

# Special Services

## — — Recreation and Entertainment for Occupation Forces

**A**N OFFICIAL of European Command Special Services recently stated: "Personnel serving in the European Command today have for their use and pleasure entertainment and recreational facilities that would strain the pocketbook of a wealthy civilian."

EUCOM Special Services, for instance, offers travel tours, rest centers, libraries, post exchanges, motion picture installations, traveling floor shows, athletic programs, service clubs, handicraft and manual arts workshops all for leisure-time use by occupation personnel.

Other types of services are provided by the corps of Chaplains, the American Red Cross and the Legal Assistance Office. Troop Information and Education Division sponsors the Stars and Stripes and the American Forces Network, and also provides facilities for those wishing to continue their education.

**E**UCOM SPECIAL Services has for its mission the maintaining of the morale and welfare of US Forces in Germany as well as in Austria, France and England through the provision of off-duty recreational and entertainment facilities.

It is responsible for the planning and operation of athletics, moving picture programs, libraries, floor shows, service clubs, tours, rest areas, arts and crafts shops, bowling alleys and pool tables.

It is responsible for the control and accounting of funds, and the procurement, storage, salvage and distribution of supplies and equipment.

It is also responsible for the supervision and control of post exchanges, including snack bars.

Funds for administration of the program come from two sources. A small part comes from Congressional appropriations, but the great bulk of operating capital is derived from contributions made by the Central Welfare Fund. In the quarter ending Sept. 30, 1948, for example, Special Services received \$66,825 in appropriated funds and \$767,868 in non-appropriated funds from the Central Welfare Fund.

This Central Welfare Fund is the pool, established and administered in the EUCOM, which receives any profits made from any service offered to occupation personnel. Post exchanges, liquor stores and motion pictures provide most of the profits.

**T**HE AVERAGE AMERICAN is certainly one of the most sports-minded individuals alive. Recognizing this, Special Services has created an athletic program designed to fit the needs of everyone. Whether we are ping-pong players or pile-driving fullbacks there is a place for us in the program.

Competition in seven major sports is organized throughout the command: track and field, bowling, boxing, softball, baseball, basketball and football. In minor sports, such as golf, swimming and tennis there is very active participation. In addition, bowling alleys, pool and billiard tables and ping-pong equipment are furnished for enthusiasts in these activities.

In boxing, an 18-man EUCOM boxing team evidenced the high caliber of athletics in the European Command by going to Chicago this year and winning the all Army-Air Force welterweight (147 lb.) championship.

The WAC, too, is included in the comprehensive program. Five command-wide championships were staged in softball, golf, badminton, horseshoes and tennis.

Nine-man touch football has been  
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American celebrities brought to EUCOM by Special Services in the last four years include, left, Miss Marjorie Lawrence, world-famous dramatic soprano, pictured here at Wiesbaden in 1948. Right, "Arsenic and Old Lace," with all-GI and hostess cast, presented at Munich in January 1949 with costumes furnished by ESS. (All photos by US Army)

added to the agenda, and there is no conceivable form of exercise for which equipment will not be furnished if enough interest is shown to warrant the expenditure of money. This goes for fencing, badminton, backgammon or even less common forms of recreation.

The whole program operates at a consistently high level. Former athletic stars from West Point and many other American colleges are assigned as coaches and directors, and competent officials are appointed to handle the various games and matches. The equipment is top-grade.

**E**VERYBODY GOES to the movies. That is evidenced by attendance figures. From June 1941 to June 1949 attendance figures totaled about 11,000,000 at 35-mm and 16-mm theaters.

The EUCOM Motion Picture Service is responsible for the procurement and distribution of all films, and the procurement, installation and maintenance of 35-mm sound and projection equipment. It operates 108 35-mm theaters, 147 16-mm theaters and distributes about 208 titles a year.

For those who find pleasure in roaming in bookland and wish to keep up with the latest fiction and non-fiction, Special Services again can supply the needs.

For the first six months of 1949 a total of 1,118,709 books was circulated



*"Archie of Duffy's Tavern," otherwise Ed Gardner, radio comedian, at AFN's Hochst studios in Sept. 1948.*

through the Special Services Library System. Seventy-seven trained librarians from the United States, assisted by qualified German personnel, operate 197 libraries, six bookmobiles and 19 library depots. The number of books available for withdrawal by personnel is 3,305,178.

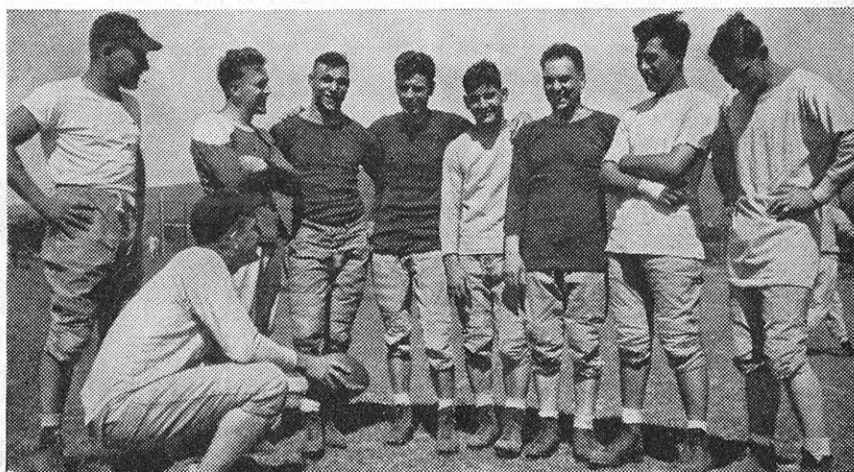
**T**HERE ARE TWO types of libraries in the EUCOM. The first is a small one usually found in the Service Clubs, and managed, in most cases, by a German civilian. The second is found in large cities like Berlin or Frankfurt. These are not unlike the ones you know back home. They are housed in separate buildings, with lounges, reading rooms and orderly book shelves.

Each library has a nucleus of cloth-bound books, both fiction and non-fiction, and new book kits are sent out regularly to keep the libraries up to date. Book club selections are prominent in the bundles of new books dispatched. New books are being ordered continuously from the United States. The libraries are constantly developing and increasing their stock of reading material.

With their cheerful, friendly atmosphere the familiar EUCOM Service Clubs have created very much of a "home away from home" for the countless thousands who have visited them and made use of their facilities.

**O**PERATED BY the Recreational Branch of EUCOM Special Services, there are 98 Service Clubs, staffed by 352 Army recreational directors. Of these clubs, 88 are located in Germany, five in Austria, three in France and one in Belgium. Some of them, like the palatial Palmgarten Club at Frankfurt, are elaborate affairs; others are more modest. But in all of them can be found a cheerful place to spend a few pleasant hours, whether dancing, reading, writing or playing games.

The clubs present floor shows and dances, stage amateur theatricals, run trips to points of local, historical or scenic interest, operate coke and coffee bars, and dozens of other things asked for by the personnel



*In the field of athletics Special Services is tireless in its efforts to maintain the morale and welfare of EUCOM forces. Its year-round planning and programming cover virtually all fields of athletic endeavor. Left, an exciting moment in a Berlin basketball game. Right, initial turnout for the Constabulary's football team of 1947, showing seven of its husky 1946 regulars.*



they are set up to serve. American, Allied or German guests can be taken into the clubs.

Of all the facilities operated by Special Services, the European Exchange System is undoubtedly the largest and most widely used. Catering to American and Allied personnel and their families in EUCOM, EES has to stock its shelves with all manner of goods.

**I**N MANY WAYS its catalogues resemble those of a US department store. It sells food,\* drink, clothing, cigarettes, candy, cosmetics and toilet articles, jewelry, watches, cameras, binoculars, automobiles, tires, gasoline. In addition, EES operates photograph studios, photo finishing plants, barber and beauty shops, dry cleaning establishments, snack bars, breweries, fruit and vegetable stands, dressmaking and tailoring shops, bakeries, ice cream plants, laundries and shoe repair shops.

EES is operated under the chief of Special Services, as the European branch of the Army Exchange Service, and any profits derived from its operation are turned over to the Central Welfare Fund. This fund is used to provide recreation and entertainment for occupation personnel.

Its organization differs from stateside PX's only in that more civilians are

\* Basic foods are supplied to dependent families by the QM Sales Commissaries.



*The inimitable Martha Raye at the 6th TT Special Services Club in Mannheim during her busy 1948 tour.*

employed. This was necessitated by the scarcity of trained service personnel, and the fact that in a small occupation force all servicemen and women are needed to perform tasks directly bearing on the occupation.

At present, there are 166 PX's in Germany, Austria, France and Belgium. A recent survey has disclosed that the price of PX merchandise is, in the main, lower than that charged by US retailers for similar goods.

**T**HE ENTERTAINMENT BRANCH books the type of professional vaudeville troupes which usually appears in Services Clubs and consisting of a master of ceremonies, singer, comedian, dancer or dance team, and juggler or magician. Such

troupes have given thousands of performances throughout EUCOM since their inception in 1947.

Until November 1948, Special Services provided German shows and until January 1949 Allied shows to entertain troops. However, in line with the American policy of restoring the German economy wherever possible, this service has been turned over to German, American and Allied agencies. German and Allied entertainers and artists now are procured, at the military post level, through booking agents who must be cleared through US Military Government and Headquarters Special Services.

Stars of stage, screen and radio who, throughout the war, gave so generously of their time and talents have not forgotten the Occupation Forces. During 1948, the Celebrities Service Section procured an array of talent including Jack Benny, Larry Adler, Phil Harris, Mary Livingstone, Alice Faye, Frank Remley, Martha Raye, Wallace Beery, Ed Gardner (Archie of Duffy's Tavern), Danny Kaye, Lana Turner, Tony Martin, the Merry Macs and the Meddiebempsters, celebrated male chorus from Bowdoin College, as well as bowling champs Buddy Bomar and Frank Bencovic.

So far this year Chico Marx has toured the zone; Brigadoon (first scripted musical show since the close

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*Boxing remains outstandingly popular among occupation personnel. At left, winners in February 1949 tournament between Frankfurt and Heidelberg military posts receiving trophies at Frankfurt from Lt. Col. R. E. Heydahl, now chief of ESS club section. Right, EUCOM's 1947 tennis singles champion, Lt. Frank Mehner, handed prize by Brig. Gen. Thomas Bresnahan, then BPE's CG.*



of overseas camp shops) has concluded an extensive tour of the zone.

**M**AKING USE of the tours service operated by the Recreation Branch of EUCOM Special Service, occupation personnel are able to visit 10 different countries. In comfort and at reasonable rates, they can travel in France, Italy, Holland, Luxembourg, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria and the United Kingdom.

Typical of the large variety of tours offered by Special Services is the eight-day journey to Switzerland. For \$60 one can visit Basel, St. Moritz, Lugano and Lucerne. Or one can spend seven days in Paris for \$31.75.

Special Services also operated the Karlsruhe Leave Center (formerly the Swiss Leave Center) charged with the booking and distribution of publicity for the tours. Up to the first five months of this year, 154,528 persons from EUCOM had taken advantage of the SS tours and recreational areas. In March alone, 34,902 EUCOM personnel visited rest centers.

**S**PECIAL SERVICES maintains three rest centers. The serviceman with a three-day pass or a week's leave can find relaxation or strenuous activity depending on how he likes to spend his vacation.

There's a rest center at Berchtesgaden, once Hitler's Bavarian retreat. There's another at Garmisch where the serviceman can swim, fish, play golf, climb mountains or, in winter,

ski, skate, sleigh or toboggan. The third, Chiemsee, like Berchtesgaden, is near the Austrian border.

EUCOM Special Services' Entertainment Section provides opportunity for participation in musical activities by any member of the Occupation Forces who so desires. It furnishes record libraries (both classical and popular), musical instruments, musical supplies (reeds, strings, etc.) and hit kits.

At the present time there are 11,687 musical instruments worth \$228,800 in EUCOM. Special Service hostesses are kept informed of developments and any group interested in any phase of the music program is urged to consult one of the hostesses.

In April of this year 513 musicians graduated from the 7701st Band Training School. Graduates of this school serve throughout the zones of Germany and Austria. This is one more item in the list of Special Services activities. Students are selected by Army band leaders of organizations and posts. Volunteers may write direct to the office of the chief of Special Services. In addition to the ordinary course, there are advance courses for soldier musicians who have served two or more months with an Army band.

**S**PECIAL SERVICES' civilian actress technicians are prepared to give advice and assistance to those interested in play production. If one



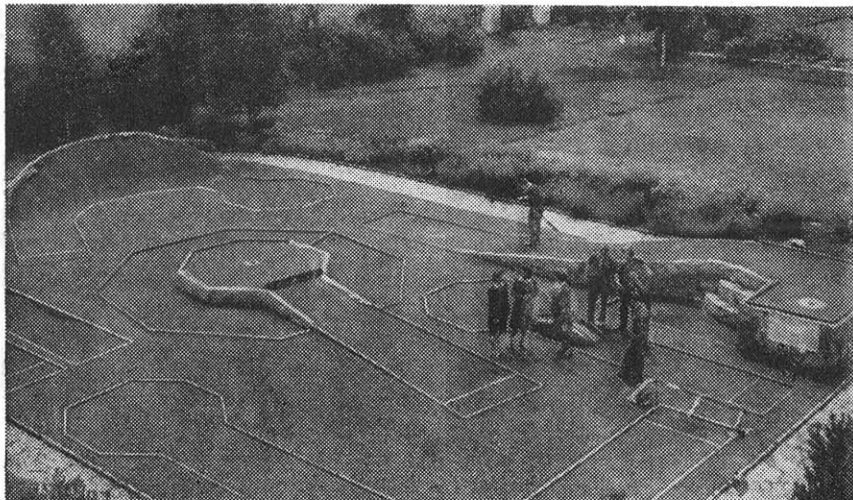
*Left to right, Charlie McCarthy and Edgar Bergen receiving scrolls from Col. H. P. Perrine expressing Heidelberg Military Post's appreciation of their highly successful 1948 visit.*

wants to stage a show or form a little theater group, the Theatrical Activities Section is prepared to provide professional supervision and advice in the recruitment of talent, writing, rehearsing, staging, theatrical makeup, prop devices, techniques and presentation of production.

For those feel the urge to carve, mold, paint, draw or make something with their hands, Special Services has set up a total of 63 craft shops and 75 photo labs in the command. These shops furnish supplies and instruction in photography, drawing and painting, clay modeling, silk screen and block printing, wood work, metal work and leather work. During June 1949, 31,412 persons worked on craft projects and 27,302 EUCOM personnel used the photo installations.

There is also the EUCOM photo contest. Reprints of the prize-winning photographs are exhibited in service clubs in the US Zone.

The many-phased program of Special Services serves no other purpose than to offer recreation and entertainment. Profits from the sale of EES merchandise and other services for which a fee is charged, go into the Central Welfare Fund, then are reinvested in servicemen welfare projects. †END



*For those not so energetically inclined in off-duty hours ESS provides — in addition to movies, libraries, tours, arts and crafts shops and pool tables — wee golf courses like that at Garmisch, in the beautiful Bavarian Alps.*