

ARCTIC WARRIOR

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OPERATION COLONY GLACIER



A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from the Alaska Army National Guard delivers supplies to 3rd Operations Support Squadron Weather Flight personnel near Colony Glacier June 18. The Weather Flight provided vital real-time weather data to aircrew in support of Operation Colony Glacier. The data is crucial for aircrew and aircraft safety because weather near glaciers changes rapidly and is dangerous. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Heinz Disch)

Weather key to mission success for personnel recovery

By Tech Sgt John Gordinier
Joint Task Force-Alaska Public Affairs

On Nov. 22, 1952, an Air Force C-124 Globemaster II – with 52 passengers and crewmembers aboard – took off from McChord Air Force Base, Wash., en route to Elmendorf Air Force Base, but the plane never made it to its destination.

The C-124 crashed into Mount Gannett, less than 40 miles from what is now Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. A search party was dispatched to the crash location and a portion of the aircraft’s tail was spotted, but harsh weather conditions and the austere Alaska environment thwarted efforts and necessitated the suspension of the recovery effort.

The wreckage lay at the base of the mountain upon a glacier, burying all evidence of the crash as well as the hope to recover the service members. All were declared missing.

Almost 60 years later, June 9, 2012, an Alaska National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crew on a training mission noticed some debris on Colony Glacier. The National Guard sent a team on foot to examine the site, and they retrieved items identified as being from the crashed C-124.

Since then, every summer, for a small window of opportunity with weather permitting, Joint Task Force-Alaska supports the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, in Operation Colony Glacier. JTF-AK coordinates mission planning and performs aircraft debris recovery while JPAC performs human remains recovery.

This year, Operation Colony Glacier occurred June 9 to 23.

“It is an honor and privilege to work this mission and provide some closure for all those families involved,” said Lt. Col.



A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from the Alaska Army National Guard provides support to Operation Colony Glacier June 18. Joint Task Force-Alaska from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson coordinates mission planning and provides support to the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. JTF-AK performs aircraft debris recovery while JPAC performs human remains recovery. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Scott Seeley)

Adrian Crowley, JTF-AK Deputy Director for Logistics. “There has been an outpouring of support from all agencies involved and they are performing this mission safely and effectively while preserving the dignity and honor of those who were lost.”

One unit who provided much-needed support was the 3rd Operations Support Squadron Weather Flight. Their assistance is vital due to the weather on the glacier being dangerous and unpredictable.

The Weather Flight provided forward weather observers to help recovery efforts on the glacier, said Air Force Staff Sgt. Stephen Soloff, 3rd OSS weather forecaster. Colony Glacier is located in an area with no weather information, and weather on a glacier can change rapidly due to the glacier’s influence. For example, strong winds are often a problem due to terrain funneling and the strong temperature gradient between the cold glacier and warm land.

The weather team provided the air transport piece of the recovery operations a better weather picture, said Tech. Sgt. Scott Seeley, 3rd OSS weather flight training noncommissioned officer-in-charge. The team consisted of two weather forecasters, one survival, evasion, resistance and

escape expert, and one communications technician from the 673rd Communications Squadron.

The team camped about three miles from the glacier where it was safe and where they had the best vantage point of the glacier and the surrounding area, said Tech. Sgt. Heinz Disch, 3rd OSS Mission Weather Element NCOIC.

“We provided the eyes forward to relay any change in weather that may have put the recovery personnel or the aircrews in harm’s way,” Seeley said. “We were able to give the aircrews real-time weather data to ensure mission success and safety.”

“Being dropped off by a helicopter in the Alaskan wilderness with minimal support was a great experience that I hope to be a part of next year,” Soloff said. “It’s not often we get to support a mission like this, and I’m grateful I was chosen to go on one of the teams to provide support.”

“The aircrews were very appreciative of having our expertise out there to support them,” Seeley said. “Continuing to put us and our system to use out there in future efforts will be productive and ensure safety of the crews involved in this important recovery mission.”



17th CSSB takes on Afghanistan mission

By Army Capt. Richard Packer
2d Engineer Brigade PAO

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Soldiers of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson-based 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion took the mission of the Central Command Material Recovery Element CSSB from the 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion of the Alabama National Guard during a transfer of authority ceremony, July 1.

The CMRE mission focuses on the return of military equipment from the battlefield in Afghanistan back to the U.S. and American forces around the world. The 17th CSSB will help sort, track and transport equipment as the logistical arm of CMRE.

Army Lt. Col. Brian Formy-Duval and Command Sgt. Maj. Jacqueline Williams, the command team of 17th CSSB, uncased the unit colors. This is the final step in a military tradition, which recognizes the unit’s move from home station to being operational on the battlefield.

“As we take over this historical mission called CMRE, we understand that we are one of many storied units who will write the last chapter of our nation’s war against terrorism in Afghanistan,” Formy-Duval told the audience. “These next few months will be defining moments. How we depart Afghanistan will be the yardstick of how the war in Afghanistan will be measured for years to come.”

“Do not let previous deployments guide your perceptions of the current operating environment,” said Army Col. Gregory Boyd, the CMRE commander. “As you have already seen in your short time here, conditions change every day.”

Boyd referred to the complex challenges facing CMRE as they carry out the downsizing of International Security Assistance Force’s footprint in Afghanistan. The 17th CSSB will be helping to manage a steady, responsible drawdown of personnel and

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JBER civilian, historian dies

JBER news release

Doug Beckstead, 3rd Wing historian, passed away in his home July 1. Beckstead was born Sept. 24, 1958, in Salt Lake City.

Beckstead joined the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson team in 2006, chronicling the history of the 11th Air Force. During his tenure, Beckstead deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan three times to document ongoing military operations.

In 2006, Beckstead’s research efforts led to the finding, identifying, and repatriating of the remains of 2nd Lt. Harold Hoskins, who was a pilot who went down in a B-24 aircraft crash over the Alaska wilderness in 1943.

In 2009, he received the John R. Burton Award, a biennial award given to the best history office in the Air Force.

Beckstead is survived by his wife Carol, daughter Rebekkah, son Jeremiah, son-in-law Justin, daughter-in-law Korrine, grandson Aiden and granddaughters Katie, Amelia and Memory.

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Weapons Airmen keep F-22s in the fight

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett
JBER Public Affairs

June 21 was this year’s summer solstice – the longest day of the year when 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. share the same amount of sunlight and potentially a similar number of people cooking on their backyard grill. In contrast, Dec. 21 is the city’s traditional winter solstice, when even those working day shift will travel to and from work through cold darkness.

Airman 1st Class Kyron Abraham worked the day shift during those months. He drove to work through the cold dark of day to the 3rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, and joined his three-man team in relieving the night shift. Then the order came to load munitions on a jet for the Combat Alert Cell, a unit that tracks U.S. airspace for foreign incursions.

“They normally put the best crews, crews they can trust to load it correctly, onto those [real world] jobs,” the F-22 Raptor weapons specialist said. “It’s the hard evidence that we’re doing a good job. It feels like there’s an actual point to all the training and everything they taught us since we joined.”

His team requested live munitions – 20-mm rounds, an AIM-9 Sidewinder and an AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile – and collected tools. Some were what might be expected, like wrenches and screwdrivers. Some were specific to the F-22, such as pylons that hold external fuel tanks, or a one-step loading adapter. They wore steel-toed boots and packed earplugs and industrial ear muffs as they headed to the jet. Abraham chose not to wear extra layers; despite the cold, the heat from the jet kept him warm.

“I feel like I’m actually doing something, making a difference, and not just doing menial tasks all day,” he said. “We load missiles onto jets.”

After performing initial checks and inspections, they started the stealth fighter and accessed the system through a laptop so they could open and close weapons station doors. They lowered the stations so the missiles could be loaded without hitting the keel beam in the center. Abraham helped hand-carry the AIM-9s to be loaded onto the sides.

Next came time to load the 20-mm rounds into the gun.



Airman 1st Class Kyron Abraham is an F-22 Raptor weapons specialist with the 3rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Abraham is part of a three-Airman team that loads weapons onto the stealth fighters, and is a native of Reisterstown, Md. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)

“It’s pretty much a trailer you bring up to the side of the jet, take the loader head and hook it up to the gun,” he said. “From there, you can hand-crank it, use the jet’s power, or pressurized air to cycle the rounds into the gun. I’ve loaded jets with live munitions a few times, just keeping our borders safe.”

There’s more to it than just putting the missile onto the station, he said. Weapons specialists are responsible for ensuring all the equipment works properly. They perform tests to make sure there’s proper communication with the jet. There is a lot that goes with putting the missile on the station; you have to know how it all works and how it all ties together, he said.

“If you [work] weapons, you don’t just handle the missiles themselves,” he said. “You handle the stations and make sure the signal goes through from the jet to the station. You have to have a weapons design mentality. You also have the electrical skills and all the mechanical skills.”

Abraham studied computer engineering in school prior before looking for something different.

“I’ve been working with computers since middle school,” he said. “All my friends

back home did junior ROTC, so I knew of the Air Force. I knew you could get an education while serving. My dad was in the Navy, so I kept the military in the back of my mind.

“I wanted to do something different... I knew about the F-22 before I joined, I thought it was a really cool jet; the only stealth fighter, I wanted to be part of that. Working on engines sounded cool, but seemed like it I would be stuck just working on engines.”

After Basic Military Training and technical school, Abraham requested an assignment to JBER.

“We only had a few choices,” the native of Reisterstown, Md., said. “There are only so many bases that have F-22s, but there are also only so many you can get assigned to straight out of technical school. Alaska was definitely first on my list; my friends said they thought it would be a frozen wasteland, but I also had a lot of friends who loved it and said it was the most-sought base.”

Abraham said he joined the team quickly, after arriving at JBER.

“When I first came here, it was almost overwhelming,” the weapons specialist said. “I got like eight different invitations to Thanksgiving. I felt kind of bad for turn-

ing people down because I’d already been invited to someone else’s house. Everybody definitely looks out for each other. You always have your friends with you, no matter what job you do; you always have somebody to help you, or just kill time with you.”

The airman said he quickly found where he belonged.

“We’re in a weapons family, since we’re around these guys every day,” he said. “You’re not just working by yourself; you also have a team chief and the other person on your team. We’re always three people, traveling together.”

Abraham said they also host friendly competitions to improve their teamwork and skills.

“Loading for a load crew competition is the most challenging part of the job,” he said. “It’s easy enough to load, but you’re being watched the entire time. Not only do you have to do everything correctly, you have to do it kind of fast. Sometimes you over-think a few steps. You’ll miss it the first time and have to go back and get it. I really like loading; it’s one of my favorite parts of this job. I’m definitely trying to beat the other crew’s time, but also do it correctly.”

“[Abraham is] one of the better guys I think we have,” said Air Force Staff Sgt. Matthew Corbin, 3rd AMXS, weapons team chief. “Any time you ask him to do something, he does it right, the first try. He’s never let me down yet. He’s been on the fastest load crew for the month a couple times.”

“It gives you an adrenaline rush,” Abraham said. “It’s fun, but it’s a lot of work. You [also] have the friendly crew rivalries. Even though we all work together, we’ll have friendly rivalries, saying my crew can do this better than your crew. It’s pretty fun in that aspect. It’s like the load crew competitions, just on a small scale.”

It’s important for munitions to be equipped onto the jets – without munitions, the F-22 would just be a jet. “It feels like I’m a part of that since we upload the jets to keep them flying,” he said.

“Our mission helps round-out the F-22,” the stealth jet weapon’s specialist said. “The plan [is] for the jet to get behind enemy lines undetected. If they need to, they take out a target and then escape without being detected. The munitions help the jet take out those targets. The pilots know they are safe and can defend themselves if they need to.”

Proven tech remains viable disaster communication tool

By John Budnik
USACE Alaska District PAO

Whether an earthquake strikes, a tsunami reaches shore, a wildfire scorches the forest or a man-made emergency has occurred, a near century-old form of electronic communication continues to prove its worth relaying critical information during catastrophes alongside today’s state-of-the-art tools.

High-frequency radio has withstood the historical evolution of telecommunications and remains a relevant means to transmit information over long distances. The mode is used by emergency management organizations and amateur enthusiasts, also known as ham operators. Therefore, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Alaska District is currently upgrading its capabilities with a new antenna.

“Technology is always changing,” said Ed Luteran, quality management assistant and high-frequency communications specialist for the Alaska District. “You want to make sure you can match other stakeholders so contact can remain during a disaster.”

The district is installing a 102-foot-tall radio tower to support the Emergency Management Office. While replacing an older 30-foot-tall structure, the new apparatus will be equipped with two aviation lights and a motor for rotating the 72-foot-long boom of a 2,100 pound directional antenna.

“This upgrade will help the Alaska District remain operable during a crisis and to communicate with our headquarters and other responding agencies when normal means of contact have failed,” said David Spence, chief of the Emergency Management Office.

The Alaska District will assist the Federal Emergency Management Agency in responding to a full range of major disasters. In particular, the district provides public works and engineering recovery support as constituted by FEMA’s national



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Alaska District constructed a new 102-foot-tall radio tower July 2 near the headquarters building on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. The structure will enhance the high-frequency radio capabilities of the district’s Emergency Management Office during a disaster. High-frequency radio allows global communications with outside partners when all other means of contact have failed. (Courtesy photo)

defense framework.

Also known as shortwave radio, high-frequency waves travel at the speed of light. These waves reflect off the ionosphere in the atmosphere and back down to earth. Transmissions can be received globally.

“You have the ability to communicate with minimal infrastructure,” Luteran said, a licensed Federal Communications Commission ham operator and volunteer for the Military Auxiliary Radio System in Alaska.

Extra equipment is necessary to relay other forms of telecommunication signals between the people transmitting messages.

One example is the Alaska Land Mobile Radio system which relies on a series of signal-repeating towers located alongside the state’s highways.

This method promotes interoperability between federal, state and municipal partners. Public safety officials are able to link with other agencies and entities across the state, including with the Alaska District, using handheld radios during a crisis. However, if an earthquake destroys one of those towers, the viability of the system is compromised.

Internet, satellite phones and everyday cell devices also rely on similar supporting infrastructure

in order to perform. Standard handheld radios transmit on a bandwidth only useful for line-of-sight distance.

Though shortwave radio is dependent upon minimal equipment, it serves well as a backup to technology that is easier to use and requires less expertise. Typically, the operator needs to understand the necessary circumstances in the ionosphere to make successful transmissions. Solar activity, frequency and seasonal changes can affect the broadcast conditions.

“You can generally forecast by knowing what has occurred from the sun, but that is just one of many factors,” Luteran said. “It’s

important for the operator to know radio theory of operations.”

Whether an emergency management organization is practicing for a major event or dealing with a real crisis, communication can be the highest sought after commodity when in dire straits.

“The sharing of information is always a challenge,” Spence said. “It’s important to be in contact with your emergency partners to effectively stage a recovery effort.”

During the next geological, weather-related or man-made disaster, there is a proven and reliable technology available to help the Alaska District achieve emergency notification.

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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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KNIFE EDGE

U.S. Air Force Maj's. Blaine Jones, Thunderbird 5, Lead Solo, and Jason Curtis, Thunderbird 6, opposing solo, perform the Inverted Opposing Knife-Edge Pass during a practice show at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo., May 27. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Larry E. Reid Jr.)

Arctic Thunder Open House looks to wow the crowd

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Wes Wright
JBER Public Affairs

You’ve been thunder-struck! The words to a popular 1990 rock song might just be the impact on the crowd during Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson’s Arctic Thunder Open House July 26 and 27, which is free and open to the public.

The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, “America’s Ambassadors in Blue,” will headline two full days of aerial performances. Charged with demonstrating the professionalism of Airmen and the capabilities of modern airpower, the Thunderbirds were formed in 1953 and is comprised of nearly 130 Airmen. The primary product of that teamwork is approximately 40 maneuvers, varying between formation flying and solo routines. The entire show lasts about one hour.

The Thunderbirds have been flying the F-16 Fighting Falcon, a multi-role fighter, since August 1982.

“The F-16 is a remarkable and dependable aircraft,” said Air Force Capt. Lucas Buckley, Thunderbirds maintenance officer. “The aircraft is fast, loud and highly

maneuverable. That’s what makes it fun and exciting to watch, especially at the relatively low altitudes required in the show.”

JBER’s own F-22 Raptors will also be in the Alaska skies, as well as several civilian acts. Additionally, static displays ranging from the B-2 Spirit Stealth Bomber to an F-16 Fighting Falcon to a KC-135 Stratotanker Aerial Refueler will be on display.

“The whole purpose is to let taxpayers know where their money is being spent and how it’s being spent,” said Song Johnson, 673d Air Base Wing community engagement chief. “Also, it’s a way for us to give back to the community that has been so kind to us.”

The open house director, Air Force Maj. Karl Easterly, 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron, encouraged families and community members to attend the biennial event.

“Really, the draw – besides the show itself – the spirit of the Air Force and America is represented with the Thunderbirds,” Easterly said. “We want people to be excited about the Air Force and excited about JBER. It’s very much a family-friendly

event. We’re going to have all sorts of fun, games and food; from bouncy castles to jets, we’ll have it all.”

Each branch of the military will be represented during the open house, with each service showcasing the mission it performs at JBER. Both days begin at 9 a.m., when the JBER-Richardson and Boniface gates will open to the public, and will end at 5 p.m.

Department of Defense ID card holders can still access the installation through any of the gates.

The Thunderbirds were last at JBER in 2012, and according to Johnson, were a hit.

“It was a huge crowd favorite and we’re happy to have them back again,” Johnson said. “JBER is one of the few places in the country that’s been authorized to have the Thunderbirds and an open house.”

Due to sequestration, DOD officials have limited open houses and demonstration teams, but according to Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, there is a continuing need to maintain their mission.

“Community and public outreach is a

crucial departmental activity that reinforces trust and confidence in the United States military and in its most important asset – people,” Hagel said. “It is our obligation to sustain that trust well into the future.”

According to organizers, many of the static displays will be set up where people can actually walk into and sit in military equipment.

“We want this to be an interactive event where people can experience what it’s like to be in a military aircraft or vehicle,” Johnson said.

With an event of the magnitude of JBER’s open house, Johnson encouraged people to plan ahead with transportation.

“Parking will be limited,” Johnson said. “The best advice I can give people is carpool. There will not be any public transportation from town into JBER. For people who want to ride bicycles, there will be areas for people to lock up their bikes.

For updated ATOH information, to include performances, displays, and prohibited and recommended items to bring, visit www.jber.af.mil/arcticthunder/index.asp. Updates are also posted on the official JBER facebook page.

Following joint ethics regulations important for military service

By Eric-James Estrada
JBER Public Affairs

As the summer season in Alaska continues in full gear and Soldiers at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson seek the adventure that is unique to “The Last Frontier,” they have to be cautious of gifts and endorsements they may be offered for their service to our country.

The Army is guided by many regulations. Common regulations many Soldiers are familiar with are Army Regulation (AR) 350-1, *Army Training and Leadership*, and AR 600-9, *The Army Weight Control Program*. While these regulations offer clear guidance on what is expected of Soldiers, some

regulations require interpretation and better understanding. Some even require legal counseling.

The Office of Government Ethics has established standards of conduct that apply to all U.S. government employees. Within the Department of Defense, these principles are guided by the Joint Ethics Regulation; Department of Defense Instruction 5500.7-R.

Army Maj. Elisabeth Claus, the brigade judge advocate for the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, said, “One of the primary rules is that public service is a public trust requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.”

The JER is made up of the 14 General Principles of Ethical Conduct and Executive Order 12731. President George H.W. Bush signed the regulation in 1990 to revise the president’s authority over employees of the executive branch in order to clarify laws that could cause a conflict of interest.

According to Claus, it’s important for Soldiers at the junior level to learn about ethics and remember the JER applies to everyone, regardless of rank. She said understanding the principles of ethics becomes more important as a Soldier progresses to higher ranks and the need to avoid an appearance of impropriety becomes more significant.

“As they grow more senior in

rank, their actions become more visible to the public,” Claus said.

In the past, the Army and many organizations have partnered to provide support to one another. There is no black-and-white rule that says one may not have any interaction with an organization, but there are specific rules about how the Army is allowed to interact with private organizations.

“As Soldiers progress through their careers, I just encourage them to start learning about the ethics regulations, and always seek legal advice if they have questions, and continue to enforce that in their formations,” Claus said.

Claus also recommends the seeking of a legal and ethics review when participating with private

organizations. Some examples which should be reviewed are a planned fundraiser, or active duty service members using their rank and service when identifying themselves in connection with private organizations.

“The advantage to seeking an ethics review from a legal attorney is no administrative action will be taken against somebody if they have received an ethics review from an attorney that approved the activity and told them this is in compliance with the ethics laws,” Claus said.

Claus said when it comes to active duty service members working with private organizations, it’s important to remember ignorance of the law is no defense.

From 17TH CSSB • A-1

equipment as America prepares to transition from Operation Enduring Freedom to the next phase of our nation’s commitment in the region, Resolute Support.

For many of the 17th CSSB Soldiers, this is their first deployment. For others, deployment has become a way of life.

“This is my sixth deployment,” said Army Staff Sgt. Sean Ryan, a 17th CSSB platoon sergeant from Port Deposit, Md. “I volunteered to come with this unit to Afghanistan. I love being here and what I do.”

After the ceremony, the 17th CSSB’s officers and senior non-commissioned officers received a brief from their commanding general, Army Brig. Gen. Donnie Walker of the 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command.

“You’ve uncased your colors. It’s time to rock and roll. Get after this mission,” Walker said after sharing his command philosophy. “You are empowered. Now go out there and execute violently.”

The 17th CSSB is expected to return to their families and friends in Alaska early next year.



Army Lt. Col. Brian Formy-Duval and Command Sgt. Maj. Jacqueline Williams, the command team of 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, uncasing the unit colors during a transfer-of-authority ceremony July 1 in Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)

Utilities upgrades

As part of Doyon Utilities’ continuing effort to improve and modernize the utility infrastructure, the organization is engaged in a multi-year project to upgrade the JBER-Richardson electrical distribution system to improve system efficiency, reduce service interruptions, and improve personnel safety.

Unfortunately, this work has recently resulted in a series of short power outages. Doyon Utilities regrets any inconvenience this may have caused and is working to avoid unnecessary service interruptions.

Work on this system is expected to continue through 2016. This summer’s work is to improve Spartan substation, which controls and regulates the distribution of electricity throughout the installation and in the past has been a single point of failure in the electrical network.

To minimize impacts, Doyon is working closely with installation officials to schedule work that could potentially result in an outage for completion during off-peak periods. If another outage does occur, utilities electrical crews will act quickly to restore service.

When work is completed on the substation this summer, the installation will see an improvement in overall system redundancy and reliability.

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Hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For more information visit www.documentservices.dla.mil, visit the office at 984 Warehouse Street, or call 384-2901.

U-Fix-It Store

The U-Fix-it Store is located in Building 706 and is open 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. 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 number of service orders.

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.,

Tuesday 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 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

A window blind cleaning machine is currently located at the JBER-Elmendorf location.

A “reservation required to use” policy is in place with the priority going to military members PCSing. For more information, call 375-5540.

JBER Bargain Shop

The JBER-Elmendorf Bargain Shop, located in building 8515 Saville off of 20th Street, is open Tuesday and Wednesday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the first Saturday of the month 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Consignments are accepted Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

For more information, please call 753-6134.

JBER’s Attic

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson’s Attic, located in building 8515 off of 20th Street, is open on Tuesdays for paygrades E-1 to E-4 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Wednesdays for paygrades E-1 to E-6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and the first Saturday of the month for all paygrades from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information, call the Attic at 552-5878.

Veterinary hours

Though the Veterinary Treatment Facility primarily works on military working dogs, the facility also provides services for pets of active duty service members, retirees, National Guard and Reserve

service members on active orders (greater than 30 days), and their dependents.

The VTF is capable of providing care for most routine services, including vaccination and sick call.

The VTF is open Monday through Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information and to make an appointment, call 384-2865.

Richardson Thrift Shop

The JBER-Richardson Thrift Shop, located in building 724, Quartermaster Drive, is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and first and third Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Consignments are accepted Tuesdays and Thursdays.

For more information, call the Thrift Shop at 384-7000.

Priority placement

The Priority Placement Program and Executive Order 13473 provide non-competitive appointment for spouses of active duty service members, including full-time National Guard and Reservists, who are relocating to accompany their service member during a permanent change of station.

The program allows spouses to register for Department of Defense positions and to be considered for jobs offered internally. Spouses are matched against potential positions, which meet their qualifications and preferences.

Job placement will vary with each individual. The spouse remains eligible for a maximum of two years from the date of the PCS orders and are in the program for one year.

Military spouses who have

never filled a federal position can now register for PPP. This program was previously limited to spouses on a current federal appointment or those who formerly had a federal position.

Military spouses can register at the Civilian Personnel Office at JBER-Elmendorf or the personnel office at JBER-Richardson. The JBER point of contact is Brenda Yaw at 552-9203.

JBER MyBaseGuide

Stay informed on where to find schools, places of worship, places to live, local services, day-care providers, auto mechanics, veterinarians and more.

Browse a wide range of area services, get phone numbers, and download the mobile application for iOS or Android at <http://tinyurl.com/ltsywzr>.

Furnishing Management

The Furnishings Management Office offers 90-day loaner furniture. Appliances may be issued for the duration of the service member’s tour.

FMO typically delivers items as far as Peters Creek or Rabbit Creek. Service members must make special arrangements beyond these areas.

When requesting furniture, service members must provide a copy of their reporting orders.

For JBER-Elmendorf, visit the Capital Asset Management Office at Building 6436, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or call 552-2740.

For JBER-Richardson, visit the Housing Management Office at Building 600, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or call 384-2576.

Learning to live again

Spartan NCO plans career in bodybuilding after pending retirement

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett
JBER Public Affairs

Sgt. Mark McElroy wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father and his grandfather. His father was a bodybuilder prior to spending 21 years in the Army, and his grandfather served two tours in Vietnam. Both were airborne infantry, and McElroy said he felt it was the right thing for him to do as well.

A native of Delphos, Ohio, McElroy joined the Army at the age of 18 and completed basic training, Advanced Individual Training and Airborne School at Fort Benning, Ga.

He then got orders assigning him to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, where he joined the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division.

McElroy was stationed here less than a year when he deployed to Afghanistan. His experiences overseas tell a story of a Soldier's year in the desert, one that cut his military career short.

"When I was over there, it was almost like you're not human," he said. "It's kind of like you're a robot. You just get used to doing crazy stuff."

The Soldier said they had no showers or means to wash their clothes, and ate only field rations for the first several months.

His uniforms became so saturated with dirt, salt and sweat, they would literally stand up on the ground when he took them off.

"I mean, the living conditions were beyond what people have here, which wasn't even a big deal," he said. "It's just some of the stuff we had to do. You're taught to feel no emotion as an infantryman."

"You're taught to just do your job – you're so set on your job you don't really know what's going on around you outside of being deployed."

He also carried a Mark-48 machine gun and a thousand rounds of ammunition – adding up to 180 pounds of gear with his other equipment – daily for the duration of the year-long tour.

McElroy left for the deployment weighing 215 pounds. Between not eating and going on patrols, he got down to 171 pounds in three months, he said.

"We had it real tough out there," he said. "We only had each other to rely on."

Their two platoons lived on a combat outpost, smaller than a forward operating base, "so small, you could stand at one end and throw a rock at the other end," he said.

"We'd go out and do a mission, and we'd come back and have to pull a 12-hour tower guard shift," he said. "You were lucky to get three hours of sleep within a 24-hour period of time. Not three hours straight; 15 minutes here, 30 minutes there."



Sgt. Mark McElroy was in the Army less than a year when he deployed to Afghanistan. Surviving various improvised explosive devices and other attacks, he completed his year-long tour and returned to tell his story. Through the Warrior Transition Unit, McElroy has put himself back together, was promoted to sergeant and is separating from the Army to care for his family and pursue a career in bodybuilding. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)

On missions, they organized seven-man teams; they would go out and set up ambush positions, he said. Sometimes they were out there a few days, sometimes a week or more, just waiting for the enemy.

"It just became a part of me while I was over there," McElroy said.

The Soldier performed more than 250 patrols "dismounted," or on foot.

"We did do some convoy patrols, but the Taliban's a lot smarter than people think," he said. "You can only go so many places in vehicles. You can go a lot more places on foot where they can't plant the IEDs."

It was March 1, 2012 when, on a dismounted patrol, he was hit by an IED. He was ten meters from the explosion.

"My team leader was on point," he said. "I was beside him and we were walking through a field. He made a slight right turn and as soon as he did, I saw the ground flex out of the corner of my left eye. My adrenaline just started pumping."

The Taliban had dug the hole too deep, causing most of the blast to travel straight up instead of spraying the Soldiers, who got down as quickly as they could, ready to return fire, he said.

"My ears were ringing; I couldn't hear anything," he said. "My head hurt so bad; I don't know if I blacked out or not. I got up, helped my team leader and another Soldier get back to cover. There was a stone wall about 50 yards behind us. After that, it's hard for me to remember [what happened]."

"Throughout the rest of the deployment there were multiple firefights, we did a lot of big missions and there were more IEDs, but that one 10 meters away was the closest I ever got. That's thirty feet away."

After completing his deployment, McElroy returned to JBER in October of 2013 and went through a month of transition training.

"They teach you how to become normal again, whatever normal is," he said. "To me, [normal] is a setting on your dryer. You can't go from 'fight-fight-fight; kill-kill-kill the enemy' to coming home and being a normal Joe off the street. It just doesn't work like that."

McElroy said the Warrior Transition Unit helped him out.

"I'm here because of multiple reasons," he said. "[Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder] is a major issue. Coming back from combat was a struggle. I deal with reintegration, flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety and panic attacks where I don't even know what's going on. I don't even drive my vehicle – my wife does the driving. I can't drive and focus on my surroundings. If there's a box or something, I still think it might be an IED. If you really think about it, it's kind of crazy, but that's my thought process [after] being over there."

He also suffers from insomnia, he said. "I'll lie down for 40 minutes and I'll be wide awake, ready to go," he said. "I still can't get my sleep schedule right. That's pretty much why I'm here today."

Carrying so much gear every day, being in firefights and explosions, also cost him body.

"That caused severe back injuries, bulging discs, spinal fluid leaking out of my back, my sciatic nerve's pinched – that's something I have to live with every day," he said.

"My wife has to tie my shoes for me half the time; I can't even bend over."



I can't hear; I'm 80 percent deaf out of my left ear."

When he in-processed at the WTU, despite a looming medical retirement, McElroy was determined to make the promotion list. Army Staff Sgt. Sheree Lapointe became his squad leader and helped him out, he said.

"When I came here, she could just tell I was squared away and she wanted to see me succeed," he said.

Every Soldier is a different mission, Lapointe said.

"[McElroy is] very motivated," the cadre said. "I could tell he was instilled with discipline. He was the epitome of what an outstanding infantryman was, so for him to come from combat, being a foot Soldier on the line and doing heavy ruck sacking, his mentality was shoot-move-communicate. He didn't know how to adjust."

"He still brought his morals, his discipline, and the seven Army values over to the Warrior Transition Unit, knowing that it was something he wasn't used to. He was used to rucking, and we were like 'listen, you're here to recover from your wounds, whatever you're facing, you're here to help yourself. Sometimes you've got to lay down your weapon and say I need a break.' I told him that's what he needed to do."

Outside of his medical appointments and personal recovery, McElroy kept himself busy by continuing to serve.

"He's able to go out into the community and work now," said Lapointe, a native of Davie, Fla. "He's able to adjust; his work site has nothing but great things to talk about. He's had great support from his wife. Everything's been successful for him here. It's really good to see that. He did what he had to do here."

"I'm really big into bodybuilding and dieting and nutrition," McElroy said. "I work[ed] over at the Health and Wellness Center on the Air Force side. I work[ed] with an exercise physiologist and a dietitian over there. We do gain analysis and workout plans for people who need to lose some weight or get a better score on their PT test. We help them with their eating habits, or quit using tobacco."

McElroy, who came to the WTU as a specialist, also achieved one of his career goals; he was promoted.

"I'd only known him for about two weeks, and I knew he was ready to go before the board and stand in front of the command sergeant major," Lapointe said. "When I had to stand in front of the command sergeant major, and he asked me how I know [McElroy] is ready, I said he's ready to lead Soldiers, regardless if he never does it again."

"Sometimes you have to take chances on a Soldier, that's what it's about. You don't know what a Soldier is capable of until you give them a chance," Lapointe said.

"I told him to keep fighting, keep working on it. So he went up to the board. He was outstanding. He was one of the top five Soldiers who got highly recommended."

"Lo and behold, he did what he had to do, and he made sergeant all by himself here at the Warrior Transition Unit," Lapointe said of his achievement. "He didn't let anybody tell him he couldn't do it. It could have backfired on me, but that's what we have to do sometimes. It's not about you, it's about them."

You get out of the program what you put into it, she said.

"Coming to this organization, you have to want to be better," Lapointe said. "The keys are here; everybody wants to help out the wounded warriors. PTSD is big here, you have to dig deep and gain that trust. Once you gain their trust, it's like a beautiful flower comes out."

McElroy is transitioning into a medical retirement.

"I plan on going to school full time, and working on becoming a professional bodybuilder," he said. "I'm training hard for that. My dad actually won one of the biggest shows in Ohio [in the 1980s] called 'Mr. Ohio.' He just turned 50; he's still huge. A guy who helped train my dad is training me right now online."

Despite all the pains and costs of his tour in Afghanistan, McElroy said he misses it.

"I miss the brotherhood," he said. "It was a big thing. I loved being over there when I was there. You've got a group of 20 or so guys who would give their life for you in an instant, and I would have done the same for any of them," he said.

"When I left, I had the mindset that I was ready to die for my country; I didn't care if I came home or not."

"That's how I lived every day over there, that's what kept me alive. That's what kept me on my toes."



Paratroopers of Blackfoot Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment conduct a security patrol, supporting a post-blast analysis of an improvised explosive device that detonated hours earlier in Terezeyi district June 1, 2012. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Jason Epperson)

Being a listening ear is a selfless service that lifts burdens

Commentary by Chaplain (Capt.) Brian Musselman
673d ABW Chaplain

While I was working through a clinical residency as a hospital chaplain years ago, I was asked if I was able to be “at home in silence.”

This was asked of me as I was learning how to care for patients, their families, and hospital staff.

Just as I did back then, you might now be asking yourself what the question means.

It took me a while to even understand the meaning behind the question.

After reflecting upon it for quite some time – days, in fact – I realized a lot of my care and attention towards patients and their families came from what I thought they needed – even before I listened to them tell me their own needs.

Visiting patients, families and staff, years ago, was most comfortable when I was speaking words of care and comfort into their lives.

Sounds like what a chaplain or pastor should be doing, right?

The key, subliminal message of this statement is “what’s comfortable for me.”

Rather, what I needed to learn, through time, experience, and practice was addressing what’s comfortable for them.

I believe this makes for a great chaplain – to be focused on others and to consider their interests above my own.

One way to get better at this, I discovered, is to learn how to be at home in silence.

After several days thinking about this, I learned “home in silence” meant “being

comfortable in listening.”

It’s far too easy to conjure up my own assumptions and intuit what I believe the other person is feeling or needs.

Additionally, it’s too easy to expect that the care given to one family is exactly what another family needs.

This rarely is the norm. Every person is different and so are his needs.

I like what our nation’s 30th President, Calvin Coolidge, said nearly 90 years ago, “No man ever listened himself out of a job.”

Henry David Thoreau, 19th century philosopher, poet and author, said, “the greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer.”

Isn’t it easy to visualize someone leaning into Thoreau and listening attentively with excitement and anticipation to learn from him?

Listening is an art form that takes practice, and it’s not a craft used for personal gain, but it is a part of care and concern I can give to all people – and which we can give to others.

At its core, it is an action which stems from a service-before-self attitude.

Winston Churchill reminds us that “courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.”

Being at home in silence takes courage, because it’s not always what is said that’s



Just listening can be a tremendous service to others. (U.S. Army photo/Steve Ghiringhelli)

important, but it’s what’s heard that matters.

“Home” carries with it different connotations for each of us.

Home can be inviting and warm; it can also be something to avoid and associated with great pain.

For me, home is comfortable, being surrounded by people who love me in all circumstances, and a place where I can escape and relax.

(Home is also my place off base that I’m constantly remodeling, fixing or paying someone for the upkeep of.)

It’s a place that I am always creating to be some sort of sanctuary, a hiding place, a place to find rest and renewal.

Of course, this is not always easy to do with a family of four and a dog and a fish.

Nevertheless, home is where I can simply “be” with no external pressures.

Being at home in silence with another

person is like being in a comfortable place, relaxed, and anticipating learning from what he has to share or wants to say.

The aim of the listener, the one that is at home in silence, is not necessarily to bring solutions, but to join the other person in her journey.

The challenge in doing this, in putting the interests of others above my own, is that I may not agree with what he is saying or decisions she is making.

Being at home in silence means I don’t have to agree; I can still offer them my presence and listening ear.

On one occasion, I made a quick introduction to a patient.

I said very few words and maybe one complete sentence during this visit.

After many tears were shed by this person, and noticing that it was time to continue my rounds with other patients, family and staff, I headed for the door.

After I said my goodbyes, this person replied, “thank you for all you did for me today, chaplain.”

Walking out the door, baffled, I asked myself, “what did I do for this person?”

I listened.

In my own faith tradition as a Christian, I have held onto the encouraging words of truth, “be slow to speak, quick to listen, and slow to become angry.”

Go ahead, try and listen yourself out of a job.

Others will benefit, and you’ll be surprised at the blessing you receive from your service-before-self attitude and action.

GUNSTON st.

by ZAVISKI

FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON CHALLENGE YOURSELF

CROSS COUNTRY COMBAT SERIES

CANOE | RUN | SHOOT

Location: Otter Lake

Sign-up deadline
July 11, 1 - 1:30 p.m.

Weigh-in / Org. meeting
July 11, 1:30 - 2 p.m.

Competition
July 11, 2 p.m.

Team make-up: 5 pers.
w/ 35-lb ruck, ACUs & combat boots

Call 384-1308 for more information.
Buckner Physical Fitness Center.
Bldg. 690

ECO CHALLENGE

RUN | BIKE | KAYAK | HIKE

Location: Hillberg

Run 4.4 miles, bike 9 miles, kayak 0.5 mile, hike 4 miles with weighted ruck.

Sign-ups

- Team (2 - 4 people) at the JBER-E Fitness Ctr. starting July 8
- Individuals July 11, 11 a.m. at Hillberg

Must 18 or older:

Race
July 11, Noon

Call 552-5353 for more information.
Elmendorf Fitness Center.
Bldg. 9510

Ask us about our swim lessons!
Call Centers for details.

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

Did you know....

You can view the JBER673FSS facebook page even if you don't have a facebook account? Stop by and see us! www.facebook.com/JBER673FSS

Eagleglen Fitness Park

Have you checked out the fitness Park?

The Eagleglen Fitness Park is now open for all DoD cardholders and dependents to enjoy. Currently, the fitness park has two trails marked for walking, running or biking. The 1.5-mile and 5-kilometer courses are clearly marked for easy reference. The Force Support Squadron is in the process of adding picnic tables, frisbee golf, and other items to make the park enjoyable. The park is also a great location to do individual or unit runs/PT.

Please make sure you adhere to the Eagleglen Fitness Park **RULES** that are posted in order to make the park enjoyable for all patrons. These include:

PLEASE:	PLEASE DO NOT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recreate at your own risk and remember "SAFETY FIRST."• Keep pets leashed at all times and clean-up after them.• Beware of and never feed wildlife.• Use trails for foot and bike traffic.• Limit golf play to the driving range only (driving range will not be open until mid-June).• Depart the area at sunset (closed during hours of darkness).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use any type of firearm on this complex (to include paintball or airsoft guns).• Operate motor vehicles anywhere on this complex.• Start any open fires.• Bring or consume alcoholic beverages.• Enter any waterways or ponds.• Remain overnight.• Hunt or fish.• Litter.

If you have any questions, please contact the Mission Support Group at **552-3004**.

ECO - CHALLENGE

JULY 11 HILLBERG SKI AREA

SIGN-UP: TEAMS
(2-4 PEOPLE)
STARTING JULY 8
AT JBER-E FIT.CTR

INDIVIDUALS
JULY 11
11 A.M. AT HILLBERG

RACE BEGINS AT NOON FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

POC: LINDA NEELY: 552-0610 OR TOM LAWSON: 552-9890

4.4 MILE RUN • 9 MILE BIKE • 1/2 MILE KAYAK • 4 MILE HIKE WITH WEIGHTED RUCK SACK - 25LBS FEMALE - 35LBS MALE (BRING YOUR OWN BAG, WEIGHTS PROVIDED)

LIMITED KAYAKS PROVIDED (YOU CAN BRING YOUR OWN KAYAK, AS LONG AS YOU IDENTIFY YOUR KAYAK. WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST, STOLEN, OR DAMAGED KAYAKS). BRING YOUR OWN BIKE! BIKES CAN BE RENTED AT OUTDOOR REC, WE DO NOT PROVIDE ANY BIKES.

Community Happenings

July 11, 2014

ARCTIC WARRIOR

B-3

THROUGH SUNDAY Bear Paw Festival

Chugiak and Eagle River host the annual Bear Paw Festival, featuring carnival rides, a car show, the Slippery Salmon Olympics, live entertainment and much much more. It's a family-friendly extravaganza with something for everyone – even a teddy bear picnic.

For information, visit bearpaw-festival.org.

SUNDAY Stories at the Cemetery

Learn about Anchorage history with this self-guided tour. Costumed actors stand at the gravesite of their character and tell their story.

Stories begin at 6 p.m.; pick up a map at the John Bagoy gate.

For information, call 274-7122 or 343-6814.

TUESDAY Youth floor hockey

Kids bored? Nothing to do? The Salvation Army Community Center hosts indoor floor hockey from 2 to 3 p.m. for boys and girls ages 8 to 12ish.

Equipment is provided; just bring a water bottle, shorts, and friends.

For more information, call 375-3583.

JULY 19 Salmon Daze

It may be Alaska's most valuable resource – so celebrate salmon in downtown Anchorage from noon 'til 6 p.m. Crafts, art and plenty of salmon are on tap.

For information, visit anchorage-downtown.org.

JULY 25 Live After Five downtown

The Air Force Band of the Pacific is back in town for the Arctic Thunder Open House – and they will be in Town Square Park from 5 to 8 p.m. for a free outdoor concert as part of the Live After Five series.

For information, call 270-5650 or visit anchorage-downtown.org.

JULY 26 Crow Pass Crossing

The Crow Pass Crossing is

one of the toughest backcountry races in Alaska – 24 miles from the trailhead in Girdwood over the rocky Crow Pass to the Eagle River Nature Center.

For information, call 786-1325.

JULY 26 AND 27 Arctic Thunder open house

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson hosts the biennial open house, this year featuring the Air Force Thunderbirds and civilian aerial acts.

The event also offers displays and demonstrations of military aircraft and equipment as well as joint military demonstrations.

For more information, visit www.jber.af.mil/arcticthunder.

JULY 31 Manifesting Love

This workshop helps you break down barriers you may have, reduce fears, and meet other singles in an interactive environment.

Workshop begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Alaska Center for Spiritual Living. For information call 522-0940.

AUG. 1 THROUGH 4 SeaFest weekend

Join the Alaska SeaLife Center for a weekend of family fun – with art walks, races, and interactive activities.

This wildlife rehabilitation center and public aquarium offers close encounters with puffins, sea lions, octopuses and much more.

For information, visit alaskasealife.org.

AUGUST 9 AND 10 Blueberry and music fest

Alyeska Resort celebrates the lush blueberry season with this family-oriented outdoor event.

Arts and crafts booths, musicians, and all the blueberry concoctions you can imagine or try are on deck – plus, there are many blueberry patches in the area. Stake out your own.

For information visit alyskaresort.com or call (800) 880-3880.

AUGUST 16 Dog Days of Summer

Peratrovich Park (at E Street) hosts this dog-themed party with a “stupid pet tricks” contest, demon-

strations, canine-related products and much more.

Bring your fuzzy pal or pals from noon to 4 p.m.

For information, call 279-5650.

Autumn Wings Festival

Join Bird Treatment and Learning Center above Potter Marsh for this celebration of birds, the outdoors, and Alaska's version of autumn from noon to 4 p.m.

For information, visit birdtlc.net.

AUG. 21 THROUGH SEPT. 1 Alaska State Fair

The 78th annual Alaska State Fair still features the things the colonists started with – agriculture, produce, friends and family. There are also concerts by KC and the Sunshine Band, Tesla, Seether and other big-name groups, giant vegetables, carnival rides and much more at this end-of-summer extravaganza.

For information, visit alaskastatefair.org.

AUG. 22 THROUGH 24 Girdwood Fungus Fair

Autumn in Alaska means mushrooms – morels, tree ears, and much more.

Take a guided mushroom tour with a mycologist, use fungi to dye fibers, and learn to identify species. Or participate in the Fungus Formal.

Events take place in the Girdwood Community room, starting at 1 p.m. Friday.

For information, visit fungus-fair.com.

ONGOING Live After Five

Town Square Park hosts this weekly Friday-night concert series.

Admission is free, the music is different every week, and food and beverages abound from 5 to 8 p.m. weekly.

For information, visit anchorage-downtown.org.

Music in the Park

Every Wednesday from noon to 1 p.m., Peratrovich Park hosts a musical performance. Get out of the office and enjoy music in the open air.

If it's raining, concerts may be cancelled; for up-to-date informa-

tion, visit facebook.com/AnchorageDowntownPartnership.

AER scholarships

Army Emergency Relief is taking applications for scholarships.

Scholarships are available for children, spouses and other dependents of active, retired and deceased Soldiers. Applications and instructions are available at aerhq.org.

For information, call 384-7478.

Protestant Women of the Chapel meetings

Women are invited to meet with the Protestant Women of the Chapel. Bible study happens Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. at Soldiers' Chapel on JBER-Richardson.

For information, email jber.ak.pwoc@gmail.com or call 384-1461.

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, call 552-4353, visit www.trainweb.org/msmrre or email bjorgan@alaska.net.

Borealis Toastmasters

Conquer your fear of public speaking with Toastmasters. This safe, friendly club helps build confidence through speeches, feedback and listening in a supportive environment. Meetings are Thursdays in Room 146 of the BP building from 7 to 8 p.m.

For information, call 575-7470.

Wired Cafe for Airmen

The Wired Cafe at 7076 Fighter Drive has wireless Internet access and programs for Airmen in the dorms. There are free meals Fridays at 6 p.m.

For information, call 552-4422.

Storytime for Toddlers

Pre-school-aged children can join zoo staff for stories about an animal species, followed by meeting animals, starting at 10:30 a.m. Mondays at the coffee shop.

For information, email camp@alaskazoo.org.

Chapel services

Catholic Mass

Sunday
8:30 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel

11:30 a.m. – Chapel 1

Monday through Friday
11:40 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday
11:30 a.m. – Chapel 1

Thursday
11:30 a.m. – Hospital Chapel

Confession

30 minutes before Mass at the chapel in which Mass is being celebrated, or anytime by appointment. Call 552-5762 or 384-5907

Religious Education

For religious education summer schedule, please call the Religious Operations Center at 552-5762.

Protestant Sunday Services

Liturgical Service
9 a.m. – Chapel 2

Gospel Service
9:30 a.m. – Chapel 1

Community Service
10:30 a.m. – Chapel 2

Collective Service
11 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel

Contemporary Service
5 p.m. – Chapel 1

Religious Education

For summer religious education schedule, please call the Religious Operations Center at 552-5762.

events & activities



Check out the May
Alaskan Adventurer



SUMMER CELEBRATION

July 14 - 18
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
at the Arctic Oasis

FREE FUN DAYS

• MONDAY •

Popcorn

• TUESDAY •

Crafts

• WEDNESDAY •

Pajama & Movies all day

• THURSDAY •

Dollar Day: Dollar hotdogs, mini golf, rock climbing & more

• FRIDAY •

Snow Cone

All items are available while supplies last.

552-8529
Bldg. 9497 JBER-Elmendorf

8 Ball Pool Tournament

At the Warrior Zone • Bldg. 655

July 12

2 p.m.

Sign-up in advance

For more information call 384-9006



Warrior Extreme PAINTBALL COURSE

2 Acre Woods-Ball Course



FREE Air Refills



No CO₂ Refills on Site



Paintballs

Bag of 500: \$16⁵⁰
Box of 2000: \$65

Safety Package

(If you bring your own gun)

Includes: Vest, Face Shield, & Neck Guard all day for \$10

Full Equipment Rental Package

(If you have absolutely nothing)

Includes: Gun, Vest, Face Shield, Neck guard, & 20oz Air bottle.
all day: \$15 ea (8 - 12 people)
all day: \$12 ea (13 - 23 people)
all day \$10 ea (24 - 30 people)

Open for Military

Events/Training
& Special Events
Reserved Parties only.

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Wrap It Up Alaska campaign hopes to reduce STD rates

Recent spikes in numbers cause for concern

By Chris McCann
JBER Public Affairs

Layer into a shot glass:
1/3 ounce youth
1/3 ounce alcohol
1/3 ounce lust
Top with a liberal dash of un-preparedness.
(Youth can be substituted with more alcohol, if desired.)

The recipe: perhaps disaster. Since 2000, Alaska has the first- or second-highest incidence in the United States of chlamydia (and other sexually transmitted infections and diseases).

There is a high percentage of military personnel in the two most populous areas, Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Troops under the age of 25 compose almost 40 percent of the military population; and in 2012, 83 percent of the cases of chlamydia in Alaska were in people under the age of 30, according to the state Department of Health and Social Services.

Statistically, service members are in a risk group.

Troops also are tested for HIV annually, which many may assume tests for all diseases; it doesn't.

While most STDs are curable, some, like chlamydia, don't cause many symptoms; testing is the only way to know if you have it.

Chlamydia can cause a host of other health issues, even for men, possibly resulting in infertility. In 2013, DHSS reported 5,792 new cases of chlamydia and 1,135 of gonorrhea.

Healthcare providers throughout Alaska have reported 20 new cases of HIV and 20 cases of infectious syphilis just in 2014 – almost

as high as the total numbers for all of 2013.

Syphilis usually starts with a single sore, which then goes away. Later, there is often a rash, and general malaise, which again seems to “go away on its own.”

It doesn't; it's another latent stage. Untreated, it can cause blindness, brain and nerve damage, and progressive destruction of bones, joints, and blood vessels.

Treated promptly after infection, it takes only a single dose of penicillin to cure. Waiting more than a few months may necessitate more treatments.

The Centers for Disease Control reports that individuals infected with STDs are two to five times more likely to acquire HIV – and HIV-positive people are more likely to transmit the virus to others.

The DHSS released fliers in May reporting a spike in syphilis and HIV among men who have sex with men.

Fifty-five percent of the new HIV cases and 91 percent of new syphilis cases were in that demographic.

One common denominator in the increased rates of infection, especially among men who have sex with men, is finding multiple sexual partners using smartphone apps or online hookup sites, officials said.

In some cases, individuals don't even know the partner's real name, only an online nickname. That can make tracking down previous partners difficult after a diagnosis.

Substance abuse also contributes to risk – whether it's an intoxicated hookup or having sex with a person who contracted a disease with an infected needle.

While all forms of sex carry some risk of disease, “safer sex” consists of using condoms, limiting the number of partners or practicing mutual monogamy, and both partners being tested (and treated for any infections) before having sex.

Public health officials advise if you're having sex outside of a mutually monogamous relationship, you should get tested for all



(U.S. Air Force graphic/Chris McCann)

STDs at least annually.

If you're in a higher risk bracket – having many partners, for example – get tested more often, and treat any diagnosed infections promptly.

With the repeal of “don't ask, don't tell,” there is no reason for a service member to avoid getting tested or treated at the troop medical clinic or the JBER hospital.

If, for some reason, an individual doesn't want to, there are

other options, like local clinics – or even through the mail.

Free condoms are often displayed, free for the taking, in military medical treatment facilities.

The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, supported by the CDC and other governmental agencies, hosts *iknowmine.org*, a website dedicated to helping people live healthier lives, with an emphasis on STD prevention.

Their “Wrap It Up Alaska”

campaign offers free condoms online.

They also have partnered with *iwanthekit.org*, a program with the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, which provides free STI test kits.

A person can order a kit, provide samples in the privacy of home, and mail it back to the university; postage costs less than \$3. Results are provided via telephone or email.

Breaks, sprains and growing pains: orthopedics expands

By Air Force Staff Sgt. William Banton
JBER Public Affairs

A buzzing, reminiscent of a barber's shop, fills the room.

Air Force Col. Benjamin Kam, an orthopedic surgeon and the commander of the 673d Surgical Operations Squadron (MSGs), places the vibrating saw to his forearm as he explains it uses oscillation to pulsate through hard surfaces without cutting through skin.

This allows the staff of the 673d Medical Group orthopedic and podiatric clinic to remove casts from patients with broken limbs – without worrying about hurting them in the process.

This is only one example of the daily grind of the service members who labor to fix bones, joints, ligaments and muscles on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson – a task immense enough to justify their clinic's expansion.

The service provides a wide range of orthopedic and podiatric treatment for disorders of the musculoskeletal system.

These can include trauma and over-use injuries, degenerative and autoimmune joint disease, sports injuries, joint infections, hand-related problems, and podiatric care.

“The focus of this clinic is to take the injured and get them back to whatever it is they do,” Kam said. “Whether it's jumping out of an airplane, flying a jet or maintaining those planes, it's a vital role we play to the community here.”

This focus contributes to what Air Force Maj. Andrew Puckett, 673d MSGS podiatry element chief, considers one of the busiest assignments of his career.

“From the stand point of [patient] per surgeon, everybody is very busy; we actually do a pretty high number of cases,” Puckett said.

The clinic here operates at the same volume as a major medical center, Puckett said. At JBER, the majority of treatment for patients is kept in-house because of the limited options available in Alaska.

“It's a wonderful thing that's happening to us,” said Air Force Maj. Tucker Drury, 673d MSGS orthopedic surgery chief. “It's allowing us to be more flexible in accommodating our patient's needs because not all patients can come in at a certain time. That was one of the restraints we had at the last clinic.”

“We had so many providers that we couldn't all be in the clinic when we need to be. Now we can all be here simultaneously and it allows us to meet each patient's individual needs a lot better,” Drury said.

Officially opening last month, the new clinic provides patients with a larger room for diagnostics and building casts, additional administration office space and additional



Senior Airman Jessica Stoudmire, 673d Orthopedic and Podiatric Clinic orthopedic technician, wraps casting tape around a patients' wrist on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson July 10. Stoudmire uses a stockinette and webroll under the casting tape to separate the patients' skin from the cast. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Tammie Ramsouer)

room for examinations.

This expanded space allows patients to move through the clinic with greater ease; due to the nature of their injuries, patients may have crutches, canes or other limitations to their mobility.

“With our capabilities, more than likely we are going to bring the patient here, just because we have more [abilities] as far as casting [broken bones] and they can get looked at better here,” said Air Force Master

Sgt. Eric MacFarlane, a 673d MSGS orthopedic technician.

These abilities also allow on-call doctors to remain mobile and take equipment with them if they need to, but usually they try to treat emergency patients in the cast room, MacFarlane said.

Highlighting the little details that help make patients feel welcome – like the extra-wide doors or the painted racing stripes on the walls – Kam emphasized the importance

of the new clinic is and the mission of the orthopedics and podiatry clinic.

The work his staff does is more important than the building they work in, but having the room helps.

“In large part, we are able to help people who've sustained a significant injury, like a professional athlete, and return them to play,” Kam said. “The mentality we have is ‘where are we in returning you to play, to your mission, to your game?’”

