



RETIREMENT... Maj. Chris Boozer stands at attention while he is being awarded military awards and decorations by Lt. Col. James Ainsworth, director of Directorate of Personnel Community Activities, during his retirement ceremony.



ALL SMILES... Dana Boozer smiles as Lt. Col. James Ainsworth, director of Directorate of Personnel Community Activities (DPCA) places a necklace around her neck during her husband's retirement ceremony. The necklace represents the sacrifice and role she played as her husband served in the military.

Boozer retires after 26 years of service

By **SGT. MICHAEL WILLIAMS**
Camp Shelby Public Affairs

One of Camp Shelby's own Soldiers has decided to move on from his military career and pursue his civilian career.

A retirement ceremony was held for Maj. Chris Boozer at building 1001 on July 16.

"I want to thank everyone who had a part in making this happen for me," said Boozer. "As much as I have been through in my career in the last 26 years, I have seen and done a lot."

For the last few years, Boozer has been working at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center Range Control Office as a Range Control Officer, which he says is a top-notch office.

Range Control's mission is to monitor and provide safety measures on different types of ranges to ensure the Soldiers safety and for the general public to be safe during day-to-day live fire missions.

"I have never served with a finer group of professional men then whom I met in the Range Control Office," said Boozer. "To me, I know that this job is a very important position and people's lives are at stake out there on the range."

With Boozer's time in service spanning more than three decades, he can't believe that time has really passed by.

"It's hard to believe that 26 years have come and gone," says the native of Amory. "I was really at the state of getting out but I talked to God and He told me it's time to get out."

"I know I have a tough job in the civilian world working at Cooper Tires in Tupelo and I had to make that decision on letting go one of my careers," says Boozer.

During the ceremony, Boozer's wife Dana received a necklace from Lt. Col. James Ainsworth, director of Directorate of Personnel and Community Activities (DPCA).



MEMORIES... Boozer holds an encased Camp Shelby JFTC Range Control hat that he received from the Range Control Office during his retirement ceremony.

"We always talk about the roles that Families play," Ainsworth said as he was placing the necklace around her neck. "While your husband was serving, we realize that you were serving, too, and we thank you for that."

A Camp Shelby coin was also presented to Boozer's daughters for their sacrifice.

"This coin of excellence is presented to the both of you for allowing us to use your dad," said Ainsworth.

MCSS

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replace uniform items while deploying in support of Overseas Contingency Operations and on their return home.

Staff Sgt. Charles Dyer, of Battery B, 278th Regimental Fire Squadron, recently returned from a deployment to Iraq. The unit had received its mobilization training at Camp Shelby when work on the facility had just begun. He had come to the store to shop and was unaware of the grand opening ceremony until he arrived.

"This is nice. It was only dirt when we left," he said. "It looks competitive now to one at a regular Army post."

The new building provides more space for merchandise and a better shopping environment, said Vanessa Saelens, store manager. Saelens is also new to Camp Shelby, having been assigned here from a store in Belgium only a few weeks ago. However, she said she was familiar with the store's previous location inside the Post Exchange.



UNIFORM SHOPPING – Staff Sgts. Charles Dyer, right, and Tony Doss, of Battery B, 278th Regimental Fire Squadron, shop for uniform items July 20 before returning home to Tennessee. The unit was demobilizing following a tour of duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"It's a lot easier to shop here now," Saelens said. "Everything is a lot more spread out. A lot of times we gave the impression we didn't have (an item) when we did, but shoppers couldn't find it because it was too cramped."

The MCSS expansion of merchandise is not large yet, she said. The new store is still primarily stocked with

the same merchandise that was at the previous location, but there are more options as the expanded sales floor has allowed the staff to display a greater variance in sizes.

The variety of items available at the store is expanding, however, Saelens said. Many new items have been ordered and will soon be in stock.

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