



Chief Master Sgt. JJ Little is the 3rd Wing command chief master sergeant at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Little spent the first decade of his military career in the Army as a field artillery cannon crew member. After a short break in service, Little joined the Air Force in 2000. (U.S. Air Force photo/David Bedard)

AD ASTRA PER ASPERA

By David Bedard
JBER Public Affairs

If Chief Master Sgt. JJ Little’s life was a poem, its meter would be flush with success – while its punctuation would be equally rife with failure. Little, the 3rd Wing command chief master sergeant, said if he has learned anything from his career, it is success comes to those who aren’t afraid to fail.

“I think we do ourselves a disservice because we seek perfection so much, that we give no latitude for failure,” the Lodi, California, native explained. “I am blessed because I’ve had leaders who allowed me to fail, who then turned around and showed me how to fix it without kicking me in the shins.” Little said he decided to pay his leadership’s generosity forward in his effort to invest in a younger generation of successor Airmen.

“You can be an encouragement,” Little said of leaders. “You can use some of those experiences, like the successes and failures I have had. It’s good to know that not everyone is going to excel at everything they do.” For Little, failure was a big part of his life early on. Equally significant was Little’s determination to find success despite often mounting challenges.

High school dropout

It seemed like a teenaged Little was headed nowhere fast. In high school, he developed a reputation as a fist fighter who got more than he gave. At the age of 16, the future Air Force leader dropped out and took a job busing tables. Little said he knew he needed direction. When he turned 17, he told his less-than-thrilled mother he was going to enlist.

His first visit was to the Marine Corps recruiter. They immediately rejected Little on account of not having a high school diploma.

Initially, the Army recruiters told Little they weren’t interested in him either. However, they allowed him to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, a test he scored very highly on. The Army recruiters were suddenly interested in the determined recruit.

The Army enlisted Little as a cannon crew member with airborne option. He went to the Fresno Military Entrance Processing Station three hours from his home, asking his mother to make the trip

to sign paperwork for the minor to enter Army service – a choice that wouldn’t be without its challenges.

“I was looking for discipline,” Little recalled. “I was looking for guidance. My first three years – certainly the first two – were not very successful.”

The challenges stemmed from an initial inability to fully adjust to military ideals during his first assignment at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

He still had a fighting spirit, but instead of fighting with his fists, he fought with a set of values that sorely needed adjustment.

“It took me a long time to move from my own moral standard – about how things should or should not be done – to move to a standard of truth that was more in line with what the military had,” Little said. “Once I figured out I was measured against their standard, and not my own, I was very successful because I would just figure out what the standard was. It wasn’t hard.”

A man who would help Little adjust to the Army lifestyle was his first sergeant, a hard-boiled Vietnam veteran who called the skinny Californian “chicken” and “yardbird.”

Little said he quickly got the impression the noncommissioned officer hated him. His suspicions were seemingly verified when the first sergeant summoned Little to his office, calling him “dumber than a bag of wet hammers.”

The admonition stemmed from the first sergeant’s discovery Little wasn’t a high school graduate.

He told the young Soldier he had two options: Little could report – in uniform – to an area high school every Monday morning, or he could visit the Fort Bragg education office to earn his GED.

Little chose the latter, earning the education that had eluded him until a leader challenged him to be better.

“As a young man, I thought the guy hated me,” Little said of the first sergeant. “But if the guy hated me, would he have ever called me in the office and set me straight on the path toward education?”

Overcoming fear

Few people have jumped out of a perfectly good airplane as many times at Little as in his military career. Little said he lost count of how many jumps he has logged. According to his official biography,

Little has more than 3,000 jumps between his Army and Air Force careers.

But on his first jump at Fort Bragg – called his “cherry jump” – Little endured a hard landing that almost changed the course of his story. Suffering a concussion and bruised ribs, and enduring an extended hospital stay, Little swore off jumping for good.

Time and a change of heart, however, would prevail on him to get in the harness again. He would have to lean on his new-found set of Army values to overcome his emotions.

“One of the lessons I learned was you have to have fear in order to have courage,” Little explained.

“It took me about a year and a half to get the courage to overcome that fear to start jumping again. But once I did, it was like an obsession for me.”

A camel and a lesson

Desert Storm. 1991. Two CH-47 Chinook helicopters flew just above ground level in an effort to evade Iraqi air defenses, 155-mm howitzers dangling beneath the flying machines.

Upon touchdown behind enemy lines, the Chinooks disgorged a score of U.S. artillerymen. Quickly, the Soldiers swarmed the 15,000-plus-pound cannons to promptly get them into action.

Once Little’s gunner placed the correct firing data into the sight and traversed and elevated the gun properly, Little peered into the optics to check the gunner’s work.

“Fire!” Little yelled. The gunner pulled the trigger mechanism, cueing a concussive boom from the gun.

A 100-pound projectile ripped through the desert air before a rocket motor kicked in, increasing its range from 14 to 18 miles.

Knowing the rounds would find their mark deep in Iraq, Little’s crew quickly prepared their howitzer for extraction. The CH-47s returned, rigged the howitzers, and picked up the crews for their expeditious trip back to Saudi soil.

As impressive as the howitzer raids were, Little said he learned more about leadership from the mundane details of the combat deployment.

When leadership identified Little as the youngest sergeant in the unit, they assigned him as the field sanitation NCO.

His first mission: remove a

dead camel from an artillery firing point.

Upon consulting the appropriate field manual, Little discovered animals were to be disposed of by burning. It seemed easy enough, he said. His detail simply needed to move the camel to the firing point burn pit. Little issued orders and left.

An hour later, the young NCO returned only to find the detail standing around looking at the camel. Infuriated, Little asked the crew why they hadn’t carried out their charge. An older specialist, holding an idle shovel, said it wasn’t a small thing to move a camel weighing more than half a ton.

Little scolded the detail, seized the shovel from the Soldier’s hands, and plunged it into the ribcage of the animal. The furious sergeant jumped on the shovel – and the animal burst open, much to the disgust of onlookers.

The odious episode made for an important lesson.

“That’s when I learned don’t ever ask your guys to do something that you’re not willing to do,” Little said. “It was like Leadership 101 for me.”

Knees to the breeze

After the war, the 82nd Airborne Division was looking for jumpmasters to volunteer for duty with the Advanced Airborne School. No one was volunteering.

Seeing an opportunity, Little threw his hat in the ring.

Selecting officials at first showed reluctance at his request due to his youth and inexperience. Little pushed back with persistence and mettle, and the officials relented.

During his tenure at the AAS, Little volunteered with the 82nd Airborne Division’s All-American Free Fall Parachute Demonstration Team. Later, Little successfully tried out for the United States Army Parachute Team “Golden Knights.”

“What I learned from the Army Parachute Team was how to be a representative of the service – how to act in a professional manner in the public eye,” Little said. “I learned to talk to a diverse group of people – from mayors to actors to a 5-year-old licking ice cream who’s trying to pack your parachute for you.”

See LITTLE • A3



716th EOD departs for nine-month Kuwait deployment

By Sgt. Brian Ragin
4/25 IBCT Public Affairs

Paratroopers assigned to the 716th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment, 725th Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne), 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, packed themselves and their equipment aboard a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft Sunday and deployed to Kuwait for a nine-month rotation.

The 716th recently returned from a training rotation at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, California.

The training at NTC readied the unit for the deployment, according to Capt. Eric Kufel, who is assigned to the 725th.

“We performed exceptionally well in our rotation to NTC in support of 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division,” said Kufel. “[Paratroopers with the 716th] are more than prepared to support [U.S. Strategic Command] as their contingency-response force for EOD support in the region in Kuwait.”

Lt. Col. LaHavie Brunson, commander of the 725th “Centurions,” said he was confident in his team as they embark on their mission.

“We are one of the best brigades in the Army, without a doubt,” Brunson said. “There is only one unit that’s going forward to take care of business, and that’s our guys. In the last 13 years, we found out that we cannot win a fight without EOD.”

While operating in Kuwait, Spartan paratroopers will work daily alongside military service personnel from Kuwait and other partnering nations stationed in the region.

Approximately 40 explosive ordnance disposal specialists with the 716th deployed to Kuwait for the nine-month rotation.

The rest of the unit’s paratroopers will continue their important work here in Alaska responding to unexploded ordnance disposal requests from all around the state.



Explosive ordnance disposal Soldiers follow Basic Combat Training with 39 weeks of training at Fort Lee, Virginia. During that time, they learn the fundamentals of electronics and how to identify U.S. and foreign munitions. They also study demolition materials and the procedures and operations for using them, as well as the basics of chemical and biological ordnance and operations. Armed with the best tactical and technical training, they locate, identify, and dispose of munitions – from improvised explosive devices to nuclear weapons.

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Leadership at every level

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BOSS

SPARTAN



PEGASUS

Deadhorse

drop tests

paratroopers’

arctic skills

By Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Smith
4-25th IBCT Public Affairs

DEADHORSE, Alaska — Paratroopers with U.S. Army Alaska’s 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division performed the largest U.S. airborne mission north of the Arctic Circle in more than a decade Feb. 24 during Spartan Pegasus 15.

The exercise demonstrated their unique ability to rapidly mass power on an objective in an extremely cold, austere environment.

The airborne operation, spearheaded by the Spartan Brigade’s 6th Brigade Engineer Battalion, inserted nearly 150 paratroopers, along with arctic-mobility equipment including a Small-Unit Support Vehicle and arctic sustainment gear.

The large-scale exercise involved intricate planning and coordination among several military components, including U.S. Army Alaska, the Air Force and the Alaska Air National Guard.

The exercise validated Soldier mobility across frozen terrain – a key fundamental of USARAK’s mission as the Army’s northernmost command.

The air support package included two Air Force C-17 Globemaster III aircraft and two Alaska Air National Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft to fly the task force more than 800 miles north of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Pegasus was a joint operation. Maj. Kirby Chacon, with the Alaska Air National Guard at JBER, said working closely with the Army for Spartan Pegasus helped further relations, and that just being able to practice for real-world applications is important for both branches.

Army Capt. John Kline, commander of B Company, 6th BEB, said Spartan Pegasus demonstrated USARAK’s unique airborne and arctic skill sets as well as the unit’s ability to work closely with joint military partners.

“We do a lot of joint partnership missions,” Kline said. “We work with our Air Force brethren out of JBER and the Alaska National Guard as well as many other partners from across Alaska.”

“This exercise showcases the rapidly-deployable capabilities of the paratroopers,” Kline continued. “The arctic paratrooper can really survive in extreme conditions and can [deploy] in very short response time.”

USARAK is the Army’s proponent for extreme cold-weather training.

As home to the Northern Warfare Training Center, USARAK validates the training concepts taught there through operations across the state – including within the Arctic Circle and even at the top of Mount McKinley.

Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Wallace, who trained



Paratroopers with U.S. Army Alaska’s 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, snowshoe across the drop zone during Exercise Spartan Pegasus Feb. 24 at Deadhorse, Alaska. Spartan Pegasus allows USARAK to maximize training resources across multiple units to maintain readiness in a wide array of mission sets across the Arctic and Pacific region. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Daniel Love)



Paratroopers with U.S. Army Alaska’s 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, hook up their static lines as they prepare to exit a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft during Exercise Spartan Pegasus Feb. 24. (U.S. Army photo/Sgt. Brian Ragin)

for the extreme cold at the NWTC in Black Rapids, said the training was beneficial because it taught him key arctic skills that he uses while training across Alaska.

“The Northern Warfare Training Center can get a little cold,” joked Wallace. “But it was a good experience. Our equipment allows us to operate down to about negative 40 [Fahrenheit], and coming up here [to Alaska] gave me the unique opportunity to get on skis for the first time in my life. Learning how to ski and how to snowshoe allows us to be

more mobile while on the ground.”

Adding to the exercise’s success were the command-and-control communications provided by the 307th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 516th Signal Brigade.

The mission marked the farthest north a command post node has been established by the unit – a key factor in the success of the overall mission.

The various military components were able to maintain constant contact with each other allowing for efficient order issue and

receipt during the entire exercise.

Though the mission was at the top of Alaska, it was tracked by the Department of the Army as an emergency deployment readiness exercise.

With all jumpers and gear safely on the tundra, the airborne team once again demonstrated USARAK’s ability to work closely with joint military partners to respond to emergencies and contingencies in the harsh arctic environment of Alaska and other parts of the Asia-Pacific region.

Carter: ‘Sad math’ of sequestration won’t resolve fiscal woes

By Claudette Roulo
Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON — Sequestration isn’t the law of the land because it makes sense, it’s the law because of political gridlock, Defense Secretary Ash Carter told Congress Wednesday.

Carter was joined by Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in presenting the president’s proposed defense budget for fiscal year 2016 to the Defense Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee.

Carter said he studied the budget proposal carefully and believes it is the right way forward.

“Most importantly, I strongly support the president in requesting a defense budget above the artificial caps of the Budget Control Act – that is, above so-called sequester levels – next year and in the years thereafter,” he said.

Any bill which locks in sequestration would be both unsafe and wasteful, the secretary said.

Bulwark against disorder

Around the world, it is America’s leadership and American service members who stand between

order and disorder, he said.

They “stand up to malicious and destabilizing actors, while standing with those who believe with us in a more secure, just and prosperous future for all our children,” Carter said.

“But this Congress will determine whether our troops can continue to do so,” the defense secretary added. “By halting the decline in defense spending imposed by the Budget Control Act, the president’s budget would give us the resources we need to execute our nation’s defense strategy.

“But – and I want to be clear about this – under sequestration, which is set to return in 211 days, our nation would be less secure,” he noted.

The tragedy of sequestration is this “corrosive damage” to national security is not a result of objective factors, logic or reason, he said.

“It’s surely not the case that the world has suddenly become more stable, or that America has less to do to keep it safe, allowing us to take a peace dividend of some kind,” Carter said.

“It’s not even that these cuts solve the nation’s overall fiscal challenges – because the sad math is, they are large and sudden

enough to damage defense but fail to resolve our long-term fiscal issues and the real drivers of the deficit and debt,” he said.

“... Sequester is purely the fallout of political gridlock. Its purpose was to compel prudent compromise on our long-term fiscal challenges – a compromise that never came,” Carter said.

Blocking reform, making waste

In addition, sequestration has been coupled with constraints on the department’s ability to reform, Carter said.

“We at the Pentagon can and must do better with getting value for the defense dollar,” he said.

“Taxpayers have trouble comprehending, let alone supporting, the defense budget, when they hear about cost overruns, insufficient accounting and accountability, needless overhead, excess infrastructure, and the like.”

The defense secretary said the department is committed to pursuing savings, but Congress must allow it to implement needed reforms.

“Reforms involving elimination of overhead and unneeded infrastructure, retirement of older force structure, and reasonable

adjustments in compensation – have been denied by Congress at the same time sequester looms,” he said.

And instead of savings, sequester has caused more waste, Carter said, as uncertain budgets force contract reductions and drive up unit costs.

Sustaining the defense strategy

If sequester returns, the current approach of incremental budget cuts will not be enough to sustain the objectives which anchor the defense strategy, the defense secretary said.

“We would have to change the shape, and not just the size, of our military – significantly impacting parts of our defense strategy. We cannot meet sequester with further half-measures,” he said.

“... I will not send our troops into a fight with outdated equipment, inadequate readiness or ineffective doctrine,” Carter said, “but everything else is on the table – including parts of our budget that have long been considered inviolate. This may lead to decisions that no Americans – including members of Congress – want us to make.”

Decisions made now will have

far-reaching effects, Carter said.

“I am not afraid to ask the difficult questions, but if we are stuck with sequestration’s budget cuts over the long term, our entire nation will have to live with the answers.”

Building the future force

“So instead of sequestration, I urge you to embrace the alternative – building the force of the future,” Carter said. “[A force] powerful enough to underwrite our strategy, equipped with bold new technology, leading in domains like cyber and space.

“Attracting and retaining the best Americans to our mission. Being lean and efficient throughout this enterprise and showing resolve to friends and potential foes alike,” he said.

The defense secretary told the committee he hopes that together, Congress and the DoD can again unite to protect Americans and make a better world.

“And I hope we can provide our magnificent men and women of the Department of Defense – who make up the greatest fighting force the world has ever known – what they need, and fully deserve,” Carter added.

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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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From **LITTLE • A-1**

Little said he struggled his first year on the team, signifying a theme that was turning into a life pattern.

“Almost everything I did – my first year – I was horrible at,” he said. “It took me a while to get good at anything.”

The chief said the key to overcoming failure is a persistent resolve.

“It’s a can-do attitude,” Little elaborated. “It’s ‘I’m not going to let this beat me. I’m going to continue to press forward.’ It’s looking at challenges as opportunities.”

While on the road, Little met his wife at the Chicago Air and Water Show.

Gone 280 days a year with the Golden Knights, Little said he thought family life and his assignment were incompatible. With his enlistment up, the Army staff sergeant hung up his jump boots.

Aim high or stay home

After leaving the Army, Little studied forestry at North Carolina State University, biting off more than he could chew with 22 semester credit hours.

He quit college, then got a job scheduling flight crews for a major airline.

“I didn’t like the job at all,” Little said. “It was six days a week, 12 hour days ... It was a great organization, but it just wasn’t the same as being in the military.”

Little said his wife could see civilian life wasn’t working out for him. She encouraged him to join back up.

The Army recruiter said they would take the former E-6 back, but he would have to lose two pay grades and come in as a specialist.

“I said I didn’t care,” Little recalled. “Just send me back to Bragg.”

At the last minute, the recruiters said they wanted him to be an active duty in-service recruiter for the Irving, Texas station. He didn’t want to do that, and the Army recruiters cut him loose.

The Air Force recruiter had other designs for Little. He told the former Soldier the Air Force had need of his skill set, showing him a recruiting video for combat control.

Reporting to Lackland Air Force Base (now Joint Base San Antonio), Texas, for training, Little

ran into some problems when he reported to the base clothing and sales store with his uniform allowance.

“I’m this very Army-centric guy,” the chief said. “They give me \$1,500, they tell me to buy my uniforms, and I don’t have a freak-ing clue about Air Force uniforms at all.”

Little filled a shopping cart with the uniform items he thought he should have, including technical sergeant stripes that were the wrong size. Fortunately for the newly minted Airman, the store clerk would set him straight.

“She said ‘You’re all messed up. Let me get you squared away,’” he said. “She put all the stuff back, walked me around, and helped me out.”

Again, Little would struggle in his new environment.

Little reported to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, where he would serve as an air traffic controller.

Eventually, the senior controller pulled him aside for what amounted to a firing.

“He said ‘You’re a great NCO. You’re a great leader. We really like having you. But you’re a little too intense. Have you ever thought about TACP?’ That’s how I got into TACP, and it was a great fit.”

As a tactical air control party specialist, it was Little’s job to call in close air support for Army and Marine Corps units. His first assignment as a TACP: Fort Bragg, with the 14th Air Support Operations Squadron. Little had come full circle.

Danger close

A Navy F-18 Hornet rolled off the deck of an aircraft carrier bouncing in the Mediterranean Sea and headed for Iraq’s Nineveh Province.

As a fast mover, the pilot would count on a TACP Airman on the ground to help him support Soldiers of Fort Wainwright’s 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team. That Airman was Little.

It was his second combat deployment as an Airman following a tour in Afghanistan.

As much as Little struggled as an air traffic controller, he seemed to fit right in with Soldiers and Marines who needed him at the worst of times.

“Generally, people aren’t looking for close air support until things are pretty bad,” he said. “And then



Chief Master Sgt. JJ Little, 3rd Wing command chief master sergeant, signals during a jump with the United States Army Parachute Team, the Golden Knights. Little served with the team for five years and has logged more than 3,000 jumps between his Army and Air Force service. (Courtesy photo)

they really need it.”

Of the 14 months Little was assigned to Eielson Air Force Base – a stone’s throw from Fort Wainwright – he was deployed to Iraq for 10. His son was sick and needed treatment at a children’s hospital in Denver, cutting his Alaska assignment short.

At his new assignment at Fort Carson, Colorado, Little was presented with a unique opportunity – attending the Marine Corps Staff NCO Academy Advanced Course.

Once again, Little was called to represent his service; this time he was representing the Air Force to the few and proud.

The first morning, he showed up wearing the Marine physical training uniform – minus the MARINES script on his chest. He could hear Marines murmuring about the Airman who would be joining them. The temporarily anonymous Little had one goal: beat everyone in fitness.

“I went there with the intention of kicking everyone’s tail in PT,” Little said. “I had trained very hard at 14,000 feet atop a mountain just

to come there and do well on their PT standards.”

Little accomplished his goal, earning the course’s Gung Ho award for his PT performance.

“I trained hard for that darn thing,” Little said, gazing at the Ka-Bar knife at the center of the award sitting in his office. “Of course, all the air was sucked out of the room when they announced who the winner was.”

Back to Alaska

After a tour in Hawaii, Little reported to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson where he would serve as the commandant of the Elmendorf Professional Military Education Center.

Gleaning from his experience with Marine Corps PME, Little worked with base leadership and his counterpart at the U.S. Army Alaska NCO Academy to establish an exchange between the schools.

Airmen could attend the Army’s Warrior Leader Course, and Soldiers could attend the Air Force’s Airman Leadership School.

Little said he wished he had done an inter-service professional exchange earlier in his career. He said such exchanges are important because the parochial way of doing business is outdated

“We don’t fight like that anymore,” Little explained. “And because we don’t, we need to get our junior NCOs to start working together and understanding the differences – cross-cultural competencies – between the services.”

After his time at the Elmendorf PMEC, Little moved across the base to the 3rd Wing headquarters.

Now, he spends a lot of his time visiting with Airmen working on the flightline, in hangars and in shops.

He said it is important for all Airmen to understand their vital place in the wing’s efforts.

“We confuse our importance to the fight based on our proximity to the fight, and we should never do that as Airmen,” Little said. “That chain has to happen for every career field in our Air Force.

“There is a logistics and a support chain that is huge,” he continued. “It must have long legs. None of the things we can do when we’re delivering airpower on the battlefields of yesterday, today and tomorrow can happen without everyone firing on all cylinders and doing their best at every level.”

By any account, being the command chief master sergeant of a composite wing signifies a successful career. Little would tell anyone he didn’t get to where he is without challenges, without failures. But he didn’t let those failures turn into patterns that would derail his military service.

When he ran into problems enlisting at the recruiting office, Little found another way to secure the discipline and direction he was looking for. When he suffered a bone-crushing landing during his cherry jump, the Soldier found a way to surmount his fears and make parachuting a passion for life. When he struggled in a career field that wasn’t a good fit for him, the Airman found the best way to serve the Air Force and the nation as a TACP.

Little’s life may have been punctuated by failure, but through extensive investments from those around him, hard work, and perseverance, the prose of his life’s story is one of success.

1 GERONIMO TROOPS THROW ROUNDS DOWNRANGE



ABOVE: Pfc. Ryein Weber, assigned to A Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, qualifies with the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon on Grezelka range at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Tuesday. The M249 is an American adaptation of the Belgian Fabrique Nationale Herstal Minimi, a light machine gun, and has seen action in every major conflict involving the United States since the U.S. invasion of Panama in 1989. (U.S. Air Force photos/Justin Connaehr)

ABOVE LEFT: Pfc. Ethan Adamson, assigned to A Co., 1-501st Infantry and a native of Milan, Ill., waits to qualify at the Grezelka range on JBER Tuesday.

LEFT: Pfc. Aaron Hadley, of A Co., 1-501st Infantry, qualifies at night Wednesday with the M240 machine gun at the Grezelka range on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Hadley is a native of Petersburg, Ind.

Air Force dining changes

Due to rising costs and perceived abuse, the Air Force Food and Beverage Program Office has instituted additional guidelines at the Iditarod DFAC, Provisions On Demand, and “campus dining” locations.

JBER-Richardson DFACs are not impacted.

Customers are authorized three meals daily, but portions have been defined to maintain program viability.

Restrictions include one entrée per serving – one steak, one sandwich, or one pasta dish; seconds are limited to dine-in customers; and only two beverages and two snack items like chips or cookies may be taken per meal period.

Shift workers may take two meals in one visit; they will be rung as two separate transactions and count as two of the daily meals.

Transactions are monitored and tracked daily.

For more information, contact the Food Program Office at 552-0379.

Special victim counselor

Victims of sexual assault are entitled to legal assistance services.

Army Capt. Callin Kerr provides special victim counseling services at Fort Wainwright and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Communication is protected by attorney-client privilege.

The SVC ensures the victim’s rights, as outlined in the Crimes Victim Act, are protected.

Those rights include being treated with fairness and respect; being reasonably protected from the accused offender; being notified of court proceedings; being present at all public court proceedings related to the offense; being able to confer with the prosecutor; receiving available restitution; and receiving information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, and release of the offender.

Eligible clients include all active duty military of all branches of service, mobilized Reserve Component members, retirees (and the dependents of these sponsors) who make a restricted or unrestricted report for sexual assault.

For more information, call 353-6507.

JBER tax centers open

Active duty members, Reserv-

ists, retirees, and their family members can receive free tax return assistance and preparation at JBER’s tax centers.

Volunteers are trained to prepare 1040 EZ and 1040 tax returns, and can provide advice on military specific issues, such as combat zone benefits and the effect of the Earned Income Credit. Volunteers also are also trained to deal with the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend.

All tax returns done through the centers are forwarded electronically to the IRS, and taxpayers can receive their refunds in as little as one week.

The JBER-Richardson Tax Center is located on the third floor of Building 600 and will be open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Thursday from 1 to 8 p.m.

The JBER-Elmendorf Tax Center is located on the first floor of the People Center, Building 8517 and will be open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Wednesday 8 a.m. to noon.

Walk-in service is available, but customers having an appointment take precedence.

Taxpayers will need proof of identity (military ID); social security cards and birth dates for all dependents; last year’s federal income tax return; wage and earning statements from W-2s, W-2Gs, and 1099-Rs; interest and dividend statements; bank routing and account numbers for direct deposit; amounts paid to day care providers; and day care providers’ tax identification numbers.

Appointments can be made by calling the JBER-R tax center at 384-1040 or JBER-E tax center at 552-5839.

Customers can also contact a unit tax advisor, who may be able to complete tax returns at the workplace and forward it to the tax center.

Provider Drive closure

Civil Engineers are repaving Provider Drive between the Exchange and JBER Hospital through Aug. 15. Local housing will have one-lane access to Wilkins Ave.

The detour uses Westover Avenue, Grady Highway and Zeamer Avenue.

Rental Partnership Program

The Rental Partnership Pro-

gram provides active-duty personnel with affordable off-base housing and consists of two options.

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

The other option, RPP Below Market, saves the member four to five percent off the rental fee that other tenants pay however utilities are paid for by the tenant.

Both options are available with no deposits or fees with the exclusion of pet fees as may apply.

An allotment must be executed through a Housing Management Office under either option of the RPP for the rental payments.

Visit the JBER-Elmendorf HMO, Bldg. 6346, or call 552-4328. Or visit the JBER-Richardson HMO in Bldg. 600, Room 104 or call 384-3088.

DLA Document Services

Defense Logistics Agency Document Services duplicates and prints documents.

Document Services documents including black and white, color, large format, photographic prints, engineering drawings, sensitive materials, technical manuals and training materials. They also handle the design, printing and distribution of business cards, letterhead, invitations and programs.

Document Services’ Equipment Management Solutions Program provides networked multifunctional devices that print, scan, copy and fax. Production facilities offer scanning and conversion services for all types of documents.

They also offer Document Automation and Content Services, a service for building digital libraries of content with online access.

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 JBER U-Fix-it Stores are open to all Aurora Military Housing tenants. Assorted items for maintaining your home may be issued from the U-Fix-It Store. Availability is subject to change and limits; 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 on base.

The JBER-Elmendorf location is 6350 Arctic Warrior Drive and is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, closed from 1 to 1:30 p.m. for lunch, 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 at 338 Hoonah Ave., open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and closed from 1 to 1:30 p.m. for lunch.

A blind-cleaning machine is available at the JBER-E 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 information, call 753-6134.

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 be considered for jobs offered internally.

Spouses are matched with positions based on qualifications and preferences.

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.

Military spouses can register at the Civilian Personnel Office at JBER-Elmendorf or the personnel office at JBER-Richardson.

For information, contact Brenda Yaw at 552-9203.

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 delivers 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.

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).

MiCare registration

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

Patients can communicate with their primary care clinicians online, and view and maintain their health records. 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 ID 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.

Lives changed by military youth academy

By Tech Sgt. Robert Barnett
JBER Public Affairs

“I came here to turn my life around,” said Bernice Morgan. “I was just hanging around with a bad crowd. If I was still with that crowd, I’d probably end up in jail or become homeless – someone who doesn’t really have a future. In honor of my family, I chose to come here.”

“I dropped out of high school,” said Rafael Vicens. “I’ve wanted to be in the military since I was 12 years old. I was in the [Junior ROTC]. I was searching the Internet for military opportunities and came across the Alaska Military Youth Academy. It seemed like a good idea. They said I could join when I turned 16.”

Morgan and Vicens, cadets at the National Guard Alaska Military Youth Academy Challenge program, are examples of the many different lives Alaska’s youth can lead. They enrolled in the AMYA at very different points in their lives, but both had something in common: they wanted to improve themselves.

Their cycle started Oct. 1, 2014.

“I prepared myself mentally because I knew this is a tough place,” Morgan said. “It’s the first time I’ve been away from my family. The first two weeks were really hard – I cried myself to sleep every night.”

“I’m the first in my family to join,” Vicens said. “The military movie that most appealed to me was ‘Full Metal Jacket.’ Some people get appalled, but I watched it and said ‘that’s for me.’ I’m interested in [eventually joining] the Marine Corps. My main interest is for college; I want some kind of degree that will help me in law enforcement.”

The mission of the AMYA is to help intervene in and reclaim the lives of Alaska’s at-risk youth and produce graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults.

The community-based program leads, trains and mentors 16 to 18-year-old Alaskans who have left high school without receiving a credential. The program is a military structured, 17-and-a-half month residential and nonresidential high school.

“I had to get used to getting up [at 6:10 a.m.], doing physical training, time crunches like shower time and schedules,” Morgan said. “After acclimation graduation, things start getting easier. There are times I really want to quit and go home, but I just keep pushing myself.

“The training leaders say ‘You made it this far; why quit?’ You finish what you started. I push myself to the limits to finish something that’s really hard. My goal is to improve my life and show my friends I can make it through this program.”

“I’ve really been trying hard here; this is about the hardest I’ve ever worked in my life,” Vicens said. “I’ve been motivated since day one.”

Cadets are instructed in the following areas: life coping skills, academic excellence, job skills, responsible citizenship, leadership and followership, health and hygiene, physical fitness, and service to the community.

Around 20 weeks into the program, the cadets said they had already noticed change



Rafael Vicens, far right, raises his hand to ask a question during a National Guard Alaska Military Youth Academy tour of the air traffic control tower at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Feb. 14. Vicens volunteered for the academy after dropping out of high school. “I’ve really been trying hard here; this is about the hardest I’ve ever worked in my life,” he said. “[After graduation] I’ll go back to get my high school diploma; I honestly regret dropping out – I should have stayed in school.” (U.S. Air Force photo/ Tech. Sgt. Robert Barnett)

in themselves.

“Going through this program has been helping me a lot with self-discipline and integrity, confidence in myself, knowing that I can be who I want to be,” Morgan said. “I can make myself what I want to be now instead of waiting until later in life ... I thought no one would listen to me and my opinions, but when I became a squad leader or platoon sergeant, they did. In our student government, we’re making decisions that will affect the next cycle. I wasn’t really a self-confident person before I came here.”

“Last Friday, we had the board for court sergeant major,” Vicens said. “I won it; I’m the top cadet of the cycle. [I was] on top of my game in all subjects – academically, physically and behaviorally. I kept a good GPA, always turning in homework on time. I have the ability to help out other cadets who are having trouble academically and physically.”

The cadets also have to work towards completion of their General Education Diploma, high school diploma or credit recovery.

“I enjoy writing a lot [and] I’m a people person,” Morgan said. “I’m going to miss this; I’ll miss my fellow cadets and groups here. We’re still going to keep in contact. I’m going to take the respect and self-discipline with me. I’ll keep my mind open to different opinions and ways of solving problems. It’s not about what I want; it’s about what the group needs.”

“I never really considered myself a

leader, but I’m told I’ve been doing a pretty good job at it,” Vicens said. “A couple weeks ago, I started doing academics in the team leader room. I help out cadets who are on the verge of getting kicked out because they are failing classes.

“There’s this cadet in our social studies class – he’s really smart, but he never turns in his assignments. I was just helping him out, keeping him on topic. It’s really good having everybody look up to me, making my team leaders proud of me. [That] boosts my confidence. This place is great. I’ve learned a lot of management and leadership skills. I’ve met my expectations.”

Their academy schedule included tours of various military units on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson to learn about different jobs and experiences. They got to see an F-22 Raptor up close and ride in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. The cadets also took turns carrying various leadership positions a few weeks at a time.

“I was picked to be the honorary guidon,” Vicens said. “Then I became squad leader, platoon first sergeant, and [finally] all the way to corps first sergeant. I went on a board against other platoons. We tested and I happened to get it. They will pick another corps first sergeant after me; after that I get to keep the rank and I’ll be a corps master sergeant, the highest rank in the academy.”

As the big day came closer, the cadets said they looked forward to graduation.

“I still have to finish high school after this, and then I’m going to go to college

and finish my education,” Morgan said. “I’m looking forward to my family being at my graduation. They’ve given me the most support. I want them to see how much I’ve changed from the person I was before. I want them to see how much I’ve matured, my self-discipline and focus. I’m pretty excited about that, but I really do love my family with all my heart, and I thank them for supporting my decisions and everything they’ve done for me.”

“I’m here to improve and be better than I was a year ago,” Vicens said. “I was pretty different; it’s been a big change. Now, I wake up every morning extremely motivated; ready to go. I’ll go back to get my high school diploma; I honestly regret dropping out – I should have stayed in school. I should have gotten all the credits possible and then come here. I’d get even more credits and be ahead in school, graduate early and move on to better things. That’s why I came here. I plan to attend another military school in New Mexico, the New Mexico Military Institute. I’m going get my education first and go the officer route. I want a career in law enforcement.”

Morgan and Vicens graduated with their class Feb. 27.

“I want my mom and dad to be proud,” Vicens said. “I want them to see me as someone doing something that matters out there.

“There are careers that just care about money and themselves, but in the military, you’re helping other people. You’re actually changing something in society.”



Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets familiarize themselves with an Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter assigned to 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Feb. 24. The Alaska Army National Guard participated in the AMYA outreach program to expose the cadets to military life. (U.S. Air Force photo/Alejandro Pena)



Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets board an Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter assigned to 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Feb. 24. Touring operational military facilities, interacting with personnel and even getting chance to take a flight further prepare the cadets for life in and out of the academy. (U.S. Air Force photo/Alejandro Pena)



Bernice Morgan crosses the stage upon graduating from the residential portion of the National Guard Alaska Military Youth Academy Feb. 27. “I’m going to miss this,” Morgan said. “I thank [my family] for supporting my decisions and everything they’ve done for me.” (Courtesy photo)

Chasing the sun on the road to self-discovery

Commentary by Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Ronald Lawrence JBER Protestant Chaplain

I was recently reminded of something Air Force Gen. Mark Welsh, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, has often said – “Every Airman’s got a story.”

I certainly hear that loud and clear, and I find it just as true of me as it is for any of us serving, whether in blue or green.

Not long ago, I embarked on an adventure that would take me from the East Coast of the U.S. to the Last Frontier – the great state of Alaska. There I was, nearly 40 years old, being uprooted from the state where I had spent most of my life.

I wasn’t quite sure what to expect, but I was in a state of mixed emotions – not certain if I wanted to leave the place that held so many memories of joy, contentment, peace and love, along with sorrow, regrets and fears.

Still, it was the place where

all I had known, including family and friends, was so close. Life as I knew it was there.

As I made my way west, I navigated a lot of ground. I traveled across the open fields of the Mid-west, the corn fields of Iowa, and through such places as the Black Hills of South Dakota and the Rocky Mountains of Montana.

I entered the mountainous region of Idaho and crossed into the state of Washington. From there I proceeded south, and crossed the state line into Oregon.

As I drove along Oregon 84, an interesting thing happened. I began to notice that the sky was growing dark, yet the light still shone brightly on the horizon. Living on the East Coast had afforded me multiple opportunities to witness beautiful sunrises.

In fact, I have seen the sun rise and set from many places around the world. However, this was my first experience driving towards the setting sun, not quite being able to catch



(Courtesy photo)

up. It was as if I was somehow chasing the sun.

Looking back over these past few years I’ve spent in Alaska, I did not fully understand what this journey was going to mean for me.

I set out on my travels, heading toward the Last Frontier, and as I was discovering the great expanse

of real estate in between, I was discovering some things about myself.

What I realized is the “last frontier” is not about Alaska at all. I discovered the frontier I have been heading for is the vast, farthest regions of my heart.

The Christian scriptures tell me

that matters of the heart are difficult, because “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

However, there is one who searches and knows my heart better than even I do. It seems the more I pursue, the darker it tends to get.

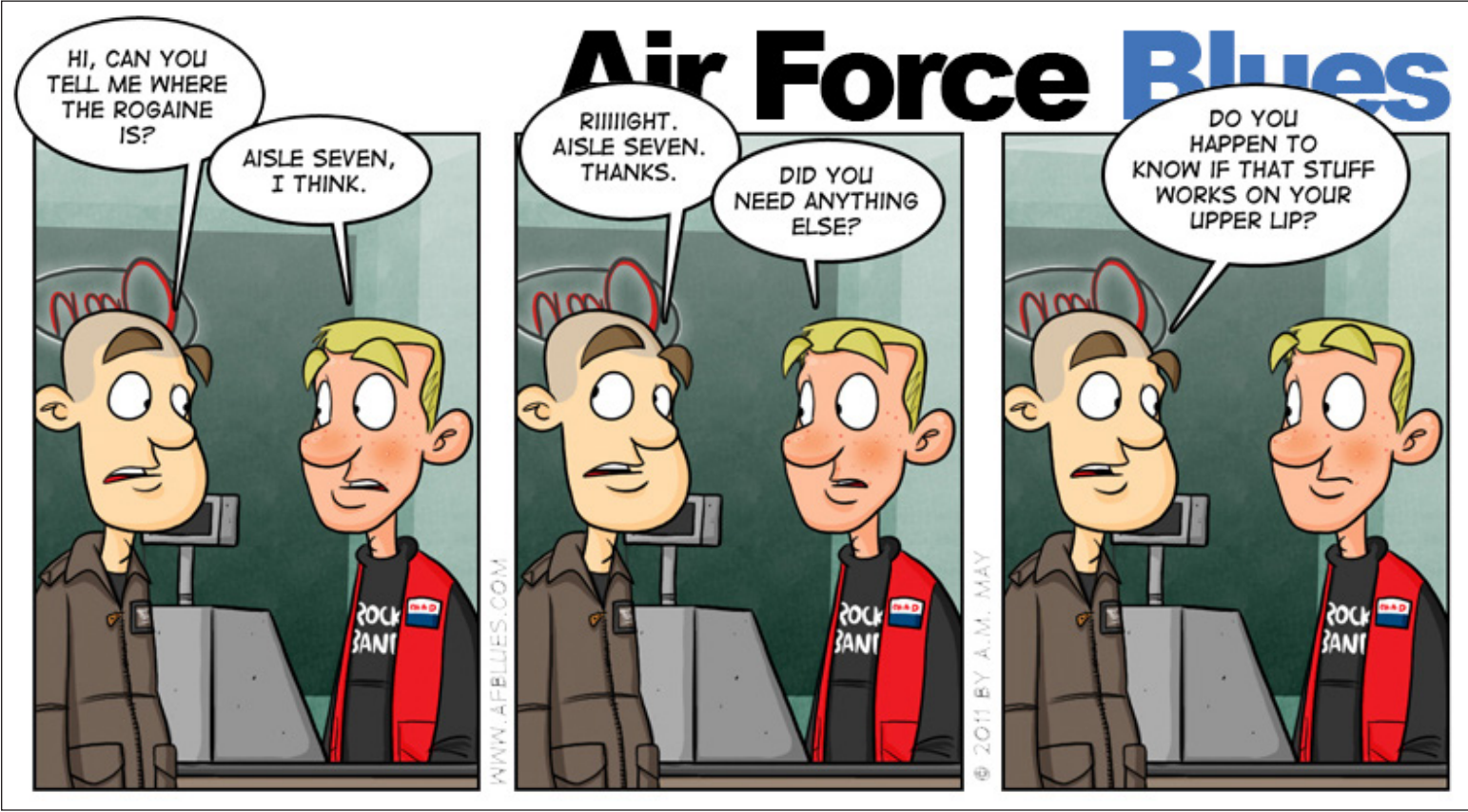
And yet, there is a pervasive light always illuminating the darkness thus allowing me to move toward a brighter tomorrow with endless possibilities.

Much that I have gone through in my life has led me here to this place, and it is here my dreams have begun to unfold. Since coming to Alaska, I have seen an ability within me come forth; I know my purpose and I have found my place.

As I learn more about myself and who I am, I realize that there are many others here that are finding this to be true for themselves.

Some people are beginning new journeys here; others are finding that their efforts in life have begun to flower in Alaska. All these things – and more – contribute to our stories. It is a wise thing to take inventory of our lives and learn from the narratives attached to each of us.

This will help us tell our story to others, and perhaps encourage them in their journeys. After all, every Airman’s got a story.



Recreation area closures

Due to the recent high temperatures and lack of adequate snowfall, the Fit-to-Fight Cross Country Ski program and the Buckner Physical Fitness Center ice rink have been closed until further notice.

The JBER Force Support Squadron will continually monitor weather conditions and will re-open facilities and programs if conditions improve.

THROUGH SUNDAY
Fur Rendezvous

Anchorage's largest winter festival is back for its 80th year with all the zany events and activities. Run with the reindeer, race outhouses, shop for furs – or bundle up for carnival rides.

Events, dates and times vary; visit furrondy.net for information.

THROUGH MARCH 15
Spring break at Hillberg

With colder nights recently, the snow base on the ski hill has maintained an acceptable level.

The hill will be open throughout spring break as planned from noon to 8 p.m. each day.

For information, call 552-4838 or visit facebook.com/hillbergski-area.

FRIDAY
Youth Center Spring break

Starting today and throughout spring break, both the Kennecott and Two Rivers Youth Centers will open at noon for students to enjoy their time off from school.

For information, call 552-2266 or 384-1508.

Youth Center Bowling

Youth center members can enjoy an afternoon of bowling at the Polar Bowl starting at 2 p.m. Hosted by the Two Rivers Youth Center.

For information, call 384-1508.

Teen roller skating

Calling all teens: the Kennecott Youth Center hosts a roller-skating outing at Royal Roller Rink from 6 to 10 p.m.

For pricing and information, call 552-2266.

Give Parents A Break

Newly arrived or have a deployed spouse and need child care for a few hours? The Katmai Child Development Center and Ketchikan School Age Program host this program from 7 to 11 p.m.

For information, call 552-5113.

THROUGH MARCH 27
Neon Bowling

All military E-4 and below receive a 10 percent discount every Friday night during March from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Polar Bowl. Gather your friends, bowl in the neon lights while enjoying today's top music hits.

For information, call 753-7467.

FRIDAY AND MARCH 9, 12, 13
Spring break bowling

Knock down some pins at the Polar Bowl during spring break. Special pricing each day for two hours of unlimited bowling, shoe rental included.

For information, call 753-7467.

MONDAY
Youth movies at Tikahtnu

Youth center members, enjoy a movie with your friends at Tikahtnu Cinemas. Trip departs from the Kennecott Youth Center.

For departure time and pricing information, call 552-2266.

Night hoops

Teens, got basketball skills? Grab you friends and get your hoop on from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Kennecott Youth Center.

For information, call 552-2266.

MONDAY THROUGH MARCH 13
TAP seminar

The Transition Assistance Program Goals, Plans and Success seminar takes place Mon. through Fri. from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Air Force Transition Center. Call 552-6619 to register.

Teen tech week

Kennecott Youth Center members, spend the week creating 3D printing projects. Center opens at noon throughout the week.

For information, call 552-2266.

Spring break science club

Explore the science behind the five senses; see, touch, taste, smell and hear. This program designed for school age children will take place from 3 to 4 p.m. Mon. through Fri. at the JBER library.

For information, call 384-1640.

TUESDAY
Scavenger hunt and skating

Teens, head to the Dimond Mall ice rink with the Kennecott Youth Center from 5 to 9 p.m. for ice skating and a scavenger hunt.

For information, call 552-2266.

Parents Night Out

Parents, need a date night? Let

the professional staff at the Juneau Child Development Center care for your children from 6 to 10 p.m.

For more information, call central registration at 384-7483.

THROUGH FRIDAY
Lifeguard certification

Interested individuals – military, family members, or Department of Defense civilians – ages 15 and older who would like to become a certified lifeguard must take this course.

Course runs Tues. through Fri. from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Buckner fitness center. There is a mandatory swim test prior to starting the course.

For information, call 384-1301.

WEDNESDAY
Teen Youth Center events

Teens, take advantage of a full day of fun with your youth centers.

Get your game and grub on at Chuck E. Cheese's from 1 to 4 p.m. with the Kennecott Youth Center.

Take a trip to the mall with your friends departing from the Two Rivers Youth Center starting at 3 p.m.

End the day with a movie night from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Kennecott Youth Center.

For information, call the Kennecott or the Two Rivers youth centers at 552-2266 or 384-1508.

THURSDAY
Youth Center events

Head to Hillberg for some tubing. Trip departs at 3:15 p.m. from the Two Rivers Youth Center.

Teen movie outing at Tikahtnu Cinemas from 4 to 8 p.m. departs from Kennecott Youth Center.

For information, call the Kennecott or the Two Rivers youth centers at 552-2266 or 384-1508.

MARCH 13
Youth Center events

Youth, head to H2O Oasis from 1 to 4 p.m. for a day of aquatic adventures. Trip departs from the Kennecott Youth Center.

Youth, enjoy a movie night starting at 5 p.m. at the Two Rivers Youth Center.

Teens, get your golf swing on at Putter's Wild from 6 to 8 p.m. for some 3D putting action. Trip departs from the Two Rivers Youth Center.

Teens, enjoy movies from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Two Rivers Youth Center.

For information, call the Kennecott or the Two Rivers youth centers at 552-2266 or 384-1508.

MARCH 14
Youth bowling tourney

Bring your kids out to the Polar Bowl for a 9-pin-no-tap tournament from 1 to 3 p.m.

Every participant will be entered into a drawing for a gift card at the Pro Shop.

For information, call 753-7467.

Madden tournament

Think you've got gaming skills? Enter a Madden football tournament starting at 2 p.m. at the Warrior Zone.

To sign up, call 384-9006.

UFC fight night

Come watch the fight starting at 3 p.m. at the 907 Sports Bar & Grill.

An Alaskan Fighting Championship fighter will be present to commemorate the event and to sign autographs.

For information, call 384-7619.

St. Patrick's Day bowling

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a Lucky Shamrock strike tourney at the Polar Bowl. Sign-ups start at 6 p.m.

Or, enjoy a Luck o' the Irish Party from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. Wear something green for a chance to win prizes.

For information, call 753-7467

MARCH 14 THROUGH 15
Dog Sledding

Ever wanted to try your hand at mushing? Come out to Hillberg Ski Area between noon and 5 p.m. for sled dog rides, a uniquely arctic experience.

For information, call 753-7467 .

Catholic Lenten services

Stations of the Cross are celebrated every Friday at 6 p.m. in the Arctic Warrior Chapel followed by a short meditation and meatless soup, bread and salad meal.

Lenten reconciliation service is Mar. 24 at 6 p.m. in the Arctic Warrior Chapel. Several priests will be available for the sacrament.

Palm Sunday Masses are Mar. 29 at 8:30 a.m. in the Arctic Warrior Chapel and 11:30 a.m. in the Midnight Sun Chapel.

Holy Thursday Mass is April 2 at 7 p.m. in the Arctic Warrior Chapel; adoration to follow.

Good Friday service will be hosted April 3 at 7 p.m. in the Midnight Sun Chapel.

Holy Saturday's Easter Vigil is April 4 at 7 p.m. in the Arctic Warrior Chapel.

Easter Sunday Masses are

Chapel services

Catholic Mass

Sunday
8:30 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
11:30 a.m. – Midnight Sun Chapel
Monday and Wednesday
11:40 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
Tuesday and Friday
11:30 a.m. – Midnight Sun Chapel
Thursday
12:00 p.m. – Hospital Chapel

Confession

Confessions are available anytime by appointment. Call 552-5762.

Protestant Sunday Services

Liturgical Service
9 a.m. – Heritage Chapel
Gospel Service
9:30 a.m. – Midnight Sun Chapel
Community Service
10:30 a.m. – Heritage Chapel
Collective Service
11 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
Chapel Next
5 p.m. – Chaplain Family Life Center

Jewish Services

Erev Shabbat Service (First Friday of each month)
5 p.m. – Heritage Chapel
Call 384-0456 or 552-5762

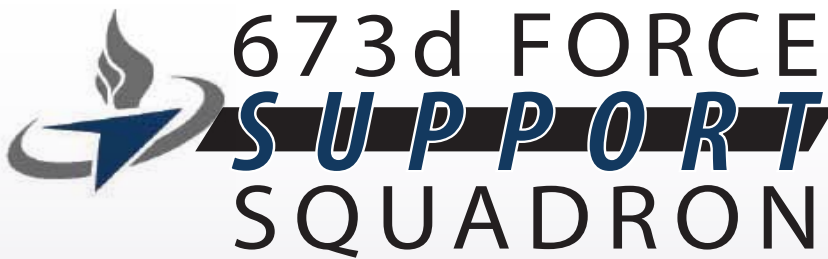
Religious Education

For religious education schedules, please call the Religious Operations Center at 552-5762 or 384-1461.

April 5 at 8:30 a.m. in the Arctic Warrior Chapel and 11:30 a.m. in the Midnight Sun Chapel.

CDCs promote literacy

Parents are encouraged to partner with CDC staff in the promotion of literacy. There will be reading competitions within each classroom. Please see your child's CDC staff for further information.



MWR events & activities



MARKETING TIDBITS
FSS = MWR

Exciting and wonderful, is the World of Science. JBER Library, located in Bldg. 7 on JBER-Richardson, is bringing this incredible world to life for school age children. Spring Break Science Club will give children a week long opportunity to be a part of that world for one hour a day March 9 - 13, 3 - 4 p.m. No pre-registration required for this FREE FSS/MWR program.

Kathryn Ruhl, a library technician from the JBER Library will be leading the Science Club and exploring the anatomy of the 5 Senses. Simple and fun experiments will be conducted that will engage young minds during every class. Library staff will draw the participants into discussion about famous people throughout history that have overcome a sensory disability.

The children will learn about Helen Keller, who could not see, hear or speak. Keller was an American author, political activist, and lecturer. She was the first deaf/blind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree. They will explore how she communicated and even excelled in life despite her limited sensory abilities.

Exploration of the 5 Senses:
Each day will focus on one of the senses:
Monday – Sight
Tuesday – Hearing
Wednesday – Touch
Thursday – Taste
Friday – Smell

On Wednesday, the students will also be introduced to special guest speaker: Kim Pace, Chairwoman of Women Studies at the University of Alaska-Anchorage. Ms. Pace will be sharing her experiences and open dialog about her adaptive lifestyle as she progressively loses mobility in her hands and legs. She will answer questions and bring an understanding of disabilities to the participants.

The staff is looking forward to the opportunity to open children's minds, stimulate their curiosity, and show them how much fun they can have Exploring the 5 Sense. FUN! FUN! FUN! For more information on this and all library programs on JBER, call 907.384.1640.

The Library invites all parents to bring their school age children to Spring Break Science Club. Library Director, Marcia Lee will be conducting story time for younger siblings during Science Club. Bring the kids and give them a chance to have fun and combat spring break boredom!

"The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity."
~Dorothy Parker.

IT'S TIME FOR A NEW IMAGE

The Alaskan Adventurer was born in 2010 when Elmendorf AFB and Ft. Richardson merged to become JBER. Now, approximately five years later, we are looking to change the name of our magazine and website again to better match the new sense of community and cooperation that was created with the joining of the two bases. In addition to the name change, our loyal readers will also notice content change on the cover of the magazine as well as inside the magazine. Your Marketing Office will strive to use more active and current pictures of the JBER community, instead of relying on stock photos.

Please take the time to vote for the new name of our magazine and website via our: Facebook & Instagram pages, or in person at some of our amazing upcoming FSS events. We will randomly award a \$20 FSS gift card to one voter through each voting option, as well as one voter per event. The last day to vote, as well as for a prize, will be May 16. The new magazine name will be revealed at a special unveiling on June 13, and will appear in print for the first time in our July issue.

Respectfully, ~Your 673d FSS Marketing Team



FREE For Club Members
(FSS Benefit Card Holders*)
\$5 for Non-Members

Ask your server about the
FSS Benefit Card!



UFC FIGHT NIGHT
MARCH 14 | DOORS OPEN AT 3 P.M.
FIGHT STARTS AT : 3:30 P.M.
AFC Fighter will be present to commentate & will be available for autographs.
Call for more information: 384.7619



Open Mic
MARCH 20 | 6 - 8 P.M.
BLDG. 9387 | 384.7619



Explore the 5 Senses
March 9 - 13
3 - 4 p.m.
JBER Library
Spring Break
Science Club
Designed for school aged children.
Free Program: No preregistration required.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAM
Bldg. 7301, 552.2023/3812
SNOWMACHINE GUIDED TOURS

WILLOW:
March 28, 8 a.m. 8- 5 p.m. \$150
Bring cold weather gear and lunch.
Helmet and transportation included.



SPRING BREAK HOURS
March 6 - 15
Noon - 8 p.m.



Birth Announcements

ARCTIC WARRIOR

March 6, 2015 **B-4**

JAN. 29

A son, Drew Barrett Skalicky, was born 22 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 13 ounces at 5:25 a.m. to Kristene Skalicky and Air Force Lt. Col. Dave Skalicky of the 525th Fighter Squadron.

JAN. 31

A son, Mateo Ults Kasinger, was born 20 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 14 ounces at 8:05 p.m. to Amelia Napo Kasinger and Tech. Sgt. Ulysses Roel Kasinger of the 773d Civil Engineer Squadron.

FEB. 1

A daughter, Clara Rose Mainolfi, was born 20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 9 ounces at 7:36 a.m. to Senior Airman Lauren Rene Mainolfi of the 673d Aerospace Medicine Squadron and Air Force Staff Sgt. James Ross Mainolfi of the 176th Medical Group.

FEB. 2

A son, Gus Dowling Jopp, was born 22 inches long and weighing 10 pounds, 8 ounces at 6:01 p.m. to Air Force Capt. Ellen marie Donohue of the 673d Dental Squadron and Harold Dowling Jopp.

FEB. 3

A son, Logan James Haynos, was born 22 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 6 ounces at 7:49 p.m. to Sally Marie Haynos and Spc. Steve Francis Haynos of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment.

FEB. 4

A son, Owen Aden Parker, was born 21 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 1 ounce at 6:15 p.m. to Elizabeth Ann Parker and Spc. Nikolai Aden Parker of the 1st

Squadron (Airborne), 40th Cavalry Regiment.

FEB. 5

A son, Samuel Thomas Ayala II, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 4 ounces at 6:15 p.m. to Mirella Sandoval Ayala and Spc. Samuel Thomas Ayala of the 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment.

FEB. 7

A son, Carter Nolan Stephens, was born 22 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 14 ounces at 4:24 p.m. to Isabelle Debussi and Cpl. Alex Joseph Stephens of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment.

A son, Paul Ryan Murphy, was born 22 inches long and weighing 10 pounds, 4 ounces at 4:59 p.m. to Amanda Kathryn Luree Murphy and Air Force Staff Sgt. Anthony Ryan Murphy of the 3rd Operations Support Squadron.

A daughter, Emma Alexandra Aspelund, was born 21 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 13 ounces at 10:30 p.m. to Air Force Capt. Chelsea Alexandra Aspelund and Air Force Capt. Daniel William Aspelund, both of the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron.

FEB. 9

A daughter, Remi Aniston Wacker, was born 18.5 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 12 ounces at 3:50 p.m. to Air Force Staff Sgt.

Heidi Elizabeth Wacker of the 673rd Medical Support Squadron and Air Force Staff Sgt. Lucas John Wacker of the 673d Comptroller Squadron.

FEB. 11

A son, Hudson James Witt, was born 22 inches long and weighing 10 pounds, 6 ounces at 7:58 a.m. to Air Force Staff Sgt. Penny Louise Witt of the Anchorage Military Entrance Processing Station and Brad Lee Witt.

A daughter, Avery Leanne Roberts, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 9 ounces at 4:17 p.m. to Cassandra Roberts and Senior Airman Johnny Lee Roberts of the 673d Civil Engineer Squadron.

FEB. 12

A son, Lincoln Archer Petersen, was born 21 inches long and weighing 9 pounds, 5 ounces at 5:21 p.m. to Beth Ann Petersen and Army 1st Lt. Justin Robert Petersen of the 1st Squadron (Airborne), 40th Cavalry Regiment.

A son, Rylan Michael Newton, was born 21.5 inches long and weighing 9 pounds, 3 ounces at 9:30 p.m. to Hayley Rebecca Newton and Army Staff Sgt. Shawn Edward Newton of the 6th Brigade Engineer Battalion (Airborne)

A daughter, Braelyn Marlene Brooks, was born 19.5 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 5 ounces at 9:42 p.m. to Courtney Lyn Brooks and Senior Airman Kyle Richard Brooks of the 3rd Maintenance Squadron.

FEB. 13

A son, Landon James Heath, was born 20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 10 ounces at 8:00 p.m. to Airman 1st Class Jessica Leigh Heath and Senior Airman Gary James Heath, both of the 673d Force Support Squadron.

FEB. 14

A daughter, Elena Hope Fremgen, was born 21 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 14 ounces at 11:22 a.m. to Ariana Hope Wallace and Airman 1st Class Shawn Lawrence Fremgen of the 773d

Civil Engineer Squadron.

FEB. 15

A daughter, Lillyanna Michele McMiller, was born 19.5 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 14 ounces at 5:02 a.m. to Crystal-Renee Northrup McMiller and Army Sgt. Timothy McMiller of the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment.

A daughter, Catalina Vera Carballo, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 14 ounces at 5:44 a.m. to Veronica Catalina Martinez and Sgt. Paul Alexander Carballo of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment.

FEB. 17

A son, Liam Ares Walter, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces at 7:53 a.m. to Army 1st Lt. Maria L. Walter of the 2nd Engineer Brigade and Jason M. Walter.

FEB. 19

A daughter, Caroline Rose Lackey, was born 20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces at 11:17 a.m. to Bobbi Korall Lackey and Cpl. Joshua Aron Lackey of the 725th Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne).

FEB. 21

A son, Derek Anthony Reyna, was born 19.5 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 13 ounces at 3:39 a.m. to Krystal Renee Reyna and Sgt. Anthony Michael Reyna of the 6th Brigade Engineer Battalion (Airborne.)

A daughter, Maddison Grace Garcia, was born 15 inches long and weighing 5 pounds at 10:47 p.m. and a son, Frank Davidson Garcia, was born 19 inches long and weighing 5 pounds, 7 ounces at 10:59 p.m. to Vanessa Garcia and Spc. David Garcia of the 725th Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne.)

FEB. 22

A daughter, Molly Ann Carlson, was born

20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 11 ounces at 1:23 a.m. to Britnee Ann Carlson and Air Force Staff Sgt. Benjamin Carlson of the 673d Logistics Readiness Squadron.

A son, Lincoln James Wheeler, was born 19 inches long and weighing 5 pounds, 13 ounces at 3:16 a.m. to Haley Brooke Wheeler and Air Force Capt. Bradley James Wheeler of the 90th Fighter Squadron.

A daughter, Abigail Rose Cook, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 12 ounces at 8:12 a.m. to Pfc. Cassandra Lynn Braden of the 205th Ordnance Company.

FEB. 23

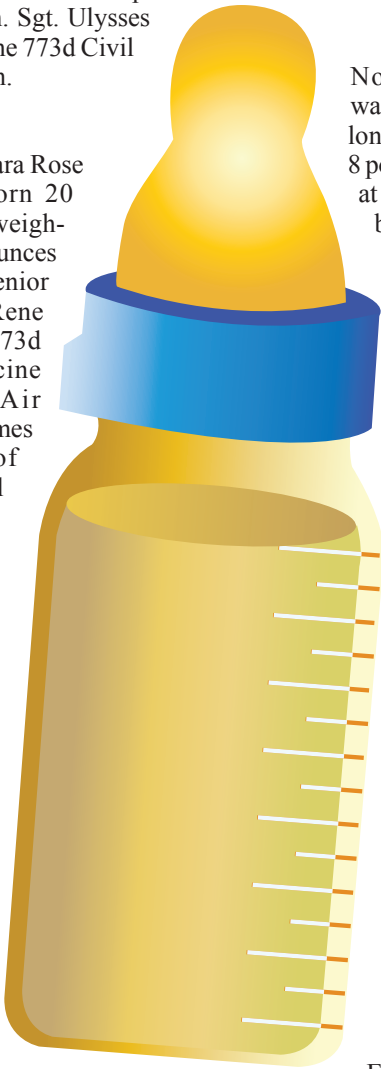
A daughter, Evelyn Louise Miner, was born 20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 5 ounces at 6:20 a.m. to Molly Ann Miner and Army Staff Sgt. Michael Anthony Miner of the 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment.

FEB. 24

A daughter, Scarlett Cheyanne Miller, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 13 ounces at 8:02 a.m. to Amanda Marie Miller and Air Force Staff Sgt. Trevor Anthony Miller of the 732d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

FEB. 25

A son, Kampbell Jacson Miller, was born 22 inches long and weighing 9 pounds, 8 ounces at 8:36 a.m. to Kehla Michelle Miller and Sgt. Justin Alan Miller of the 59th Signal Battalion.



Organization opens new doors for specialist

By Airman 1st Class Kyle Johnson
JBER Public Affairs

“I didn’t know I had been selected until I received a platoon-wide text message which read:

Congratulations Private First Class Mehring, you’ve been selected to be the BOSS president; please be in your office at 0900.”

“I sat down and, at first, was very lost,” said Spc. Natalie Mehring, of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, U.S. Army Alaska, and president of Better Opportunities for Single Service members. “It’s a whole different dynamic to being a representative.”

BOSS is an organization designed to enhance the quality of life for single Soldiers and Airmen. BOSS provides activities for the junior-enlisted force – like all-terrain vehicle trips, hiking trips and local events at discounted prices.

“We boost service members’ morale by hosting events that take them out of their barracks,” Mehring said. “So they get to truly see the beauty of Alaska.”

As a volunteer-oriented program, BOSS also provides an opportunity for junior-enlisted to make a difference in their community and stand out as leaders while they do it.

One such program is Joint Base Against Drunk Driving, which provides free rides to ensure service members can make it home safe after a night out on the town. JBADD averages 10 to 20 safely transported service members every weekend.

Mehring earned the position of BOSS president, a slot normally reserved for non-commissioned officers, as a private first class – a direct result of her extensive volunteer work as a BOSS representative for her unit.

“As representatives, we would take notes of upcoming events; ideas for upcoming events; and issues people would bring up regarding quality of life,” Mehring said. “We would brief for five minutes at the safety brief every Friday and offer volunteer opportunities for the unit.”

As a representative, Mehring organized a domestic-violence seminar which provided practical information to service members on how to protect themselves and others.

“As a representative, you push out the information, and the president tells you to make sure everyone knows about the events,” Mehring said. “As the president, I have a bigger role in what happens in the program.

“It made me nervous,” she said.

By having a position fundamentally driven by leadership, Mehring is now in a



As a private first class, Spc. Natalie Mehring of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, U.S. Army Alaska became president of Better Opportunities for Single Service Members, a position normally reserved for noncommissioned officers. Mehring, now a specialist, was selected for the position based on her extensive volunteer work as a BOSS representative for her unit. (U.S. Air Force Photo/Airman 1st Class Kyle Johnson)

position to lead in ways a junior-enlisted Soldier normally might not.

However, with opportunities come expectations.

“Due to the whole gamut of things that

need to be done, you normally put that [expectation] on an NCO

because they’re used to doing it in their natural work environment,” said Bill Miracle, BOSS advisor and program manager for the Warrior Zone. “It’s rare that you get a PFC who has it together enough to handle it. She’s an incredible speaker, she always knows what she’s talking about and she’s continually growing” Miracle said.

The role of president is a temporary duty Mehring will support until her permanent change of station.

However, within BOSS there are many opportunities service members can hop right into and begin their own path to success. One such opportunity is the role of vice president, which is considered an additional duty.

“When I first got up here, I stayed in my barracks. I

didn’t want to go out and I didn’t know anybody. I was kind of a lost private,” said Spc. Bridget Augustine, the BOSS vice president and a linguist with Delta Company, 6th Brigade Engineer Battalion (Airborne), 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division.

“After becoming more involved, I became aware of the benefits it creates. I got out there and realized [BOSS] is more than just supporting single service members,” She said. “It

creates an awareness of all the opportunities available for us.”

“What matters to me is the happiness of the service members,” Mehring said. “You get here, you don’t know anybody, you’re alone.

“I dont ever want anybody to feel that way.”

By volunteering and maintaining a positive attitude, Mehring opened the door to a unique career opportunity she can use to fuel her momentum forward.

Opportunities like this may not always go smoothly; but Mehring said it’s worth the effort.

“You have to fall a couple times before you can be strong enough to stand on your own two feet,” Mehring said. “So I have failed, I learned from it and I feel like where I am now is phenomenal.”

For more information on BOSS and how to get involved, visit their Facebook page or call 384-9023

Exploring Alaska: Denali National Park

By Air Force 1st Lt. Elias Zani
354th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Technology has drastically changed the way people live their lives all over the world, but Alaska challenges technology with an “old-world” charm.

People everywhere are fascinated by the way many of us live and what we do in Alaska.

However, one of the most recognizable features of the state is Denali National Park, home to Mount McKinley, the highest peak in North America.

During a perfect Alaska summer day, visitors from all across the world explore Denali. Alaska’s summer climate makes it an ideal tourist location, but the extreme sub-zero temperatures during the winter bring far fewer visitors to the park.

As most Alaskans and most service members stationed in the Last Frontier know, the beauty of snow-capped mountains against a perfectly painted sky keeps many veterans here for life.

Though I’ve been to Denali before, I had not explored any of the park’s 6 million acres during the winter before a couple of weeks ago.

Only a little more than 100 miles from Fairbanks, it’s one of the best day trips anyone could find in the United States. And as an added bonus, military members can take this trip and spend nothing but time and the cost of gas.

It took my wife and me a little more than three hours to make it to the Murie Science and Learning Center, which acts as the visitor’s center during the winter visiting season.

We were greeted by Wendy Mahovlic, our friendly neighborhood National Park interpretive ranger, who promptly taught us all about the myriad activities the National Park Service offers during the winter.

During the winter months the park is patrolled by around 30 of the most lovable sled dogs that you will ever have the privilege of meeting. Wendy pointed out the kennel and told us that, though you cannot ride a sled, anyone is more than welcome to go visit the dogs and speak with some of the handlers.

Even the drive to the kennel was gorgeous.

While pulling up to the kennel the sound of barking filled the air. Every one of these dogs is thrilled to greet every visitor that walks by their individual houses.

You could spend all day with these furry patrollers, but with the long list of things to do, you’ll just have to take another trip to spend time with them.

After the first couple of hours in the park,



The sun sets behind the mountains in Denali National Park Jan. 19. Denali National Park encompasses more than 6 million acres of land, containing hundreds of miles of trails and is home to Mount McKinley, the highest peak in North America. (U.S. Air Force photos/1st Lt. Elias Zani)

the Murie Science and Learning Center is a great place to recharge by the fire and enjoy the lunch you packed before exploring more of the vast wilderness.

After lunch we read some more about the park and prepared for our hike to Horseshoe Lake.

There are hundreds of miles of trails in the park – we took a quick two-mile loop that overlooked the city of Denali, which sits among the mountains of the park.

Our trail followed parts of the Alaska railroad which runs from Fairbanks to Seward. Due to how mild the winter was thus far, snowshoeing was not authorized throughout the park, but Wendy was quick to allow us to try them on and walk around the perimeter of the winter visitor’s center.

Many may not think of visiting Denali during the winter, but you really cannot claim to have seen Alaska until you have watched the sun rise over the snow-capped mountains in Denali, lighting up the valley with a soft, warm light on a crisp day.

There are not enough hours in the day to explore all of Denali, and you will yearn to visit again once you make your first voyage.



Tuya, a sled dog, rests in her doghouse after greeting a handful of park guests at Denali National Park Jan. 19. The park has nearly 30 sled dogs that patrol much of the park’s 6 million acres throughout the winter; visitors are encouraged to meet them while the dogs are not on patrol.