

Cleaning up

The charts, maps, slides, crisp military uniforms and the aides and support people in the wings ready to offer additional information—all that was missing in Fort Detrick's presentation last Thursday night was a list of casualties and sincere pronouncements that we're reaching the end of the tunnel in the war.

The presentation on Fort Detrick's chemical waste cleanup plan was definitely not on the same scale as a battle briefing, but for the residents of the area, just as serious.

A decent crowd was on hand, possibly because the neutral site at Waverley Elementary School was considerably less intimidating than an on-base meeting site might have been.

Those involved in the meeting—including principal speaker Lt. Col. Jeff Springer—were helpful, knowledgeable and patient. This is a comprehensive, lengthy and expensive effort to safely dispose of toxic chemicals on the base, but it's just the start of a three-year \$20 million base clean-up program.

The chemical pollution problem has already had an impact on the lives of nearby residents—including Shookstown Road dairy farmer Bill Krantz who was forced out of business by water contamination and residents whose well are contaminated—but Fort Detrick officials are trying to find solutions to the problem.

They're also willing to take additional comments or concerns on the chemical cleanup project by June 14. Send those comments to Dept. of the Army, U.S. Army Garrison, Environmental Management Division, Attn: Douglas Warnock, 1500 Porter St., Fort Detrick MD, 21702-5000 or fax them to 301-619-2555.