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# ARCTIC WARRIOR

Volume 2, No. 34

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## ORDER OF THE ARCTIC SAPPER

Sgt. Philip Rupprecht of Toledo, Ohio, rappels down a cliff overlooking Ship Creek as Soldiers of 6th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne), compete in the Order of the Arctic Sapper competition. Six teams of about 10 Soldiers competed in mountain climbing, rappelling, river crossing and several other combat engineer events to be inducted into the Order of the Arctic Sapper. (U.S. Air Force photo/Justin Connaher).



Pfc. Douglas L. Cordo

### Stryker Soldier killed by IED in Afghanistan

USARAK news release

The U.S. Army Alaska Soldier who died Aug. 19 in Afghanistan has been identified as Pfc. Douglas Leonard Cordo, 20, of Kingston, N. Y.

Cordo was killed, and two other Soldiers were wounded, by an improvised explosive device which detonated while they were on a mounted patrol in a Stryker vehicle in the village of Shah Joy, in Afghanistan's Zabul Province. Cordo was the driver of the Stryker vehicle.

Cordo joined the Army in March 2010 and graduated from Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Benning, Ga.

He arrived in Alaska in July 2010 and was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division at Fort Wainwright where he served as an infantryman.

His 4,000-Soldier brigade deployed to Afghanistan in mid-April for a one-year tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

### Senior engineers face challenges to complete sapper rite of passage

By Army Capt. Aaron Anderson  
6th Engineer Battalion

On Aug. 17, the 6th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne) conducted the Order of the Arctic Sapper, a rigorous day-long training event involving multiple team-based challenges. The event's participants included 52 Soldiers in the rank of sergeant first class and above throughout the battalion.

"The Order of the Arctic Sapper was designed to achieve multiple individual and collective training objectives, while building

cohesion among our senior leaders through friendly team-based competition," said Lt. Col. Marc Hoffmeister, commander of the 6th Eng. Bn.

The daylong event consisted of six teams of approximately 10 Soldiers. Each team was presented with a series of objectives which required them to overcome challenges unique to the Alaska environment.

The challenges included mountain climbing, rappelling, and river crossing before reaching the final event in which each team conducted a live fire and battalion knowledge board.

In addition to the natural physical and mental challenges, secrecy was a key feature of the event. Aside from a handful of planners, the details of the event were not disclosed to participants until the day prior to execution, which further challenged ev-

eryone's ability to think on their feet and deal with uncertainty.

The event began as teams were transported by helicopter into the Alaska wilderness and required to climb to the summit of Temptation Peak. Teams were not given a designated route, which tested their land navigation skills.

"The climb to Temptation Peak was definitely a challenge," said Capt. Tyler Van Zandt of the 84th Engineer Support Company. "Not only did the terrain itself make the event challenging, but the addition of hail, rain, and wind at higher elevations further increased the level of difficulty."

Following this grueling hike through rugged terrain, each team then made their way to Ship Creek in order to rappel down

See Arctic Sapper, Page A-3

## Kadena Airmen hone fighting skills at Red Flag-Alaska

### RF-A success depends on behind the scenes work

By Senior Airman Christopher Gross  
JBER Public Affairs

Alaskan Command's premier quarterly exercise, Red Flag-Alaska, results from several long months of hard work put in by hundreds of individuals.

Red Flag-Alaska, hosted at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson and Eielson Air Force Base four times a year, is a Pacific Air Forces-directed field training exercise for the U.S. and coalition forces flown under simulated air combat conditions. Crews have the largest air-ground training complex in America to sharpen their war-fighting skills because the Joint Pacific Alaskan Range Complex is more than 67,000 square miles.

Preparation for this RF-Alaska, which runs from Aug. 15 through 26, began back in March of this year when the initial planning conference was held, according to Air Force Lt. Col. Kevin Dolata, the 353rd Combat Training Squadron,

Detachment 1 director of operations.

Dolata said there's a lot of time and effort that goes into hosting all the different units that take part in RF-Alaska, especially international partners.

"Every time units arrive, we have to activate computer accounts for them and set up networks with Eielson to execute mission planning," he said. "It is very difficult due to communication restrictions to actually execute every flag no matter where units are from. However, when foreign units are here, this increases dramatically because they are not allowed access to the NIPR and SIPR at all."

Dolata said it can become a huge logistical nightmare when it comes time to move files, brief and mission planning materials.

However, the team of 21 full-time personnel from the detachment, manage and execute the mission. Their hard work has allowed 166 aircraft to partake in the first two of four RF-Alaska training sessions this year, flying 2,154 sorties for a total of 4,580 hours.

Part of this includes Airmen from Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan.

Many moving pieces ensure pilots and air crews arrive at JBER on time and ready for training when

See Kadena, Page A-3



ABOVE: Airman 1st Class Michael Atherton, 18th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, goes through his pre-flight inspection of an F-15 Eagle, Aug. 18. Airmen from Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan, arrived at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson earlier this month for Red-Flag Alaska 11-3. LEFT: An F-15 Eagle takes off from JBER, Aug. 18. (U.S. Air Force photos/Senior Airman Christopher Gross)

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### School zone speeding

Please obey the school zone speed limit signs. Those caught speeding by Security Forces in installation school zones will lose their installation driving privileges for 30 days on the first infraction and for six months on the second.



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## POST - 9/11 GI BILL

### A NEW BILL FOR A NEW CENTURY



Courtesy graphic

## Free books for active duty under G.I. Bill changes

By C. Todd Lopez  
Army News Service

Active duty service members and their spouses will soon be able to get funding for books and supplies as part of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill.

Beginning Oct. 1, active duty members and their spouses can receive up to \$1,000 for books and supplies, per academic year, as part of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill. Active duty members were not previously eligible for the books and supplies funding.

Additional benefits to service members and veterans include reimbursement of fees for exams used for admission to colleges. Such exams include the ACT, GMAT or SAT. Changes to the bill also mean reimbursement for more than one licensing or certification examination. Additionally, there are expanded benefits for non-college degree programs, on-the-job training, apprenticeship training, flight programs and correspondence training.

"I think the great thing about these changes (is) that it brings a lot more training options under the umbrella of this already robust program," said Keith Wilson, director of education service at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

New enrollees in the program will also find that if they are entitled to the housing allowance (active duty and their spouses are not) they can receive that benefit while enrolled in certificate or other non-college degree programs or even long-distance learning.

Those enrolled in distance learning could receive up to 50 percent of the housing allowance provided to those who enrolled in on-campus education programs. The housing allowance for those in resident training is now prorated based on a student's course load. A student taking a course load that is approximately 80 per-

cent of what a school deems "full time," would receive 80 percent of the housing allowance. Housing allowance for an in-resident student taking a full load is equivalent to the basic housing allowance for an E-5 with dependents.

Additional changes to benefits under the bill include elimination of housing payments for even short gap periods between enrollments. In the past, during the less-than-one-month breaks between semesters, beneficiaries could continue to receive housing payments. But that is no longer the case, Wilson said.

While Wilson said VA is working to keep students informed of the changes, students will have to practice some "sound financial management" on their own to make rent payments during the short non-enrollment periods between semesters. Wilson pointed out that under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, beneficiaries have never received housing allowance during the three-month summer break.

Wilson added that, when beneficiaries did receive housing payment between enrollments, they were actually burning up part of their benefits. The bill provides for 36 months of benefits. If a student was getting just housing benefits for the nearly one-month period between the fall and spring semesters, for instance, that would burn up a month of benefits.

The new change in law also affects payment eligibility, and now accounts for active duty service performed by National Guard members under Title 32.

A summary of recent changes to the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill can be found at [http://gibill.va.gov/benefits/post\\_911\\_gi\\_bill/Post911\\_changes.html](http://gibill.va.gov/benefits/post_911_gi_bill/Post911_changes.html).

Questions can be addressed to the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Education Center via email to [edoffice@elmen-dorf.af.mil](mailto:edoffice@elmen-dorf.af.mil).

# Hang up and drive

## Distracted driving can lead to fatal results

Commentary by Don Branum  
Air Force News Service

If you've been in the Air Force for a while, you might know the name Gary Kunich. He worked for European Stars and Stripes around the time I first entered the Air Force in 1999. He retired in 2006 as a master sergeant, but he has never put down the pen. Today, he writes for local publications in his adopted hometown of Kenosha, Wis.

Today, he has a new message, one that he's asking everyone to help spread: "Don't drive distracted. Put away your electronic devices before you start your engine."

It's a message he can't spread by himself, but it's one that might have saved his son.

Kunich shared tragic news with a group of military public affairs professionals via Facebook Aug. 14: Devin Kunich, 21, had died a few days earlier when a car hit his bicycle along County Highway H in Pleasant Prairie, Wis., in the early hours of Aug. 7.

According to Pleasant Prairie Police Department reports, visibility was poor. The stretch of County Highway H where the accident occurred has no street lights, and a fog blanketed the area. Devin was riding north on his way home from the Bristol, Wis., Renaissance Faire, where, according to his obituary, he was captain of the Black Swan swing ride.

At the same time, 18-year-old Quashae Taylor was driving along the same road. She was driving without her glasses and had been talking off and on to her boyfriend on her cell phone. She closed her eyes for what she described as a "long blink" as she answered her phone again at approximately 12:45 a.m.

Taylor probably never saw Devin before she hit his bicycle from behind. The impact flipped him onto her car, where he lay for almost six seconds before falling off. Police would later find his backpack, personal belongings and bicycle seat strewn in a 300-foot trail from the impact site.

Taylor slowed down, called 911 and stopped at the intersection of County Highway H and State Highway 165, a mile north of the accident scene. The paramedics who responded pronounced Devin



Distracted driving – talking on a cell phone, grooming, texting – can be as dangerous as driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs. Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson policy prohibits the use of cell phones without a hands-free device while driving. (Courtesy photo)

dead at the scene.

As tragically as the events unfolded, one thing stuck out at me: the police reported Devin was wearing dark clothing at the time of the accident and was not wearing a helmet. They later found a light which may have been on his bicycle at the time of impact.

I talked with one of my co-workers about the situation on Aug. 15. At the time, police had reported not finding any lights or rear reflectors on Devin's bike. I asked my co-worker, a fellow bicyclist, how I could write a story without mentioning that it might have been impossible for anyone to see Devin until the last second? Neither of us had a good answer.

That answer came a couple of days later, on the evening of Aug. 17. I was talking to my wife as we walked through Garden of the Gods Park, and as I posed the same question to her, I recalled a similar event about a year ago.

I was driving north along Chelton Road, just north of Fountain Boulevard in Colorado Springs, about an hour after dark. A bicyclist, dressed in dark clothing and with no lights on his bicycle, seem-

ingly appeared out of nowhere. I had maybe half a second to swerve just enough to avoid him – and I probably missed him by less than a foot.

Half a second. The blink of an eye.

What if I had been trying to answer my phone instead of paying attention to the road?

Quashae Taylor has no prior record, no criminal history, not even a traffic ticket. Prosecutors have charged her with negligent homicide.

She faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$25,000 fine. The blink of an eye changed her life.

Devin Kunich is dead. The blink of an eye ended his.

Gary and Ruth Kunich must live the rest of their lives without their son. Gary told me he doesn't want her to face extensive jail time but does want "some jail time and accountability."

"The hard part is struggling with the forgiveness (balanced with) the accountability," he said.

But more importantly, Gary and Ruth want people to put the phone away before turning the ignition.

So please, hang up and drive.

## Clean out your medicine cabinet

### Don't reuse or share prescription medications

Commentary by Air Force  
Capt. Francisco Boral  
Air Force News Service

Have you checked your medicine cabinet lately? You may have unwanted antibiotics from a recent infection, surplus pain medication from when you had your wisdom teeth removed or extra sleeping pills from a recent bout of insomnia.

There are several reasons you may have leftover medications: you may have felt better and stopped your antibiotics early, which is never a good idea; your pain may have stopped and left you with extra tablets or your problem may be seasonal, like certain allergies.

When you have leftover medications, you should never take them the next time you feel sick, share them with a sick friend or flush them down a toilet. These actions can lead to potential misuse or abuse. Prescription drug misuse and abuse is occurring more and more and it happens when someone intentionally takes a prescription medication in a way other than as prescribed.

According to the 2009 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more than seven million Americans currently abuse prescription drugs. A common misconception is prescription drugs are safe under any circumstance because a doctor assigns them to us. The truth is, while prescription medications can play an important role in our overall health, they also can have serious health risks when misused or abused.

So what's really wrong with taking leftover medications? A medication is prescribed for a specific condition. For example, specific antibiotics are effective against particular bacterial infections. That leftover antibiotic may not be effective against a new

infection. In fact, taking an antibiotic for less than its full course of therapy may cause bacteria to become resistant and more difficult to treat.

Sharing leftover prescription drugs with friends or family members also may have dangerous consequences. The shared medication may interact with your friend's current medications or an underlying medical condition, the dose may be wrong for your friend's body size or weight, or a serious side effect or allergic reaction may develop. Sharing medications bypasses simple safety checks that doctors and pharmacists perform to prevent these types of occurrences.

Sharing prescription medication not only is dangerous to your health, in some cases it is illegal. The military's policy on drug abuse applies to the use of illicit drugs and to the wrongful use and distribution of controlled prescription medications. Controlled substances are prescription drugs with a potential for abuse which can lead to addiction and dependence.

Have you ever noticed a warning label on your prescription that says "CAUTION: Federal law prohibits the transfer of this drug to any person other than the patient for whom it was prescribed?" This shows it is a crime to share, possess or use someone else's controlled medications. This act is punishable under Article 112a of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Wrongful use of medications may result in forfeiture of pay, loss of rank, dishonorable discharge or confinement.

To dispose of your medications, do not flush them down a toilet or put them down a sink.

Only a few select medications with a high potential for abuse have been recommended by the Food and Drug Administration for flushing. You may refer to the FDA website or check with the pharmacy for a complete list of approved medications for flushing. For medications not recommended for flushing by the FDA, contact your local trash and recycling service if a drug take-back collection program is available or check with local law enforcement stations for the location of drug disposal boxes and sites.

The Drug Enforcement Administration sponsors a National Prescription Drug Take Back Day campaign every six months and provides venues to safely dispose of expired, unused or unwanted prescription medications. The next event is scheduled for Oct. 29 and DEA officials plan to release venue locations on their website in September.

If there is no drug take-back program available, most medications can be disposed in the household trash. Simply remove the drugs from the prescription containers, crush and mix with undesirable substances such as cat litter or coffee grounds. Then, place in a disposable container with a lid, such as laundry detergent or bleach bottle, seal with tape and place in the trash.

Having unused or expired prescription medications in the house increases the risk of misuse and abuse. Help safeguard your family's health and your career by disposing of unused prescription medications appropriately. Prescription misuse and abuse is not only dangerous, but it is also incompatible with the military way of life.



# ARCTIC WARRIOR

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# 'Resilience is learnable'

## Master Resilience Trainer course instills passion in unit representatives

By Luke Waack  
JBER Public Affairs

Passion – it's a word seldom heard in Army training, but it was used frequently by Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program instructors in Master Resilience Trainer classes at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program and University of Pennsylvania resilience instructors delivered mobile Master Resilience Trainer classes to 73 students Aug. 8-19.

Soldiers, Airmen and civilians from the course will take the knowledge they learned about scientifically-proven resilience techniques, which can help service members and their families weather the storms of life, back to their units and give frequent resilience training, officials said.

"Resilience is learnable," said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Gantt, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness. "Not everyone is born resilient. No matter how old you are, no matter what gender or religion, resilience is learnable."

"Hunt the Good Stuff" was one technique the class practiced to become more resilient, where soon to be MRTs actively identified positive moments, ideas or personal interactions in their daily lives.

"What we try to instill into the Master Resilience Trainers is the passion," Gantt said. "If you believe it, then others will



**Sarah Fowler, University of Pennsylvania, Master Resilience Trainer course instructor, discusses teaching techniques with students at the JBER Consolidated Library and Education Center, Aug. 17. Seventy-three Soldiers, Airmen and Department of Defense civilians started the nine day Master Resilience Trainer course Aug. 9, in order to learn to teach members of home units to use scientifically proven methods to make people stronger, mentally, physically and spiritually. (U.S. Air Force photo/Luke Waack)**

believe it. What you put into it is what you get out of it."

Students like Army 2nd Lt. Robert Parrish, HHC, 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, gained a better understanding of resilience from the course and learned how to effectively teach it to others.

"I think there are a lot of people with their own definition of what resilience is," Parrish said. "I think there are a lot of assumptions

going on and until you actually go through some of this training there's a big question mark of what it is."

Techniques like hunting the good stuff are going to pay dividends personally and professionally, Parrish said.

Teaching the material to his fellow students helped him better grasp the concepts, Parrish said.

"I think it's going to be a great benefit because a lot of the stuff that we're learning

is preparation for dealing with adverse situations," Parrish said.

Parrish said he will give resilience training to Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers who are scheduled to deploy in the next year.

The CSF program calls for a minimum of two hours of resilience training every three months, before, during and after deployments, Gantt said.

U.S. Army Alaska Soldiers will receive 20 hours of resilience training each year, according to Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo, USARAK commanding general.

"The biggest thing we want the trainers to take back to their units is definitely the skill set to empower their units, empower their Soldiers, so they become more resilient," Gantt said.

The Army has been equipping Master Resilience Trainers since 2009, so there is an established community of instructors the latest MRTs can reach out to, Gantt said.

Even though the initial phase of training is over, the CSF program will continue to be a resource for students, Gantt said.

"They can always reach out and touch us (Comprehensive Soldier Fitness) and someone will be available," Gantt said. "We give them all the tools they need to be successful as a Master Resilience Trainer in their unit."

Students were encouraged to teach their first resilience class within 30 days of MRT course completion, so the skills stay fresh.

"Because this program has been going on roughly two years now, many of these people will be falling into programs already established in individual units and they're going to be more of a helper asset to that program," Gantt said.

The CSF program has a Facebook page where the resilience community can network to share information.

## Kadena

From Page A-1

the exercise kicks off, said Air Force Capt. Alex Goldfein, a pilot with the 67th Fighter Squadron and this unit's deployment manager for RF-Alaska.

With almost 150 Airmen from Kadena's 18th Operations Group and 18th Maintenance Group, Goldfein said there's a lot of paperwork involved and lots of back and forth with subbing in Airmen for one another. That's probably the most difficult part of prepping for RF-Alaska is "the movement of the people, plans change pretty rapidly, so we always have to adjust," Goldfein said.

One of the most important things for Kadena Airmen was to ensure everything's in line and ready to go, he said, things such as life-support gear, and parts and pieces maintainers will need to work on the jets. Once all that was compiled, it was loaded up onto a C-17 Globemaster III and sent to JBER.

He said the easiest part was

getting the jets to JBER. Kadena brought 10 F-15 Eagles and an E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System.

Airmen arrived about a week before the exercise kicked off. They attended required briefings and by Aug. 15, it was all about keeping up with the high-operation tempo for everyone involved, Goldfein said.

Once the exercise kicks off and things get underway, Goldfein said all the hard work that his crew and himself put in is worth it, because this is truly a great training experience.

"The biggest thing that I've seen from these exercises that we can't get at home is just the pure integration of all the aircraft. We don't have the opportunity to fly with these aircraft all that commonly," he said.

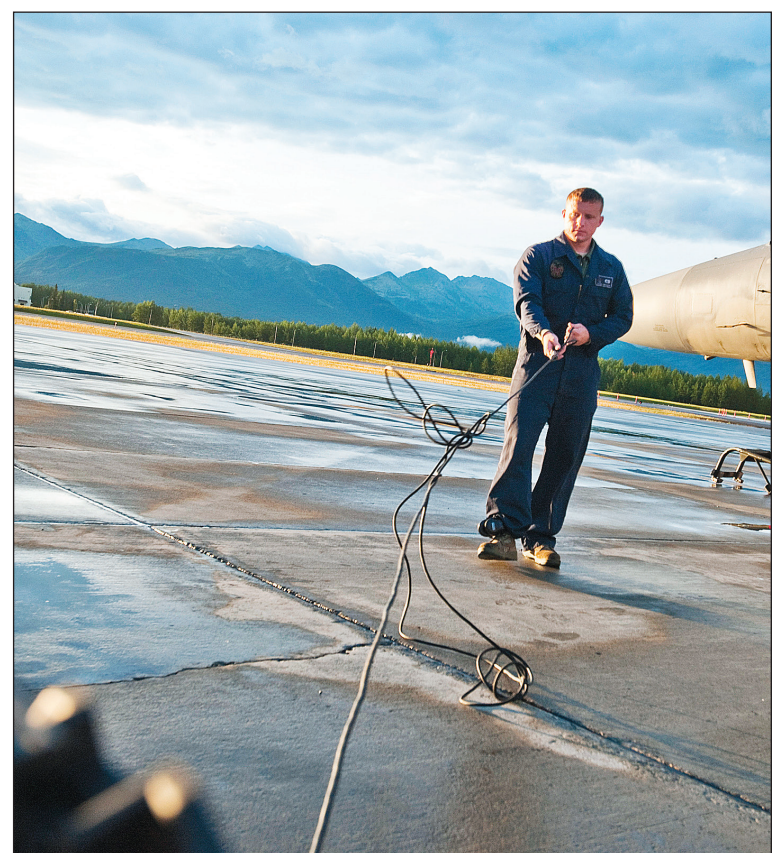
He said air crews can practice and simulate the scenarios all day, but to be out there with everybody and going through those scenarios at full speed really pays off. It allows them to overcome any challenges or kinks they may have and move forward with more confidence.

Goldfein said he really enjoys working with all the other units from around the globe, and he also admires being able to see all the different capabilities from the high volume of aircraft that participate in RF-Alaska.

He said he's very impressed with the high-ops temp the maintainers have to keep up with. Kadena typically flies most of their jets here twice a day. Back at home station it's a much smaller percentage of jets that go twice a day, "there's a lot of pressure on them to get the jets prepped and ready to go," he said, but they get the job done.

Air Force Capt. Brett Vanderpas said he agrees with Goldfein about what a great training opportunity this is for everyone involved.

"I've been flying Eagles for two years now (and) this is my third Red Flag. It's a great training opportunity. This one in particular seems really good. Training with our Guard brethren and total force integration as well as getting to train with the aggressors up north is a good training platform for us," said the Boston, Mass. native.



**Airman 1st Class William Denton, 18th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, completes his pre-flight inspection of a Kadena Air Base F-15 Eagle, Aug. 18, at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Christopher Gross)**



**ABOVE: Army Lt. Col. Marc Hoffmeister, 6th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne) battalion commander, of Eagle River, Alaska, rappells down a cliff during the Order of the Arctic Sapper competition, Aug. 17.**

**RIGHT: Soldiers of 6th Eng. Bn. load a UH-60 Black Hawk, Aug. 17, enroute to the Order of the Arctic Sapper competition. (U.S. Air Force photos/Justin Connaher)**

## Arctic Sapper

From Page A-1

a 150 foot tower.

Upon ascending back to the top of the rappel site, each team moved further up the river and conducted a crossing on a rope bridge.

Connected to a single rope using nothing but a carabiner, each member pulled themselves through the water on their back hand over hand until they reached the other side. While tired from the events already completed, the cold river water was enough to motivate each participant to move at a very rapid pace.

The final objective required each team to complete a live-fire range which was immediately followed by a board which tested each team's knowledge of the battalion's history. This final event was aimed to teach each leader about the unit history and instill a greater pride in the 6th Eng. Bn.

In total, each team endured approximately 18 hours of challenging training. Along the way, each team was forced to motivate each other and come together as a cohesive unit.

"The Order of the Arctic Sapper definitely pushed everyone to their mental and physical limits, but we all pulled through and accomplished our tasks together as a

team," said Capt. Andrew Scott, battalion plans officer. "It was a true confidence building measure from an individual and team perspective."

Each team was evaluated based upon previously established criteria, to include performance on the live fire range and the time it took to complete the course. The team representing the 23rd Engineer Company (Sapper) (Airborne) was declared the overall victor for this inaugural event.

All participants were officially inducted into the Order of the Arctic Sapper and presented "Arctic Sapper" tabs to certify their completion of the event.

Although this event was unique in several respects, the concept of team building through friendly competition was not new to the Arctic Sappers. Last winter, the battalion conducted the Arctic Sapper Winter Olympic Games in March for 10 days involving multiple team-based competitive events designed to reinforce arctic skill sets.

"We hope to continue our tradition of building tactically competent Soldiers through both traditional training events and competition-based training," Hoffmeister said. "Our next competitive training event will take place in the winter with the continuation of the Arctic Sapper Winter Olympics, which will go a long way in building a full spectrum, all-weather force that is capable of mastering the physical terrain of their surrounding environment."



# Panetta: 'I will not break faith'

*SecDef says any retirement changes won't affect serving military, addresses targeted defense spending cuts*

By Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — In his clearest statement on the subject to date, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said, Monday, if the military retirement system changes, it will not affect serving service members.

"I will not break faith," the secretary said during a roundtable meeting with military media representatives in the Pentagon.

Panetta's predecessor, Robert M. Gates, asked the Defense Business Board to look at the military retirement system and make recommendations. The final report is due later this month, but Panetta said he is familiar with the outlines of the proposal.

"I certainly haven't made any decisions (on retirement)," he said.

"People who have come into the service, who have put their lives on the line, who have been deployed to the war zones, who have fought for this country, who have been promised certain benefits for that — I'm not going to break faith with what's been promised to them," Panetta said.

People in the service today will come under the current retirement system, which gives retirees 50 percent of their base pay after 20 years of service.

"Does that stop you from making changes?" Panetta asked. "No, because obviously you can 'grandfather' people in terms of their benefits and then look at what changes you want to put in place for people who become members of the all-volunteer force in the future."

One aspect of the retirement issue is one of fairness, the secretary said. Most service members do not spend 20 years in the military and therefore do not get any retirement benefits when they leave the service.

"They are not vested in any way," Panetta said. "The question that is at least legitimate to ask is, 'Is there a way for those future volunteers to shape this that might give them better protection to be able to have some retirement and take it with them?'"

Health care is another area that has to be dealt with, the secretary said. In fiscal 2001, the DoD health care bill was \$19 billion. It is more than \$50 billion now, he said, and it soars to the neighborhood of \$60 billion



Pat and Harold Wolfe affix a pin signifying 30 years of service to daughter, Air Force Col. Barbara Wolfe, 673d Medical Group, during the officer's Aug. 5 retirement ceremony at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's Professional Military Education Center. Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta said current service members won't be affected if policies concerning military retirement change. Currently, retirees are granted 50 percent of their base pay after 20 years of service. (U.S. Air Force photo/Justin Connaehr)

in future years. Among proposals Congress is contemplating is an increase in some TRICARE military health plan premium payments.

"I think those recommendations make sense," Panetta said. "Especially with tight budgets, it does make sense that people contribute a bit more with regards to getting that coverage."

The Defense Department — which is responsible for a large part of the nation's discretionary budget — will do its part to reduce the budget deficit, the secretary said. But while Defense has a role to play, he added, Congress has to deal with the more than two-thirds of the federal budget that represents the mandatory spending.

"If you are serious about getting the

deficit down," Panetta said, "you have to deal with the mandatory side of the budget and taxes."

DoD has a responsibility to look at all aspects of the budget, the secretary said, and officials at the Pentagon are doing that.

"This is not because it is necessarily going to hurt areas," he added, "because frankly, a lot of this can be done through efficiencies, a lot of it can be done looking at the administrative side of the programs: what can we do to make these programs more efficient?"

The secretary said he believes the budget crunch can represent an opportunity to make DoD a more efficient, effective and agile force which still can deal with the threats of the future.

The department also needs to ask how to provide benefits for troops and their families that will be effective at ensuring the nation always has a strong volunteer force, Panetta said.

"That's a debate and discussion that it's important for the Defense Department to have, the White House to have, the Congress to have and the country to have," he said. "(We) need to have that debate about 'How are we going to do this in a way that maintains the best military in the world?'"

The Defense Department will face some tough choices, Panetta acknowledged.

"I think the bottom line is this can be an opportunity to shape something very effective for the future that can still represent the best defense system in the world," he said.







# Army CID seeking special-agent candidates

CID news release

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID, is actively recruiting qualified Soldiers who are interested in pursuing a career as a federal law-enforcement officer.

Special agents with CID are some of the most highly-trained and experienced detectives in the law-enforcement arena. They are responsible for investigating felony-level crime that has an Army nexus, conducting protective-service operations, conducting counter-narcotic operations, developing criminal intelligence, and working with federal, state and local law-enforcement agencies worldwide.

"Without a doubt, this is the best job in the Army," said Special Agent Erick Bryant, an 18-year veteran of CID who has mentored more than 100 apprentice special agents during his career. Asked if he feels like his work has made a difference in terms of protecting Soldiers and the Army as a whole, Bryant replied with a resounding, "Yes, absolutely."

"I feel as though I am contributing to others' welfare," said Bryant. "It's my experience that every agent I've encountered wants to help victims. On some level, it's a common thread with every agent. That shared goal brings us together and gives us a common purpose. There is strength in that."

Agent candidates go through 15 weeks of training during the CID Special Agent Course at the U.S. Army Military Police School and receive advanced training in several specialized investigative disciplines. Selected agents can receive advanced training at the FBI National Academy, Metropolitan Police Academy at Scotland Yard, the Defense Academy of Credibility Assessment, and the Canadian Police College.

Agents also have the opportunity to



In addition to investigating crime within the Army, Criminal Investigation Command special agents provide personal security services for key Department of Defense and Department of the Army officials. (U.S. Army photo/Jeffrey Castro)

pursue a master's degree in forensic science from George Washington University and enlisted agents have tremendous opportunities to become warrant officers.

"The training is fast-paced and thought-provoking, covering everything from crime-scene processing to interviews and interrogations and was recently accredited by the Federal Law Enforcement Training Accreditation Board," said CID Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Seaman, who is also a CID special agent. "The instructors are some of the most respected law-enforcement professionals in the field and the quality of and the level of instruction is second to none. As an apprentice agent, new agents at their first duty assignment receive mentorship and field training by senior agents and are given an opportunity to apply a multitude of felony investigative techniques in real-life scenarios

while learning to master their craft."

To qualify, applicants must be a U.S. citizen, at least 21 years old, be a specialist or sergeant (non-promotable), with at least two years but not more than 12 years time in service, have an ST score of 107 or higher, have at least 60 college credit hours (waiver of up to half of this prerequisite may be considered), have a physical profile 222221 or higher, with normal color vision and no record of mental or emotional disorders, a minimum of one year of military police experience or two years of civilian police experience (a waiver of this prerequisite may be considered).

With just 12 months on the job, Special Agent Jennifer Swierk, a former military police officer and now a CID special agent at Fort Stewart, Ga., said she became an agent because she wanted a challenging career

in law enforcement, but more importantly, she wanted to serve and protect her fellow Soldiers.

"CID was something I was familiar with prior to even joining the military," said Swierk. "As an MP (military police officer) I worked with CID and realized it was the type of job I would thoroughly enjoy. I recognized I wanted to be a part of something bigger than the MP world. I cannot think of any other job in the Army I would rather be doing."

Applicants must be able to speak and write clearly, have suitable character established by a Single Scope Background Investigation – leading to a top-secret clearance, no record of unsatisfactory credit and no felony or court-martial convictions. Lastly, applicants must be able to complete 36 months of service obligation upon completion of the CID Special Agent Course.

"The unique opportunities in CID are second to none and our agents are some of the most sought-after professionals in law enforcement today because of the caliber of training they receive and their experience in solving serious crime," said Chris Grey, chief of Public Affairs for CID. "We are always looking for qualified Soldiers to join our elite team of investigators."

According to Grey, CID special agents are first responders and the Army's detectives for murders, sexual assaults, contracting fraud, robbery, computer crimes and any other felony criminal acts against the Army community. Agents from CID work daily with the FBI, ATF, DEA, and numerous other law-enforcement agencies and have one of the highest solve rates for serious crime within federal law enforcement.

To apply, contact a local CID office today, or go to [www.cid.army.mil](http://www.cid.army.mil) for additional information.

## Briefs and Announcements

### Pharmacy closure

The 673d Medical Group Pharmacy will close Sept. 2 at noon for Pacific Air Forces family day, and will be closed all day Sept. 5 for the Labor Day holiday.

### Hangar 5 closure

Due to the setup and tear down for the upcoming Hangar 5 Airman's call, the hangar will be closed for all activities, including CrossFit, Monday and Tuesday, 8 a.m. to noon.

### Dining facility closures

The Gold Rush Inn, Building 655, will be closed until Wednesday for renovations. The Wilderness Inn, Building 647, between C and 2nd streets is the recommended alternative to the Gold Rush Inn.

The Iditarod Dining Facility is scheduled to close Sept. 15 for renovations. Food service operations will shift to Kenai Dining Hall for three months and shuttles will be available for transportation from the dorms.

### Become a JAG lawyer

The Army Judge Advocate General Corps is now accepting applications for the Funded Legal Education Program which sends active-duty commissioned officers to law school at government expense while remaining in an active-duty status.

The Army projects selecting 25 officers to attend law school beginning fall 2012.

The FLEP selection board will meet the second week of December and will consider officers second lieutenant through captain.

Applicants must have two but not more than six years of total active federal service at the time training begins.

Interested officers should refer to Army Regulation 27-1, "Judge Advocate Legal Services," chapter 14 for additional eligibility requirements.

Applicants must submit their application through their chain of command to their basic branch at Army Human Resources Command.

Interested officers should review the AHRC website for branch specific contact information.

Applicants must also submit their application to the Office of the Judge Advocate General, ATTN: DAJA-PT (Yvonne Caron - 10th Floor), 1777 North Kent St., Rosslyn, Va. 22209-2194.

The suspense to AHRC and OTJAG is Nov. 1.

Interested officers should immediately register for the Law School Admission Test. The board will not consider applications without LSAT scores.

Interested officers should immediately contact the U.S. Army Alaska Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at 384-0420 for further information and to schedule an interview.

### Munitions stockpile inventory

The 3rd Munitions Squadron will be carrying out a semi-annual inventory Sept. 20 to 23.

All munitions users must be aware of inventory dates and schedule requests for munitions issues and turn-ins around the inventory.

During inventories, only emergency requests will be processed after being submitted in writing and approved by the group commander.

For more information, call the Munitions Operations Section at 552-8666.

### POW/MIA ceremony

Representatives from all branches of

the military will honor prisoners of war and service members missing in action at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's POW/MIA ceremony, Sept. 23, 3 p.m., at the 3rd Wing headquarters.

For more information, call 552-5693.

### Check your university

Effective Jan. 1, 2012, an academic institution must have signed a Department of Defense memorandum of understanding and be on the list of participating institutions in the DoD Tuition Assistance Program to be eligible to receive funds from the Service's Military Tuition Assistance program.

The policy affects all academic institutions operating on and off military installations delivering courses through various modalities to include but not limited to classroom instruction, distance education and correspondence courses.

Students are advised to contact their academic institution to check if their school either has an established MOU or is in the process of having one signed prior to the deadline.

Approved MOUs will be posted at [www.dodmou.com](http://www.dodmou.com).

Please contact the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Education Center at [edoffice@elmendorf.af.mil](mailto:edoffice@elmendorf.af.mil).

### Trespass notice

Trespassing on JBER-Elmendorf's two Combat Arms firing ranges for any reason is both illegal and dangerous. Firing on each range is based on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson requirements and can occur at any time.

The outdoor range is located one mile north of Sixmile Lake and the indoor range is located in Building 4309 Kenny Ave. For more information concerning this notice call Combat Arms at 552-1846.

### Military publications available

Visit the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Public Affairs Office, 10480 22nd Ave., Suite 123, for copies of the following official military publications: the 2011 JBER Installation Guide and Phonebook (limited supply), U.S. Air Force Priorities poster series (large and small sizes), and Airman Magazine (2011 almanac issue).

City of Anchorage maps are also available.

Call 552-8918 for information.

The information provided in the Installation Guide is also available online at [www.jber.af.mil/library/newcomers/index.asp](http://www.jber.af.mil/library/newcomers/index.asp).

### U-Fix-It Store reopened

The U-Fix-it Store, previously known as the Self-Help Store on JBER-Richardson, reopened in Building 706 to all Aurora Military Housing tenants.

Assorted items for maintaining your home may be issued from the U-Fix-It Store. The items available are subject to change and limits and some may have a cost.

The U-Fix-It Store also provides equipment checkout items, such as carpet cleaners, wheel barrows, yard sale signs, and more.

There are also American flag kits, and fire extinguishers available.

U-Fix-It work includes all home maintenance activities.

Its purpose is to allow the occupant to make minor improvements and repairs to their home and cut down on the amount of service orders at maintenance.

This allows tenants to do work in their homes themselves, thus improving the appearance of the interior as well as the exterior of the home.

There are two stores located on base. The

JBER-Elmendorf location is 6350 Arctic Warrior Drive and it is open 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. (closed for lunch noon to 1 p.m.).

The JBER-Richardson location is Building 706 1st St., open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday; Saturday usage will require using the JBER-Elmendorf location.

For U-Fix-It information call 743-9070. A window blind cleaning machine is currently located at the JBER-Elmendorf location.

There will also be window blind cleaner installed at the JBER-Richardson within one or two months. A "reservation required to use" policy is in place with the priority going to military members PCSing. For more information, call 552-4439.

### New service hours

The Army Military Personnel Section has new customer service hours, 1 to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday.

By exception, ID card appointments are 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m. Monday to Wednesday and Friday, closed Thursdays.

The Reassignments Section will only be open to unit S-1s, 1 to 5 p.m.

Soldiers must see their battalion or brigade S-1 and have authorization prior to being seen at the Army MPS.

Passports are processed on JBER-Elmendorf every Friday at 10 a.m. in the People Center, Room 118, and on JBER-Richardson every fourth Tuesday of the month 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., location to be determined.

### FTAC NCOIC needed

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Force Support Squadron First Term Airmen Center is seeking a highly motivated staff sergeant or technical sergeant to fill the FTAC NCOIC position.

The First Term Airmen Center is an Air Force level program mandatory for all first duty station Airmen.

First Term Airmen Center NCOICs are assigned for two years with a reporting identifier of 9F000.

The application deadline is Aug. 31.

Per AFI36-2624, candidates must be a volunteer and have commander's recommendation; must be at least a staff sergeant with 12 months time in grade with a minimum of five years time in service or a technical sergeant and be a graduate of Airman Leadership School.

Candidates must also be outstanding in appearance, military bearing and conduct both on and off duty; meet Air Force fitness standards with a passing score of 75 or higher; have a rating of no less than 5 on the last three EPRs; have the ability to speak distinctly and communicate well with others and meet all Air Force standards and other quality factors. Master sergeant selects will not be considered for FTAC duties.

The Report No Later Than Date is Jan. 3, 2012. For a full application with requirements and job description email [brent.johnson1@elmendorf.af.mil](mailto:brent.johnson1@elmendorf.af.mil) or [kisha.richardson@elmendorf.af.mil](mailto:kisha.richardson@elmendorf.af.mil).

### Furnishings management

The Furnishings Management Office offers 90-day loaner furniture for Airmen arriving at or leaving JBER-Elmendorf.

The FMO also has appliances for Airmen residing off base, for longterm use. Delivery and pick-up is provided for 90-day loaner furniture and appliances. The FMO also has longterm furniture for ranks E-1 through E-5.

These items are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The service member is responsible for transporting these furnishings. Airmen should take a copy of PCS

orders to the Government Housing Office at 6346 Arctic Warrior Drive to schedule delivery.

Call 552-2740 for any questions regarding the FMO program. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Soldiers can call 384-0092 for the JBER-Richardson FMO.

### Employee assistance

The Employee Assistance Program is confidential, voluntary, and at no cost to the employee. The screening and referral service is provided to supervisors, civilian employees, their spouse, retired military and disabled veterans.

For the supervisor, the EAP provides expert consultation and training for organizational leadership, (management, supervisors and union stewards) regarding the problematic or troubled employee, enhancing the work environment and improving employee performance.

For the employee and all other eligible clients, the EAP provides confidential problem identification and assessment services. For cases where referrals are required, case monitoring and follow-up is provided.

The EAP also conducts training for civilian employees on topics such as drug-free workplace, workplace violence, customer relations and other tailored training that contributes to the overall welfare of the civilian workforce.

For more information contact George Mongar at 384-0863 or in person at Building 658, 1st floor..

### 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 December.

More than 2,400 patients have already signed up to 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.

The 673d Medical Group is the first Air Force site to test this system.

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 some basic 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 registration process.

The project team is monitoring results in order to develop future implementation plans.

The Air Force is also interested in understanding how this new technology impacts the quality of health care provided to patients, as well as the overall well being of the patient population.

A research team is conducting a study in conjunction with this pilot program.





Royal Air Force Senior Aircraftman David Anderson, No. 47 Squadron from Brize Norton Station, United Kingdom, goes over an after-flight inspection on a U.K. C-130. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Christopher Gross)



ABOVE: A Royal Air Force C-130 Hercules of the No. 47 Squadron taxis on the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson flightline during Red Flag-Alaska 11-3, Aug. 22. (U.S. Air Force photo/Steve White)

RIGHT: Royal Air Force Sgt. Rob Parnell, No. 47 Squadron, goes over an after-flight inspection on a U.K. C-130. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Christopher Gross)  
 FAR RIGHT: Royal Air Force Flight Sgt. Mark Oakman, No. 47 Squadron, communicates with a U.K. C-130. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Christopher Gross)







**JBER ham radio club offers fun**  
**Page B-5**

**Flag football kicks off,**  
**Page B-4**

[www.jber.af.mil/news](http://www.jber.af.mil/news)

# ARCTIC WARRIOR

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## FEATHERS, FLIPPERS AND FINS

*Puffins are just down the road in Seward*

Commentary by David Bedard  
JBER Public Affairs

Nestled at the origin of the Seward Highway in the town of Seward, the Alaska SeaLife Center is a veritable ark of Alaska sea mammals, fish and aquatic birds for visitors to see and learn about.

This past weekend, I made the little more than two-hour drive to Seward for my first ever visit to the center and my first trip to the town in more than 14 years.

The drive was gorgeous — even on a rainy day — with vistas of rolling mountains, rock cliffs, ponds, waterfalls and streams. The countryside was almost pastoral in a European sense when compared to the thick forests most often encountered in other parts of the state.

I was immediately impressed with the architecture and décor of the ASLC, belaying its relatively recent opening in 1998. Aviaries and other animal ecosystems had the appearance of natural habitats, and the center is host to dozens of interactive exhibits such as a station where young kids and big kids alike can touch live starfish.

The habitats can be viewed at the surface and below water. For instance, the aviary is host to several species of aquatic birds which roost on the artificial shore and surrounding cliffs.

Below the water line is a view of the aquarium that is home to several species of sea fish which eat feeder fish not immediately scooped up by their feathered neighbors.

According to the ASLC website, the center is the state's sole public aquarium as well as ocean wildlife rescue and rehabilitation center.

The facility is host to Alaska marine biology and ecosystem research. Staff at the facility teach day programs for children of

all school-aged groups by reservation.

During our visit, we booked the puffin encounter, available at extra cost and by appointment. A knowledgeable graduate student of marine biology was our host through the facility's laboratories and aviary.

She showed us the facilities where animal food is processed as well as where eggs are incubated before hatching. We had the opportunity to look at eggs of marine birds across the state and we learned about the birds' diets, adaptations and nesting habits.

The best part of the day by a wide margin was our foray into the aviary. We had an opportunity to see how the birds nested in the artificial cliff as well as how they fly and dive.

Because they nest on the shore, two murrens — which resemble penguins — squawked at us continually for invading their territory.

We were given a sizable pail of herring and other small feeder fish and the opportunity to hand feed the birds. Like Pavlovian dogs, the feathered diners swam and flew intercept courses to get in line for lunch.

The puffins, both horned and tufted, were the most civil.

Like little tuxedoed ladies and gentlemen, they waddled up to the pail and waited patiently for their turn to grab several small fish, which they carefully arranged sideways in their signature beaks before shuffling off to eat.

At the other end of the spectrum were skittish red-legged kittiwakes — cliff-nesting sea birds closely related to the sea gull. Though the shrill birds could be coaxed to grab a herring, they resorted to hit-and-run tactics of quickly grabbing their prize before flying away to safety.

At the end of the tour, we had a chance to throw the remaining fish out on the water for a "broadcast feeding," allowing a free for all for the birds and the habitat's surprisingly large fish. Many of the flying birds transformed into adept torpedoes as they dived for kipper.

In addition to the Puffin Encoun-

ter, the ASLC offers octopus and marine mammal encounters with similar behind-the-scenes encounters with the animals.

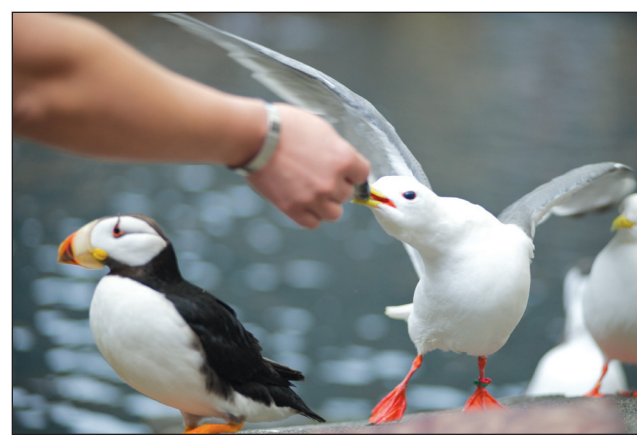
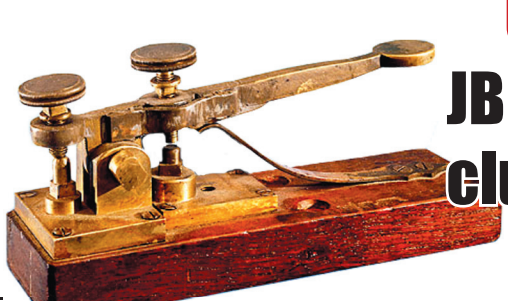
After our encounter, we toured the rest of the center, gaining close access to salmon life-cycle exhibits, touch tanks, sea lions and interactive exhibits to name only a few of the center's attractions. All in all, it was truly a charming and informative day at the aquarium.

For more information, visit [www.alaskasealife.org](http://www.alaskasealife.org).

To book reservations for an encounter, call (888) 378-2525.

**RIGHT: A tufted puffin patiently awaits a meal of kipper (small fish, like herring) offered during Puffin Experience Aug. 20, at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward, about a two-hour drive from Anchorage.**

**BELOW: A Steller sea lion swims Aug. 20, at an Alaska SeaLife Center aquarium in Seward. The center offers up-close and personal experiences with many of the birds and other creatures.**



**ABOVE: A red-legged kittiwake grabs kipper offered during Puffin Experience, Aug. 20, at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward.**  
**FAR LEFT: Anchorage residents James, 9, Justin, 7, and Jessica Vaughn, 5, marvel at a huge ocean fish aquarium at the center.**  
**LEFT: A murre stands watch at the SeaLife Center. (U.S. Air Force photos/David Bedard)**

# Commentary: How my older brother taught me to live life

Commentary by Senior Airman Emerald Ralston  
92nd ARW Public Affairs

**FAIRCHILD AIR FORCE BASE, Wash.** — I thought I was ready for war.

I had gone through Army combat skills training at Fort Lewis, Wash. I had squared away all my financial and legal documents. I even found a new confidence and a love for the military.

My brother, Army Sgt. Ian Ralston, a combat medic, and I spoke on the phone just hours before I boarded my first flight overseas.

He offered me advice, motivation and insight, as I was deploying with the 10th Mountain Division.

I thought I was ready. After a couple of weeks in Afghanistan, I was preparing to convoy to an even more remote area.

Before we left, I made the usual call home. I'd ask my parents to pray for me before I went on convoys so they knew what I was up to and in case anything happened, they would be prepared.

This time, I didn't get the "Okay, honey, be safe," I was used to.

Instead I heard my mother's muffled sobs, and through the tears and gasps I put together what I could: the part of the war I wasn't ready for.

"Ian got hit," were the only words I heard before I let out that guttural groan of grief you never want to have to release.

"It's bad ... real bad," were the next words I heard.

My big brother was deployed to Iraq at the time with the 2/23 Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Battalion Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. He had been on a convoy earlier that day.

The hours that followed felt like years. My unit at Camp Spann acted more quickly than I thought possible. They understood the gravity of the situation and scheduled convoys, flights and liaisons for me at each stop to get me to my brother.

I spent the next 24 hours running from flight to flight from Afghanistan to Germany, fearing and expecting the worst, trying to find a way to prepare myself. I couldn't eat, I couldn't sleep. I had nothing but the love for my brother to keep me going. I needed to see him, and I knew he needed me there.

When I finally arrived at Landstuhl Army Medical Center, Germany, my brother was being stabilized and prepared for a medevac to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

I met with Sgt. Jake Flores, a close friend of Ian's from their first tour in Iraq. He specifically requested to be Ian's nurse so Ian would always have someone he knew and trusted by his side. He pulled me aside before I entered Ian's room and explained Ian's injury to me.

He offered me a shoulder to cry on. He reminded me to breathe, and reassured me that if I needed to break down, I could take a moment to do just that before I entered Ian's room. And I did.

My brother—the reason I joined

the military, the reason I wanted to deploy, the person I wanted to make proud more than anyone in the world with my military service — was now a quadriplegic. Shrapnel had penetrated his C2 vertebra, and, the doctors told me, would kill him if they tried to remove it.

When I finally pulled myself together, I knew from that point on I had to be strong, I had to take everything the military had taught me about strength and bearing and put it all to the test.

When I walked in, I looked at everything except him. I looked at the machine that was breathing for him, at the monitors all around his bed. I focused on the sound of the ventilator breathing in and out, the beeping of his vitals. Finally, my eyes rested on my brother.

Honestly, he looked fine, as if nothing had happened. But then he looked up at me and tried to smile, and I noticed the tubes in his mouth.

From that moment, I spent every second by his side. I flew with him to Walter Reed and was greeted by hoards of military leaders. Chaplains asked if I was okay. Senior officers thanked us for our service. Then nurses loaded him onto another litter, taking his tubes, wires and monitors, and rushed him to the intensive care unit, an area I became very familiar with over the next three weeks.

Later that night, after my parents arrived, a nurse came into his ward and told us we had to look at something.

We did, and I knew what I had to do. After all, my parents

shouldn't have to ask their son if he wants to be taken off life support. It was the hardest thing I've ever done.

After we took him off his medication and asked him, he blinked twice. No. He wanted to be alive.

From that moment on, I realized the fragility, preciousness and importance of life. I realized the difference between the war they prepare us for and the side of war that exists in hospitals.

I spent 19 days in Afghanistan and 19 days at Walter Reed. The part of war I saw at Walter Reed was one I didn't see in Afghanistan.

Not many people see those in limbo — the ones who live after sustaining serious injuries. They are certainly not forgotten, and they don't go unnoticed.

Ian was a Soldier to the core, even when we were kids. Every Halloween, he wanted to wear camouflage. He "bled green" from the day he was born at the U.S. Army Hospital at Wurzburg, Germany, while our father served in the 123rd Signal Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division in 1985.

He "bled green" until the day he took shrapnel to the back of the neck and rolled out of the back of his Stryker. Then he just bled.

Ian currently sits in the Veterans Affairs Spinal Cord Injury Center in Minneapolis, Minn., surrounded by friends and family. His positivity is a reminder to everyone who knows him that life is worth living; life is bigger than the problems we face at the moment.

He smiles and laughs every day. He says "please" and "thank

you" when asking for medication. He knows he is blessed to be alive, and the nurses and doctors are consistently blown away by his progress.

The doctors say he will never walk again. Ian feels differently. His faith and stubbornness have taken him past what the doctors told him he would be capable of.

People like Ian are reasons to make life worth living, to live a life worth the sacrifices of those who serve.

There are little things we do every day that my brother can't do: scratching his face, clearing his throat, speaking out loud. My brother is one of thousands of men and women who protected our freedoms. He spent his career saving the lives of others. Now he is on the other end of the spectrum.

I urge service members to keep in mind what it means to wear our uniform, the uniform so many Soldiers and Airmen may never be able to put back on because of their sacrifices. Make them and our nation proud by the way we conduct ourselves in uniform and remember what an honor it is to put it on every morning.

And remember, when you set foot in the war zone, anything can happen. You may never be prepared for what you may face, but if you ever have to see the horrors of war, face them with honor.

I thought I was ready for war. Now I have to prepare for a fight of a different kind: the fight to help my brother live his life.

He has certainly taught me how to live mine.

## Chaplain offers pointers for success in healthy marriages

Commentary by Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Terry Fox  
673d ABW Chaplain

Many young couples leap into marriage with little preparation. Perhaps they've grown up on Hollywood stories of love at first sight. They think if they have "feelings" for someone, then they're in love. Yet after they've been married for a time, they realize that the Hollywood story is just that: a story.

The couple begins to wear on each other's nerves over issues of finance, communication, and even toilet seats and toothpaste.

The truth is, if they want their marriage to last, they need to work on it, and work hard. This is worth repeat-

ing: both parties have to be willing to work at making their marriage a success. That being said, husbands, you have the greatest work ahead of you.

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul tells the husband to love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her (Eph. 5:25). This is no small task.

Let's begin by looking at how Christ loved the church. Through the sin of Adam, all mankind is sinful (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12).

This is easily demonstrated by the conflict in marriages. Two people fighting not for the interests and agendas of their spouse, but for their own.

Yet because of God's grace and mercy, Jesus came

to earth as a man, lived a perfect life, sacrificed Himself for the forgiveness of sin, and on the third day rose from the dead, never to die again.

Jesus loved us by sacrificing Himself so that we would not suffer the everlasting consequences of our sin. He became sin for us so that our sins would be forgiven (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ showed His love for the church by sacrificing Himself for her.

Husbands, that's the idea Paul has in mind when he tells you to love your wife. You don't have to die physically for her as Christ died for His church, but you must love her by sacrificing yourself for her. That's your calling as a husband.

Now, many husbands like to go to verse 22 of Ephesians 5. This is where Paul tells wives to submit to their husbands.

They like this verse because it seems to imply that he's the boss, and his wife is to do what he commands. There are two problems with this view. First, it assumes that a wife is subordinate. This simply isn't true. She, too, is created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27).

It's true that she has a different role, but she is an image-bearer of God.

Second, this is a skewed view of a husband's role and conduct. Since the husband is parallel to Jesus, we must evaluate Jesus to see what a husband is supposed to be like. (Remember, husbands

are to love their wives as Christ loved the church.) You see, Jesus didn't boss His disciples around, ordering them to wash His feet.

Instead, Jesus washed their feet, when it was their responsibility to wash His. Serve your wife as Christ served His disciples. Love your wife as Christ loved His church.

What might this look like? Don't expect your wife to do all the housework. Help her; wash dishes or do laundry.

Watch the kids so she can take a break. Ask about her day (and actually listen), instead of sitting in front of the television when you come home. When you get into an argument, sacrifice yourself by being willing to

lose the argument. Be the first to say, "Will you please forgive me?" and be the first to forgive. And if hunting, fishing, working, hanging out with your friends, etc. are more important than your wife, then you're not loving her.

Said another way, you're putting your own interests above hers, considering yourself more important than your wife. Husbands, marriage is hard work because it requires from you a sacrifice.

To love your wife is to treat her as an image bearer of God and to give yourself up for her. When we love our wives as Christ love the church, we can find our marriages meaningful and rewarding.

ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON  
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## 2011 Schedule September - October

### WEEK 1

**Thursday, September 8**  
N. Orleans at Green Bay, 4:30 p.m.

### Sunday, September 11

Atlanta at Chicago, 9 a.m.  
Cincinnati at Cleveland, 9 a.m.  
Buffalo at Kansas City, 9 a.m.  
Philadelphia at St. Louis, 9 a.m.  
Tennessee at Jacksonville, 9 a.m.  
Pittsburgh at Baltimore, 9 a.m.  
Indianapolis at Houston, 9 a.m.  
Detroit at Tampa Bay, 9 a.m.  
NY Giants at Washington, 12:15 p.m.  
Carolina at Arizona, 12:15 p.m.  
Minnesota at San Diego, 12:15 p.m.  
Seattle at San Francisco, 12:15 p.m.  
Dallas at NY Jets, 4:20 p.m.

### Monday, September 12

New England at Miami, 3 p.m.  
Oakland at Denver, 6:15 p.m.

### WEEK 2

### Sunday, September 18

Kansas City at Detroit, 9 a.m.  
Baltimore at Tennessee, 9 a.m.  
Cleveland at Indianapolis, 9 a.m.  
Oakland at Buffalo, 9 a.m.  
Tampa Bay at Minnesota, 9 a.m.  
Chicago at New Orleans, 9 a.m.  
Jacksonville at NY Jets, 9 a.m.  
Seattle at Pittsburgh, 9 a.m.  
Arizona at Washington, 9 a.m.  
Green Bay at Carolina, 9 a.m.  
Dallas at San Francisco, 12:05 p.m.  
San Diego at New England, 12:15 p.m.  
Cincinnati at Denver, 12:15 p.m.  
Houston at Miami, 12:15 p.m.  
Philadelphia at Atlanta, 4:20 p.m.

### Monday, September 19

St. Louis at NY Giants, 4:30 p.m.

### WEEK 3

### Sunday, September 25

New England at Buffalo, 9 a.m.  
San Francisco at Cincinnati, 9 a.m.  
Miami at Cleveland, 9 a.m.  
Denver at Tennessee, 9 a.m.  
Detroit at Minnesota, 9 a.m.  
Houston at New Orleans, 9 a.m.  
NY Giants at Philadelphia, 9 a.m.  
Jacksonville at Carolina, 9 a.m.  
Kansas City at San Diego, 12:05 p.m.  
NY Jets at Oakland, 12:05 p.m.  
Baltimore at St. Louis, 12:05 p.m.  
Arizona at Seattle, 12:15 p.m.  
Atlanta at Tampa Bay, 12:15 p.m.  
Green Bay at Chicago, 12:15 p.m.  
Pittsburgh at Indianapolis, 4:20 p.m.

### Monday, September 26

Washington at Dallas, 4:30 p.m.

### WEEK 4

### Sunday, October 2

Carolina at Chicago, 9 a.m.  
Buffalo at Cincinnati, 9 a.m.  
Tennessee at Cleveland, 9 a.m.  
Detroit at Dallas, 9 a.m.  
Washington at St. Louis, 9 a.m.  
San Francisco at Philadelphia, 9 a.m.  
Minnesota at Kansas City, 9 a.m.  
New Orleans at Jacksonville, 9 a.m.  
Pittsburgh at Houston, 9 a.m.  
NY Giants at Arizona, 12:05 p.m.  
Atlanta at Seattle, 12:05 p.m.  
Miami at San Diego, 12:15 p.m.  
Denver at Green Bay, 12:15 p.m.  
New England at Oakland, 12:15 p.m.  
NY Jets at Baltimore, 4:20 p.m.

### Monday, October 3

Indianapolis at Tampa Bay, 4:30 p.m.



The Arctic Chill will be open  
Sunday • 8 a.m. starting September 8  
Monday & Thursday • 3 p.m.

**Arctic Chill**

### Win

- NFL Tickets
- Super Bowl Party Package
- Weekly Prizes
- New Football Menu
- Free Member Breakfast -  
Sundays • 8 a.m.  
Non-Member \$6<sup>50</sup>
- Additional entries available  
Call for more info!

384-7619

# Community happenings

**FRIDAY**  
**Women's Equality Day observance on JBER**  
 The Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Education Center will host "The Quest For Equality" in honor of Women's Equality Day in the lecture hall from 10 until 11:30 a.m.  
 For information, call 384-0336 or email [william.boberg@us.army.mil](mailto:william.boberg@us.army.mil).

**Sexual Assault Prevention**  
 Anne Munch presents "Naming the Unnamed Conspirator" as part of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program at the Arctic Warrior Events Center from 8 until 9:30 a.m. For more information, call 551-2033.

**THROUGH SUNDAY**  
**Alaska State Fair**  
 The last blast of summer runs through Sunday, featuring flowers, record-setting vegetables, traditional fair food and entertainment for all at the Fairgrounds in Palmer. Discount tickets are available through the Information, Tickets and Travel office on base.  
 For more information visit [www.alaskastatefair.org](http://www.alaskastatefair.org).

**SEPT. 2-4**  
**Girdwood Fungus Fair**  
 The annual celebration of local mushrooms features the Fungus Formal, the Fabulous Fungus Fair at the Alyeska Hotel, as well as classes on mushroom identification, mushroom harvesting and walks, and other classes.  
 For more information visit [www.fungusfair.com](http://www.fungusfair.com) or call 754-2275.

**SEPT. 9**  
**Taste of Mardi Gras**  
 A street party recreating Bourbon Street, featuring authentic Cajun cuisine from local celebrity chefs, live music, and street performers from 5 until 10 p.m. on 4th Avenue between G and H streets.  
 Enjoy the last days of summer in New Orleans style, with proceeds benefiting the Red Cross.  
 For more information, email [tasteofmardigras@gmail.com](mailto:tasteofmardigras@gmail.com).

**SEPT. 10**  
**Vertical Challenge**  
**Climb-a-thon at Alyeska**  
 The 4th annual climb-a-thon is an endurance event in which

contestants walk, hike and run up the steep North Face Trail of Mount Alyeska and ride the tram down as many times as possible from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
 The top competitors have climbed more than 20,000 vertical feet – the equivalent of climbing Mount McKinley, only with 10 hours to do it.  
 For information visit [www.alyeskaresort.com](http://www.alyeskaresort.com) or call 754-2111.

**SEPT. 11**  
**Freedom Flag Run**  
 Commemorate Sept. 11, 2001, with this drive from Palmer to Wasilla, beginning at the Carr's parking lot in Palmer. There will be a car show and barbecue after the drive and a time to reflect.  
 Attendees are encouraged to bring side dishes; hot dogs and hamburgers are provided.  
 For more information call 745-2652 or 982-5072.

**SEPT. 13**  
**Job Fair at Egan Center**  
 Get your resume out and discover job opportunities in Anchorage and Alaska at the job fair from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information call 263-2800.

**SEPT. 14**  
**Fighting championship at Sullivan Arena**  
 The Alaska Fighting Championship kicks off its new season at Sullivan Arena, part of a full schedule that includes nine dates in Anchorage.  
 For more information, visit [www.alaskafighting.com](http://www.alaskafighting.com) or call 351-8184.

**SEPT. 15**  
**Richardson Spouses Club**  
 The Richardson Spouses Club hosts its Super Sign Up from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Building 56 on Fourth Street.  
 The club is open to all military, spouses and Department of Defense civilians. There will be door prizes and food.  
 For more information about the club and activities, visit [frsc.shutterfly.com](http://frsc.shutterfly.com).

**SEPT. 17**  
**Air Force Ball**  
 The Egan Center will host the Air Force Ball from 6 to 10 p.m. for all Air Force personnel. Meal

choices are chicken or halibut.  
 Contact your unit representative for tickets.  
 For information call 580-6603.

**OCT. 1**  
**Rage City Rollergirls**  
 Anchorage's own roller derby group battles it out at the Dena'ina Center from 7 until 10 p.m.  
 For information, call 272-4801 or visit [www.ragecityrollergirls.org](http://www.ragecityrollergirls.org).

**JBER Arctic Bazaar**  
 This craft extravaganza in Hangar 5 is open to the public and features pottery, woodwork, art, food, children's activities and more. Proceeds go to scholarships, grants, and organizations on base.  
 For information, email [arcticbazaar@elmendorfoso.com](mailto:arcticbazaar@elmendorfoso.com).

**Nov. 5**  
**Vendors needed for fair**  
 The Country Fair will be hosted Nov. 5 at the Buckner Gymnasium, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Organizers are looking for local vendors selling handcrafted items.  
 Family readiness groups can earn money for their group. Sell items at a food booth or set-up or clean-up.  
 For more information, contact [FRSCcountryfair@yahoo.com](mailto:FRSCcountryfair@yahoo.com).

**ONGOING**  
**Motorcycle safety courses**  
 The JBER safety office continues to offer motorcycle safety courses through Sept. 11. Basic rider course, basic rider course II, and sport bike safety classes are available.  
 For more information contact Jeff Gross at 384-2382 or email [jeffrey.gorss.ctr@elmendorf.af.mil](mailto:jeffrey.gorss.ctr@elmendorf.af.mil).

**Aurora: The Great Northern Lights show**  
 There isn't much darkness in Alaska this time of year, but it's still possible to see the Northern Lights set to beautiful music.  
 The 40-minute program runs every day and begins every hour at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts.  
 For information, visit [www.alaskapac.centertix.net](http://www.alaskapac.centertix.net) or call 263-2993.

**Spenard Farmers' Market**  
 Alaska-grown, -caught, -baked and -made items are available under the windmill in Spenard.

Everything from fresh oysters, organic bread, garden starts, kettle corn and reindeer sausage is available, including live music, every Saturday from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.  
 For information, call 563-6273 or email [spenardfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:spenardfarmersmarket@gmail.com).

**Market and festival**  
 Local farmers and artisans sell their goods Saturdays and Sundays in a festival atmosphere.  
 Enjoy free lively entertainment and food while browsing booths.  
 Market days run through Sept. 11 – Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. at the Third Avenue and E Street parking lot.  
 For information, call 272-5634 or visit [www.anchoragemarkets.com](http://www.anchoragemarkets.com).

**Model railroading**  
 The Military Society of Model Railroad Engineers meets at 7 p.m. Tuesdays with work sessions at 1 p.m. Saturdays in basement Room 35 of Matanuska Hall, 7153 Fighter Drive. Anyone interested in model railroading is invited.  
 For more information, call 552-5234 or 952-4353, visit [www.trainweb.org/msmrrre](http://www.trainweb.org/msmrrre) or email [bjorgan@alaska.net](mailto:bjorgan@alaska.net).

**Farmers' market**  
 A non-profit, farmer-directed market at 15th and Cordova, offering fruits, vegetables, herbs, flowers, plants and animal products.  
 Offerings and vendors vary seasonally; open Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. through Oct. 15.  
 For information, email [info@anchoragefarmersmarket.org](mailto:info@anchoragefarmersmarket.org).

**Family Advocacy support programs available**  
 The New Parent Support Program hosts several activities for families with young children up to age 3.  
 Family Advocacy also offers anger management classes, classes for new fathers and nursing mothers, as well as other programs for service and family members. "Dads 101" and "Home Improvement" are also featured.  
 For more information, call Family Advocacy at 580-5858.

**Museum unravels the 'History of Basketry'**  
 The Anchorage Museum pres-

## Chapel services

**Catholic Mass**

**Sunday**  
 9 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel  
 10:30 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1  
 5 p.m. – Soldiers' Chapel

**Monday through Friday**  
 11:40 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel  
**Monday, Wednesday and Friday**  
 11:30 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel Center  
**Thursday**  
 11:30 a.m. – Hospital Chapel

**Confession**

**Sunday**  
 4:30 p.m. – Soldiers' Chapel  
**Monday through Friday**  
 Before/after 11:40 Mass – Soldiers' Chapel

**Protestant Sunday Services**

**Joint Liturgical Service**  
 9 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 2  
**Celebration Service**  
 9 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1  
**Collective Protestant Service**  
 11 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel  
**Gospel Service**  
 Noon – Elmendorf Chapel 1  
**Contemporary Protestant Service**  
 5 p.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1

ents "Unraveling the History of Basketry" through the end of the year exhibiting baskets from Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Yup'ik natives. The impact of non-native culture on native art is examined.  
 For more information, call 929-9200, or visit [www.anchoragemuseum.org](http://www.anchoragemuseum.org).

**Planetarium shows**  
 Through 3-D graphics, surround sound and a dome screen, the Anchorage Museum's planetarium offers a fascinating way to learn about astronomy, the solar system and more.  
 For more information call 929-9200 or visit [www.anchoragemuseum.org](http://www.anchoragemuseum.org).



## Experience JBER Elmendorf-Richardson

**Guided Trail River Trout/Dolly Varden Fishing Trip**  
 September 9 & 10  
 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
 Cost \$100  
 Poles and waders will be provided. Bring lunch, tackle and wet weather gear.

**Jim Creek ATV Trip**  
 September 24  
 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
 Cost \$150  
 Open to all ages 16 & up.

**ATV Safety Training**  
 September 13, 20 & 27  
 1 - 5 p.m.  
 All trips meet at ODR Building 794

**JBER Outdoor Recreation Richardson**  
 384-1475/1476

**Big Dipper RV Storage**  
 Lot must be cleared of all items by September 8.  
 Call 384-1475 for details.

**Eklutna ATV Trip**  
 September 18  
 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
 Cost \$100  
 Open to all ages 8 & up. Must have ATV Safety Certification. Bring extra clothes for the ride back and a small cooler for snacks and water. Helmets provided.  
 For more information contact  
**JBER Outdoor Adventure Program**  
 552-4599



# Labor Day Bike Ride

FREE

September 5  
10 a.m.

Local Anchorage Bike Trails.  
Bike rentals \$5. For more information  
**Outdoor Recreation Elmendorf • 552-2023**

# Classes Offered at the Oasis

- ZUMBATOMIC
- TANG SOO DO  
*Korean Martial Arts*
- American Kenpo
- Zumba
- Dance Classes

- Kinderdance
- Ballet
- Tap
- Jazz

**Arctic Oasis Community Center**  
 See front desk for more information.  
 552-8529



We'll help you navigate the roads of education.

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**FSS School Liaison Office**  
 Building 600 • Room B154  
 We're here to assist with information & referrals regarding local school districts and other education options including home schooling, private & charter schools as well as virtual schools.

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 Don Cole: 384 - 7500  
 Adele Daniels: 384 - 1505  
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# JBER kicks off the season for FLAG FOOTBALL



Airmen from the 673d Medical Group (blue shirts), lost to the 3rd Maintenance Squadron, 20-6 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's flag football field Monday. Autumn is approaching and the intramural flag football season is now on, with unit teams from around JBER battling it out at the Buckner Physical Fitness Center field and on the corner of Arctic Warrior Drive and Fairchild Avenue after duty hours. (U.S. Air Force photos/Steven White)

## Golf tournament brings JBER's players onto the links



ABOVE: Brad Stanbury, of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, of the U.S. Army Medical Activity, misses a putt during the JBER annual golf tournament as John Reinke, of the U.S. Army Medical Activity, waits for his turn. The tournament was held at the Moose Run Golf Course Tuesday through Thursday, and pitted JBER's best golfers against each other.  
BELOW: Golf trophies stand in neat ranks at the Moose Run Golf Course clubhouse. (U.S. Air Force photos/Steven White)

Hollis Darby, of C Company, 307th Signal Battalion, tees off during the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson annual golf tournament held at the Moose Run Golf Course Tuesday through Thursday. Many golfers turned out to battle for trophies, despite overcast weather on Tuesday.



# JBER ham radio club offers skills, history, opportunity

By Chris McCann  
JBER Public Affairs

With easy Internet access almost anywhere these days, we often forget that everything depends on sensitive electronics and in many cases on fiber-optic and other cables underground or even under the ocean. Many things can disrupt those connections, from earthquakes to mudslides and fires. When that happens, there's an outage – usually repaired quickly. But in the case of a big event, like a major hurricane, there may be days of isolation.

Into that vacuum step ham radio operators. (The term came from the first decade of the 20th century as a pejorative; a 'ham actor' was incompetent, and professional telegraphers thought amateurs were unskilled.)

"During Hurricane Katrina, communications equipment wasn't just down, it was under water," said Ron Keech of the 673d Communications Squadron, who serves as the secretary for the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson amateur radio club. "Before (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) got there, ham radio was up and running."

Amateur radio personnel got communications going, relaying information about what different areas hit by the hurricane needed.

"We don't broadcast, we communicate," he said.

In the 1964 earthquake in Alaska, for four days, all military communication was down – but amateur radio was working, Keech said.

The military has long supported amateur radio; Fort Richardson had a Military Auxiliary Radio Station for many years, although it has been off the air for a while, Keech said. The Elmendorf MARS station is affiliated with the ham club. MARS is a Department of

Defense-affiliated network, which can relay information between federal agencies like the DoD and FEMA on federal frequencies.

"We have people coming out of the woodwork who were here in the 50s and 60s, talking about Elmendorf Air Force Base. So we catch them up on what has happened here, and learn the history."

The call sign KL7AIR was assigned to Elmendorf in 1948. "We've had an unbroken history of that call sign," Keech said. "There were other stations on Alaska bases, but they're gone now. We're trying to maintain that history." Trading contact, or QSL, cards with operator call signs on them is a long-standing tradition, and Keech said there are still QSL cards from Alaska stations around the world.

"We still get QSLs (contact cards) from Air Force Station Shemya in the 1970s."

But JBER has a ham radio station and Keech encourages anyone with base access to get involved.

"It doesn't take a genius," Keech said. "We have everyone from basic operators to guys who build their own radios, from 14 year olds to the elderly."

"If young people are involved and have confidence with it, they can be of benefit to the base and the community," Keech said.

There are amateur radio operators in the emergency operations centers in Anchorage and Wasilla, he noted. "It's a designated volunteer position for backup functions; they can communicate with the Lower 48 while other systems are getting fixed."

JBER's ham club meets in the Civil Air Patrol building off Denaina road on the back of the flight line, Keech said. The club moved there in 2004. There are about 14 people active in the club – almost all civilians – and they

would like to see some new faces.

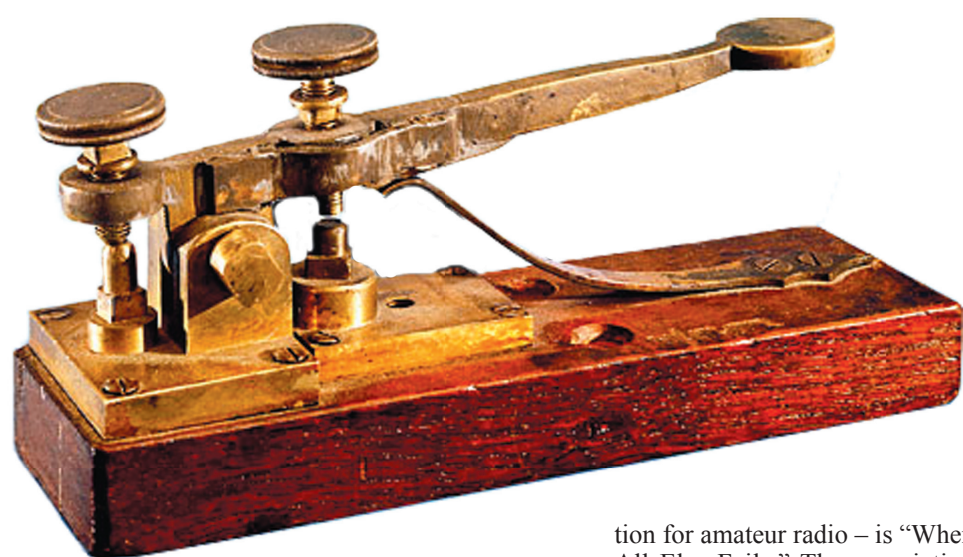
"Seventy percent of hams are 60 or older," he said. "We're trying to preserve the call sign; it's dark in Alaska in the winter, but whatever the weather is, someone's on the net."

"The principal function is to provide and maintain a viable working station for active duty people," Keech said. "If they can't have a station at home, that's what the club is for." The hobby isn't hard to get into, Keech said.

"The cost is cheap compared to some other hobbies," he said. "This is a poor man's hobby. ... The tests are free, and the license is good for 10 years. If you can't afford a radio, we have ones that can be borrowed or you can use the club. Some people get involved enough to get into contests."

A radio setup can be small enough to fit on a desk or in a vehicle, although some people have extensive studios.

The tests ensure that operators know basic safety and electronics, radio etiquette and regulations. Once an operator has that basic license, it's hands-on training for achieving higher levels. The payoffs are communicating with people around the world and helping in emergencies



**“The world likes to talk to Alaska.”**  
– Ron Keech

when other communications fail.

"The world likes to talk to Alaska," Keech said. "We're kind of hard to reach. But if I point my antenna over the North Pole, I pick up Europe – and everyone wants to log a contact in Alaska."

Amateur radio operators often compete to get contacts from different states and countries, with awards organized by their home clubs.

"There are lots of hams in the (Alaska) bush," he said. "Obviously there are lots in the population centers, but every night I talk and listen to people in Deadhorse, Nome, northern Canada, Kotzebue – people so far off the roads they have to fly in. But they have a ham radio."

And there are several nets on at night, so there's a gaggle of people in Alaska on the radio, and if there is trouble, someone will hear.

"Even satellite phones can be very unreliable here in Alaska, because the satellites are so far down off the horizon they can't connect," Keech said.

Hams man checkpoints on the Iditarod trail, he said, relaying times and providing communication where even news crews don't get to. When aircraft go down in the bush, it's often someone with a radio who relays information back to emergency services.

"Cell phones and email are great when they work, but don't put all your communication eggs in one basket," Keech said. "When things break, they tend to break catastrophically. And although systems are robust, they're not perfect. One good earthquake in Prince William Sound would sever 80 percent of communications between Alaska and the Lower 48."

The Federal Communications Commission allows ham radio to operate because it provides an essential service.

The motto of the American Radio Relay League – the associa-

tion for amateur radio – is "When All Else Fails." The association has more than 156,000 members, according to its website. Because operators pay for the equipment and maintain and operate it, it's off the grid – and less susceptible to damage.

"If the equipment survives the storm or crisis, the operators are on the air," he said.

The aurora borealis is caused by solar wind in the atmosphere – and they can disrupt GPS and other communication.

"The radio gets noisy," Keech said. "We might have to relay a message, but we get through."

For those considering getting into the hobby, Keech has nothing but encouragement.

"They don't need to buy equipment; they can contact the club on base. We have manuals, which were donated; they give you the basics of everything in the test. There's no charge for the tests, which are available in Anchorage twice a month."

"There are practice tests online that people can take. If they're consistently passing, they can go take the Technician test and get on the air."

"It's not difficult," Keech said. "It just takes a little effort to get the license and then get to the club. You have to start somewhere."

For military personnel, being active in amateur radio can be good for evaluation bullets as community service.

While knowing Morse code is no longer a requirement for the test, learning it does open up more horizons in ham radio, Keech said. There are also ways to link computers to the radio.

"A computer can pick up the tones and filter out the noise," he said, offering clearer communication even in a solar storm.

For communicating long distances, operators can bounce radio frequencies off Mount McKinley, the ionosphere, low-earth orbiting satellites and even the moon.

"The hobby is so big, it's hard to describe all the things you can do," Keech said.

The club meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 5 p.m. at the club building.

For more information, visit the club's website at [KL7AIR.us](http://KL7AIR.us) or email [KL7AIR@arrl.net](mailto:KL7AIR@arrl.net).



The power supply, antenna tuner, and a ham radio in the Elmendorf Amateur Radio Society ham shack in the Civil Air Patrol building. Ham radio is a relatively inexpensive hobby and can be used both for fun and for relaying information or contacting help in an emergency. (U.S. Air Force photo/Chris McCann)





## Slow down!

A student from Orion Elementary School uses a crosswalk on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Tuesday. The speed limit in school zones is 20 miles per hour while the lights are flashing. A speeding violation in a JBER school zone results in loss of on-base driving privileges for 30 days, while a second offense costs on-base driving privileges for six months. Safety is paramount, and with the school year now in session, children are walking more. As the mornings get darker, drivers need to be more aware of children on the roads. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Ty-Rico Lea)

## Births

### Aug. 1

A son, Hazen Alexander Maldonado, was born 21.75 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, at 9:41 p.m. to Pfc. Marlen Maldonado Soto and Pvt. Timothy Ross Patton, both of Company C, 307th Expeditionary Signal Battalion.

### Aug. 6

A daughter, Abriella Olivia Dominguez, was born 21 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 15 ounces at 9:22 a.m. to Iby Diaz and Air Force Staff Sgt. Conrad Dominguez of the 381st Intelligence Squadron.

A daughter, Zoey Lea Pierce, was born 20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 3 ounces at 1:30 p.m. to Anja Marie Pierce and Senior Airman Keith Glenn Pierce of the 703rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

### Aug. 8

A daughter, Kally Delilah McGranahan, was born 20.75 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 8 ounces at 3:50 p.m. to Brittney Nichole McGranahan and Senior Airman Corey Marshall McGranahan of the 732nd Air Mobility Squadron.

A son, Ezra Jacob Theilacker, was born 20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces to Niki Theilacker and Pfc. Nick Theilacker of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment.

### Aug. 9

A daughter, Rowen Briel Brendle, was born 20 inches long and weighing 5 pounds, 15 ounces at 12:28 a.m. to Briana Rae Brendle and Sgt. John Allen Brendle of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment.

A daughter, Harley Mae Johnston, was born 14 inches long and weighing 5 pounds, 12 ounces at 10:06 p.m. to Amanda Nicole Johnson and Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Thomas Johnston of the 525th Fighter Squadron.

A son, Danny Ray Rogers Jr., was born 20.75 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 11 ounces at 2:06 a.m. to Kristina Rachel Rogers and Tech. Sgt. Danny Ray Rogers of the 3rd Maintenance Squadron.

A son, Diesel Bryce Siegman, was born 20.75 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 5 ounces at 8:52 a.m. to Pfc. Katherine Sophia Siegman and Pfc. Shaughn Daniel Siegman, both of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment.

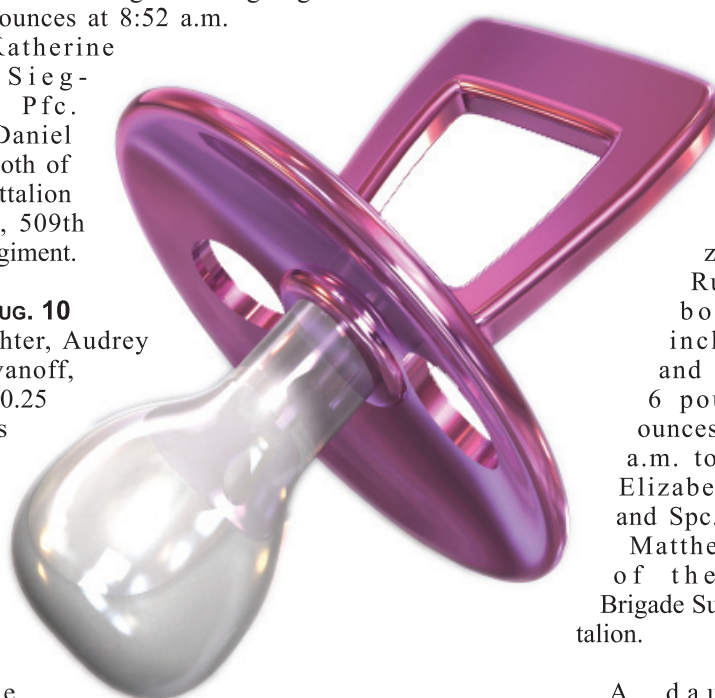
### Aug. 10

A daughter, Audrey Chasyn Evanoff, was born 20.25 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces at 8:37 a.m. to Theresa Marie Evanoff and Air Force Staff Sgt. James Micheal Evanoff of the 3rd

Munitions Squadron.

A son, Sebastian Brady Moore, was born 20.75 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 10 ounces at 6:13 p.m. to Pvt. Jammie Alison Moore of the 3rd Operations Group and Jason Scott Moore.

A daughter, Lily Ann O'Reilly, was born 21 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 9 ounces at 10:48 p.m. to Mary Ann O'Reilly and Air Force Staff Sgt. Bradford Thomas O'Reilly of the 3rd Maintenance Group.



### Aug. 11

A son, Kai-zer Aries Rump, was born 19.5 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 12 ounces at 11:52 a.m. to Chelsea Elizabeth Rump and Spc. Brandon Matthew Rump of the 725th Brigade Support Battalion.

A daughter, Chloe Ann Beatty, was born 22 inches long and weighing 9 pounds, 2 ounces at 8:53 p.m. to

Cassie Lynn Beatty and Spc. Charles Andrew Beatty of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment.

A son, Lowdon William McCain, was born 20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces at 2:42 p.m. to Senior Airman Hannah Rachael McCain of the 673d Dental Squadron and Senior Airman Christopher Edward McCain of the 525th Fighter Squadron.

### Aug. 12

A daughter, Zoey Haiden Berry, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 6 ounces at 12:19 p.m. to Kristin Danielle Berry and Pvt. Joseph Michael Berry IV of 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment.

A son, Cael Robert Manning, was born 21 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 10 ounces at 7:53 a.m. to Air Force Staff Sgt. Lacey Renee Manning of the 3rd Maintenance Squadron and Tech. Sgt. Gregory Robert Manning of the 3rd Mission Operations Squadron.

A son, Levi William Shartzter, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 7 pounds at 7:49 p.m. to Jennifer Louise Shartzter and Tech. Sgt. Camron John Shartzter of the 3rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

### Aug. 13

A daughter, McKenzie Ann Thomas, was born 21.25 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 2 ounces at 4 p.m. to Air Force Staff Sgt. Candace Leigh Thomas of the 517th Aircraft Maintenance Unit and Shane Michael Thomas.





## Taking the first lap

Air Force Maj. Brian Rendell, commander of the 673d Force Support Squadron (center) and Air Force Col. Edward Thomas, commander of the 673d Mission Support Group, (right) lead a group of Airmen across the finish line ending the inaugural lap around the new indoor track and the CrossFit workout area inside Hangar 5, August 18. While it has been used for months as a fitness center, Hangar 5 was recently overhauled for the purpose, with restrooms and locker rooms installed, as well as new CrossFit and other fitness equipment. (U.S. Air Force photo/Johnathon Green)

## At the movies

For recorded show and movie times, call 428-1200 or visit the Army and Air Force Exchange Services website at [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com). Movies are subject to change without notice. Admission: Adults \$4, children \$2. Information provided courtesy of AAFES.

### Now playing



### TRANSFORMERS: DARK OF THE MOON

**Rated:** PG-13  
**Playing:** Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m.  
**Run time:** 157 minutes  
**Starring:** Shia LaBeouf, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley and Tyrese Gibson, John Turturro

Bumblebee, Ratchet, Ironhide and Sideswipe, led by Optimus Prime, are back in action taking on the evil Decepticons, who are eager to avenge their recent defeat. The Autobots and Decepticons become involved in a perilous space race between the U.S. and Russia, to reach a hidden Cybertronian spacecraft on the moon and learn its secrets.

## More support activities begin using electronic transfers

By Andrea Guadarrama  
 Air Force Services Agency

SAN ANTONIO — Nonappropriated fund central cashiers have a new way to electronically deposit checks, thanks to the U.S. Department of Treasury's OTCnet system.

The system allows installation Force Support Squadron NAF central cashiers to scan daily check deposits at their desk and convert the items into electronic debits to the check writer's accounts.

This eliminates the need for personnel

taking checks to a bank.

OTCnet will automate check deposit processing, reduce bank fees, check float and improve the current manual process of collecting returned checks.

The new system also allows the Air Force to continue the trend of shifting to electronic fund transfers from the slower paper processing, saving time and money.

"Customers look to benefit since the new process will provide more accurate, up-to-date bank account balances as a result of fewer outstanding items on their bank account reconciliation when they use checks in our NAF activities," said John Griffin, Air Force Services Agency Treasury Division Chief.

As of the end of July, more than half of the Air Force installations currently using the desktop software version had transitioned to the Internet version.

All installations are slated to be converted to the new system by February of next year.

For more information about the Air Force Services Agency and other quality of life programs, visit [www.usafservices.com](http://www.usafservices.com) or [www.myairforcelife.com](http://www.myairforcelife.com).



