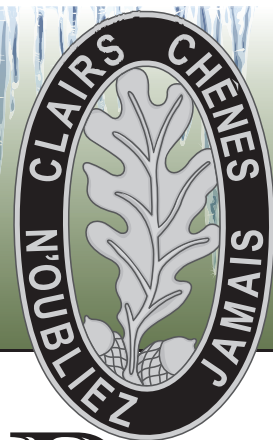


## Holiday ski party

Hillberg Ski Area hosts a holiday gathering noon to 4 p.m. with skiing, snowboarding and other activities, for more details, see Page B-3

## Arctic tough initiation

Arctic Sappers brave subzero temperatures to prepare themselves for operations in subarctic climates Page A-3



www.jber.af.mil/news

# ARCTIC WARRIOR

Volume 3, No. 50

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson

December 14, 2012



## ON THE WINGS OF HERCULES



A forklift off-loads supply pallets from a C-130H Hercules at Cape Newenham, Dec. 4. Cape Newenham is a radar site which is part of the North Warning System, a 2,983-mile long and 199-mile wide "tripwire" stretching from Alaska, through Canada, to Southern Labrador. The radar sites cannot operate without these resupply missions, as many of the sites have no roads in or out. (U.S. Air Force photos/Tech Sgt. Brian Ferguson)

## C-130 aircrews support remote radar sites

By Tech Sgt. Brian Ferguson  
JBER Public Affairs

**M**any would say they haven't used half the math skills they learned in school. Why would they? In today's computer age, most don't need to.

However, there is one particular job in the Air Force where a calculation and attention to detail can be the difference between life and death.

When it comes to the safety of the crew, the cargo and the passengers aboard a C-130 Hercules, loadmasters like Airman 1st Class Andrew Thompson reign supreme.

A loadmaster calculates the weight and balance of the aircraft before every flight. Those calculations keep the aircraft within limits and safe to fly.

"During this mission, I oversaw the loading and unloading of the pallets and made sure the load plan was correct," said Thompson, 537th Airlift Squadron. "We can adjust it as needed for aircraft performance, in this case, for the short runways."

The mission recently took the C-130 crew to two remote Alaska radar sites: Cape Romanzof and Cape Newenham.

These sites were set up in the 1950s to aid in detecting aircraft crossing the North Pole. The North Warning System consists of 15 long-range radars and 39 short-range radars. The system forms a 2,983-mile long and 199-mile wide "tripwire" stretching from Alaska, through Canada, to Southern Labrador.

The radar sites cannot operate without these resupply missions, as many of the sites have no roads in or out.

"These site visits are our lifeblood," said Vance Spaulding, a radar site station chief and mechanic. "We depend on these missions for supplies."

Temperatures during the mission were well below zero, making the simple act of standing outside difficult.

"The weather was actually better than I expected," Thompson said. "It was cold, but



Airman 1st Class Andrew Thompson calculates the load plan on a C-130 Hercules aircraft before takeoff from JBER Dec. 4

I actually expected it to be worse."

The crew off-loaded three pallets at Cape Romanzof and two at Cape Newenham. They also picked up one pallet from each location, and transported them back to JBER. As pallets came on and off, Thompson adjusted his numbers accordingly.

Thompson, originally from Stockton, Calif., arrived at JBER in March of 2012, fresh from technical training school. He said the most challenging part of being a loadmaster involves attention to detail.

"I wasn't fresh out of high school. I was living on my own, not having to do super detail-oriented things," he said. "Then I came in to do this job, which is very detail oriented. That has been quite the adjustment, an exciting adjustment, but it has been pretty tough."

Thompson said he did have somewhat of an advantage over his fellow students, because for a short time before joining the Air Force he had been in a flight school, so he was familiar with things like checklists.

"My biggest disadvantage, however, was that I had been out of high school for six years and even then my study habits were bad," he said. "When I began training, they were horrible and they were a constant struggle and still are today. My wife was also pregnant at the time, so that added some distractions throughout the process."

The training a loadmaster receives takes

about six to eight months to complete depending on the airframe they are assigned to.

It starts at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, at the enlisted aircrew center of excellence with the first course of aircrew fundamentals. Upon completion, students go to the basic loadmaster course. When they graduate from BLM, they receive their basic aircrew wings and move on to the next part of their training: water survival and combat survival. Once survival, evasion, resistance and escape training is done, they move on to the flying training phase and the time spent at the flying training unit will depend on the airframe. The flying phase of training for the C-130H is roughly five months.

"You could never train for every situation or load that you will have to carry," Thompson said. "Right now, I am trying to gain experience, so that when something unusual comes up I know where to check for regulations that apply and to be able to recognize little details that could cause a problem."

Once a new loadmaster arrives at their first flying squadron, there are only a few tasks for them to complete to become combat mission ready.

"Unlike a lot of other [Air Force specialty codes], our students come to us fully

See Hercules, Page A-3

## FEATURE STORY



Air Force Master Sgt. Kevin Walker is the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron first sergeant on JBER. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)

## Air Force first sergeants work to help Airmen

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett  
JBER Public Affairs

**T**he diamond in the rough. The sharpest tool in the toolbox. One sharp rock. These are a few phrases that describe which the role of the first sergeant is.

The origin of the symbolism behind the modern Air Force first sergeant is unknown, but a common theory relates back to the Army role. While the rest of the troops would remove their shirts while doing manual labor in hot weather, the lead NCO would continue to wear his in order for others to know whom to seek further instructions from. They would ask "the shirt."

The duty is performed in different ways by the Army, the Air Force and the Marines. It often becomes perceived as a tough billet, because the first sergeant is who people see when there's trouble. But the shirt is also someone who can help out.

Air Force Master Sgt. Kevin Walker, 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron First sergeant, wants to try to change that stigma. Walker, who has been in the military for 17 years and is originally from Ames, Texas, said he has been helped by first sergeants, and helped out others as a first sergeant.

"We had a member who was due to go on leave on Dec. 12," he said. "He came to me and said his mom was having emergency surgery. I told him that in order for me to put him in for emergency leave, his family, on their end, would have to notify the Red Cross, which in turn would contact me directly. Then we'd have some paperwork to fill out to get them put on emergency leave, which gives them priority at the airlines. We'll get a high priority with the airlines, so usually we can just pick up the phone and call the airline, tell them we've got a member on emergency leave, and they can go."

"I wanted it to happen fairly quickly, so I got his confirmation number and called the airlines. We have Operation Warm Heart that could help financially if needed. He bought the ticket and ended up leaving that Friday morning. He made it home in time to handle the family emergency and it was good."

Operation Warm Heart is an organization run by first sergeants. It is similar to Air Force Aid, except that no repayment is needed. While AFA provides an interest-free loan, those qualifying for Operation Warm Heart are simply given the funds.

"You can go to your first sergeant and say, for example, my windshield was broken on my car and I don't have the funds for that," he said. "Your shirt can go directly to Operation Warm Heart. It's a case-by-case basis. As long as you exhaust all the other op-

See Shirts, Page A-3

## Index

|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Season's greetings.....          | A-2 |
| Officer evaluations changes..... | A-2 |
| Briefs and announcements.....    | A-4 |
| Dentists maintain smiles.....    | B-1 |
| Chaplain's corner.....           | B-2 |
| Community Calendar.....          | B-3 |
| Combat holiday stress.....       | B-4 |

## Community

Check out the Arctic Warrior community section for the latest sports, family and recreation news for JBER and the Anchorage Bowl area.

PERMIT NO. 220  
ANCHORAGE, AK  
**PAID**  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PRESORTED STANDARD





Command Emphasis

USARAK Command Team sends season’s greetings



By Army Maj. Gen. Michael Garrett and  
Command Sgt. Maj. Bernie Knight  
U.S. Army Alaska Command Team

As another year draws to an end, we encourage you to celebrate the things in life that matter most. Surround yourselves with family, friends and those you love.

Being a Soldier can be a demanding lifestyle and not everyone will be with their nearest and dearest over the holidays, but modern technology affords us the opportunity to participate in family events from just about anywhere. Whatever your situation, please spend as much time as you can with those you love this holiday season.

We should also reflect on the blessings we enjoy as Americans, especially the freedom we as Soldiers are committed to defend. The benefit of these blessings is evident not only in the peaceful lives enjoyed by the citizens of our nation, but also throughout the world among all those who aspire to the ideals of liberty, dignity and the worth of the individual citizen.

With so many members of our Arctic Warrior family having spent last Christmas deployed, we hope you will join us in remembering the thousands of our fellow Americans who are still deployed in harm’s



Courtesy photo

way. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

We also ask you remember their Families, our wounded warriors and the Families

of our fallen. If you have the means and ability, please extend your kindness to make their holiday season a little brighter.

The personal commitment and concern

of a leader can make all the difference in the life of a young Soldier. Each Soldier must receive a thorough safety briefing from their first-line supervisor before leaving Alaska. Every leader will know what their Soldiers plan to do while home and will impress upon them how essential they are to our Army family and remind them that their conduct at home, whether good or bad, will reflect not only on themselves, but on the Army as well.

As professionals, we must all be mindful of our actions and live the Army Values. Regardless of who you are or where you are from, you are a Soldier and your behavior must be in accordance with our collective standards. We will accept nothing less.

So as you go home and spend some much deserved time in the Lower 48 and with your families around the world, please enjoy yourselves, recharge your batteries and always remember you are a professional.

We send season’s greetings to every Soldier, civilian and family member in the Arctic Warrior family and want to emphasize how important each of you are to our USARAK team. We pray your holidays will be safe, joyful and fulfilling. May God bless every one of you and this great nation.

Arctic Warriors! Arctic Tough!

Senior NCO defines accountability

Commentary by Senior Master Sgt.  
Rickey Mann  
673d Medical Group

Merriam-Webster’s dictionary defines accountability as the quality or state of being accountable; especially: an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions.

I define accountability as fulfilling my duties as a senior non-commissioned officer to the best of my ability and accepting the consequences of not meeting standards.

How do you define accountability?

However we define accountability, it is an absolute necessity for good order and discipline which is vital to mission accomplishment. We have volunteered to defend our country and are expected to be accountable to our leaders and the public.

On August 10, 1995, then Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ronald Fogleman addressed the Air Force about standards and accountability. In his address, he stated “Accountability is critically important to good order and discipline of the force.”

I reference Fogleman because he believed holding members accountable for actions within his or her control was our duty. This belief led to his peers dubbing him the “Accountability General.” Not only did he support holding people accountable, he firmly believed not blaming members for actions outside of his or her control was appropriate and necessary.

Not blaming others for our actions or decisions is the foundation of accountability. The importance of holding ourselves accountable



and not blaming others or making excuses is paramount. We must build a culture of embracing accountability and stray from building a culture of blame.

Responsibility of our actions should rest on our shoulders. For example, knowing I am injured, I make a decision to schedule my official Air Force Fitness Assessment. Who is to blame when I fail?

As a senior NCO, I made a bad decision and must accept it. I knew the fitness standards and the ramifications of a fail. It is my duty to be accountable, therefore; the consequences are mine.

Accountability is not an option for NCOs. As outlined in AFI 36-2618, The Enlisted Force Structure, NCOs must appropriately recognize and reward those

individuals whose military conduct and duty performance clearly exceed established standards.

Also, hold subordinates accountable when they do not meet established standards. Our guidance does not instruct us to consider or think about enforcing accountability; the guidance reads “Must.”

We have a duty to correct and guide Airmen who do not meet established standards. This can be done through feedbacks, EPRs or awards. Leaders will have different ways to accomplish the goal, however; the end result should be the same.

In order to hold members accountable we have to start with ourselves.

Ask yourself a few questions. Do I hold myself accountable? Do my subordinates understand accountability? Do I hold subor-

dinates accountable? Do I expect results not excuses?

If you can answer yes to all of the questions, you are doing well. If you are not sure of an answer, you have room for improvement as do most of us. The first question is the building block for the others. Being accountable for our actions and decisions sets the path for us and our subordinates.

Once we establish the expectations and standards, we must demonstrate the expectations and standards apply to everyone. If you do not meet an expectation or standard, admit your fault and make sure you develop a plan to meet all expectations and standards.

Those actions will assist our subordinates in understanding accountability. Now the foundation has been paved and they will expect accountability of you and demand it of themselves and others.

Echoes of Dec. 7, 1941, still heard at Pearl Harbor

By Joan King  
Arctic Warrior contributing writer

Scanning the horizon, you would never think the palm trees and warm, sunny weather would even hint at the chaos and panic 77 years ago. Honolulu usually arouses thoughts of lei garlands, hula music and tropical scenery – unless perhaps you’re a World War II veteran.

Visiting the Pearl Harbor Memorial in the upcoming days marking the anniversary of the “day which will live in infamy” only added more meaning to the occasion. As I stepped off the tour bus, I heard the remark, “At least they’re not shooting at us this time!”

The voice belonged to an older gentleman clutching his cane, all smiles. I politely asked him if this was the first time he returned to Pearl Harbor, and he cheerily responded that he makes a point to return often.

While the gentleman was in high spirits, he was one of few. The memorial halls are decorated with photographs from the war. Audio recordings of veterans reliving what they witnessed on that fateful day played over the intercom. There was a somber, heavy effect in the room. Many of us were blinking back tears while others wept openly.

Annually, veterans and civilians visit the memorial to draw a scrap of paper from a box. The paper reads the name of one of the thousands of individuals who never saw the end of the war. The person is then to bear the name in



Sailors man the rail of the USS Hopper (DDG 70) as it sails by the USS Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. (DoD photo/Air Force Staff Sgt. Paul Holcomb)

mind as they view the memorial, undoubtedly feeling the ultimate debt and the privilege of being an American. This ritual allows everyone to appreciate the lost lives on a more personal level instead of appreciating a number or a statistic.

Although the yearly ritual was not the day we visited, we still stood silently, in awe, paying our respects to those who gave their lives for us standing there that day.

After viewing the memorial halls, we watched an information film. The story we have heard many times began again ... But it never ceases to shock.

Though America experienced a heavy loss that day, Japan did not celebrate victory for long.

On that day, it was left to our imagination to picture Battleship Row, which is nothing more today than a beautiful view of clear, blue water. The magnitude of the great battleships once impressed the world, gracing the waters of the harbor.

On Dec 7, 1941, USS Arizona, one of the most remarkable battleships, had exploded, pouring flaming oil into the waters. Men risked the fire in order to save their own lives, jumping overboard to face excruciating burns. Many did not survive.

The Arizona was lost, taking the lives of the 1,177 Sailors trapped inside. The other admired and famed battleship, the USS

Oklahoma, capsized, taking with her 429 lives.

Finally, we boarded the ferry for the height of the tour. As the boat approached what was left of the USS Arizona, only a white building was visible on the water, standing over what remained.

The shape of the building represents the fall and rise of America; the great nation that stood tall, sloping downwards during the attack, only to rise again, victoriously. After the ferry docked, we stepped onto the memorial, an open balcony and an empty hall leading to a plaque covering an entire wall, reading the names of all the Sailors entombed in the ship. The mere size of the plaque was astounding.

Many of us leaned over the railing, peering into the water. Rainbow-colored oil escaping from the fallen battleship glazed the surface of the water. Seventy-seven years later, and it’s as if the ship was still alive under the water, reminding us of the sacrifice of those who rest beneath our feet.

The trapped bodies still reside there today. What stories would they have to tell us? What horrors had they seen?

In later years after the attack, scuba divers recovered few bodies from USS Arizona. Eventually the decision was made to discontinue further disturbance to the historical monument that now represents our country’s resilience.

After the battleship was declared an official resting place, more than 40 World War II veterans requested their ashes be returned to the tomb to rest with their fellow Sailors.

After the veteran’s family releases the ashes, the scuba divers then swim down to the Arizona to release the urn into the open cavity of the ship. A final salute from the divers marks the end of another life rejoining long lost friends.

When we seated ourselves on the ferry to return to shore, several of us turned our necks to steal one last glance at the memorial. After all these years of the attack on Pearl Harbor, much has been done to ensure no Sailor, no Marine, is ever forgotten. I looked around at the pensive faces around me on the ferry, and I thought it stands to reason none of us are ever likely to forget.

**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/  
673d Air Base Wing Commander**  
Col. Brian P. Duffy (USAF)

**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/  
673d Air Base Wing Vice Commander**  
Col. William P. Huber (USA)

**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/  
673d Air Base Wing Chief Master Sergeant**  
Chief Master Sgt. Kevin L. Call

**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/  
673d Air Base Wing  
Command Sergeant Major**  
Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse R. Pratt

ARCTIC WARRIOR

The *Arctic Warrior* is published by Wick Communications, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force or the Department of the Army, under exclusive written contract with the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Public Affairs Office.

This civilian enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the *Arctic Warrior* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force or the Department of the Army.

The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by U.S. government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, the Department of the Army, or Wick Communications of the products or services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made

available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

To advertise in the *Arctic Warrior*, please call (907) 561-7737. Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the *Arctic Warrior* staff.

Editorial office and mailing address: JBER Public Affairs, 10480 22nd St., Suite 123, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK 99506; telephone (907) 552-8918.

Send emails about news stories and story submissions to [david.bedard.1@us.af.mil](mailto:david.bedard.1@us.af.mil).

Deadline for article and photos is 4:30 p.m., Monday, for the week of publication. Articles and photos will be published on a space-available basis and are subject to editing by the *Arctic Warrior* staff. Submission does not guarantee publication.

**JBER Public Affairs Director**  
Maj. Joseph Coslett (USAF)

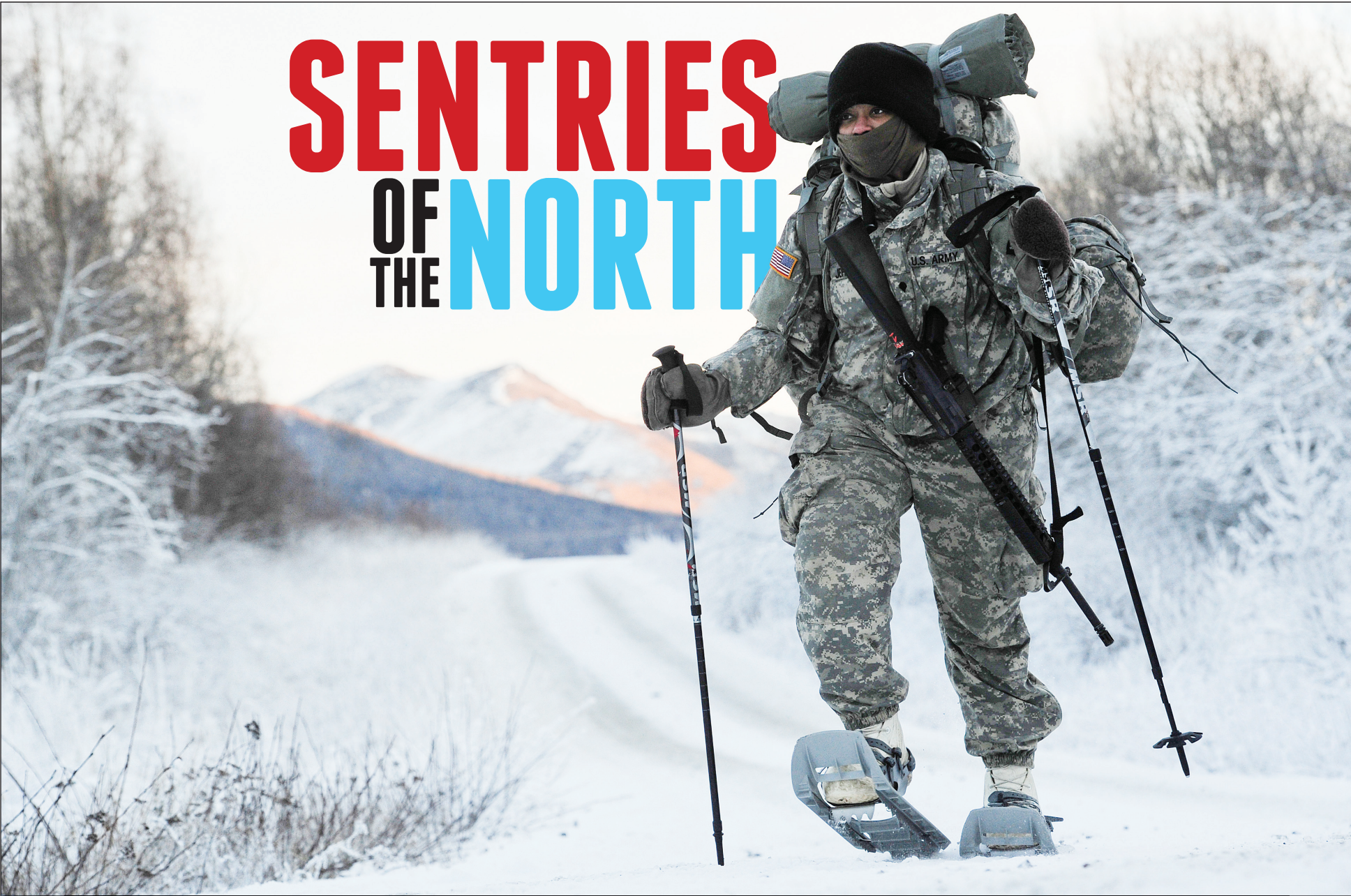
**Deputy Public Affairs Director**  
Bob Hall

**Public Affairs superintendent**  
Senior Master Sgt. Brian Jones

**Command Information Chief**  
Jim Hart

**Arctic Warrior staff**  
David Bedard - editor  
Chris McCann - community editor  
Ed Cunningham - webmaster





**ABOVE: A Soldier assigned to 6th Engineer Battalion (Combat, Airborne) carries out a tactical march during Arctic Light Individual Training on Bulldog Trail Dec. 6 in sub-zero conditions. ALIT is USARAK's cold-weather indoctrination program, granting all Soldiers the foundation to successfully work, train, and go to war in some of the harshest environments in the world. (U.S. Air Force photos/Justin Connaher)**

**LEFT: Spc. Dalal Mohammed, a native of Baghdad, Iraq, left, drives a stake for a ten-man arctic tent as Army Pvt. Christopher Moore holds it steady during ALIT on Bulldog Trail Dec. 6. ALIT teaches individual Soldiers and units the fieldcraft necessary to sustain military operations in subarctic and arctic conditions.**

**FAR LEFT: Spc. Douglas Smith, 6th Eng., a native of Escondido, Calif., listens to instructions prior to a stress fire during ALIT on Bulldog Trail Dec. 6.**

## Hercules

From Page A-1

qualified,” said Master Sgt. Jason Allen, 537th AS assistant flight chief and former technical school instructor. “They only have to do a personnel airdrop and a couple of flights with an instructor loadmaster to clean up any areas they may be lacking in and to show them the local procedures before we allow them to perform the job on their own. They should be combat mission ready within three months.”

“We are constantly training for deploy-

ments or upgrade qualifications like instructor, airdrop inspector and special airdrops certifications,” Thompson said.

No matter the mission, loadmasters play a crucial role on the ground and in the air.

Allen said the math loadmasters perform on the job is not complex; there is no algebra involved, but there are a few formulas they use to complete certain tasks.

“Some loads may require that we calculate how much restraint the tie-down devices are achieving to ensure we have enough restraint to handle the possible G-forces that could occur during flight or landing,” he said.

“If we get a balance number wrong, we

would think that the plane is fine for flight, but if the actual balance is making the plane aft heavy, on take-off we could end up with our nose pointing at an angle too high for the plane to handle, and the plane would stall causing us to lose power. No power... no flight,” Allen said.

For Thompson, he said the pressure and responsibilities of the job are worth it.

“I love this job because it’s such a different atmosphere from a normal squadron,” he said. “We train side by side with the officers as they learn their jobs as well. Also, once we’re on the plane, our interaction is completely different than on the ground. On the aircraft we refer to each other by

the position occupied instead of ranks. I once heard a lieutenant colonel (pilot) tell a lieutenant (co-pilot) not to say ‘sir’ during critical phases of flight. When I later asked him about it, he told me that when we’re in important flying phases, the co-pilot needed to focus on backing him up and correcting him when necessary. If someone is sensitive to rank or position, he might be too intimidated to point out mistakes during flight.”

There are also perks for C-130 crew members flying missions in Alaska.

“I get mountain and glacier tours that you can’t buy from actual tour companies, so I get to see beauty that very few people could even imagine,” he said.

## Shirts

From Page A-1

portunities, Operation Warm Heart will step in and give you the money and expect nothing in return.”

Walker said his own experience as a senior airman played a large part in inspiring him to be a shirt.

“In 1998, I was stationed at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam,” he said. “I deployed in February of 1998 and went to Al Dhafra Air Base. My brother had contacted the Red Cross from Texas. I was lying in my bed with headphones on, and this guy, I don’t remember if it was my first sergeant or if it was a fill-in, came into my tent and said we just got a Red Cross notification that your father passed away. He said we needed to get me out of there on a plane pretty quick.

“For probably two or three hours, I was getting everything I could together, the same guy comes back and tells me a KC-10 Extender had just taken off, and they had called it back to pick me up. So I grab my stuff and we throw it in the back of his truck. We go to the flight line and the KC-10 pulls up. They put out a ladder, I get on, they throw my luggage in and we’re off. I was home in about 27 hours.”

Walker said his father hadn’t actually died yet, but was surviving on machines. They were going to pull the plug.

“He had asked to see me before they disconnected him. So we talked for about an hour or so, and then he said he was ready to go,” he recalled. “I got home just in time. I stayed there and we went through all the arrangements. I stayed about three weeks.

“I thought it was pretty cool, I mean, they jumped through a

lot to call an aircraft back to pick up this one single little Airman up. That was really awesome. To fly around the world in 27 hours and get back home to see that was good, especially considering how many people aren’t able to. That was amazing.”

He was in Osan Air Force Base, Korea, when he got the chance to try out first sergeant duties himself.

“I went to the first sergeant’s symposium and did a little ‘under-shirting’ there,” he said. “Then I came here and there weren’t any more problems than any other shop, but there were some problems. So I’d fill in and be something like the disciplinarian of the fire department. I started talking to the shirt and got involved.”

The ‘diamond in the rough’ explained that, as a firefighter, his work hours weren’t family friendly.

“Being in the fire service, you work twenty-four hours on, twenty-four hours off,” he said. “I enjoyed every minute of it, but my daughter was growing up and I just had the opportunity to become a shirt and chose to come here and do it. It gave me the opportunity to go home and have dinner with my family every night and sleep in the same bed, instead of sleeping in the fire station for one night, then going back home and such. Plus, I’d had a little bit of practice at shirt duties by then; my writing skills were improving.

“I always knew I wanted to help people,” he said, “I want to remove the stigma from the first sergeant that every time you’re in the first sergeant’s office, it’s always bad. That’s really not the case, it’s not the case at all. There are a lot of things done behind the scenes that are never advertised, just like Operation Warm Heart. It’s not widely advertised because

we don’t want people to abuse the system.

“There are a lot of things first sergeants do behind the scenes that the masses will never know because that’s our own piece of the pie, it’s our own wing within itself,” Walker explained. “Emergency leave is a great example. Just like helping someone get their heat. If it’s not 50 degrees or below, a lot of times housing won’t come out because it’s not considered an emergency. So we might get a call saying ‘hey Shirt, we’ve got a brand new baby in the house and we need some heat.’ We’ll say we got it, man. So we call around and a lot of times, they are really good about taking a first sergeant’s word that it’s a serious situation. Those are the little things that are never advertised because that’s our little thing.”

“I don’t think we can ever completely change the stigma of thinking you’ll be in trouble because you’ve got to go see the first sergeant. The thing I think we can do is fit together as our own organization.”

The ‘sharpest tool in the toolbox’ said a lot is involved with even a day in the life of a first sergeant.

“A day in the life of a first sergeant is crazy,” he said. “It depends on what your squadron has going on. You’re involved in pretty much everything in the squadron. Maybe not directly, but indirectly, you’re involved in every decision-making process in the squadron, and sometimes outside of your squadron as well.



“I get notified when one of my members has some sort of action taken against them, or they’ve allegedly done something wrong. Then I receive all the information, and I immediately transmit it to my commander, who in turn will channel it up to the Group, and from there up to the wing, so that there are no surprises.

Networking is one of Walker’s favorite things about being a shirt.

“Personally,” he said. “I form relationships around the base; with legal, with the Military and Family Readiness Center, there are a lot of organizations we work with that you have to maintain a strong relationship with. You never want to burn a bridge. I form relationships with all these organizations; you never know who you’re going to need.

“The first sergeant world is a very tight-knit community,” he said. “I’ll just send an email to JBER diamonds or JBER first sergeants, or my chief because he was a first sergeant, if I don’t know about something, and, in seconds sometimes, there will be 10 or 15 examples of what to do. I really do like that networking. If I have never dealt with it, there’s another first sergeant who has. We share freely with each other.

The role of a first sergeant, like every other position, is largely dependent on how the individual chooses to perform it. The Air Force first sergeant position is different than the other branch’s positions.

“When I attended the First Sergeant Academy in February,

we had the Marines come in,” he said. “The Marines, the Army, the Air Force, we lead differently, represent our squadrons differently. The Army and Marines first sergeant duty is a permanent position, whereas for us it’s a special duty. We are the only ones that are not. We have to return to our career field either after the first tour, which is three years, or the second to give you a total of six. You can only do two three-year tours as a first sergeant.

Those retiring as a first sergeant get a unique ceremony. Other first sergeant’s form a diamond formation and step forward to present the flag. The formation, to Walker, symbolizes being the sharpest in the toolbox.

In the First Sergeant Academy, Walker learned an illustration he enjoys sharing with others.

“I tell people to be the duck,” he said. “If you sit and watch a duck just cruise across a pond, it looks just so graceful and beautiful; the waves that come around the duck are just rolling. What you don’t see are the little feet going to work beneath the water. But he’s got a steady head; with water-proof feathers, the water just rolls off his back.

“I relate that to the first sergeant. You can be personal with people, but when it hits the fan, you have to let it all roll off your back and not take it too personally. I always tell people ‘be the duck’, be calm and collected. No one can ever see you working hard. You never see the duck’s feet under water. I thought that was pretty cool, so that’s what I tell people is be the duck.”

The first sergeant said he loves his job.

“I’m having a blast, I’m really having fun,” he said. “I really do love people, love it.”



# Briefs and Announcements

## Pharmacy volunteers

The 673d Medical Group Pharmacy needs volunteers to provide the best possible customer service to beneficiaries.

Pharmacy volunteers can help perform such critical tasks as bagging, shelving and handing out medication.

For more information on how to volunteer, call 580-6807 or email [christina.mcquaide@elmendorf.af.mil](mailto:christina.mcquaide@elmendorf.af.mil).

## Christmas tree cutting

Christmas tree cutting permits will be issued through Dec. 21.

Users first need to obtain an iSportsman permit from [jber.sportsman.net](http://jber.sportsman.net), the iSportsman kiosks at the visitor centers, or at the Wildlife Education Center, Building 8481.

Users can read more about the Christmas tree cutting program by clicking on the “Forestry” tab on the iSportsman website.

For more information please contact Sarah Jones, coordinator for the Wildlife Education Center, at 552-0301 or [sarah.jones.ctr@elmendorf.af.mil](mailto:sarah.jones.ctr@elmendorf.af.mil).

## Satellite pharmacy

The refill pharmacy at the Moose Entrance of the JBER hospital is closed.

The AAFES satellite pharmacy is open Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday for pickups only from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The main hospital pharmacy is open Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

## Giant Voice testing

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

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

## Road closures

Gulkana Avenue is closed west of Sixth Street for housing construction, opening again time to be determined.

Dyea Avenue is closed from Fifth to Sixth streets until December for housing construction.

Juneau Avenue is closed near Fifth Street until March 15, 2013, for housing construction.

Alpine Avenue and Birch Hill Drive near Alpine Avenue will be closed until February for housing construction.

Seventh Avenue is closed between Beluga and Dyea avenues until April 15, 2013.

## Brain injury classes

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

For more information, call 580-0014.

## Scholarship opportunity

The Air Force Aid Society will be accepting applications for the Gen. Henry H. Arnold Education Grant for the academic year 2012 to 2013 until March 9.

Eligible spouses will have an opportunity to receive up to \$2,000 to fund their college education. To apply, please visit [www.afas.org/Education/ArnoldEdGrant.cfm](http://www.afas.org/Education/ArnoldEdGrant.cfm).

## Lunch with a Lawyer

Judge Advocate General lawyers will meet with troops every Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Iditarod Dining Facility to answer general legal questions.

## Public Health hours

Public Health closes the first Thursday of the month from 1 to 4:30 p.m. and the third Thursday of the month from noon to 4:30 p.m. every month. For more information, call 580-4014.

## Home buyer’s seminar

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

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

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

## Find housing

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

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

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

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

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

## Rental Partnership

The Rental Partnership Program at JBER is available to all eligible active-duty members and consists of two options.

The first option, RPP Plus, includes utilities and sometimes cable costs providing an easier budget with a set rental payment year round.

The other option, RPP 5 Percent below market, saves the member five percent off the rental fee that other tenants pay however utilities are paid for by the tenant.

Both options are made available with no deposits or fees to the member with the exclusion of pet fees as applicable.

This program is designed to provide active-duty military personnel, enlisted and officers, accompanied and unaccompanied with affordable off-base housing.

An allotment must be executed under either option of the RPP for the rental payments which is made directly to the landlord resulting in

a more trouble free transactions.

JBER-Elmendorf can see RPP officials at the Capital Asset Management Office, Building 6346, Arctic Warrior Drive, or call at 552-4328 or 552-4374 for further information and assistance regarding this program.

At JBER-Richardson, visit the Housing Management Office, Building 600, Richardson Drive, or call at 384-3088 or 384-7632.

## Furnishings management

The Furnishings Management Office offers 90-day loaner furniture for troops 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 transport.

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.

## 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 information, including name, social security number, birthday and email address.

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

## Do not trespass

Trespassing on JBER-Elmendorf combat-arms firing ranges is both dangerous and illegal.

Units fire on ranges at random times in accordance with their training schedules.

The outdoor range is located approximately one mile north of Sixmile Lake and the indoor range is at Building 4309 Kenney Ave.

For more information or to inquire about access to these areas, call Combat Arms at 552-1846.

## Mortgage relief

Policies are in effect to provide significant housing relief to thousands of service members and veterans who have faced wrongful foreclosure or been denied a lower interest rate on their mortgages.

Service members and their dependents who believe that their Service Member Civil Relief Act rights have been violated should contact their servicing legal assistance office – 552-3046 at JBER-Elmendorf office, and 384-0371 for the JBER-Richardson office.

Additionally, information and referral services regarding the mortgage relief plan can be obtained at the JBER Military and Family Readiness Center, 552-4943.





Keep your sanity and enjoy the season, Page B-4

When teens want to get high, your prescription is available, Page B-4



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

# COMMUNITY

Volume 3, No. 50

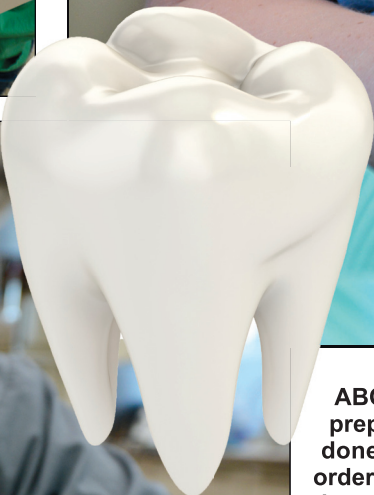
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson

Dec. 14, 2012

## SERVICE FOR YOUR SMILE



Air Force Maj. (Dr.) Jared Cardon demonstrates the use of a surgical operating microscope to see into a root canal in the 673d Dental Clinic on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Dec. 4. The 673d Dental Squadron provides a variety of services including exams, cleanings, and care for root canals. Cardon is a board-certified endodontist from Salem, Utah. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)



ABOVE LEFT: Air Force Staff Sgt. Matthew Snyder, dental assistant craftsman, prepares an instrument tray for a patient coming in to have a routine checkup done at the 673d Dental Clinic, Dec. 6. He arranges the instruments in an orderly fashion to stay organized for the dentist performing the dental work. The dental clinic cleans and sterilizes more than 30 packs of soiled instruments a day to ensure safety for patients.

ABOVE: Air Force Maj. Beth Jablonowski, assistant director for dental residents, cleans a patient's gums during a routine checkup at the 673d Dental Clinic Dec. 6. Regular cleanings are important to dental and overall health, and one of the benefits service members receive.

LEFT: Air Force Staff Sgt. Alex Bickett shapes the edges of an essix retainer for a patient in the dental lab at the JBER hospital. Retainers keep the teeth straight, and prevent them from shifting after braces or other orthodontic work. (U.S. Air Force photos/Airman 1st Class Tamie Ramsouer)





# Advent season recalls meaning of Christmas

Commentary by Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Todd Dickman  
JBER chaplain

The chaplain’s corner is a place where your chaplains take a moment to write on issues of spirituality, various world religions, and ideas for successfully negotiating life from a spiritual point of view – being “spiritually resilient,” as it is often called in the military these days.

Today I’d like to tell you about a season within the Christian tradition called Advent.

Advent is the beginning of the Christian church year in the Western tradition.

It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day, which is the Sunday nearest November 30, and ends on Christmas Eve.

If Christmas Eve is a Sunday, it is counted as the fourth Sunday of Advent, with Christmas Eve proper beginning at sundown.

The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival.” For Christians, the focus of the entire season is the celebration of the virgin birth of Jesus the Christ in his first advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his second advent.

For Christians, Advent is far more than simply marking a 2,000 year-old event in history. Christians believe that, at a specific time in history, God revealed himself to hu-

manity in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was born of the Virgin Mary, in Bethlehem. John wrote in his Gospel account of the life of Jesus, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

And, during Advent (actually, at all times) Christians await the return of their king, the Lord Jesus Christ, who they believe is even now in heaven, creating a place for the faithful. Jesus told his followers:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my father’s house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.”

Christians celebrate the ‘breaking in’ of God into human history in the virgin birth of Jesus, that God is present in the world today, and that Jesus Christ, the risen one, will come in power to gather the faithful.

This acknowledgment also provides



A nativity scene. (Courtesy photo)

a basis for ethics, for holy living arising from a profound sense that Christians live “between the times” and are called to be faithful stewards of creation and fellow human beings; to ‘love God with the whole heart, soul, mind and strength’ and to ‘love one’s neighbor as one’s self.’

Christians, I exhort you to share your faith appropriately and genuinely in word and deed. For those of you who are not

Christians, Advent is a great time to ask questions of your Christian friends and co-workers to learn more about one of the world’s major religions.

And, as always, your chaplain corps remains resolutely ready to serve you and your family for spiritual health and fitness, issues of religious accommodation, and confidential counseling – whether you are a person of faith – any faith – or not.

# A military dream cut short by a momentary temptation

Commentary by Airman Blake Hubbard  
Air Force News Service

As I stood, sweating outside the Military Entrance Processing Station on a hot June 24, 2010, I knew I had made a very important and life-changing decision; the decision to join the United States Air Force.

I joined the Air Force to attend school, travel, and grow as an individual. I left for Basic Military Training on the cold winter morning of December 27, 2010.

At BMT, I became the tactical deployment leader during our simulated deployment training, which was the first time I was placed in a leadership role of that magnitude.

I never gave up, even as military training instructors were screaming in my face and telling me I would fail.

On Feb. 28, 2011, I experienced one of the most memorable accomplishments in my life: being in my Air Force service dress uniform and graduating basic mili-

tary training.

At that moment, I was looking forward to a promising career as a broadcast journalist.

Upon graduation, I attended technical training school at Fort George G. Meade, Md., where I was surrounded by many great individuals. I met several lifelong friends and had unforgettable experiences in Baltimore and Washington D.C.

After graduating, I received orders to Shaw Air Force Base, S.C., where I was the only broadcaster at the installation, which caused me to learn quickly through on-the-job-training.

I was afforded opportunities to receive training at Charleston Air Force Base where I sat in on webinars, conference calls, and online video training from Poynter University.

I was fortunate enough to attend a 40-hour National Press Photography Association seminar as well in San Antonio, which gave me skills to network globally.

While assigned to Shaw,

I was coined six times, received 10 letters of appreciation and was Airman of the Quarter in my flight.

My career-ending mistake occurred in early spring, while hanging out with a friend and fellow Airman. I was working on my vehicle when I started to feel sleepy because it was so late.

My wingman offered me his pills to help me stay awake and focus.

Being away from family, friends, and in an unfamiliar environment at the age of 19, it was very easy to stray from my morals and sacrifice personal judgment. I thought of it as harmless, especially because I wasn’t on base.

After taking the pills, my coordination and concentration spiked, allowing me to stay up for the remainder of the evening to complete the work on my vehicle.

A few weeks went by and we were cleaning his garage when again, my wingman offered me his medication to help me focus on the task at hand.

After finishing the work in the

garage, we went back inside to play video games. During the following weeks, I didn’t really think about it again.

On October 11, 2012, several months later, I found myself in the very service dress uniform that I had once been so proud of.

It was then that I experienced yet another life-changing moment.

But there was nothing accomplished about standing in front of my commander as she read her recommendation for discharge from the Air Force.

As I stood at attention, I realized that my career was severely short-lived because I chose to make poor decisions.

I was required to perform extra duties, was restricted to base and lost a stripe along with my dignity.

I called my mom and told her that I’d made a mistake that cost me my career. I then had to tell her that I had to move back home, which was not easy.

My actions didn’t just impact me, they negatively affected my unit as well. Due to my reckless

disregard for the Uniform Code of Military Justice, my discharge caused low morale in my squadron and strained my wingmen, who now have to pick up my extra duties and responsibilities.

In addition, knowing that I disappointed senior leadership was a lot to deal with.

I was one of the most responsible and respected troops in my unit, and what I did erased all the credibility I had worked so hard to attain.

Temptation is all around us and presents itself in different ways. The choices and decisions we make today directly affect our futures. Just because you didn’t get caught in the act does not mean it won’t come back up later.

Please don’t get caught up as I have, because life on the other side of the gate is not promising.

Make smart decisions and go with your gut feeling when in doubt, because a bad choice will land you in hot water.

A couple hours of fun aren’t worth a permanent discharge.

## FSS EVENTS

### END OF THE WORLD BASH!

#### The Elmendorf Pool is open!!!

Bldg. 9510 • 552-5353

#### Lap Swim

Monday - Friday

5:30 - 7:30 a.m., 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

& 4 - 5 p.m.

Tuesday & Thursday

9:30 - 10:30 a.m., 5:30 - 8 p.m.

Saturday

11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

#### Open Swim

Monday, Wednesday & Friday

7 - 9 P.M.

Sun., Holidays & Family Days

Noon - 4 P.M.



**Celebrate the end of the Mayan World in Style!**  
If it's all over... make sure you dress up in your vision of the end of the world!

**Going Out Prizes:**  
Best Dressed • Most Complete Bucket List • Least Complete Bucket List

**DECEMBER 21**  
7 P.M. UNTIL THE WORLD ENDS  
(OR 3 A.M.)  
WHICHEVER COMES FIRST!

Club Members Get In Free All Night • Women Get In FREE Before Midnight



**Art Inspire Chill**  
BLDG. 655  
384-7619





## Polar Bowl

Bldg. 7176 • 753-PINS(7467)

## Bowling With Santa

December 22 • 10 A.M. - Noon

**\$24.99 Per Child if Booked by December 19\***

**2 hours of unlimited bowling**

**Shoe Rental • Holiday Gift Bag**

**Picture with Santa**

**Hot Dog, Chips, a Drink**

**\*Full Payment due at time of reservation, fully refundable if cancelled by December 19**



## & ACTIVITIES



Community happenings

**FRIDAY**  
**Bullying Prevention**  
The Exceptional Family Member Program and the Stone Soup Group host this bullying prevention workshop at the JBER-Richardson Theater from 5 to 7 p.m., focusing on children with disabilities.  
For information, visit [www.stonesoupgroup.org](http://www.stonesoupgroup.org) or call 384-6736.

**SATURDAY**  
**Wreaths Across America**  
The Fort Richardson National Cemetery hosts this wreath-laying ceremony beginning at noon.  
Eight wreaths will be laid honoring fallen troops in this holiday tradition.  
For information, call 892-8944 or email [cdkimball@mtaonline.net](mailto:cdkimball@mtaonline.net).

**Christmas Village**  
One of the newest holiday shows in Alaska happens at the Dena'ina Center from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Buy and sell both Alaska-made and imported gifts.  
For information, email [info@anchoragemarkets.com](mailto:info@anchoragemarkets.com).

**Reduced Shakespeare**  
The Reduced Shakespeare Company takes viewers on an irreverent trip through the holidays with the Ultimate Christmas Show.  
The "Three Wise Guys" celebrate familial dysfunction and slapstick merriment at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts.  
For information, call 263-2787.

**DEC. 20**  
**EOSO Christmas Tea**  
The Elmendorf Officers' Spouses' Organization hosts this Christmas Tea and ornament exchange at the Arctic Warrior Events Center.  
RSVP by Dec. 17 to [reservations@eoso.com](mailto:reservations@eoso.com) or call 980-9944.

**DEC. 21**  
**JBER Holiday Party**  
Hillberg Ski Arena hosts the annual JBER holiday gathering from noon to 4 p.m. with skiing, snowboarding, tubing, sledding and door prizes.  
Lift passes are free and concessions are available. For information call 552-4838.

**DEC. 20 AND 21**  
**High School hockey**  
The Anchorage School District allows free admission to all high school hockey games both days for military members and their dependents with ID cards.  
For information, visit [www.asdk12.org/activities/hs/hockey](http://www.asdk12.org/activities/hs/hockey).

**DEC. 24**  
**Santa Skis Free Day**  
The Alyeska Resort hosts this ski-free day – if you're dressed right.  
Wear a Santa suit – hat, beard, jacket and pants – and ski free all day at the Alyeska Resort.  
For information, call 754-1111.

**DEC. 26 THROUGH 29**  
**Stomp**  
This explosive, provocative, witty and unique percussive symphony uses dance and unconventional instruments like garbage can lids, buckets, and sticks.

The Alaska Center for the Performing Arts hosts performances at 2 p.m, 4 p.m., 7:30 p.m. and 8 p.m.  
For information, call 263-2787.

**DEC. 31**  
**Masquerade Ball**  
The Dena'ina Center hosts this New Year's Eve masquerade ball and classy party; open to 21 and older only.  
For information, call 263-2800.

**Torchlight Parade**  
Skiers and snowboarders traverse the slopes of Mount Alyeska with torches on bamboo poles, lighting everything with a red glow. The parade is followed with a massive fireworks display.  
For information, call the Alyeska Resort at 754-1111.

**ONGOING**  
**Discovery chapel classes**  
Soldiers' Chapel hosts classes for all ages, from elementary school through adults, Wednesday evenings. A free meal begins at 5:45 p.m.; classes last from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Nursery care is provided.  
For information, call 384-1461 or 552-4422.

**Wired Cafe for Airmen**  
The Wired Cafe is located at

7076 Fighter Dr., between Polaris and Yukla dormitories.  
The cafe has wireless Internet and programs throughout the week for single Airmen living in the dorms.  
There are free homestyle meals Fridays at 6 p.m. at the cafe.  
For information, call 552-4422.

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

**Wildlife Wednesdays**  
This science lecture series takes place at 7 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month at the Alaska Zoo Gateway Lecture Hall.  
From October through April, learn about different wildlife topics and enjoy coffee or tea.

This series is aimed at older audiences, not children – university students and scientists especially.  
For more information, call 341-6463 or email [slhartman@alaskazoo.org](mailto:slhartman@alaskazoo.org).

**TBI coping classes**  
Does your spouse or partner suffer from a traumatic brain injury? Need help dealing with the effects? Meet with others and learn peer coping strategies Tuesdays from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. in the JBER Hospital dining hall's conference room.  
For information, call 580-4081.

**Borealis Toastmasters**  
Conquer your fear of public speaking with Toastmasters. This safe, friendly club helps build confidence through presentations, feedback and listening.  
Meetings are every Thursday in Room 146 of the BP building from 7 to 8 p.m.  
For information, call 575-7470.



Chapel services

Catholic Mass

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

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

**Confession**  
**Saturday**  
6 p.m. – Soldiers' Chapel  
**Monday though Friday**  
Before/after 11:40 Mass – Soldiers' Chapel

Protestant Sunday Services

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

Doors open at 6:30; and fights start at 7. For information, visit [thursdaynightfights.com](http://thursdaynightfights.com).

HOLIDAY CHAPEL SERVICES

**Catholic**  
**Dec. 19: Simbang Gabi Mass**  
Chapel 1 – 6:30 p.m.  
**Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Mass**  
Soldiers' Chapel  
Children's program – 5 p.m.  
Mass - 6 p.m.  
**Dec. 25: Christmas Day Mass**  
Chapel 1 – 10:30 a.m.

**Protestant**  
**Dec. 24: Candlelight Service**  
Soldiers' Chapel – 4 p.m.  
**Dec. 24: Candlelight Service**  
Chapel 1 – 7 p.m.  
**Dec. 31: Watch Night Service**  
Chapel 1 – 8 p.m.

# Winter Wonderland

December 15 • 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**\$7.50 per person**  
**Includes entry, activities, a visit with Santa, and a ham or turkey sub with chips and a drink.**

*Dog Sled & Horse Drawn Carriage Rides*  
*\$3 per person*  
*Tickets go on Sale December 1*

**Arctic Oasis COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**552-8529**

## Snowmachine Safety Class

December 18, 19, 26 & 27

**\$40**  
**Noon - 1:30 P.M.**  
**& 5:30 - 7 P.M.**

**JBER Richardson ORC • 384-1475/76**

## HANDGUN CARTRIDGE RELOADING CLASS

DECEMBER 21 • 5:30 P.M. • \$5

**JBER ELMENDORF ORC • 552-2023**

## DOG SLED RIDES!

**DECEMBER 22 & 23**  
**NOON - 5 P.M.**  
**(on Hillberg Lake)**

**Adults \$10**  
**Children 12 & Under \$5**

**Paint a trio of Christmas Plates**  
**Sundays Only for \$20**  
Polar Express Arts and Crafts  
384-3717

## Check out the December Alaskan Adventurer

(or go online)

**For a coupon at JBER Elmendorf ORC for \$2 off ice skates or helmet rental.**  
**coupon valid only at JBER Elmendorf ORC.**

# CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

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



# Your prescription is available

By Nancy Nolin  
ASACS counselor

It seems we can't get away from media reports of tragedy related to the abuse of prescription drugs.

But it's not just the celebrities; the problem is closer to home than most people realize. According to an annual survey by the Partnership for a Drug Free America, one in five teens has abused prescription medication, and one in ten has abused over-the-counter cough medication.

There are as many new abusers age 12 to 17 of prescription drugs as there are of marijuana. Surprised? Most parents are when they hear about the prevalence of prescription drug abuse by teens.

Teens mistakenly believe prescription drugs are not as dangerous as illegal drugs such as ecstasy and cocaine because they have legitimate uses.

What they often don't realize is that it can be deadly. This false sense of safety, combined with ease of access, make for a dangerous combination.

The types of medications most frequently abused by teens are painkillers such as vicodin and oxycodone, sedatives and tranquilizers such as sleeping pills or anti-anxiety drugs, and stimulants such as Ritalin used to treat ADHD.

Over-the-counter cough medications containing dextromethorphan are also abused. Mixing various prescription drugs and combining them with alcohol can be life-threatening.

What can parents do? Monitor prescriptions in your home and keep track of amounts and refills. Secure all prescriptions.

Sixty-four percent of teens who abused pain relievers reported they obtained them from relatives or friends. Know the vocabulary of prescription drug abuse.

To some degree, we shouldn't really be surprised about the newest drugs of abuse, considering our children have grown up with a constant barrage of advertisements about pharmaceuticals.

They are used to the ease of access of information on the Internet, where they learn about the effects of various drugs.

We need to speak up to counter what our kids learn from the internet and from peers. Make sure your "don't do drugs" message includes ones in the medicine cabinet.

Parents really do have a bigger influence on their teens than peers or media when it comes to their decision about drug use.

Kids who learn about the dangers of drugs at home are much less likely to abuse them. So discuss the topic with your teen. See how much they know about the issue. Ask them if they know anyone who abuses prescription meds or cough medicine. Make sure they know where you stand.

Adolescence is a critical time for prevention. It is where the pattern of substance abuse typically begins and it's best interrupted at this stage.

By later adolescence, attitudes and behaviors are not as easily changed. Age is a powerful predictor of future problems, especially if use begins before age 15.

Adults with substance abuse disorders are more likely to have started using in their teens, not during adulthood.

If you suspect your child is using, take action. Intervene at the earliest signs. It can be easier to miss the signs of prescription drug abuse because they're not the classic signs of illegal drug abuse.

For more information, or just to talk, call Nancy Nolin, the Adolescent Substance Abuse Counseling Service counselor.

Nolin is a licensed clinical social worker and a certified addictions specialist, who provides prevention education classes, information events and counseling services as well.

Services are confidential and free to military families of active duty and retired personnel. Services are provided at JBER, Eagle River High School, Bartlett High School and Gruening Middle School.

She can be reached at 384-0134 or at the ASACS Eagle River HS office at 742-2743 or by email at [nancy.b.nolin@saic.com](mailto:nancy.b.nolin@saic.com).

Free copies of "Getting High on Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs is Dangerous: A guide to keeping your teenager safe in a changing world" are available by email.

Parents and teenagers can also visit [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com), [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org) and [www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov).

# Chill out – don't stress out – this holiday season

By Lara H. Smith  
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

It's supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year. Yet for many, it's anything but that.

"If the holidays have you overwhelmed, you are not alone," said TriWest Healthcare Alliance Behavioral Health Educator Kristin Musch. "Expectations are high, to-do lists are long and, often, the budget is tight, which can result in sadness, anger, frustration and resentment."

But there's good news. Stress can be reduced, allowing you to actually enjoy this time. "The key is to plan ahead," Musch said.

Check out our eight top tips for a stress-free holiday season:

1. Check your expectations. Are they higher now than other times during the year? Ask yourself why.
- The holidays don't have to be perfect. Find a way to incorporate a few rituals that bring you happiness and comfort. Fewer expectations can lead to greater appreciation and enjoyment.
2. Manage your time. Schedule specific days and times for shopping, baking, wrapping and other holiday commitments. Make sure that what you are doing is important to you. Add in some scheduled down-time for reading, watching a movie or taking in a favorite hobby.
3. Just say no. This is not the time to take on extra projects at home, school or for others.
- Know your limits and stick to them. Productivity expert David Allen has sage advice on this topic. "You can do anything, but not everything."

4. Move it. Feeling overwhelmed? Exercise is one of the best ways to relieve stress, said Musch.
- The few minutes you take to get in a walk, shovel some snow or go for a run will clear and calm your mind. Include your kids or other family members in your activities.
5. Indulge carefully. Whether gift shopping, snacking on tasty holiday treats or celebrating with cocktails, make sure to do it all in moderation.
- The indulgence now could leave a sour taste in your mouth when that credit card statement or scale presents you with a number you weren't expecting.
6. Keep visions of sugar plums dancing in your head. That's right. Sleep is a must during this busy time.
- It will restore your energy, ward off illness and will keep your head clear during a time of year when we all have a lot on our minds.
7. Laugh it up. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, the saying goes. Surround yourself with people and activities that bring a smile to your face.
- And be sure to stay away from those that bring you down.
8. Focus on the haves, not the have-nots. Author Melody Beattie may have said it best. "Gratitude turns what we have into enough."
- Every day there is something for which to be grateful. Whatever that is, however small it is, identify it, share it, write it down. When we focus on what we have, it truly becomes enough.
- Here's to a happy, healthy and stress-free holiday season.
- For more tips on managing stress, visit [TriWest.com/BH](http://TriWest.com/BH).



# JBER hosts third annual Joint Family Action Plan conference

By Airman Ty-Rico Lea  
JBER Public Affairs

The JBER Community Education Complex hosted its third Joint Army Family Action Plan conference Nov. 20 through 22.

Formerly known as the Army Family Action Plan, the program was created in 1980 through focus groups.

The program then developed with the first official AFAP conference hosted in July 1983.

The conference has been active for 32 years, empowering leaders throughout the Army and joint bases.

"JAFAP is a grassroots level process that identifies issues or concerns from the global armed forces," said Anthea Acosta, JBER JAFAP program manager, during day three's closing remarks.

The feedback to leaders can

lead to policy changes, which become tangible end-products at installations across the U.S.

JAFAP beneficiaries include all service members, retirees, civilian employees, surviving spouses and their family members.

The JAFAP program gives an individual in the JBER community the opportunity to influence his or her own quality of life.

Issues are discussed amongst the board and are then filtered through leadership channels to be addressed properly.

Leadership uses the information to influence change that improves standards of living and support programs.

These changes foster a satisfied, informed and resilient military community.

The program enlists representatives from around the world to identify and prioritize issues,

which will improve the standard of living on the installation, as well as an organization as a whole.

Acosta said 683 issues have been identified during the past 30 years, leading to 126 legislative changes, 177 Army or Department of Defense policy changes, and 197 improved programs and services.

During the three-day event, focus groups had time to brainstorm various issues, ideas and answers concerning the joint base's well-being.

Representatives briefed 10 major concerns towards the end of the conference a few of which are as follows:

**Title:** Special Duty Pay Impacting Childcare Fees

**Scope:** The determination of total family income now includes special duty pay (flight pay, active duty demolition pay, and sea

pay) for the fiscal year 2012-2013 Department of Defense childcare fees.

For example, an active duty E-6 receiving flight pay in 2011-2012 was category 3, but in 2012-2013, the same E-6 is category 5 paid an additional \$120 a month; this is equal to 30 percent of SDP for one child.

The inclusion of special duty pay to TFI increases the fee category which could result in a financial burden, and could lead to the breakdown of morale for DOD members and families.

**Recommendations:** Remove special duty pay from total family income when determining childcare fee categories.

**Title:** Transition Unit for Involuntarily Discharged Service Members

**Scope:** Service members pending involuntary discharge from the

military consume valuable time and resources of the leadership within the unit.

Current U.S. Army Alaska statistics identified on average 240 service members are being involuntarily discharged annually.

The complete responsibility of escorting the service members is being assumed by the unit – with the expectation that they will maintain a high state of readiness and unit morale.

This in turn causes strain on the unit, its members, and overall mission readiness.

**Recommendations:** Establish a transitional unit for service members who are being separated from the military involuntarily.

The JBER leadership has taken into mind what types of issues have ailed the community – and are working diligently to see them resolved in a timely manner.















































