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The F/A-18 Super Hornet: lessons on communication from a force-multiplier

By Air Force Staff Sgt. William Banton
NE15 Joint Information Bureau

Exercise Northern Edge 2015 played host to a “force multiplier” capability giving operational commanders flexibility when employing tactical aircraft in a rapidly changing battle scenario.

The F/A-18 Super Hornet strike fighter is, according to *Navy.mil*, the nation’s first strike fighter, designed for traditional strike applications such as interdiction and close air support without compromising its fighter capabilities. But how do you integrate traditional strike applications in to the Northern Edge exercise environment, which is designed to sharpen tactical combat skills, improve command, control and communication relationships, and develop joint interoperability?

“A lot of the tactics are very similar [between the services], obviously there are different capabilities on both sides but for the most part, at the base line, the tactics are relatively similar,” U.S. Navy Lt. Nicholas Fritzhand, F/A-18 weapons systems officer. “It’s the language we use to talk about things, which is completely different now.”

NE-15 provides a unique opportunity to increase operational knowledge of other services airframes, however, for the most part, the tactical mission sets different airframes preform are similar across all branches, he said. For example, a Navy fighter is capable of doing escorts and fleet air defense but if it was assigned an attack mission it would also be able to perform force projection, interdiction and close and deep air support.

“The learning process for us is getting there after an event,” Fritzhand said. “The [mission] will take us an hour of being in the sky fighting, but we will spend four hours debriefing.”

Part of this process takes place as the pilots unwind from the day’s events.

“We may end (the day) drawing arrows (representing the day’s events) saying ‘okay when we do this the Air Force uses that kind of language,’” he said.

An advantage to a joint exercise involving approximately 200 aircraft from all service branches and units including U.S. Pacific Command, Alaskan Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Pacific Air Forces, Marine Corps Forces Pacific, U.S. Army Pacific, Air Combat Command, Air Mobility Command, Air Force Materiel Command, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve Command and U.S. Naval Reserve is the proximity to a knowledge base pilots usually don’t have access to.

“Next door there is a Raptor squadron. Next to them there is an F-15 squadron. We are able to just go over there and ask these guys, ‘Hey, when you said that what does that mean? Would you mind coming over here and drawing us some arrows? What does your tactics involve when we set this kind of presentation,’” Fritzhand said.

These types of lessons carry over to the maintainers who keep the fighters flying.

“Not many people realize the amount of inspections and maintenance we do and the number of hours we put in,” said Aviation Electrician’s’ Mate 3rd Class Lucas McLean.

People have spent days, if not weeks worth of time, just to get one aircraft off the ground we don’t want to put all that work to waste, he said.

“We have to exhaust every resource we have even if that means we have to go to every squadron and say ‘we need this part’ and if it’s not available [the aircraft] is going to get bumped out,’” McLean said.

Like the pilots, a lot of the interaction and learning on how to operate within other branches environment happens after regular duty hours.

“It’s great because they live a totally different life,” McLean said. “It’s like you’re growing up and you have couple of brothers who all go different routes in life and then you get together at Christmas. Everyone wants to talk about what they do.”

“Everyone has great stories. You get to hear about their experiences. Everyone does things slightly differently and you think your stuff is the coolest.”

‘PEACE COMES FROM THAT’



Australian Army Warrant Officer Class 2 Roderick Orchard talks about joint training operations with American paratroopers assigned to the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, U.S. Army Alaska, on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Wednesday. (U.S. Air Force photo/Justin Connaehr)

Australia, U.S. partnership takes it to the Outback

By Airman 1st Class Kyle Johnson
JBER Public Affairs

Next week, the 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry (Airborne), 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division is scheduled to jump with Australian jumpmasters as part of the joint forcible entry operation dubbed Operation Talisman Saber.

The operation serves two primary functions.

“The purpose of the exercise is first and foremost to reinforce our bilateral relationship with Australia,” said Lt. Col. Matthew Hardman, commander of the 3-509th. “For us it’s all about deterring potential adversaries and reassuring neighbors, and we do that together.”

“Peace comes from that.”

Talisman Saber is routinely performed every other year, but the scope of the operation is anything but ordinary, Hardman said.

They will jump into the Kapyong Drop Zone – named after a historic battle in the Korean war – in Shoalwater Bay Training Area, Queensland, Australia.

The troops will leave JBER, fly more than a dozen hours, and exit an aircraft on a continent many of them have never been to before while under operational leadership from another country. Afterward, they will perform ground operations for the rest of the day before turning around and flying back to Alaska to do it all over again the next day at the Malemute Drop Zone, Hardman said.

“It’s as close to as real as possible,” Hardman said. “I think the [troops] are looking forward to that.”

Successfully completing the operation requires the strategic assistance of the Navy,

Marines and Air Force, Hardman said.

“There’s a joint strategic reach capability that’s critical here, our ability to reinforce and support allies as well as to respond to crisis around the world,” Hardman said.

“Demonstrating that capability is critical to show we are able to do what we say we can do.”

Part of that strategic reach is careful and efficient planning coupled with effective communication with sister branches and Australian forces.

To that end, over the past two and a half weeks, a few Australian jumpmasters and instructors have been at JBER to help prepare 3-509th paratroopers for the operation ahead of them.

“We’ve been working with the battle preparation with the 509th and going through jump rehearsals,” said Warrant Officer Class 2 Roderick Orchard, a jumpmaster and instructor with the Australian Army. “The troops here are very professional.”

Jumping into a foreign continent can be scary, but Australia, like Alaska, is well known for its unique wildlife.

“That’s probably the number one thing we’ve been asked,” Orchard said. “What’s going to bite me and kill me?”

Both parties received briefings concerning the unique dangers of the other’s operating environment; something they share lighthearted jokes about.

While wildlife safety is something which is taken seriously, sometimes a bit of good-natured humor can help assuage concerns.



“We have nine of the most venomous snakes in the world,” Orchard said. “We’ve got lots of vaccines for our snakes, but I have yet to see a bear vaccine!”

To prepare 3-509th paratroopers for the operation, Orchard and his compatriots have jumped with them here in their own drop zone over the past few weeks.

The drop zone was named after the Battle of Kapyong, Korea, April 23 and 24, 1951, in which the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment forces held their position against overwhelming odds as enemy forces attempted to recapture the city of Seoul.

According to the Australian War Memorial’s website, the Battle of Kapyong became known as the most significant and important battle for Australian troops in the Korean War.

The Australian regiment received support from Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry during the battle, and were relieved by U.S. Army troops.

Both the Australian and Canadian battalions received United States Presidential Distinguished Unit Citations for their part in the battle.

The same interoperability that provided success in that battle is still being honed today through Operation Talisman Saber.

“The 509th’s been a great host since we’ve been here,” Orchard said. “It’s been great to work with you guys and see the procedures and see how they work.”

“You’ve been doing a great job – and I’ll be looking forward to working with you again.”

Be safe and vigilant this holiday weekend

By Brian Bruckbauer
673d Air Base Wing and JBER commander

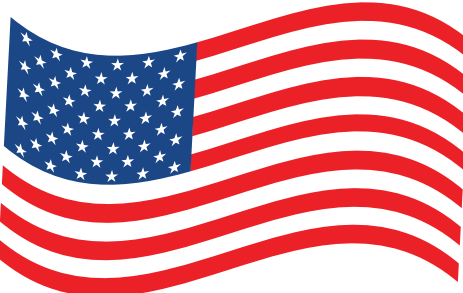
This Independence Day marks the 239th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

As we reflect on the heritage and values of the United States, I would like to thank each service member, civilian and family member for your devotion to duty and professionalism that protects our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The holiday weekend is a time to gather with friends and family, but is traditionally one of the most hazardous weekends of the year. Plan your activities wisely and, as professionals, manage the risk of those activities.

Swimming, fishing, boating, cycling and traveling all pose significant risks. Hazards which are not properly identified and controlled cause accidents.

Responsible use of alcohol is also an important consideration when engaging in any activity. Many fatal accidents and serious injuries occur because of the



impairment of decision-making caused by alcohol. Have a plan and stick to it. If your plan falls through, call Joint Base Against Drunk Driving at 384-RIDE.

The Anchorage area and JBER are currently under a burn ban. This means no open or wood fires. Covered gas and charcoal are approved for use, and every precaution must be taken to avoid errant flames or sparks from spreading.

Fireworks are banned on the installation and in Anchorage, with stiff fines for violators – and a high risk of causing a destructive fire. This ban may change; for the most current information, visit afd.muni.org and the JBER website.

I also want to emphasize the importance of maintaining our vigilance and situational awareness to guard against a multitude of ongoing threats.

Terrorism remains an enduring, persistent, and worldwide threat throughout the Indo-Pacific region and our homeland. Terrorism comes in many forms and can happen at any time. Remember, a vigilant effort of detection and prevention is our greatest weapon in the fight against terrorism.

Be watchful, and if you see something suspicious, contact local law enforcement, call iWatch Army at 384-0823 or 384-0824, or Air Force Eagle Eyes at 552-2256 or 552-4444.

All of us must be engaged at every level to influence the mindset that leads to safe behavior. Please continue to enforce standards, share and apply your safety knowledge, watch out for each other, and work together as a team to ensure you, your teammates, and your loved ones’ safety.

I wish you and your families a safe and enjoyable Independence Day weekend.

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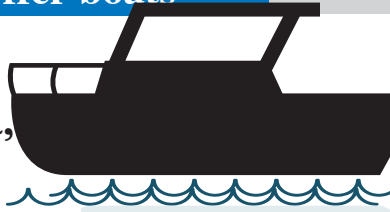
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No selfies: three basic steps to better leadership skills

By Senior Master Sgt. Bryant Roy
962nd AACs Superintendent

If you’re following what’s going on with the enlisted force and rollout of the new Enlisted Performance Report, you’ve probably heard and read a lot about the word “performance” when it comes to how we will identify those ready for promotion.

I’ve found most noncommissioned officers are very open to the changes, and have been disgusted with the notion (real or perceived) that Airmen who ace a fitness assessment or volunteer for every community service project under the sun were most likely to be recognized and advance.

However, I’ve also noticed a blind spot which seems to materialize when I’ve asked some of the same NCOs to define high performance.

They wax poetic on all manner of performance related to their badge and trade. For example, my enlisted aircrew will speak about earning exceptional aircrew qualification ratings, maintaining mobility readiness at all times, developing vast technical expertise and Airmanship, and so on.

Without question, those are essential factors in determining operational excellence, and I’m certain a group of Security Forces K-9 handlers (or any enlisted Airman, for that matter) could provide a similar list related to their career field.

When they were finished with that, however, I’d point at the chevrons on their sleeves or rank on their name patches and ask “What about those?”

No matter which badge you wear, the common thread that we share as enlisted Airmen are performance factors related to those stripes.

For the purpose of this article, noncommissioned officers, I’m looking at you right now.

Execution of the duties and responsibilities commensurate with your stripes will be a deciding factor in who the top-performing enlisted are; operational excellence is only a part of that.

Your abilities as an effective leader, follower and teammate are equally important as, if not more so than, your ability to perform your technical duties.

Developing your leadership philoso-



The time to cultivate leadership philosophies is as a young NCO – not when you’re sewing on master sergeant stripes. (U.S. Air Force photo/Justin Connahee)

phies and skills is of utmost importance; I urge you to start the process sooner rather than later.

The time to cultivate your leadership approach starts as a young NCO, not when you are sewing on master sergeant stripes.

I offer three suggestions to enhance your performance as an NCO in today’s Air Force: be courageous, build trust, and be selfless.

Be courageous. Stories of courage on the battlefield are held in high regard, so why is supervisory courage often overlooked? I often see NCOs shy away from confrontation with subordinates, especially during feedback and when making necessary corrections.

They are quick to tell peers and leaders of the trouble, as if expecting or hoping that someone else will address the problem. When told to take the issue on, many supervisors will alibi to the subordinate that the “flight chief made me do this” instead of owning the matter themselves.

The Air Force needs honest NCO leaders who are not afraid to tactfully and professionally tackle issues to increase productivity and enhance long-term development of Airmen. My top performing, most influential supervisors were those who had the courage

to confront me when I was wrong, offer context and solutions, and build some opportunities to recover.

Be selfless (No “selfies”). If you’ve spent any time walking around in Alaska, you’ve probably noticed the hordes of tourists and residents alike with their omnipresent “selfie-sticks,” snapping hundreds of pictures of themselves with beautiful landscape backdrops.

I understand the “look at me” mentality is pervasive in our modern culture, and if you need proof just spend 10 minutes browsing the social media platform of your choice.

It’s evident in our supervisory ranks as well. I’ve observed some NCOs are proficient at talking about their own careers, writing their own reports and award packages, but, sadly, they don’t exert the same effort when recognizing their subordinates and what they bring to the table.

Want to be a higher-performing NCO? Put down the selfie stick, get serious about knowing and investing in your Airmen, and make others the focus of your picture.

A simple daily tactical-level application of this concept would be each time your unit leadership enters your duty section, stand up and brag for a few minutes on one

of your people.

I’m confident your leadership will appreciate the positive report and you will build goodwill with your Airmen. If you can’t seem to find anything good to say, it’s very possible you don’t know them, aren’t challenging them, or are too busy examining your own belly button lint.

Build trust. This is where your operational expertise and enthusiastic attitude sets the tone. Your subordinates, peers, and superiors all see you doing the mission, and doing it well.

This doesn’t necessarily mean that you are out there turning wrenches, delivering intelligence briefings, or updating databases personally, but if needed you are ready and proficient to get the job done or help others in doing so.

You should not be above working a detail or task alongside your Airmen now and then; they will know that you have not lost touch with their reality.

Trust extends to administrative diligence and excellence; regard tasks such as writing reports and decorations as an honor to take care of your subordinates. After all, they have been entrusted to your care and are a reflection of you.

The tips above all relate directly to our core values; my goal was to provide just another way of looking at each and applying them to your career.

Be courageous = integrity first. No selfies = service before self. Build trust = excellence in all we do.

Commanders, supervisors and other leaders will communicate performance factors and standards related to your specialty, but the stripes that you wear dictate performance as a noncommissioned officer – which is a common element across the entire enlisted force.

Operational and professional excellence are attached at the hip; to progress to higher levels of responsibility, make it a priority to excel at both.

By emphasizing performance as NCOs and technicians – in ourselves and others – we will meet the Air Force’s intent with the new performance evaluations and feedback system, and continue to complete the mission while developing and investing in our future.

Marine Corps’ KC-130J Hercules provide power for NE2015

By Chief Petty Officer Larry Foos
NE15 Joint Information Bureau

JOINT PACIFIC ALASKA RANGE COMPLEX, Alaska — High above the Gulf of Alaska and Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex, dozens of fighter jets engage in lengthy and complex joint combat missions for Northern Edge 2015.

At one precise moment, two Navy F/A-18F Super Hornets break engagement toward the welcome sight of a KC-130J Hercules flown by Marine Air Fueling Transport Squadron (VMGR) 152, of Iwakuni, Japan.

Simultaneously, the Hercules reels out hoses to both Super Hornets for air-to-air refueling, delivering 10,000-plus pounds of aviation fuel to extend the jets’ operation.

The operation was one of more than 20 sorties VMGR-152 completed for Northern Edge, providing as much as 1.5 million pounds of aviation fuel delivered by its two KC-130Js participating in the two-week, biannual exercise.

“We’re flying air refueling tactical missions at Northern Edge,” said Marine Capt. Todd Kirkman, Hercules pilot for VMGR-152. “The [battlefield commanders] are doing a good job of simulating an operational environment out here. You can be thinking you’re heading in one track and all of a sudden they say, ‘Hey there’s jets up north that need gas. You’re going up there now.’”



A U.S. Navy F/A-18 Hornet of Air Test Squadron (VX) 9, China Lake, California takes fuel from a U.S. Marine Corps KC-130J stationed in Iwakuni, Japan, over the Gulf of Alaska while participating in Exercise Northern Edge June 22, 2015. More than 200 military aircraft from all services practiced operations, techniques and procedures while simultaneously enhancing interoperability during Exercise Northern Edge 2015 – Alaska’s premier joint training exercise. (U.S. Navy photo/Lt. Edward Cartagena)

Northern Edge afforded the Marine squadron to do something rarely done before – conduct aerial delivered ground refueling to a U.S. Navy P-3 Orion of Patrol Squadron (VP) 46 on King Salmon, a remote area on the Alaska Peninsula.

The KC-130Js commonly deliver fuel on the ground for Marine helicopters and tactical ground vehicles as an expeditionary maneuver, but not for Navy aircraft.

“It’s a new mission for the Navy. The P-3 crew were definitely excited about doing it,” Kirkman said. “We were able to re-arm the P-3 with fuel and sonar buoys to enhance its range capability.”

The KC-130Js completed air-to-air refueling for three F/A-18 squadrons participating in Northern Edge 2015, including Strike Fighter Squadrons (VFA) 147 and 154 of Lemoore, California and Air Test and

Evaluation Squadron (VX) 9 of China Lake, California. The joint exercise proved a valuable training experience for the VMGR-152 Marines as well.

“We’re a support unit. Here they’re running aerial battles. It’s not something we get to experience very often within our small unit training. You have to keep your head on a swivel and your mind running for what’s coming next,” said Kirkman.

Airborne Air Control Squadron tests upgraded AWACS during exercise

By Chief Petty Officer Larry Foos
NE15 Joint Information Bureau

Calmly soaring at 30,000 feet in the midst of nearly 100 fighters, bombers and refueling tankers executing a battle scenario, an Air Force E-3G Airborne Warning and Control System surveys every aircraft in a 300 mile radius, calling out commands, verifying target hits and sending aircraft back home safely.

Threat detection, improvisation, air battle management – it was all part of a typical mission for the E-3G crew of the U.S. Air Force 964th and 966th Airborne Air Control Squadron out of Okla-

homa City during Exercise Northern Edge 2015 in the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex.

“We provide the command and control of the aircraft. It’s our job to oversee what’s going on, and in real time, make changes in the air,” said Air Force Maj. Dan Sprunger, 964th AACs mission crew commander. “We run the tanker plan so when guys need gas, we send them there. If guys need to fall out, we shift aircraft around. We’re like the chess master of the game.”

With as many as 24 weapons officers, surveillance officers, radar and communication technicians, and flight deck crew on a single E-3G Northern Edge mission,

the AACs gained not only valuable, high-tempo warfare experience, but also met specific testing goals.

The E-3G aircraft carries an upgraded computer platform for their weapons and surveillance scopes, known as the 4045.

It advances their old operating system by about 30 years.

Northern Edge enabled AWACS personnel to try the new system and they quickly learned the value of the new features.

“It provides more situational awareness,” said 1st Lt. Breann Hermann, 964th AACs air weapons officer. “You can personalize it and now you can build unlimited

airspace. It’s more reliable and more technologically advanced.”

After each mission, the crew provides feedback about how the 4045 system worked and offers potential areas of improvement. Overall, they said, it’s been a success.

“The system cuts down on (operator’s) steps. The ease of use is drastically higher, and the tracking process goes faster,” Sprunger said.

By the end of the two-week exercise, the AACs’ squadrons will have completed approximately 15 command and control missions using both old and new systems.

Both AWACS aircraft effec-

tively brought dozens of aircraft in and out of the battle range safely and successfully hitting their targets.

Alaska’s premier joint-training exercise, Northern Edge combined approximately 200 military aircraft from all services to practice operations, techniques and procedures.

The exercise enhances interoperability within the JPARC and the Navy’s Temporary Maritime Activities Area located in the Gulf of Alaska.

Some 6,000 Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen from active duty, Reserve and National Guard units participated in the two-week event.

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/ 673d Air Base Wing Commander Col. Brian R. Bruckbauer (USAF)
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/ 673d Air Base Wing Vice Commander Col. William P. Huber (USA)
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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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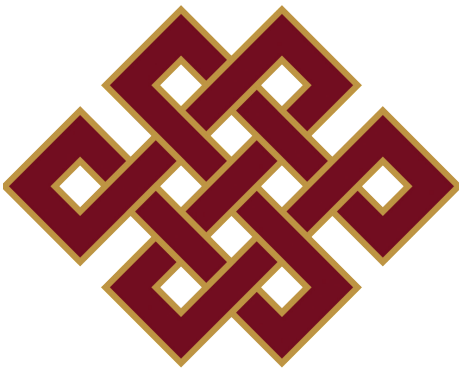
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KHAAN QUEST OF MONGOLIA



ABOVE: Sgt. Alexander Catevenis, of U.S. Army Alaska's 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, lead instructor for the medical field training lane, checks the tourniquet on a simulated casualty during Exercise Khaan Quest 2015 at Five Hills Training Area in Tavantolgoi, Mongolia, June 25. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/ Sgt. Balinda O'Neal)
LEFT: Baigalimaa Maruush, a senior surgical nurse with the Mongolian Armed Forces, instructs Spc. John Hahn, with 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, on how to provide medical attention to a simulated casualty during Exercise Khaan Quest 2015. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Sgt. Balinda O'Neal)
BELOW: Alaska Army National Guardsman Spc. Matthew Millette of the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade conducts perimeter security during cordon-and-search training June 24.(U.S. Army National Guard photo/Sgt. Marisa Lindsay)



673d LRS fueling flight keeps Northern Edge aircraft flying

By Chief Petty Officer Larry Foos
NE15 Joint Information Bureau

Over the course of the two-week-long exercise known as Northern Edge 15, participants practiced tactics, techniques and procedures in vast Alaskan training ranges. The designated training areas include 42,000 square nautical miles in the Gulf of Alaska, 65,000 square miles of airspace and nearly 2,500 square miles of land space known as the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex. The planned high operational tempo of Exercise Northern Edge and the influx of manpower and machinery created several logistical hurdles. Critical to these missions is the accurate allocation and timely delivery of fuels. The 673d Logistics Readiness Squadron at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson stepped up to the pump to deliver an average of 360,000 gallons of fuel to Exercise Northern Edge participants and home station units

every day. Keeping these state-of-the-art fighters, air transports and support vehicles operational is a complex and well-orchestrated logistical dance of planning, maintenance and manpower. A fleet of R-11 Refuelers, each boasting a 6,000 gallon capacity are dispatched and able to dispense up to 600-gallons a minute into awaiting aircraft. “Prior to the start of Northern Edge, 18 R-11 Refuelers serviced an average of 50 aircraft a day, dispensing as much as 150,000 gallons of fuel,” said Senior Master Sgt. Ronald Crowl of the 673d LRS. “In anticipation of the influx of aircraft, two R-11 Refuelers and seven crew members were added to assist with the demands of the exercise.” Transports and fighter aircraft filled with personnel and equipment landed at Alaska bases just days before the start of Northern Edge 15 – each staking claim to sections of flightline.

In all, 36 units from across the Asia-Pacific theater and the Lower 48 set up temporary homes in hangars spanning the four corners of the airfield. “Since the start of the exercise we have had a sound line of communication between the Fuels Service Center and the air wings, allowing us to best coordinate deliveries,” Crowl said. “We were prepared to be overwhelmed and with an addition of a fourth shift to create an overlap of drivers, I’d say we are performing like a well-oiled machine.” The professionalism and innovations demonstrated by the 673d LRS Fuels Management Flight were recently recognized by the American Petroleum Institute with an award as the best in the Air Force for 2014. “We are very proud of the hard work we do and the innovations we have instituted to better our operations,” said Tech. Sgt. Ronald Aragon, 673d LRS. More than a hundred launch and recover-

ies are performed daily during the exercise, where advanced aircraft like the Navy’s F-18 Super Hornet and the Air Force’s F-22 Raptor provide refueling crews different challenges and communication strategies between the services. “This exercise has been a great opportunity to learn about the difference and similarities of each platform,” said Airman 1st Class Sengchanh Seuam, 673d LRS Petroleum, Oils and Liquids – Fuel Distribution operator. The sharing of information will be invaluable when working in a joint environment. Northern Edge is one in a series of U.S. Pacific Command exercises in 2015 that prepare joint forces to respond to crises in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. More than 6,000 service members and approximately 200 aircraft from every branch of the military have descended on JBER and Eielson Air Force Base to participate in the biannual exercise.

Combat engineers seize, clear ‘enemy’ airfield during exercise

By Marine Cpl. Tyler Giguere
NE15 Joint Information Bureau

High in the sky, chutes opened wide as men and women parachuted onto an enemy airfield. After quickly grouping together, the engineers seized the surrounding location and pushed on to establish a presence on the runways. Combat engineer mine sweepers moved in while other combat engineers set up an area of fire. With the area secure, engineers hastily mobilized vehicles and equipment to begin repairs to the damaged runways. The engineers with the 6th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, were participating in a simulated airfield seizure during a mission as part of Northern Edge 2015. The main goals of the exercise were to see how well the engineers could repair damaged runways and to test joint service airborne drop capabilities.

“We are out here today on Allen Army Airfield; my battalion just jumped in to do an airfield seizure as a part of Northern Edge 15,” said Lt. Col. George H. Walter, the battalion commander for the 6th BEB. “Northern Edge 15 is a joint multi-component and multi-composition exercise involving about 6,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen.



Combat engineers with the 6th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, seize Allen Army Airfield and begin clearing the airfield in preparation for engineers to begin runway repairs at Fort Greely during Exercise Northern Edge June 17. Thousands of Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen from active-duty, reserve and National Guard units are involved. (U.S. Marine Corps photo/Cpl. Tyler S. Giguere)

It’s a part of a large operation taking place in Alaska, which is one of the premier training grounds in the United States,” Walter said. “In addition to being a great place to train, it has strategic importance with the access we

provide by location to the rest of Pacific.” The exercise has a large focus on joint-service cooperation, which involves multiple bases and units from all over the globe. “We parachuted in by U.S. Air

Force aircraft,” Walter said. “Once my force had assembled and we reached minimum combat power effective to go out and do our mission, we secured the area via blocking positions at the screen line, we established our fires – which are

internally provided – as well as external fires provided by the Air Force, which is flying overhead of us and Marine Corps ANGLICOs [Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Companies] on the ground.” One of the primary objectives was the repair and recovery of the taxiways and runways. The engineers used a variety of heavy vehicle equipment and man portable equipment to conduct the mission. “Today we did our airfield seizure, part of the joint airfield seizure operation,” said 2nd Lt. Paul Rogers, a platoon leader for B Company, 6th BEB. “My platoon has the light airfield repair package [which] is an aerial delivery system that repairs airfield runways.” A Marine Corps Force Reconnaissance Company team surveyed the airfield prior to the Soldiers’ arrival and reported the damage they found. The damage was initially thought to have been worse, but after assessments the airfield was determined to only have light surface damage. “We are able to jump into any airfield, and once the area has been established, we assess the surface for any damage, and then we can repair that,” Rogers explained. The successful repair of the runway allowed for follow-on forces to land using the airfield, aid with resupply, and allow for aircraft take-offs.

WAPS/EES roadshow

Personnel from Headquarters Air Force and the Air Force Personnel Center will host a briefing Tuesday at the Talkeetna Theater to share information about changes to the Enlisted Evaluation System and Weighted Airman Promotion System.

Experts will discuss changes already implemented and those to come, and the reasons for the changes. The executive course for raters, especially noncommissioned officers and leaders, is at 10:45 a.m. All are invited to classes at 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.

For more about the changes, go to the myPers website at *https://mypers.af.mil*

Road closures

Finletter Avenue will be closed from 5th Street to 9th Street through July 17.

The north end of Fighter Drive is closed until July 17.

West Sijan Avenue will be closed beginning June 1 for water line maintenance.

For information about any of the closures, call 982-4433.

Pharmacy renovations

The JBER hospital pharmacy in the main building is undergoing renovations through November.

There will be three functioning windows and a slight reduction in waiting area; wait times will increase slightly, especially during lunchtime and other peak hours.

When renovations are complete, there will be six windows, 100 percent more waiting area, and an expanded inpatient pharmacy.

JBER recreational access

The Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson recreational permit fee costs \$10 for active duty, military-affiliated and civilian personnel. Senior citizens 60 years of age and older, and those disabled 50 percent or more as documented by the Department of Veterans Affairs, will see a \$5 rate per year. Users must sign in and sign out using the iSportsman system, using computers, kiosks at the visitors centers, or by phone.

For information, visit the website or call 552-2439 or 384-6224.

Home buying seminar

Volunteer realtors and mortgage lenders present an hour-long home buying seminar every Wednesday at either the JBER-Elmendorf or JBER-Richardson Housing Management Offices from 1 to 2 p.m.

These seminars are intended to support those interested in purchasing a home by explaining the buying and selling process in the Anchorage and Mat-Su areas. The seminar covers loan pre-qualifications, offers and acceptance, inspections, title searches, types of loans, and the closure process to prospective home owners.

For information or to sign up, contact the management office. For the JBER-Elmendorf HMO, call 552-4312, or visit Bldg. 6346 Arctic Warrior Drive.

For the JBER-Richardson office, call 552-3088, or visit Bldg. 600, Room 104.

Special victim counselor

Victims of sexual assault are entitled to legal assistance services.

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.

Rental Partnership Program

The Rental Partnership Program 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.

The Equipment Management Solutions Program provides networked multifunctional devices that print, scan, copy and fax. 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.

It is open 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For 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,

allowing occupants 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 PCS-ing. For more information, call 375-5540.

JBER Bargain Shop

The JBER-Elmendorf Bargain Shop, located in Building 8515 Saville across from the log cabin, 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 their qualifications and preferences. The spouse is eligible for a maximum of two years from the date of the PCS orders and is in the program for one year. Spouses who have never filled a federal position can now register for PPP.

Register at the Civilian Personnel Office at JBER-Elmendorf or the personnel office at JBER-Richardson.

For information, call 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.

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.

Get the app for iOS or Android at *http://tinyurl.com/ltsywzr*.

Quartermaster Laundry

The Quartermaster Laundry, located at 726 Quartermaster Road, cleans TA-50 gear for free and is open Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Giant Voice testing

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

If the announcement is difficult to hear or understand in any base housing area, please contact JBER at *Facebook.com/JBERAK*.

Air Force staff sergeant passes on the light



Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets salute during a uniform inspection. The AMYA Challenge program is a 17.5 month, quasi-military residential and non-residential high school which uses military values and methodology to reclaim the lives of Alaska's at-risk youth. (Courtesy photo/Roman Schara)

By Airman 1st Class Kyle Johnson
JBER Public Affairs

It's dark, the walls creep in, leaving just enough room to struggle, but not enough to turn around. There's no going back; in the darkness, a misshapen monster sprints down the tunnel. The only evidence of its power echoes all around: tick ... tock.

If only there was a light, an opportunity, an option. Tunnel vision is a dangerous thing.

According to a survey by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 15 percent of America's youth are drinking alcohol before the age of 13, 35 percent ingest marijuana before the age of 16, and 17 percent drop out of high school.

The causes for these statistics are many; what may start out as simple curiosity can quickly develop into a dark trap, with no light to be seen.

Sometimes this happens after graduating high school, sometimes it happens sooner.

Programs and agencies litter the frontlines of this battle for America's future, each fighting to shed some light on the lives of at-risk youth. Among them, there is one program that has taken a unique approach and it doesn't fall under the department of education.

It falls under the Alaska Department of Military and Veteran Affairs.

According to their website, the Alaska Military Youth Academy Challenge program is a 17.5 month, quasi-military residential and non-residential high school

which uses military values and methodology to reclaim the lives of Alaska's at-risk youth.

Of particular note is the 22-week residential portion, wherein candidates will go through an education and training experience very near to military basic training.

"It's the hardest thing [I've ever done] mentally for sure," said Cadet Cody Smith, who recently passed the 12th week of the program and has lost 35 pounds since beginning the program.

Cadets are assigned a mentor who can communicate with them during their time in the program. Smith's mentor is Air Force Staff Sergeant Erik Fortenberry, fuels distribution supervisor of the 673d Logistics Readiness Group's Fuels Management Flight.

Approximately four weeks into the program, Fortenberry introduced himself to Smith, and began a relationship of edification, guidance, and respect.

When first arriving at the academy, cadets are treated to a heaping pile of shock and awe many military members may recall from basic training.

What follows is two weeks of emotional and physical pressure many of them may have never felt before.

"Yeah, it's tough," Fortenberry said. "But when it comes down to it, do you want to do a couple push-ups, or do you want to be in jail? They push them a little bit, but it's all for a reason."

Many don't make it, and those that do earn the privilege to be called cadets during a ceremony known as Acclimation Graduation.

"After Acclimation Graduation, I thought 'I can do this,'" Smith said.

The program offers emotional and physical testing, but at its core, it is an accredited academic school.

"They go on ruck marches and they do PT, but it's a learning environment," Fortenberry said.

Classes at the AMYA are dramatically smaller than an average high school, allowing for more one-on-one tutoring a normal school system may not be able to offer.

For many, the AMYA is their last chance to get a high school diploma or General Education Degree so they can stand on their own two feet as they transition into America's workforce.

"Hopefully I'll get my GED and join the military," Smith said. "I wasn't good in school before; this program is the last opportunity for me."

Cadets also get some exciting opportunities while they attend AMYA they wouldn't otherwise be able to experience.

According to their website, one of the things cadets look forward to most is the "adventure training" where cadets get to go out and experience some military-related and outdoor activities.

Each cadet comes from a different background, with a different story and different goals; but they all go through the same experience.

Likewise, each mentor comes from a different background and is volunteering hours and hours of their time to these youth for different reasons.

Fortenberry, a native of

Franklinton, Louisiana, arrived at JBER in December 2014, and has been involved in the AMYA mentor program since February this year.

"It really interested me because it was a chance to get involved with some kids who have made some bad decisions and try to get them on the right path," Fortenberry said.

Fortenberry and Smith write each other throughout the week, and the cadets are offered visiting hours where mentors can come and talk to them and encourage them.

"The more I became involved, the more I saw what they do," Fortenberry said. "The more I realized what they are doing for these kids."

"For the vast majority, this program works."

Fortenberry said the program stood out to him because he thinks the military may have very likely saved his life.

"The ultimate reason I became involved in the program is it is a chance for me to be able to give back," Fortenberry said.

As a youth, Fortenberry said he found himself slowly being sucked into a toxic lifestyle.

"I was your typical punk teenager," Fortenberry said. "I always wanted to be hanging out with my friends, and some of them weren't the best of influences."

As he grew older, his friends graduated from bad influences to having adult problems with the law, and Fortenberry began to see what was at the end of his tunnel; he didn't like what he saw.

"There came a point in my

life where I looked at myself, the people I hung around with, and I asked myself: Is this what I want to do for the rest of my life?

"The answer was no, I don't want this."

Roughly 10 years ago, Fortenberry took ownership of his future in a Panama City, Fla. Air Force recruiter's office. He made a decision that would dramatically alter the direction his life was headed.

"I'm pretty sure that if I had not joined the military, I would either be in jail or dead now."

While AMYA is not designed as a military recruitment tool, it does provide cadets with some of the benefits of military training as civilians.

Fortenberry said he wasn't a bad kid, but he definitely had some bad influences, and it was beginning to show.

"Some of these kids are going through that as well," Fortenberry said. "Except now they have someone who's there to say 'You're going to learn today.' It teaches humility and it gives them the social skills they need to survive in the outside world."

With the skills they've acquired during their time at AMYA, and the continual guidance of mentors like Fortenberry, cadets are equipped with a toolkit they can use to make a difference in their lives.

"Our role [as mentors] really takes shape when they are out of the program, Fortenberry said.

"[Cadets] who've gone to this program are going to get out and think 'Ok, I want to work for this company, this is what I need to do to get there,'" Fortenberry said.

"That's where we come in, they tell us they have a job interview or something and we say 'Okay, let me help you, let me set you up to succeed.'

In the end, that's what it's all about; the AMYA succeeds when its cadets succeed.

"It seemed to me like this is a great chance for some of these kids to be taken away from their negative influences and put into a different world," Fortenberry said.

"A world where they have to develop teamwork, communication, physical fitness, education, and they have to use all these different concepts to work together toward the goal of graduating the program."

Sometimes at-risk youth don't see the options in front of them. They're too busy running through the dark.

"I want to show them some things they can do to better themselves," Fortenberry said. "Not just what they've done wrong."

"I want to show them there's a light at the end of the tunnel."

Military Family Support hosts quarterly spouse orientation

By Airman 1st Class Kyle Johnson
JBER Public Affairs

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson hosted its quarterly Joint Spouse Orientation program June 25 at the Military Family Readiness Center.

The orientation is designed to expose military spouses to the opportunities, benefits, and resources available to them while they are here, said Jeri Romesha, a community readiness consultant at the MFRC.

"The purpose behind it is to strengthen military families and enhance mission readiness," said Romesha.

The program is six hours long, and participants engage in a variety of activities, briefings, and communication designed to equip spouses with the tools they need to acclimate to JBER's unique environment as seamlessly as possible. Lunch is provided.

"Our spouses' orientation does not just bombard them with information," said Barbara Hopkins, a community resource consultant with the MFRC. "We actually give them tools and resources they can utilize."

During the orientation, more than a dozen agencies come to explain the services they have to offer to JBER families, Romesha said.

"We have a mini information fair where we have all kinds of agencies to come and talk about what they have to offer," Romesha said.

"It's not just picking up and leaving with brochures; we actually give you a knowledge of how things work."

JBER has several unique characteristics which make this orientation uniquely important, even to experienced spouses, said Hopkins.

JBER has some unique wildlife dangers that many spouses may not have encountered before. To offer their expertise, representatives from the JBER Wildlife Education Center will provide basic wildlife safety instructions.

"Even if they are familiar with the



Experienced military spouses share stories and advice with spouses new to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson June 25 as part of the quarterly Joint Spouse Orientation held at the Military Family Readiness Center. The orientation is designed to equip spouses who may be new to the military, joint environments or Alaska with the tools and information they need to succeed. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Airman 1st Class Kyle Johnson)

[military]," Romesha said, "JBER is a little different than they may be used to because it is a joint base."

Many people arriving in the summer may not be used to the constant daylight, and during the winter could be thrown off by the unrelenting darkness, Hopkins said.

Additionally, many common services one would find on a military installation are still offered here, but operate by different names – such as the Military Family Readiness Center, which serves the same capacity as Army Community Service and the Airman Family Readiness Center.

The orientation also serves as a bit of a translation session to make sure everyone is on the same page, Romesha said.

"This is a joint venture; Air Force or Army can come to either side for what they need," said Romesha.

"We can help either branch out at either of the centers."

"As a spouse, they have a big role in the success of their own spouse and the mission they are trying to accomplish," Romesha said.

The next orientation is scheduled for September 17 from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

To register, or find out some of the information presented in these orientations, contact the Military Family Readiness Center at 552-4943, or 384-1517 for the JBER-Richardson location.

Finding balance despite the constant chaos of life

Commentary by Tech. Sgt. Jessica Keechle
673d ABW Chaplain assistant

Finding balance in life and the Air Force has become more of a challenge over the last several years. Decreases in manning, increases in responsibilities, and then let’s throw in family and all the little things that pile up at home.

It seems like it’s never ending right? So how does a person seek to find balance with all the constant chaos?

For me finding this balance is a constant everyday battle. Once I think I have it down, I don’t.

I like to think I am the queen of making lists, scheduling and prioritizing it all out. One list for my primary duties at work, one for additional duties at work, one for home, one for the fun things I want to do for me or with the kids, one for groceries, and so on.

That helps balance my life, right?

As soon as I get one thing checked off of any one of those lists, I’ve added five more things. It seems as though I never have enough time for any of the things I want to do. Oh! Let’s not forget the schedule.

Just when you think you can tackle some of that house cleaning list because the kids are down for a nap or in their room for quiet time ... throw that out the window!

Being an active-duty single parent presents its own set of challenges as well; PCSs, daycare and family care plans, deployments, TDYs, ear infections and homework – all without another half to balance the load.



(Courtesy photo)

know it sounds like I’m complaining; no, I’d not change a single day of my life – I am simply illustrating that life is crazy and presents its own unique challenges for all of

us in each of our walks. But how we handle them is the key.

One day at a time, one hour at a time, one minute at a time, one challenge at a time,

one checklist item at a time. That’s what I tell myself.

When everything starts to come unglued and I’m starting to feel out of control, I have some amazing friends, supportive family and wonderful co-workers that will tell me to stop, take a deep breath and ask ‘What’s important right now?’ ‘What do you need to focus on right now?’

They help me to stop take a step back and re-evaluate; make a new list and keep moving forward.

Sometimes this step back takes just a few minutes of quiet time, or a walk away from the desk.

Sometimes it takes a day, maybe two. Sometimes it may take longer than that and more help than I thought I needed.

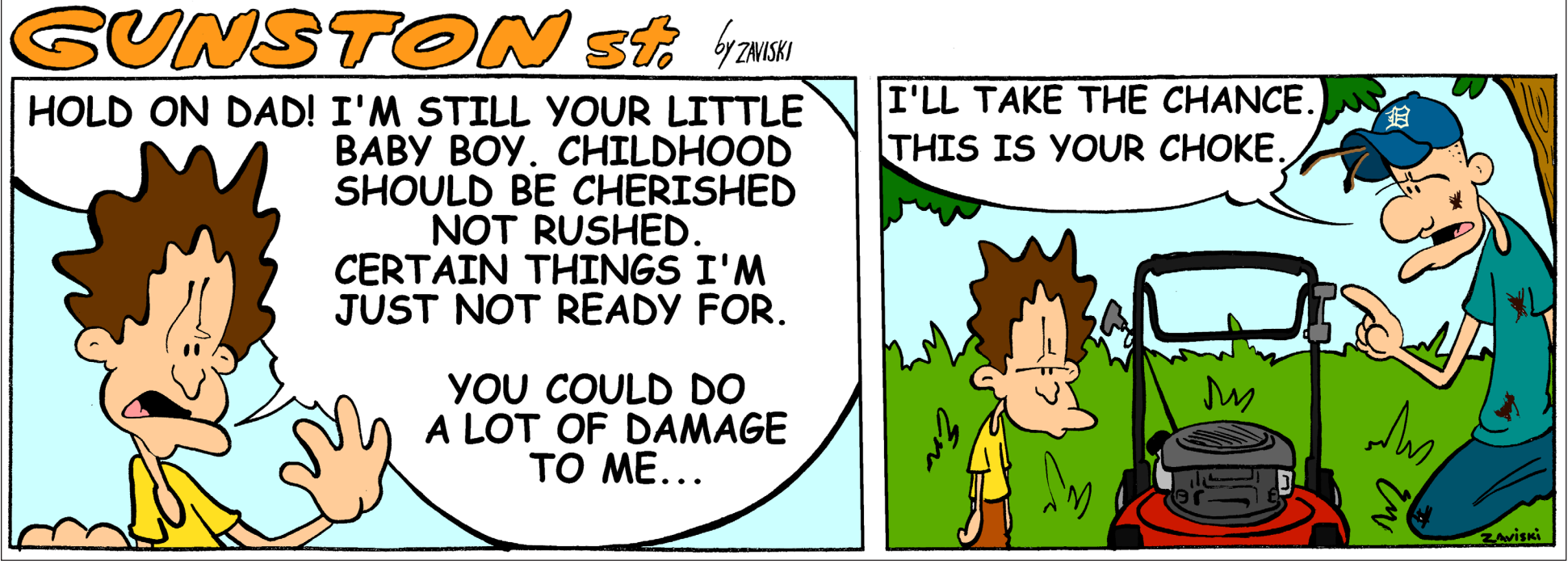
Maybe I need to go talk to someone because it’s all too overwhelming. Lay it all on the table, shuffle it around, balance it out and pick it back up.

In all this chaos going on around us, and as we seek to balance our work lives, family lives and ourselves, the one thing that I hold on to is my faith.

For me, faith is the anchor I come back to time and time again. Jeremiah 29:11 says “For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.”

Faith is what I keep coming back to when things are good and balanced and when things are too much and the scales are not equal.

How do you strive to keep your balance?



THROUGH JULY 17
Summer reading program
The JBER library hosts a music-themed summer reading program “Read To The Rhythm” through July 17. The program is open to all ages.
To register, call 384-1640.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
Fourth of July bowling
Celebrate Independence Day with bowling. The Polar Bowl will be open from 11 a.m. July 3 to 1 a.m. July 4 featuring bowling specials all day and evening.
For information, call 753-7467.

THROUGH SUNDAY
Eklutna ATV trip special
Choose a single day trip or all three days and head to Eklutna on a guided ATV tour from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Sign up at JBER-Elmendorf Outdoor Recreation Center. Helmet and transportation will be provided; bring weather-appropriate clothing and lunch.
To sign up or for more information, call 552-4599 or 552-2023.

SATURDAY
Red, white and blue golf tournament
Put together your two-person team and hit the course for an Independence Day golf tourney at the Moose Run Golf Course from 7:30 a.m. to noon. Prizes will be awarded for longest drive, closest to the pin and hole in one. Space is limited to the first 64 teams.
To register, call 428-0056.

TUESDAY THROUGH THURSDAY
Teen archery day camp
Teens, want to learn the sport of archery or hone your skills? Attend the archery camp offered by the Two Rivers Youth Center from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday. Camp is free for JBER youth center members ages 12 to 18.
For information, call 384-1508.

TUESDAY THROUGH JULY 10
Yoga clinic
Youth center members ages 9 to 18, take advantage of the opportunity to learn a new fitness routine through a yoga clinic offered by the Two Rivers Youth Center starting at 2 p.m. each day.
For information, call 384-1508.

WEDNESDAY
RecOn mountain biking
Let the experts at the Outdoor Adventure Program lead you on an exciting mountain biking outing

through Kincaid Park from 5 to 8 p.m. There are beginner through advanced trails to challenge riders of all skill levels.
Sign up at JBER-Elmendorf Outdoor Recreation Center.
This trip is part of the RecOn program which provides discounted trips and services to service and family members.
To sign up or for more information, call 552-4599 or 552-2023.

ATV safety course
Certified ATV Safety Institute instructors host an ATV Riders Course from 5 to 9 p.m. at the JBER-Elmendorf Outdoor Recreation Center. Course completion is required to operate personally owned ATVs on the installation’s trail system.
To sign up or for more information, call 552-4599 or 552-2023.

THURSDAY
Parent Advisory Board
For all parents of JBER Youth Programs members. Join the Youth Parent Advisory Board to stay informed about what’s going on and where the programs are headed. Meeting will take place in Bldg. 600, Room B170 from 11:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
For more information, call central registration at 384-7483.

Teen gardening
Teens, want to learn a new hobby? Join the staff at the Two Rivers Youth Center for gardening every Thursday throughout July starting at 1 p.m. and get your green thumb on.
For information, call 384-1508.

Paddle board class
Looking for some new outdoor skills? Learn the ins and outs of stand-up paddle boarding in Alaska with this training course offered by the Outdoor Adventure Program at Otter Lake from 5 to 7 p.m.
For information or to register, call 552-4599 or 2023.

JULY 10
Combat Cross-Country
Get your five-person team together for the JBER Combat Cross Country Series canoe, run and shoot. Competition starts at 2 p.m. at Otter Lake.
Participants must be in military uniform, combat boots and carry a minimum of 35 pounds in a rucksack.
Sign ups are from 1 to 1:30 p.m., with weigh-ins and an organization meeting from 1:30 to 2 p.m.

For information, call 384-1301.

Bear Awareness
Join the Outdoor Recreation staff at the JBER-Elmendorf ORC from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. to learn how to stay safe while recreating in bear country.
For information, call 552-4599, 552-2023 or 552-3812.

Youth movie night
Youth ages 9 to 12, ready to get out of the house for an evening of movies and fun?
Head to the Two Rivers Youth Center from 5 to 7 p.m. for youth movie night.
For information, call 384-1508.

JULY 22 AND 23
Transition summit
Join the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s “Hiring Our Heroes” hiring fair and transition summit. The summit, which starts at 10 a.m. at the Denalna Center in Anchorage, will feature workshops, panel discussions, and a hiring fair – all focused on improving competitive employment for service members, veterans, and their spouses.
For information or registration, visit: hiringourheroes@uschamber.com or call (202) 463-5807.

ONGOING
Golf clinic
New to the game of golf or want to brush up on your skills?
The Moose Run Golf Course offers golf clinics for adult beginners through advanced players every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
For information, call 428-0056.

Single Airman Program
Single service members, are you interested in getting out and enjoying all that Alaska has to offer? Take a trip with the JBER Single Airman Program.
There are a plethora of outings offered at deeply discounted prices such as guided halibut and river fishing charters, mountain biking, white-water rafting, and rock climbing.
For more information, call 552-8529 or stop by the Arctic Oasis.

Family golf
Every Tuesday after 3 p.m. is Family Golf at the Moose Run Golf Course.
Get a free bucket of balls, hot dog, chips and fountain drink with each purchase of a 9-hole round.
For information, call 428-0056.

FSS summer jobs
Looking to earn some extra cash to fuel your summer adventures? The JBER Force Support Squadron has multiple job openings to get you started.
Visit nafjobs.org for more information.

Family golf clinic
Learn another way to enjoy Alaska’s midnight sun. Bring your family out to Moose Run Golf Course every Tuesday from 6 to 7 p.m. for a free golf clinic.
Open to ages 6 and up; golf clubs will be provided.
To sign up, call 428-0056.

Keystone meeting for teens
Keystone Club is a leadership development experience providing community service opportunities for young people ages 14 to 18.
Meetings take place every Wednesday at 5 p.m. at the Two Rivers Youth Center.
For information, call 384-1508.

Hour of prayer power
The 176th Wing Chaplain’s Office invites all to participate in 40 days of spiritual resiliency coupled with fitness at the JBER-Elmendorf Fitness Center track beginning July 7 at 6 a.m.
During this “Hour of Prayer Power” the 176th Wing chaplain will commit to praying for units and meeting with unit members from 6 to 7 a.m. on the following days: July 7 through 10, 13 through 16, 20 through 24 and 27 through 31.
For information, call 551-0268.

Financial counseling
Does more than 25 percent of your pay go to bills? Are you making only minimum payments, or taking out new loans to pay off old ones? Are you having frequent family arguments over money? Do you really need that new TV, watch or cup of fancy coffee?
Financial counseling is available through Army Community Service or Army Emergency Relief, at 384-7478.

Neon bowling
All military E-4 and below receive a 10 percent discount every Friday night 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Polar Bowl. Gather your friends and bowl in the neon lights while enjoying today’s top music hits.
For information, call 753-7467.

Model railroading
The Military Society of Model

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
July 10
5 p.m. – Joint Religious Operations Center
Call 384-0456 or 552-5762

Religious Education

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

Railroad Engineers meets at 7 p.m. Tuesday and 1 p.m. Saturday in the basement of Matanuska Hall, Room 35.

Anyone interested in model railroading is invited.
For information, call 552-4353, or visit trainweb.org/msmrre.

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4th of July Extravaganza:



Polar Bowl will be open July 3rd from 11 a.m. - 1 a.m. with special prices all day!


- 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. \$4.99 per person for 1 hr. or \$6.99 per person for 2 hrs. *shoes included*
- 5 - 11 p.m. \$2.99 games & \$3.29 shoes or \$17.99 lane rental per hr. (up to 5 bowlers per lane) & \$3.29 shoes
- 11 p.m. - 1 a.m. \$24.99 per lane 1st hour (up to 5 bowlers, shoes included) or \$3.49 games

Polar Bowl & Igloo Lounge will be open July 4th from 5 p.m. - 1 a.m.

- \$8.49 per person for 1 hour, \$11.49 per person for 2 hours, & \$14.49 per person for 3 hours!



Eureka ATV Trip Special
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1, 2, or 3 day trip (\$150-350)



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July 9, 5 - 7 p.m. • \$25
Held at Otter Lake



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Sockeye season spurs salmoner safety

By Petty Officer 1st Class Shawn Eggert
17th District Coast Guard
Public Affairs

The Bristol Bay Salmon Fishery is reported to be the world’s largest sockeye salmon fishery with approximately 1,300 vessels registered to participate.

This fishery annually provides more than a billion dollars in economic benefit for the state of Alaska, which means it’s vital that crews are prepared for any emergency so they can come home safe.

The Coast Guard conducted commercial fishing exams and marine safety training throughout south central Alaska May 30 through June 19.

Personnel from Coast Guard Sector Anchorage, Sector Juneau and Marine Safety Detachment Homer conducted exams, training and community outreach in Sand Point, King Cove, Port Moller, King Salmon/ Naknek, Dillingham, Egegik and Togiak to coincide with the beginning of the sockeye salmon fishery.

“Alaska’s waters get incredibly cold and the weather can turn on you in an instant, so it’s important to have functioning safety equipment and plans in place for how to respond to an emergency at sea,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Kate Brinkley, a vessel examiner for Sector Anchorage.

“These safety exams become even more important when you consider upcoming changes to regulations that will make them mandatory for any commercial fishing vessel operating beyond three nautical miles from shore.”

Vessel safety exams for commercial fishing vessels will become mandatory in October of 2015, Brinkley added.

Examiners conducted 412 dockside exams during their trip and issued 354 inspection decals to crews who were ready for the fishing season. The decals are valid for up to two years and show Coast Guard and state boarding teams a crew has taken the proper steps to keep safe on the water.

“Two of the most common discrepancies we found were ruined survival suits and expired alcohol test strips,” said Chief Petty Officer Harry Howard, a vessel examiner from Sector Anchorage.

“Over time, survival suits can deteriorate from exposure to the elements. The alcohol test strips are required for testing for the presence of alcohol in saliva in the event of



A marine science technician from Coast Guard Sector Anchorage, inspects a vessel during a commercial fishing vessel safety exam in Dillingham, June 13. Coast Guard personnel conducted 412 dockside exams prior to the Bristol Bay Salmon Fishery. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

any major marine casualty.”

The Coast Guard recommends survival suits should be regularly inspected and serviced by an approved facility 10 years after purchase. Alcohol test strips should be replaced with DOT-approved strips once they’ve expired.

The Coast Guard will continue its prevention efforts with trips to remote arctic communities July and August. It’s all part of keeping mariners safe and preserving a way of life that is truly Alaskan.

Starting October 15, all commercial fishing vessels fishing beyond three nautical miles from the baseline of the U.S. territorial sea will have to maintain valid compliance decals in order to go fishing. More details about the mandatory exams can be found in Marine Safety Information Bulletin 18-14.

Fishermen who wish to schedule dockside exams should visit the Coast Guard Commercial Fishing Industry Vessel Safety website.

To prep for the Coast Guard’s visit, fishermen can use the site’s checklist generator to obtain a custom list of safety items required for a particular vessel, based on factors such as the vessel’s size, area of operation and crew complement.



Petty Officer 1st Class Nathan Frerichs, Scott Wilwert and Russell Hazlett, members of the Coast Guard commercial fishing vessel exam team, inspect vessel safety gear at the start of the 2015 Bristol Bay sockeye salmon fishery. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

Corps park rangers share passion for outdoors, flood mitigation

By John Budnik
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Alaska District

Much like the Chena River snaking through the heart of downtown Fairbanks, a passion for the outdoors flows through the veins of the park rangers at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Alaska District’s Chena River Lakes Flood Control Project. The two are contributing members of a team overseeing 20,000 acres of multipurpose public land.

Jacob Kresel, senior park ranger and natural resource specialist, and Cole Van Beusekom, park ranger, are easy to recognize with their forest green uniforms, “Smokey Bear” hats and Corps castle belt buckles. The opportunity to work at the Chena Project in North Pole is a fulfilling vocation for both.

“I have always loved being outside and in the woods. I grew up on a nice chunk of land in Elk Mound, Wisconsin,” Kresel, 27, said. “It seemed like becoming a park ranger for the Corps was that access to a career where I get to be an outdoorsman.”

Growing up in Delano, Minnesota, it only took a short time for Van Beusekom, 25, to realize his calling.

“I wanted to be a ranger since I was a young lad,” he said. “My office is the wilderness.”

During their childhoods, backwoods experiences that were filled with boating, hiking and subsistence expeditions shaped the two men into their current roles at the project. Kresel said his fondest outdoor memory was a 60-mile, six-day canoe adventure down the Flambeau River. Whereas Van Beusekom described a two-week family canoe and camping trip through the Superior National Forest as a rustic chapter during his upbringing.

“These two bring an energy to the project which is especially enhanced by their high interests in hunting, fishing and the outdoors,” said Tim Feavel, Chena Project manager. “As every Alaskan knows, it takes a special breed to thrive in the Interior and park rangers are no exception.”

The two are equipped with educations that translate well into their daily duties of law enforcement and public safety patrols; community engagements; contract management for public land; special use permit issue and monitoring; and wildlife habitat enhancement, to name a few.

Kresel studied conservation at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls with an emphasis in biology, environmental studies and outdoor education.

Van Beusekom earned his degree from the University of Minnesota in recreation

and resource management.

Overall, the duo claims there is great satisfaction from interacting with visitors using the land.

“Since I have been working here, learning how to talk to people, whether to de-escalate a situation or answer general questions has provided me with the greatest lessons,” Van Beusekom said.

Furthermore, strong relations with the visitors and members of the North Pole and Fairbanks communities are critical to a successful mission for the Corps and its rangers.

“Maintaining a good rapport with the public and helping them understand how the gates and dam operate is important,” Kresel explained. “This way, people know what our capabilities are and what we are mandated to do at the project.”

The Chena Project is the most northern flood risk mitigation operation within the Corps and is responsible for protecting Fairbanks, North Pole and Fort Wainwright from highwater on the Chena River. In 1979, the project construction was completed for \$256 million in response to the devastating 1967 Fairbanks flood.

During that event, heavy rains swelled the Chena and Little Chena rivers causing water to pour into downtown Fairbanks and the outlying region. Nearly 7,000 people were displaced from their homes and damage estimates totaled more than \$80 million.

Located 20 miles east of Fairbanks, the key components of the Chena Project include Moose Creek Dam, an eight-mile-long earthen dam, four large flood gates and a 3,000 acre grassy floodway.

Since its completion, the dam has been operated successfully 22 times, most recently in the summer of 2014.

Based on flood prediction and modeling charts, it is estimated the culmination of these activations has saved more than \$370 million in damage prevention, said Julie Anderson, civil engineer in the Operations Branch.

“The Chena Project dam is there for a reason, serving a purpose along with the floodway,” Van Beusekom said. “The dike systems are not just earth and embankments. There is a purpose to them.”

High-water events can happen due to heavy rain or fast melting winter snow and ice upstream. During an occurrence that requires lowering the gates, the main objective

is to regulate the Chena River’s flow to less than 12,000 cubic feet per second of water in downtown Fairbanks. On an average day, the water typically courses through the heart of the city at 1,000 to 3,000 cubic feet per second. Residents may notice that the river still rises downstream, but the chance for flooding is significantly diminished.

Depending on the severity of the event, the Chena Project’s 3,000 acres of floodway will fill as Moose Creek Dam begins to impound water. The project diverts excess flood waters into the Tanana River to avoid Fairbanks, or slowly regulates its release through the outlet.

The integrity of Moose Creek Dam is critical to avoiding property damage or worse. Therefore, preservation of the embankment is a community effort that requires public understanding of the destructive impacts from all-terrain vehicles to its gravel

surface and silt-blanket, Feavel said.

With more than 165,000 visitors each year, two rangers enforcing illegal off-road use on the dam cannot stop the problem, but can help slow it down, Kresel said.

“We try to reduce the amount of ATV traffic in the floodway to protect the area from damage from the tires that may cause rutting,” Van Beusekom explained. “Otherwise, it increases the risk of dam failure.”

Ultimately, as part of an engineer team that monitors and regulates river flow during high-water events, the rangers’ primary duties are to manage all public use of the land, enforce rules, answer questions, crowd and traffic control. Also, they help project and district staff observe water levels, embankment and floodway conditions as well as manipulate gate functions.

“Flood risk management becomes the number one priority and recreation second,” Kresel said. “However, we do not shut down recreation during an event.”

The Chena Project offers a myriad of recreational opportunities such as hunting, hiking, fishing, horseback and walking trails, paved bike paths and excellent wildlife viewing.

Through a partnership with the Fairbanks North Star Borough, the Chena Lakes Recreation Area offers a boat launch, camp sites, cross-country trails, picnic spots, playground, non-alcohol beach, swimming, volleyball court and restrooms.

Special use permits also are available to

groups wanting to use the land for special events. In the past, the project has been used by groups such as historical societies, dog trainers, mushers, snow machine races and the Bureau of Land Management’s fire service smoke jumpers.

If water conditions are right, throughout July, salmon can be seen swimming up the Chena River to spawn, and the top of the outlet works control structure is an excellent place to see them. Project staff sets up displays, tents and picnic tables on the deck to encourage the public to view the migration upstream, Feavel said.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game also establishes a counting station every year. In previous years, about 10,000 salmon have passed through the dam on their way to their spawning grounds through mid-August.

In the fall, the Corps issues personal-use firewood permits to the public to take advantage of logs bailed from the Chena River during the flood events.

Certainly, the rangers’ strong friendship helps them achieve success during the tense moments of a dam operation or while conducting general oversight of the land. Growing up in the same part of the country, sharing a love for their professions and partaking in the occasional hunting and fishing trip together has strengthened that bond, Kresel said.

“He is a great role model to look up to,” Van Beusekom said. “Kresel has been here a few more years than I have, so he is a great resource of information about the dam and area.”

Together these rangers have driven ATVs hundreds of miles into remote parts of the Chena Project to root out timber poachers, squatter shacks, dumped vehicles, land encroachments and off-road violators, Feavel said.

“We went up river on a boat patrol to check out the bear and moose camps,” Van Beusekom explained. “We look at those to ensure there are not residential cabins or trash left behind on the project boundaries.”

During off-duty hours, these rangers are united by a common interest in training their hunting dogs. Kresel has a Brittany spaniel, Mac, and Van Beusekom owns a German shorthaired pointer, Smokey.

Indeed, their passion for the outdoors and fulfilling the Chena Project’s mission is what drives these men.

“We are here to protect Fairbanks,” Kresel said. “An understanding of what we do here and sharing that with other community members is ideal. That way, we can be as helpful as possible to the public.”





The JBER-Richardson Outdoor Recreation Center offers many boats to rent during the summer. An online boat-safety course must be completed before requesting to rent any motorboat; anyone renting ocean-going boats must also take the Captain’s Class. Basic seamanship is the focus of the Captain’s Class available at JBER-Elmendorf Outdoor Recreation Center during the summer. For more information, visit boatus.org/alaska or either of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson outdoor recreation centers. (U.S. Air Force photos/Airman Chrispoher Morales)



JBER Outdoor Recreation hosts captain’s class

By Airman Christopher R. Morales
JBER Public Affairs

Alaska has more than 3,000 rivers, 33,000 miles of shoreline and three million lakes, allowing for boating of all kinds. But there is a first step to every adventure.

The Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Outdoor Recreation Centers offer rental boats designed for rivers, lakes and the ocean, which Department of Defense ID card holders can rent.

“The Outdoor Recreation Center gives our service members the opportunity to enjoy Alaska with the boats we offer,” said Brenda Nabulsi, operations assistant at the Richardson ORC.

Canoes, kayaks and paddle boats are available. Prior to renting a boat, the center requires watching a 30-minute safety video before renting non-motorized boats.

Motorboats can be rented after successfully completing an online boater-safety course.

For ocean boats, renters must take the two-hour Captain’s Class at the JBER-Elmendorf ORC and an online boater-safety course.

The online course consists of six lessons and a final exam, which requires a score of 80 percent or higher.

According to the BoatUS Foundation, boating education is a critical part of responsible boating.

The test covers the rules of the water, like larger boats always having the right of way, and never tossing an anchor off the back of the boat.

Bob Braun, Captain’s Class instructor at the JBER-E ORC, reviews the laws of boating in Alaska with a slideshow during the class.

He also mentions local considerations, such as tide awareness. For example, if anchored too close to shore on high tide, when the tide falls so will the boat.

Braun recommends always starting with full tanks of fuel, a charged battery, a working fire extinguisher and flares. He also suggests using one-third of fuel to get to your destination and one-third to get back,

keeping one-third in reserve. “Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson’s rental boats have been in fewer accidents since the introduction of the Captain’s Class here in 2007,” Nabulsi said.

On any adventure, it is dangerous to go alone. The operator has a lot to manage, so it is the duty of passengers to keep an extra eye out for potential hazards like wildlife, other boats and obstacles in the water.

“Everybody on the boat is a lookout,” Braun said.

“If you see something, tell somebody. Trust your instincts; if it doesn’t feel right, don’t do it.”

For more information, visit boatus.org/alaska or either of the JBER ORCs.