and help guide the other scouts on their Eagle trail.”

Epilogue—Thoughts from the Parents

With any achievements that children attain, it can be assumed that 99.99% of the time their parents were the guides to focus them on the path toward success. Greifenstein and Vanmeter are no different and their parents are very proud of their sons’ Eagle accomplishments.

“My wife, Stacy, and I cannot be more proud of our son,” “Griff” Greifenstein said. “Michael has dreamt of attaining the goal of Eagle Scout since the day he put on his Tiger Scout uniform in 2011. I watched him work hard, stay focused and accomplish his goal, which has been nothing short of incredible … what amazes us both to this day is that on day one, as a 6-year-old, he told us both that, ‘one day, mom and dad, I am going to be an Eagle Scout.’ And, he did it.”

Capt. Jody Vanmeter, USCC S-5, added, “As any parent with their child’s accomplishments, proud doesn’t even begin to describe how we feel. Braden set a goal and with the help of many leaders and fellow scouts, he achieved something he only dreamed about. He started in Cub Scouts in Germany as something to get involved in. To take that younger Braden and see the steps and life skills he learned while being a scout, it makes us very proud of him every day.”

The parents also spoke highly of their sons’ character of not only being able to lead these projects, but also fulfilling obligations they set forth toward the goal of achieving the rank of Eagle.

“This was an opportunity to prove to himself that he could lead, prove fortitude and lead his peers while trying to ensure everything works out,” Jody Vanmeter said. “This project helped build more character and positive reinforcement, allowing him to showcase his abilities and have a positive impact on himself, the Troop and the community.”

“Griff” Greifenstein said about his son’s character, “This is no small effort for an adult, let alone a 15-year-old young man … Throughout the process, Michael remained dedicated, faithful and worked incredibly hard to organize, resource, execute and dedicate his prayer and reflection garden, all in a very tight timeline, all done to honor Mrs. Frances Streck on her 95th birthday. The crowning moment was watching Michael pour his heart out during the official dedication ceremony to Mrs. Streck, her family, his church and his family. His character truly shined bright that Sunday morning, showing all that scouting had done to make him the fine young man he is and an upstanding citizen in our community.”

Currently, with COVID-19 still near its peak in the New York area, there are no plans in the near future to hold an Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremony for both Vanmeter and Greifenstein, but once things get back to near normal, the kids will see their day in the sun.

“As with life, there are many hurdles and challenges,” “Griff” Greifenstein said. “Michael knows the day will come soon when he can gather with his family, friends, fellow scouts, scout leaders and his church to celebrate this achievement and honor those who helped him along the trail to Eagle Scout.

Whenever that day is,” he concluded. “We will be sure to make his Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremony special and memorable for him—he truly deserves it.”

Braden Vanmeter and Phil Koury, West Point arborist and project beneficiary, work together to help set up Vanmeter for success on his Eagle Scout project.
A Legacy and Family in action

By Kim McDermott
West Point Association of Graduates

Army Hockey Head coach Brian Riley wears two steel bracelets, one on each wrist. They bear the names of two graduates who have left an indelible mark on Riley. Leaving legacies to the program, and to the nation, were Maj. Thomas Kennedy (‘00) and 1st Lt. Derek Hines (‘03). Both officers were killed in action in Afghanistan; Hines on Sept. 1, 2005 and Kennedy on Aug. 8, 2012.

The mention of their names clearly touches a nerve and sets off a passionate response that Riley has repeated many times over.

“I would go to the top of any mountain to talk about them,” Riley said. “One of the most important jobs I have is to make sure the legacies of our former players live on. I wear these bracelets in honor of that and I will never take them off. These guys were my guys. They were obviously good hockey players, but more importantly they were great people, young men and great leaders.”

Riley does all he can to make sure his current players understand who they were, holding them up as models to emulate.

“I can only hope to try and accomplish some of the great things that these great men have done,” Junior Trevin Kozlowski said.

“Both had such team-first mentalities,” Riley said. “Neither were superstars, they just cared more for their teammates than themselves.”

Riley believes that their selfless attitude as players carried over to their actions as leaders on the battlefield. He leverages every opportunity he can to speak about Kennedy and Hines and always ends with saying that he is certain of one thing. That “without a doubt, if they could speak now, they would say no matter what happens to them than one of their Soldiers.”

In the summer of 2017, Riley had a special opportunity to recognize Hines. The Cadet Basic Training detail that summer was designated Task Force Hines. Riley got to talk about Hines to the cadre and new cadets. He was especially honored to give a leadership talk to the cadre and new cadets. He was especially honored to give a leadership talk to the cadre and present a real-world hero who happens to be a hockey player, but the memory of an American hero,” Riley said. “One of the most important jobs I have is to make sure that West Point players, in particular, have better be physically tough because that’s what opponents expect.

Mental toughness he describes as having the capacity to “do whatever it takes to battle adversity to get through 60 minutes on the ice.” And discipline, he says, is just reinforcing “the way of life here at West Point.”

He expects his players to have the discipline to come to practice and work hard, to play the right way, and to always work at lifting each other up. Riley emphasizes that teams lose when there is a lack of discipline.

Many programs talk about family, and it is always important for teammates to be there for each other. But being at West Point seems to take it to another level. Riley says that the academy and the team are something that his players will be a part of forever, “until the day they die.”

As an example, he describes how much it meant to him that when his father died in 2016, the players (both current and alumni) circled around him and his family—to lift them up. It is that caring for each other that means the most to him for his players to learn.

Riley added, “Caring doesn’t mean you can’t be tough and enforce standards,” and his players confirm that.

Kozlowski said, “(Coach) demands excellence from his team and is not afraid to let you know when he feels you could be doing better. This is because he only wants the athletes on this team to be the best possible version of themselves both on and off the ice.”

“As a coach, Riley focuses his team on four main areas: physical toughness, mental toughness, discipline, and family.”

The first three are common to athletics in general. He realizes that West Point players, in particular, had better be physically tough because that’s what opponents expect.

Mental toughness he describes as having the capacity to “do whatever it takes to battle adversity to get through 60 minutes on the ice.” And discipline, he says, is just reinforcing “the way of life here at West Point.”

Riley’s proudest moments aren’t the wins, he said.

“‘It’s when I’m on the deck of the Holleder Center watching the bar pinnings, because I know that they are leaving as leaders that will make this institution proud,” Riley said.

Players get a taste of that pride, even as cadets. Kozlowski said, “Being able to represent not only the United States Military Academy but the Army as a whole is something incredibly special to me. Whenever I pull the jersey over my head, the first thing I do is look down at the word ARMY across my chest. This reminds me that I am playing for something bigger than myself.”

They are playing for something bigger than themselves, and Riley will never forget this. Every morning, as head coach Brian Riley drives past the West Point Cemetery, he says something to one of the fallen who rests there—Kennedy.

At a lot of schools, losing games is a coach’s biggest fear. For Riley, this is not the case. He says his biggest fear is to lose a player.

“I wear two KIA bracelets,” he says. “I don’t have any more wrists.”

Sports calendar

NO GAMES SCHEDULED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.
Every teacher is very personable with every student, athlete or not. I am an Engineering Management major within the Systems Engineering department, and I enjoy going to every class in my major. The students and teachers make each day special. Without a doubt, my current and past teachers at the academy will be some of the greatest mentors in life.

I’d like to shout out the seniors during my freshman year—Leo Genders (now 1st Lt. Genders) and Joseph Pritts (now 1st Lt. Pritts). While I was still trying to figure my life out plebe year, both of these gentlemen guided me through and set me on the right path. They showed me what it meant to be a true leader of character and compassion rather than an authoritarian one.

The same goes with my sophomore year team captain, Nick McAfee (now 1st Lt. McAfee). He was known for the phrase “nobody cares, work harder.” While this sounds very blunt and careless, it meant so much to me. He was one of the only leaders I’ve ever come across who could be so rough and straight up, but who you knew also really cared about every single guy under him. He would say this phrase out of love, and to make you a better man. Nick was the most hardworking, disciplined person I have ever met, and I still strive to be more like him every day.

While I only mentioned a few individuals on the team, the point I aim to get across is that Army gymnastics is truly a family. If the academy seems a bit scary at first, I would not let that stop you from making the decision to come here.

The gymnastics team is really something special. The guys on the team will help you get through the rough patches and enjoy yourself along the way. You will quickly become friends when you are sharing a meal-ready-to-eat and walking up a mountain with a ruck on at 3 a.m. in the complete dark.

Our team struggles together and is forced to endure worse conditions than most people experience in their entire lives. But we don’t even mind it because we are together. As one team with one fight.

All the meets along the way traveling across the country with a large group of my best friends were the best times of my life. I can’t speak for the atmosphere on any other teams, but I can say for certain that the Army gymnastics team was the closest-knit group of guys I’ve ever seen or been a part of in my life.

There were many struggles along the way, and many tough meets, but what’s special about Army gymnastics is that we can quickly put the hard times behind us and focus on what’s next. It is about the grittiest group of gentlemen that you can find anywhere, who all are an integral part of the team, and who all care about each other deeply.

Personally, I feel cheated that my last meet was the last meet of my career and I didn’t even know it. I never got that feeling of competing for the last time or doing the last routine of my life, landing and feeling grateful for the accomplished career I’ve had. What the season ending did teach me is to never take anything for granted. I completely appreciate what I had at Army—the coaches, my teammates, our physical trainer, our fans, all of it.

While COVID-19 unfortunately and abruptly ended my final season as an Army gymnast, I still consider myself lucky to have been able to be a part of the family long enough to appreciate what it was. I ended my final season on a high note, as the ECAC Co-Most Improved Gymnast, and with multiple personal bests on the pommel horse. The last meet I competed in was the best I’ve done in my life and received my final personal best of a 13.8. While ending the season the way we did was difficult, I am as happy as can be ending it with a personal best, without even knowing it at the time.

Gymnastics is more than just a sport. It is a way of life. It teaches discipline from an early age. It means going to practice when your friends are all hanging out on a Friday night.

Going to practice instead of going to the beach during summer break. Going to practice when you have more schoolwork than time to get it done by class the next day. And if you asked me if I would do it all over again, I’d say yes in a heartbeat.

Army gymnastics has taught me to be gritty and never accept anything less than my best. It was not always easy to be a cadet at the United States Military Academy and NCAA Division I athlete, but it taught me to care for my family and to always be there for each other. This will stay with me forever.

The relationships I’ve made will last forever. My love for the sport will exist forever, despite the unexpected and unfortunate ending for the seniors and the rest of the gymnasts around the nation.

If there is one decision that I cannot recommend enough to anyone in life, it would be to join the Army gymnastics team. It will be the toughest and best times of your life, but the best times far outweigh the tough ones. It will make you physically and mentally strong and ready to face anything that comes your way in life.

But lastly, it will give you more meaning than any other school in the nation because upon graduation you will commission as an officer and leader of character into the United States Army.

I hope this letter resonates with young gymnasts across the nation and helps guide them with their decision to continue collegiate gymnastics in the future. I did my best to write it in a way that it would have helped me out four short years ago.