



JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON'S SOURCE FOR NEWS

# ARCTIC WARRIOR

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A total force of JBER Airmen sharpen their skills during Operation Readiness Exercise

## POLAR FORCE



ABOVE: Security Forces Airmen perform tactical maneuvers on Camp Mad Bull April 6. JBER Airmen participated in exercise Polar Force 13-3. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Omari Bernard)

TOP: Airman 1st Class Charles Taylor, left, and Senior Airman Justin Vann, right, discuss the Airman's Manual while on door guard duty during exercise Polar Force. The readiness exercise is designed to validate the wing's ability to integrate, mobilize, and prepare assigned personnel, aircraft and equipment for their wartime mission and to employ forces and weapons systems to perform tasked missions. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)

By Air Force Staff Sgt. William Banton  
JBER Public Affairs  
and Air Force Staff Sgt. Nancy Goldberger  
176th Wing Public Affairs

The continuous 24-hour operational readiness exercise, Polar Force 13-3, came to a close Monday after a week of evaluating Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's Air Forces deployment capabilities, despite weather complications.

"Arctic Warriors, congratulations on a very successful Polar Force 13-3 exercise," said Air Force Col. Brian Duffy, 673d Air Base Wing commander. "Whether you were out front helping us get simulated people, equipment or aircraft ready for deployment, or whether you were working in our child development centers or manning our gates, you were all part of the collective success and we have a tremendous amount of thanks to give everyone."

The 3rd Wing commander, Air Force Col. David Nahom, echoed sentiments of thanks to all his personnel and their hard work throughout the exercise.

"I think we learned a lot about how to operate in a non-permissive environment," Nahom. "I think also we were probably fighting the conditions of the weather here in Alaska, more than the scenario at times."

Nahom concluded his assessment of the

exercise by highlighting that, despite the weather, he thinks the 3rd Wing is more prepared to go forward to the next exercise and on to the exceptions next year.

The weeklong ORE helped validate and evaluate the wings' ability to integrate, mobilize, and prepare assigned personnel, aircraft and equipment for their wartime mission.

Designed with long hours and a busy work load, the intent was to push Airmen to their limits so they can do their best didn't go unnoticed.

"Aside from the 12-hour shifts, it's not too bad," said Airman 1st Class Terah Spear, 703rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, aerospace propulsion apprentice, about her first exercise. "It kind of makes you think about what you're doing so you can get used to it."

Tech Sgt. Adam Aguilar, a member of the services Exercise Evaluation Team from the 673d Force Support Squadron agrees.

"It's important to sharpen our contingency skills," Aguilar said. "[This] gives us the opportunity to test our equipment and skills that we would otherwise not have the opportunity to until we got into the field."

The process is designed to provide operational training to prepare for deployment situations. These scenarios include in-processing newly arrived overseas personnel from a Noncombatant Evacuation Operation, deploying Airmen, and preparing strategic

mission postures from deployed locations.

The contributions of the Guardsmen and Reservist as contingency assets during real world operations helped increase the authenticity of Polar Force 13-3, and helped to make it a success.

"Our biggest success within civil engineer was the total force integration of active duty, Guard and Reserve," said Chief Master Sgt. Keith Wilson, 176th Civil Engineer Squadron EET. "I think we have some challenges, but we can overcome those challenges. If we continue to work together, we'll achieve success."

Aguilar said he agreed with Chief Wilson's assessment.

"I think that's important to keep ties between our Guard and Reserve," Aguilar said. "We will do the same job. It's good to know who our counterparts are."

The combined partnership of Active, Guard and Reserve was an important step in making Polar Force 13-3 a success.

"I was extremely pleased with the effort the planning, execution and the ultimate total force combined effort that went into this exercise," said Air Force Col. Donald Wenke, 176th Wing commander. "I think we all learned a lot out of it. I think we are going to get better day as we continue to exercise in the future and prepare for war time tasking's and our readiness inspections in the future."



Army Staff Sgt. Jason Dean, a paratrooper assigned to the 725th Brigade Support Battalion, crosses the climbing bars on the "Tarzan" during the Best Junior Leader Competition on JBER April 2. The "Tarzan" is one of 10 obstacles paratroopers complete during the Confidence Course. (U.S. Army photo/Sgt. 1st Class Jason Epperson)

## Spartans compete for best junior leader, top squad honors

By Sgt. 1st Class Jason Epperson  
4-25th ABCT Public Affairs

While spring has begun for most Soldiers in the Lower 48 states, the arctic paratroopers assigned to 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, are still training hard in the snow.

The 4-25th ABCT hosted two days of "Best Junior Leader" and "Best Squad" competition on JBER all day April 2 and 3 that began both days in the early hours.

The competitions included a 15-mile foot march, an obstacle course, an M249 machine gun assembly challenge, a stress-shoot event, a modified physical fitness test, a harness rigging, and challenge events for field

► See SPARTANS, A-3

## JBER engineers build school, partnership in Philippines

By Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Chris Fahey  
American Forces Press Service

ZAMBALES, Philippines — Philippine and U.S. Air Force engineers laid the concrete foundation for the new Omayra schoolhouse, April 1, marking the first major construction milestone for the combined team.

Interwoven with steel rebar, the 60-by-28 meter concrete pad will be the permanent home for a two-classroom prefabricated building.

"You can always kind of exhale a bit (with relief) once you finish the concrete," said Air Force construction officer-in-charge Master Sgt. Benjamin Bone, from JBER's 773d Civil Engineering Squadron. "It's the hardest part and takes the most focus. We'll give it about three days to dry and then begin building the actual schoolhouse. It feels great to be getting this done. The community is really happy too."

Education is a valuable commodity in the Philippines. In areas where farming is basically the only occupation, a good education can allow greater opportunities for students. Missing school because of dangerous condi-

► See SCHOOL, A-3



A C-130 Hercules taxis the JBER runway in preparation for takeoff during Polar Force 13-3 April 7. The readiness exercise is designed to validate the wing's ability to integrate, mobilize, and prepare assigned personnel, aircraft and equipment for their wartime mission. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Blake Mize)

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**F-22s resume normal flight operations**

F-22 Raptors resumed normal flight operations after modifications were made across the fleet to aircrew life-support equipment, A-3



## America's Army – our profession

By Command Sgt. Maj. Bernie Knight  
USARAK Command Sergeant Major

Every year, a Gallup poll asks Americans to rate how much confidence they have in a variety of U.S. institutions. The military has topped that list for several years running.

As Soldiers, we maintain that public trust by being professionals. But what does that really mean?

The Army is not a profession just because we say it is. The Army is a profession because we uphold standards and discipline. It is a profession because the Army is a values-based organization. The Warrior Ethos and Army Values aren't just slogans or posters to put up in the orderly room – they guide our actions and define us as professionals.

Standards and discipline, when properly established and practiced, are reflected in the decision to do what is right – on and off duty, in garrison, or on the battlefield. This is especially true in the face of temptations, obstacles, adversity, frustrations, fatigue, and fear – where it matters most.

After more than a decade of war and with a drawdown on the horizon, the Army is taking a hard look at what it means to be a professional and how to establish what right looks like.

Starting in 2010, the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic gathered feedback from more than 40,000 professionals across the Army about the state of the profession and the way ahead. They identified several areas



Airborne leaders, company grade and above, from the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, pull an ahkio sled packed with cold-weather survival gear while training during the U.S. Army's Cold Weather Orientation Course at the Northern Warfare Training Center March 26 to 29 at the Black Rapids Training Site near Fort Greely, Alaska. Discipline and professionalism are attributes especially needed for operating in cold weather. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Michael O'Brien)

of concern – most of them based on inconsistencies in the enforcement of standards and discipline throughout the Army.

This is why, during 2013, the Army will conduct an education and training program

called "America's Army – Our Profession" aimed at re-establishing the Army's professional identity by focusing on these four themes throughout the year:

- 1st Quarter: Standards and Discipline

- 2nd Quarter: Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions
- 3rd Quarter: Military Expertise - Certified Army Professionals
- 4th Quarter: Trust

The Army has established a website with training support packages, videos and recommended reading to help leaders conduct effective training and discussion on these topics at: <http://cape.army.mil/aaop/AAOP%20Overview/overview.php>

Leaders, I urge you to visit this site and use the resources available there in your development training and discussions.

The foundation of our Army is solid, and U.S. Army Alaska Soldiers continue to amaze me with what they can accomplish. But repeated deployments, continuous preparations for further counterinsurgency operations, and increased reliance on contractors have caused portions of our force to lose skills in fundamental areas such as training management, property accountability, maintenance, and counseling back at home station.

It's time to repair these areas where standards of professional discipline have eroded. We cannot allow our Soldiers to have a perceived relaxation of standards after deployment.

We must maintain the trust and respect of the American people that we've worked so hard to earn and continue to be the greatest Army in the world.

## Developing arctic leaders in the Last Frontier

By Army Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Smith  
4-25th ABCT PAO

Command leadership teams from across the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, participated in the U.S. Army's Cold Weather Orientation Course March 26 to 29 at the Northern Warfare Training Center at the Black Rapids Training Site near Fort Greely, Alaska.

The unique Cold Weather Orientation Course gave all command teams across the 4-25th ABCT the opportunity to further develop their arctic leadership skills, and share their lessons learned from leading paratroopers in combat, and lessons learned in the last frontier.

The Northern Warfare Training Center is headquartered at Fort Wainwright, and is located in the interior region of Alaska, about 30 miles south of Delta Junction. The training area is a rugged, remote and cold environment which makes it a premier location for operational training in an arctic region.

NWTC's commandant, Army Maj. William Prayner, said CWOC is a course where senior leaders, company grade and above, are introduced to basic arctic skills which are required to sustain and survive in an arctic environment.

"It teaches them the individual skills which allow them to go off and execute collective tasks," Prayner said.

The 4-25 ABCT's training went beyond individual arctic skills, because it provided senior leadership training for all command teams across the brigade.

"The 4-25's event was a modified version of our CWOC, where it was a higher level of intensity with a tactical mission added to it," Prayner said. "It allowed them to experience the realities of training in Alaska ... We had a tremendous opportunity to train over 58 company commanders and first sergeants on what it takes to operate in the arctic. They experienced it first-hand ... They are going to better understand their equipment, themselves, and really what it takes to prepare their units to conduct arctic training over the next several years."

Prayner said the leaders of the 4-25th ABCT were exposed to 30 mph winds, 5-foot deep snow, sub-zero temperatures, and significantly demanding terrain during their time at NWTC.

The first morning of the training saw the command teams embarking into an environment that



Airborne leaders, company grade and above, from the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, negotiate a snow covered hill during the snowshoe appreciation phase of the U.S. Army's Cold Weather Orientation Course at the Northern Warfare Training Center March 26 to 29 at the Black Rapids Training Site near Fort Greely, Alaska. The event helped develop leader skills needed for operating and planning for combat operations in extremely cold environments. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Michael O'Brien)

was minus 15. The deep snow required the paratroopers to dig down several feet in order to construct their arctic shelters.

Many challenges can arise in an arctic environment such as weapons malfunctions, movement difficulty and cold-weather injuries. Command teams learned how to effectively manage and operate their equipment in the extremely cold environment. They learned how to inventory and move ahkios (sleds rigged with arctic survival gear), erect 10-man tents, employ space heaters and squad stoves, and don snowshoes and the Army's Extended Cold Weather Clothing System.

Army Capt. Nick Carlton, from Fowlerville, Mich., commander of Baker Company, 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, said the training was challenging because of the rigorous physical requirements. The extremely cold conditions made simple and routine tasks difficult.

Planning and accounting for difficult maneuvering in an arctic environment was a key piece of the training, he said.

"Moving with ahkios is extremely physically demanding," Carlton said. "That was probably the most difficult part of the training. The snowshoeing part is similar to ruck marching. Once you get into the groove and the zone, you're alright, but when you start pulling the ahkio with four or five other guys in the wind and you have hills to negotiate, and vegetation, and micro-terrain to negotiate, it becomes very, very difficult."

"Operating in a severely cold weather environment gives you an idea of how your equipment is supposed to work and how the arctic shelters, (10-man tents) are supposed to work," Carlton continued. "And then, how to move, and some of the planning considerations, specifically for the leaders. Like, what are the planning considerations while moving with

snow shoes, while moving with ahkios," he said. "Everything takes longer, to include putting on gloves and putting on coats. The training is very deliberate and very well thought out."

"The training was excellent," the commander concluded. "I look forward to trying to get our subordinates there, and taking my company and leaders, whether it is CWOC, or basic mountaineering. It's an excellent training area. I can't wait to try and get back there."

1st Sgt. Erick Ochs, from Reading, Pa., with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment, said the training was very useful from a leader's standpoint because it gave them practical experience working with the equipment their Soldiers are expected to employ.

Confidence in the equipment was a key takeaway for Ochs. He said he gained trust in the

equipment issued, and when used properly, it can protect and sustain Soldiers' lives.

"I think the training was great," he said. "We have all of this equipment we expect the Soldiers to use and carry around, but I had never put a 10-man tent up before or placed a stove into operation. So, just like basic leadership principals, we shouldn't be asking our Soldiers to do anything we aren't doing ourselves... So, now we know how to plan our training."

The 4-25th ABCT's commanding officer, Army Col. Matthew McFarlane said, "The purpose was to qualify leaders on cold weather training, and to develop leadership skills in field conditions. It built cohesion across brigade leadership, giving infantry and support commanders the chance to train and interact together ... It gave them the opportunity to share ideas on what's working, and what can be improved across all the companies in the brigade."

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## ARCTIC WARRIOR

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# ARCTIC TRAILBLAZERS READY FOR COMBAT

Purple smoke rises as Soldiers of the 95th Chemical Company react to a simulated improvised explosive device attack, during convoy operations in the vicinity of the Infantry Squad Battle Course Shoot House, JBER-Richardson, April 3. The unit's week long training included an array of mission essential tasks, which, upon completion, will validate their readiness in meeting U.S. Army Forces Command pre-deployment training requirements. The unit is scheduled to deploy to Kuwait later this year in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (U.S. Air Force photo/Percy G. Jones)

**RIGHT:** Sgt. Drdamis Burton, 2nd Engineer Brigade, assembles a radio antenna at Forward Operating Base Sparta. (U.S. Air Force photo/Steven White)



**FAR RIGHT:** Soldiers of the 109th Transportation Company, clean an M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. It had been fired from a Stryker vehicle during a live fire evaluation as part of the unit's certification for deploying later this year. (U.S. Air Force photo/Steven White)



## F-22 Raptors resume normal flight operations

Air Combat Command Public Affairs

JOINT BASE LANGLEY-EUSTIS, Va. — The Air Force's F-22 Raptor has resumed normal flight operations after modifications were completed across the fleet to aircrew life-support equipment, including the upper pressure garment and related hoses, valves and connectors. Completion of this task eliminates the need to restrict flight operations to remain within a 30-minute flying distance from an airfield suitable for landing.

F-22 crews have also resumed their aerospace control alert mission in Alaska after the Automatic Back-up Oxygen System was installed in JBER-based aircraft. Altitude restrictions have also been incrementally removed for F-22s that have received the ABOS

modification. Altitude restrictions for training flights remain for non-ABOS equipped F-22 aircraft; however, those restrictions will be removed as each aircraft is modified.

The return to normal flight operations hinged on completing eight near-term actions identified by the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board, successful fielding of the modified Combat Edge upper pressure garment valve, and fielding of the automatic backup oxygen system. All actions identified by the SAB were completed in December 2012. Fielding of the modified Combat Edge upper pressure garment valve and related pieces was completed in January.

The fielding of the ABOS provides additional protection to F-22 pilots while flying at high altitudes and in the most demanding

oxygen-delivery scenarios. The first combat aircraft was modified at Nellis AFB, Nev., in January, JBER Raptors began modifications in February, and officials expect combat fleet completion by July 2014.

In May 2011, the Air Force stood-down the F-22 fleet for four months. This operational pause enabled the Air Force to accelerate efforts to study, define and fix the cause of the reported incidents. After the Scientific Advisory Board completed its investigative actions in January 2012, the F-22 Life Support Systems Task Force formed a multi-service, multi-agency team of government, industry and academic experts to review previous recommendations and findings. This increased breadth of experience, enhanced scope of knowledge,

and additional impartial expert analysis led to the conclusion a lack of oxygen quantity was causing the physiological incidents. The task force also determined the quality of oxygen was not causing the physiological symptoms reported by F-22 pilots and ground crew.

F-22 aircrews have flown more than 22,270 sorties and more than 27,500 hours since the last previously unexplained incident in March 2012.

The Air Force will continue to leverage lessons learned throughout the F-22 investigative process and will invest in characterizing and better understanding the high-performance aircraft environment to improve pilot safety and performance in the F-22 and in all current and future weapon systems.



A paratrooper assigned to 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, low crawls under barbed-wire at the JBER Obstacle Course April 2. (U.S. Army photo/Sgt. 1st Class Jason Epperson)

### ▼ From SPARTANS, A-1

radio communication and first aid.

Out of approximately 60 junior leaders who competed individually, Sgt. Justin Siegfried, assigned to Fox Company, 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment won the Becker Non-Commissioned Officer Award.

"It feels amazing," Siegfried said. "I'm a little surprised and proud to represent 509th. I can't wait for the next one."

Army 1st Lt. Thomas Mussmann, assigned to Chosen Company, 3-509th Inf. won the Andrews Junior Officer Award.

The competition was not without challenges.

"I'd say the hardest part was

just to ruck the whole way," Mussmann said. "Fifteen miles is pretty far away, especially when you are trying to keep your place and trying to beat everyone else."

Out of approximately 30 nine-member squads, the best Spartan Squad came from Comanche Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment.

Army Staff Sgt. Christopher Norris, the squad leader, said, "It feels good to represent our company and battalion."

The awards are named for Army Staff Sgt. Shane Becker, who was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving with the 1st Squadron (Airborne), 40th Cav-

alry Regiment during Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Army 2nd Lt. Darryn D. Andrews, who was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy while serving with the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment during Operation Enduring Freedom.

The purpose of the competition was to reinforce esprit-de-corps through competition, and further develop the brigade's arctic fighting skills, while honoring the sacrifices of paratroopers who made the ultimate sacrifice in combat.

This was the first brigade-level competition hosted by the 4-25th since redeploying from Afghanistan in October 2012.

### ▼ From SCHOOL, A-1

tions causes students to find ways to get to school, which weighs on the minds of the parents.

"During the stormy season, the school tends to flood," said Marilyn Palaylay, mother of an Omayra Elementary School student. "That scares me and many of the other parents, so we don't let them go."

The new schoolhouse will be on an elevated piece of land on the school grounds. This will keep the schoolhouse and children safely away from the river and any future flooding or other related natural dangers.

"We are very happy about that, and our kids will be much safer," Palaylay said.

The schoolhouse was one of eight engineering civic action projects being performed by Combined/Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force units in support of exercise Balikatan 2013.

Balikatan 2013 is an annual Philippine-U.S. bilateral exercise. Humanitarian assistance and training activities are intended to help the Philippine and American service members build lasting relationships, train together and provide assistance in communities where the need is the greatest.



Airman 1st Class Matthew Farnworth, 773d Civil Engineer Squadron, helps even out concrete for the new Omayra schoolhouse's foundation. The project was one of eight engineering civic action programs being performed by Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force units in support of exercise Balikatan 2013. Balikatan is an annual Philippine-U.S. bilateral exercise. Humanitarian assistance and training activities enable the Philippine and American service members to build lasting relationships, train together and provide assistance in communities where the need is the greatest. (U.S. Navy photo/Petty Officer 1st Class Chris Fahey)

## School physicals

The 673d Medical Group recommends children receive their well child examinations, school physicals and sports physicals from their assigned clinic team at the 673d MDG Pediatric Clinic or Family Health Clinic.

A child's primary care provider is most familiar with the child and can most efficiently complete the physical.

With high demand for physicals June through August, now is the time to beat the rush.

Call 580-2778 to schedule an appointment.

## Road closure

Gulkana Avenue is permanently closed between 5th and 6th streets in support of JBER housing privatization. The homes in this area are to be demolished and the district will be reconfigured.

## Dental clinic closure

The JBER-Richardson Dental Clinic will close 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday for training.

Limited sick call will be available from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., and 1 to 3:30 p.m.

## Arctic Valley Gate closure

The Arctic Valley Gate (JBER-Richardson exit only gate) is closed until April 30 due to construction projects outside the gate.

## Studded tire changeover

In the Southcentral Alaska region, motorists have until April 30 to remove studded tires.

Motorists caught on JBER between May 1 and 7 will be issued a warning citation. Beginning May 8, motorists caught with studded tires will receive a U.S. District Court Central Violations Bureau citation of \$50, correctable within five days if the motorist brings the vehicle and citation to a JBER Law Enforcement desk and verifies the removal of the studded tires. Motorists who fail to correct the ticket or pay the fine will receive a notice to appear in Anchorage's U.S. Magistrate District Federal Court.

Off base, local law-enforce-

ment officials may or may not issue warning citations, and fines range between \$160 and \$200 per offense.

## JBER tax centers open

Volunteers are on hand to help with forms 1040EZ and 1040 tax returns; complex filing may be best taken to a professional. However, volunteers' training does include how to deal with the Alaska Permanent Fund.

Customers will have to gather the following documents before visiting a center:

- Proof of identification (military ID)
- Social security cards and birth dates for taxpayer and all dependents
- Last year's federal income tax return
- Wage and earning statements from W-2's, W-2G's and 1099-R's
- Interest and dividend statements
- Bank routing and account numbers for direct deposit
- Amounts paid to daycare providers and day care providers' tax identification numbers.

JBER tax centers are open until Wednesday.

The JBER-Elmendorf tax center is located at building 8517, the People Center.

They will be open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Walk-ins are welcome (appointments take precedence) or you can call 552-3912 to make an appointment.

The JBER-Richardson tax center is located in building 600 on the third floor. Their appointment line is 384-1040, and walk-ins are also welcome.

The tax center will be open Monday through Wednesday as well as Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and 1 to 8 p.m. on Thursdays.

## Find housing

Visit the Automated Housing Referral Network at [www.ahrn.com](http://www.ahrn.com), or [www.ahrn.org/mobile](http://www.ahrn.org/mobile) if using a mobile device, to find housing before packing up.

Sponsored by the Department

of Defense, the website listings include available community rentals, military housing, shared rentals, temporary lodging and military for sale by owner listings.

Listings include property descriptions, pictures, maps, links to local schools, and contact information.

Service members who would like to rent their homes, sell their homes, or are looking for another service member as a roommate in their current homes, may post an ad free of charge on the site.

For more information, call the 673d Civil Engineer Squadron Capital Asset Management Office at either 552-4439 for JBER-Elmendorf or 384-3088 for JBER-Richardson.

## Home buyer's seminar

The 673d Civil Engineer Squadron Capital Asset Management Office offers a first-time home buyer's seminar two times each month through the Volunteer Realtor Program.

The seminar covers home loan prequalification, negotiations, offer acceptance, inspection, title search, available types of loans, and the closure process as well as many other aspects of interest to a prospective home owner.

Please contact the JBER-Elmendorf office at 552-4439 or the JBER-Richardson office at 384-3088 for specific times to be included in the sign-up roster.

## Brain injury classes

Every Tuesday from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m., the JBER hospital Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic will host education and peer-coping strategies classes for spouses and partners of service members affected by TBI.

For more information, call 580-0014.

## Giant Voice testing

Giant Voice mass notification system testing occurs every Wednesday at noon. If the announcement is difficult to hear or understand, please call 552-3000.

If the announcement is difficult to hear or understand in any base housing area, please contact JBER at [Facebook.com/JBERAK](https://www.facebook.com/JBERAK).

## Utility allowance changes

Starting last month, the utility allowance will be adjusted for all Phase I (Sunflower- those units on Fairchild Avenue, Dallas, Silver Run and Chugach housing areas) and Phase II (Moose Crossing, Denver, Houston, general officer housing and Dayton housing areas) metered housing units to reflect decreases or increases in electricity and natural gas rates Aurora pays to the government and a local provider, respectively.

The Phase I and II utility allowance is a portion of the basic allowance for housing that Aurora sets aside to cover the gas and electric utility costs for each house. Aurora pays for each resident's water and sewer costs regardless of the usage. The utility allowance encourages energy conservation.

In accordance with the agreements between Aurora and the Air Force, Aurora is required to annually adjust the utility allowances based upon actual metered usage data and current utility rates.

Aurora will continue to read utility meters monthly and provide a statement reflecting actual consumption, quarterly allowance amount and the resulting balance of the account.

As is currently the case, when the credit balance of an account exceeds \$250, Aurora will issue a refund check.

Conversely, if an account reflects a debit balance in excess of \$250, residents are required to make payment to Aurora in the amount of the account balance.

In addition, each account is annually reconciled and adjusted to zero at the end of June.

This means during July, residents will either be refunded any accumulated credit, or invoiced for any amount owed regardless of the dollar amount.

For more information about the utility program, please contact the Aurora Utility Staff at 375-0508 or Aurora Office at 753-1023.

## AER scholarships

Army Emergency Relief annually provides scholarships for Soldier family members.

With an average award of more than \$2,400, these scholarships

relieve some the financial burden associated with pursuing higher education.

Applications for the 2013-2014 academic year scholarships will be available until May 1 at [www.aerhq.org](http://www.aerhq.org).

For more information, call 384-7478.

## Dining facility survey

ARAMARK is conducting a survey to evaluate how the contractor can better offer dining service to JBER.

The 17-question survey can be accessed at <http://tinyurl.com/bm5koz6>.

## MiCare registration

MiCare, the online personal health record and secure messaging application, has been available to patients and medical group staff at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson since 2011.

Patients can take advantage of the ability to communicate with their primary care clinicians online.

Registered patients also have access to electronic records, allowing them to view and maintain their health records.

Once registered, patients have the ability to participate in the study by completing a short series of surveys during the course of the next year.

This provides an opportunity for all active-duty, retired and dependent patients to have an impact on shaping the future of Air Force health services.

To register, visit the Military Treatment Facility, where enrollment specialists are available in each primary care clinic.

All beneficiaries who are enrolled in the family health, pediatrics, flight medicine and internal medicine clinics are eligible to participate.

Patients need to show a military identification card and provide information, including name, social security number, birthday and email address.

The enrollment specialist will enter the information and patients will receive an email which contains a link and instructions for completing the process.

## Back in the day

### Historians maintain archive for future



**LEFT:** Douglas Beckstead, 673d Air Base Wing historian, points to photographs of past flight events in the hallway of the history office on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska March 11. The photographs are of fighter pilots who were stationed on Elmendorf Air Force Base before it became a joint base in 2010. **BELOW LEFT:** Beckstead retrieves historical documents for inquiries, including documentation of family members connected to the base. The oldest historical documents it contains are from the 1920s. **BELOW:** Joe Orr, 3rd Wing senior historian, looks at a photograph of JBER March 11. Orr's job is to protect and maintain documents for historical research and knowledge. Historians learn about the past and document the present for future historians. The historians' office can provide a wealth of information to those interested.



**RIGHT:** Beckstead holds a volume of the Sourdough Sentinel newspaper on JBER March 5. **BELOW:** Movie reels show the base's layout before becoming a joint base with Fort Richardson. The documents found at the historians' office can be used to find information about past events on JBER. (U.S. Air Force photos/Airman 1st Class Tammie J. Ramsouer)



## Saving energy critical, easy with more sun

By Chris McCann  
JBER Public Affairs

Employees are looking at a furlough, some aircraft are grounded, morale shows are postponed or canceled, and Congress is trying to come up with and pass a budget.

It all comes down to how much money is being spent – and while shutting off your monitor at night seems like a drop in the ocean, when it's combined with all the monitors in all of the U.S. military installations around the world, it adds up to a lot of cash.

The natural gas reserves in Cook Inlet – which supply not only JBER but all of Southcentral Alaska – are not infinite. In fact, in October, the area was already dipping into reserves.

If the bitter cold had continued, there might have been brownouts, said Richard Hiatt, JBER energy conservation manager.

Ultimately, even electricity

comes from natural gas in this area, so conservation is critical. It powers lights, heat, your water heater and most other things.

Little energy-saving choices can add up; doing a few things every day to save energy can help the installation, the community and the military as a whole.

While energy conservation has been an issue for years, there is a continuing – and more critical – push.

In many of JBER's old buildings, steam heat is on constantly in the winter. People open windows to cool things down – and all too often leave them open overnight, said Sonny Turpin, JBER utility engineer. Ensuring windows are closed for the night and lights, monitors and other electric appliances are off is important.

"Even in standby, those things use electricity," Turpin said.

Consolidating break room refrigerators is another step, and

turning off overhead lights and using desk or task lighting can be another.

Facility managers, as part of their training, receive a separate conservation portion, Hiatt said. Conservation personnel can retrieve building energy use records and go over them with facility managers to find out where use is elevated and ways they can reduce overall use.

At home – on post or not – be sure to turn things off when you're not using them. Microwave ovens are more efficient than traditional ovens.

The JBER Energy Policy letter states that Executive Order 13514 requires the installation to reduce its facility energy use per square foot by three percent a year through 2015, and it is everyone's responsibility to help achieve that milestone.

Now that days are lengthening, the sun can help save a lot of

money, Turpin said. Opening the blinds can supply all the necessary light.

"We're not saying to work in the cold or dark," he clarified. "Just do the practical things."

Increasingly, the Air Force is trying to increase the supply and use of renewable energy.

The JBER Landfill Gas Waste to Energy Plant began operations January 2013 and generates more than 56,000 megawatt hours or 26.2 percent of JBER's electrical load, said Tim Berg, 673d Civil Engineer Squadron asset optimization chief.

The Anchorage Municipal Solid Waste Landfill - adjacent to JBER - collects and burns landfill gas to comply with EPA regulations. With the new plant, the methane is no longer just burned off, it provides a lot of power which is converted to energy. It can only supply JBER-Richardson, but that side of JBER has reduced its elec-

trical needs from Municipal Light and Power by half.

Another energy-saver is water – it requires electricity to pump, clean and heat. By reducing water usage, consumers can reduce the energy needed.

Old sodium lights can be replaced with energy-efficient LEDs, which save huge amounts of power.

Every October, the Energy Watch exercise asks residents of the Anchorage and JBER communities to drastically reduce their energy consumption for two hours, as a drill in case of a shortage (such as severely low temperatures).

During the exercise, consumers can turn their water heaters to the 'vacation' setting, refrain from doing laundry, and turn the thermostat down.

For more energy-saving tips, or for help making your workplace more energy-efficient, contact the Energy Conservation office at 384-6644.

## Don't call down lightning with your words

Commentary by Army Chaplain (Maj.) Dwight Croy  
JBER Operations, Training and Mobilization Chaplain

I have read about people who were struck by lightning; they were not doing a science experiment.

Each and every one of them did not desire to get struck by lightning. Not one of them went out and looked into the sky during a storm and said, "Over here, hit me."

Perhaps at best, we as a safety conscious military could say they were participating in some unsafe action.

If we saw someone desiring to be hit by lightning, we would be concerned about their sanity.

The way we communicate is often like the ridiculous scenario above.

In our most precious relationships, we fill our communication with "electrically

charged" words. We call for a lightning storm in conversations with those we most love.

Often when engaged in an argument, we pull out our "ace card." It is usually a word that we know is sensitive and hurtful to the person we are arguing with.

We may even win the fight by sheer force of words, but we lose the intimacy of the relationship. All of us want to win. All of us want to be right.

However, all of us want to be loved and respected. Lightning rod words are not the way to achieve love and respect.

So what words am I talking about?

I decided on purpose not to put them in this article. Some could not be printed anyway.

If you have stayed with me to this point of reading, you may have thought of one incredible electrically overcharged word that you lean on when you feel boxed in by

those you interact with.

I am taking my lead from the Bible, the word of God which addresses all the generations of culture and words in which humankind participates.

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." (Ephesians 4:29)

Wow. That word, "unwholesome" can include a lot of words that can "push our buttons."

My young daughter often said to me when growing up with her little brother, "Dad! He is laying on my nerves!"

We all can get overly sensitive. We do not have to pull out a word that draws "lightning."

So what are we to do with our "bad" emotionally charged words? How are we to manage our mouth? How do we get to

"wholesome" words?

More importantly, how do we get to communication that will enhance and build great personal friendships? I recommend the following steps:

1) Take the meaning of words seriously. All words have meaning and weight. Is the force of the word necessary to the context of your communication?

2) Speak less and listen more; "one mouth, two ears" reminds us of the priority to listen.

3) Use your words for others mostly and not yourself only. In leadership we want to become champions of others.

4) Work on eliminating one bad word at a time (put it on the calendar for 30 days; any slip, put it back on the calendar until you have gone 30 days without saying it; then tackle another word).

We often discourage ourselves by working on all our bad words at once; take it from me; this is too monumental a task.

5) Finally, and perhaps the hardest thing, "fold" or humble yourself and come back to your disagreement another time.

Just as the Kenny Rogers country song says of a card game, "you have got to know when to hold them, and when to fold them."

Our words are a revelation of our heart. Good leaders seriously take in the words of those they lead.

"But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them." (Matthew 15:18)

Let us, as professionals in the U.S. military, lead and represent our families and profession with positive wholesome words - words that build up, encourage, strengthen, and invite deeper conversation.

Let us live in the sunny weather of good words and not the lightning storms of electrically charged words.

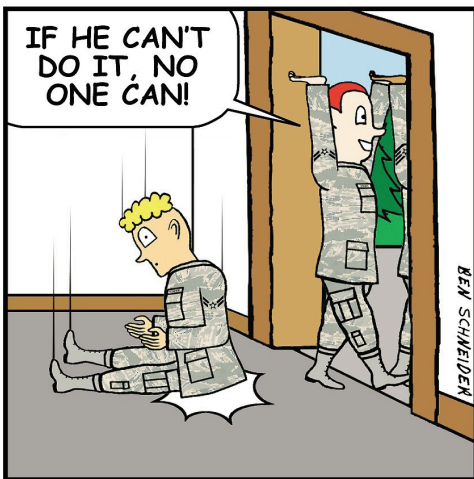
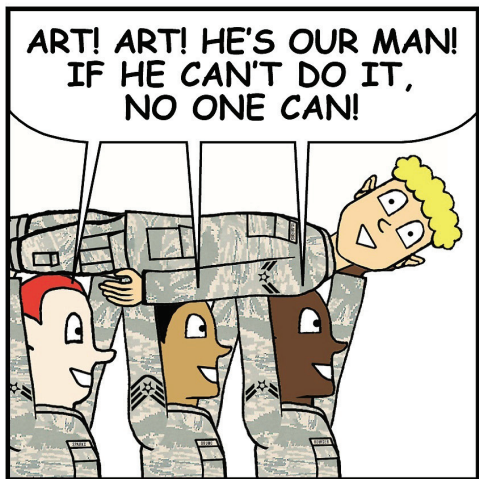
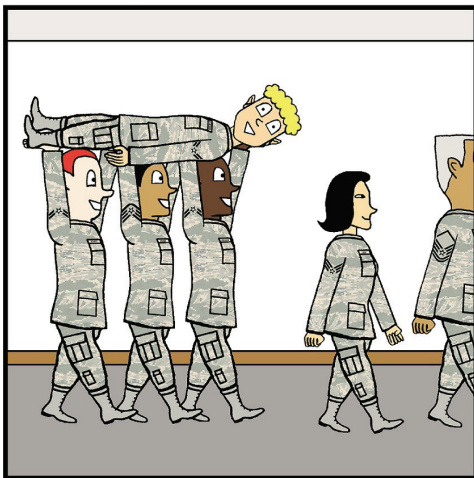
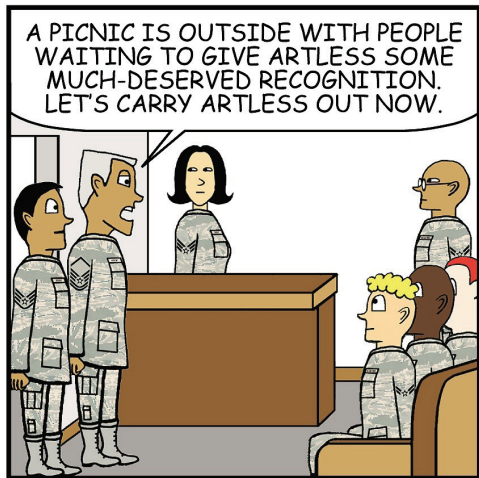
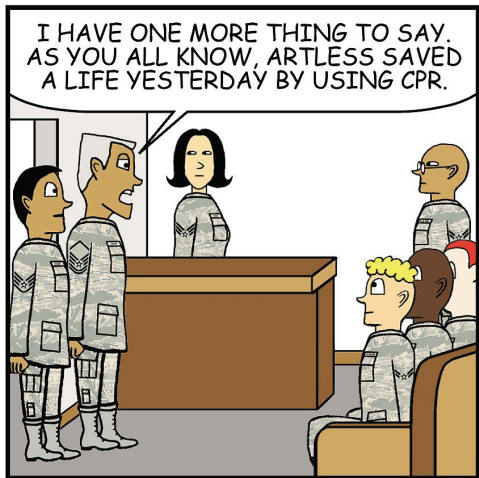
I have met so many wonderfully talented and innovative military leaders in our professional militaries.

Often the difference in how far they go professionally and personally is the way they speak and use their words in all their interactions.

My prayer for all our military is that they all experience rich intimate friendships, committed marriages, and become leaders who know how to build and champion others with their words.

## AIRMAN ARTLESS

by Ben Schneider



airmanartless.com

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## FSS EVENTS

Month of the Military Child Special

### Basic Bike Maintenance Clinic

April 13 & 27  
1 p.m.

Class is \$5 per person  
Call JBER-E Outdoor Rec at 552-2023 to register.

Bldg. 7301



April 13  
Noon - 5 p.m.  
\$1.79 per game, \$1.69 shoe rental  
Reduced Prices for all kids during Extreme Bowl Time!

Polar Bowl  
Bldg. 7176  
753-PINS (7467)

## Love your JBER Library

Celebrate National Library Week!

April 14-20

Bldg. 7 384-1640



## & ACTIVITIES

# Community Happenings

April 12, 2013

ARCTIC WARRIOR

B-3

## THROUGH MAY 15 Seward Military Resort

The Seward Military Resort is offering 20 percent off gray whales tours in the Kenai Fjords. Specials on lodging mean staying two nights gets you a night free – that's three nights in a motel room for only \$102.

For more information visit [www.sewardresort.com](http://www.sewardresort.com).

## MONDAY 1-2-3 Magic class

This six-session class covers dealing with difficult behavior and encouraging better behavior with clear guidelines. Hosted every Monday at the JBER-R Education Center.

For information, call 384-2932.

## Girls' Night Out

The Women's Health Clinic in the JBER hospital hosts this evening with food, massages, manicures and a chance to get mammograms and annual exams done with less stress, from 5 to 7 p.m.

For appointments or information, call 580-4182.

## APRIL 19 THROUGH 21 Alyeska Slush Cup

This spring festival celebrates the last of winter with a blast of chilly fun.

The signature event is the Slush Cup – in which costumed competitors try to make their way across two ice-cold ponds of water.

For information call 754-1111 or visit [www.alyeskaresort.com](http://www.alyeskaresort.com).

## APRIL 19 Financial Fitness Fair

Families are invited to flex their monetary muscles at this fair at the JBER Education Center from 9 a.m. to noon or 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Learn money skills, credit reports, housing assistance, investments and energy-saving tips.

Registration is required due to limited class size.

For information, call 384-0188 or email [stacey.m.gilbert2.civ@mail.mil](mailto:stacey.m.gilbert2.civ@mail.mil).

## APRIL 20 Kids' Day at the Zoo

Celebrate spring with the Alaska Zoo. Visitors will get special presentations, keeper talks, games and more, and the petting zoo will

be open.

A fun run for little tykes is planned. Good times start at 11 a.m. and last until 4 p.m.

For information, call 346-2133 or visit [alaskazoo.org](http://alaskazoo.org).

## Anchorage Symphony

The symphony's season finale wraps the season with a bang.

Berlioz's 'The Damnation of Faust' brings Goethe's iconic tale to life with assistance from the Alaska Chamber Singers, Anchorage Concert Chorus and more.

The event starts at 8 p.m. at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts.

For information, call 263-2787.

## APRIL 24 Love and Logic class

This six-session parenting class covers simple ways to make parenting more fun and raise responsible children. Offered by Family Advocacy, it meets from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the JBER-R Education center.

For information, call 384-2932.

## APRIL 25 THROUGH 27 NYO Games

More than 500 athletes from around Alaska demonstrate strength, agility and skill in traditional games like the high kick, seal hop, and more.

Events are open to the public at the Dena'ina Center, and run April 25 from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., April 26 from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information, visit [citci.com](http://citci.com).

## APRIL 27 JBER Denim Day

Show your support for the prevention of sexual assault by wearing jeans.

For information, call 384-0995.

## MAY 1 Employment symposium

The Egan Center hosts this Employment Symposium, with workshops before and after, coaches for those who need extra help with resumes and interview skills, and much more for job seekers.

Workshops start at 8 a.m.

For information, call 269-4777.

## EFMP resource fair

The Exceptional Family Mem-

ber Program will be hosting a Resource Fair from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Lecture Hall of the Education Center.

Gather information about services and resources that are here to assist your family. Several agencies both on and off the installation conveniently located under one roof.

For information, call 384-6736.

## MAY 4 USS Anchorage

The commissioning ceremony for the USS Anchorage, LPD-23, is a ceremony that officially brings the ship "alive."

The Anchorage will be homeported in San Diego, but is named for the city of Anchorage.

For more information, call 552-8183.

## MAY 11 Anchorage Market

The summertime farmer's market kicks off at the 3rd and E Street parking lot downtown.

Seven acres of vendors offer produce, exotic goods, Alaska souvenirs, meat and so much more. The food, music and more is an Anchorage highlight.

For information, call 272-5634.

## ONGOING Victims' clothing drive

Donation boxes at the BX, Arctic Oasis, Soldiers' Chapel and the SAPR office are available for collecting gently-used or new sweat suits in all sizes, new men's and women's underwear, and toiletry items.

Clothing and other items will be provided to victims of sexual assault.

For information, call 384-0995.

## AER scholarships

Army Emergency Relief is taking applications for scholarships. Scholarships are available for children or spouses of active duty, retired and deceased Soldiers. Applications and instructions are available at [aerhq.org](http://aerhq.org).

For information, call 384-7478.

## Discovery chapel classes

Soldiers' Chapel hosts classes for all ages, from elementary school through adults, Wednesday evenings.

A free meal begins at 5:45 p.m.;

classes last from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Nursery care is provided.

For information, call 384-1461 or 552-4422.

## Protestant Women of the Chapel meetings

Christian women are invited to meet with Protestant Women of the Chapel, with meetings Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. at Soldiers' Chapel. Child care will be available.

For more information, email [jber.ak.pwoc@gmail.com](mailto:jber.ak.pwoc@gmail.com) or call 384-1461.

## Wired Cafe for Airmen

The Wired Cafe is located at 7076 Fighter Dr., between Polaris and Yukla dormitories. The cafe has wireless Internet and programs throughout the week for single Airmen living in the dorms.

There are also free homestyle meals Fridays at 6 p.m. at the cafe.

For information, call 552-4422.

## Model railroading

The Military Society of Model Railroad Engineers meets at 7 p.m. Tuesdays and 1 p.m. Saturdays in basement Room 35 of Matanuska Hall, 7153 Fighter Drive. Anyone interested in model railroading is invited.

For information about meetings, work days, and shows, call 952-4353, visit their site at [www.trainweb.org/msmre](http://www.trainweb.org/msmre) or email [bjorgan@alaska.net](mailto:bjorgan@alaska.net).

## Wildlife Wednesdays

This science lecture series takes place at 7 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month at the Alaska Zoo Gateway Lecture Hall.

Through the end of the month, learn about different wildlife topics and enjoy coffee or tea.

This series is aimed at older audiences. For more information, call 341-6463 or visit [alaskazoo.org](http://alaskazoo.org).

## Borealis Toastmasters

Conquer your fear of public speaking with Toastmasters.

This safe, friendly club helps build confidence through presentations, feedback and listening. Meetings are every Thursday in Room 146 of the BP building from 7 to 8 p.m.

For information, call 575-7470.

## Chapel services

### Catholic Mass

#### Sunday

9 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel  
10:30 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1

**Monday through Friday**  
11:40 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel  
**Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday**

11:30 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel Center

#### Thursday

11:30 a.m. – Hospital Chapel

### Confession

30 minutes before Mass at the chapel in which Mass is being celebrated, or anytime by appointment. Call 552-4422 or 384-5907

### Protestant Sunday Services

#### Joint Liturgical Service

9 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 2

#### Traditional Service

9 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1

#### Contemporary Protestant Service

11 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel

#### Gospel Service

Noon – Elmendorf Chapel 1

#### Contemporary Protestant Service

5 p.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1

### Motorcycle training

Military motorcycle riders and civilians using motorcycles for their jobs on JBER must attend an approved safety course, and classes are now available. Contact a unit or command safety representative for more information on scheduling, or call 552-5035.

### Night at the Fights

The Egan Center hosts boxing every Thursday night, with several fights each night. Doors open at 6:30 and fights start at 7.

For information, visit [thursday-nightfights.com](http://thursday-nightfights.com).

## 5K BREAK-UP FUN RUN

April 12 Noon

Sign up 11 a.m. the day of the event at the Elmendorf Fitness Center.

First 40 to sign up get a FREE T-shirt.

Prizes to the 1st and 2nd place male and female.

JBER Elmendorf Fitness Center  
Bldg. 9510  
552-5353

## Birch Syrup Class!

April 13, Noon  
@ JBER-E Outdoor Rec Center

\$5 per person

Call 552-2023 to sign up!  
Bldg. 7301 552-2023

## JBER-E Outdoor Rec.

Spring has arrived,  
as a reminder, the last day to return  
ski/ snowboard season rentals is

April 15!

Bldg. 7301 552-2023

## Garden Plot Reservation Sign Up April 15

Outdoor  
Rec Center  
Bldg. 7301  
552-2023

## RIFLE CARTRIDGE RELOADING CLASS

APRIL 12 5:30 P.M.

\$5 PER PERSON.

BLDG. 7301 552-2023

## Check out the April Alaskan Adventurer

(or go online)

For a coupon at Arctic Oasis  
\$2 off a purchase of \$5 and more.

Coupon not valid for food purchases at Paradise Cafe

# CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

<http://www.elmendorf-richardson.com>



# Play it safe with Alaska wildlife on JBER

By Mary M. Rall  
U.S. Army Alaska Public Affairs Office

Being stationed in Alaska is a unique opportunity for many families, and a lot of the spectacular aspects of being stationed at JBER are literally located right in service members' own backyards.

It's not uncommon to come across a moose peeling birch bark off a tree at a residence or to discover a bear dumpster diving in a unit parking lot.

Some become so accustomed to sharing space with wildlife on base that it's easy to forget the danger undomesticated animals may pose.

The uniqueness of being stationed in Alaska is an experience no one should take for granted, but it's equally important to keep safety in mind when wildlife encounters become up close and personal.

Regrettably, base residents sometimes throw caution to the wind and interact with wildlife by feeding untamed animals, which may be perceived as being harmless.

However, it's not a victimless crime, according to Jim Wendland, a conservation law enforcement supervisor with the 673d Civil Engineer Squadron.

"It puts you, your neighbors – basically the whole installation population – at risk," Wendland said, noting that attracting animals to an area with food, deliberately or unintentionally, is not only dangerous, it's against the law.

According to the Government Registry Online Records Retrieval website, the negligent feeding of wildlife by displaying known moose attractants like hay in an accessible location in a yard or leaving unsecured dog food or birdseed out for bears to get into is punishable by a \$300 fine.

Intentionally baiting animals into an area with such items is a Class-A misdemeanor that could result in jail time and a fine of as much as \$2,000.

It's important to remember that being located on a military installation doesn't make wildlife any less "wild," and creating an unnatural familiarity between humans and animals is a dangerous thing to do.

Despite the fact that an Anchorage Daily News article entitled "85-year-old woman wields shovel to stop moose stomping" detailed how a "tiny but tough" senior citizen prevented a moose stomping her husband to death with the business end of a snow shovel, base residents should always remain cautious when they have any contact with wildlife.

Even a routine act of walking a dog can turn grave if a moose decides attacking a human is in its best interest, as the Jan. 22 article describes.

"Moose pose a real threat at the end of the winter season, because their bodies are stressed due to a lack of food," Wendland said, noting that a moose is more apt to fight than a bear is if its fight-or-flight instinct kicks in – especially if there is a calf with it.

As animals feed in residential areas, they get used to the presence of humans and are more likely to search those familiar areas for food.

After all, it's easier to walk down a plowed street to snack on a tasty wreath on someone's front door than it is to trudge through yards and yards-deep snow to get to a patch of trees.

Too often, base residents make it easy for wildlife to search residential areas for food simply because they don't make an effort to properly secure their trash.

Bears find this particularly attractive. Bears don't like to work for their food and when a service member leaves trash cans outside, fails to secure dumpsters, or stores garbage in a truck bed, the bears will come.

Just as you might know which aisles in the supermarket carry your favorite cereals or potato chips, a bear can quickly identify the hot spots for scoring an easy meal.

Making a residential area a reliable food source for bears virtually guarantees they will frequent a neighborhood, putting the community and the animal at risk.

According to Wendland, nuisance bears aren't typically relocated, because they almost always return to a dependable food source.

As such, a service member's laziness when it comes to securing trash could result in a bear being destroyed if the animal's frequent foraging in a residential area poses a threat to base residents.

Bear season is also just around the cor-

ner, Wendland said.

Bear sightings were confirmed during the last week in April for the last three years – and as early as January in 2009.

"Contrary to what most people believe, bears don't hibernate during a specific time," Wendland said.

The latest spell of unseasonably warm weather in Anchorage could cause bears to start poking their heads out of their dens any day now.

Although bears have a tendency to initially stick close to their lairs following hibernation, he noted, it's only a matter of time until the need for sustenance will cause them to move progressively farther away from the comforts of home in search of food.

With that in mind, the time for service members to put measures in place to discourage bears from browsing what goodies might be hidden in a family's trash is now, rather than after a bear has turned a backyard into an animal's equivalent of a sample session at a local big box store.

No matter how cautious base residents are, though, there are times when Alaska's animals become all but unavoidable, whether they're quenching their thirst with a residential sprinkler, or taking a break from the rigors of their daily routine in a neighborhood playground.

It's those kind of moments that can be some of the most memorable for families stationed in Alaska, and the temptation to share those experiences with others may cause people to put themselves unnecessarily at risk.

As enticing as it may be to approach wildlife in hopes of populating a social networking site with photos others won't be able to resist checking out, no number of "likes" is worth you and your family's safety.

"It's almost like they look at it like it's the neighborhood dog," Wendland said of bears base residents often seek out to photograph.

He described one instance when several base residents put themselves at risk by taking pictures less than 30 feet from a brown bear which had killed a young bull moose along a stretch of Ship Creek.

"They got irritated when we asked them to leave for their own safety," Wendland recalled.

Social networking is a wonderful way to remain connected with friends and family members, but it would be a shame if the next status update someone makes is from the emergency room, because he got too close to wildlife for the sake of a picture.

Many animals have become accustomed to the humans dwelling where their den used to be, hiking through the forests where they hunt, or driving cars along the route to their favorite stream, but it's dangerous to mistake their tolerance of humanity for a willingness to participate in a photo shoot.

The safest wild animal is one that can be appreciated from a distance.

A close-up of the eagle hanging out in the trees outside a residence isn't as valuable as a person's safety, so no one should use a wild animal's proximity to justify putting himself at risk.

Instead, residents should get educated on how to safely record their wildlife sightings, a good resource for which is the Alaska Department of Fish and Game website at [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov).

The comprehensive site offers a wealth of information on how to safely observe and photograph wildlife under its "viewing" link, which includes information on observation ethics, how to obtain permits, where and when animals are most apt to be spotted, and detailed safety tips, guides and checklists.

Among the site's recommendations for safely viewing wildlife are giving animals plenty of space, learning how to recognize signs of alarm, how to be respectful of den areas, the importance of leaving orphaned or sick animals alone, why pets should be restrained and how to respectfully share a wildlife viewing opportunity with others who may be outdoors in hopes of having the same experience.

Ensuring the safety of the installation's residents when it comes to wildlife encounters is one everyone on base shares.

The inevitability of those opportunities to experience the state's wildlife make it essential for JBER's residents to be the brightest of the beasts by doing all they can to ensure the safety of the installation's human and animal communities alike.



(Courtesy photo/JBER Conservation Enforcement Staff)

