

YUKLA 27
REMEMBERED



Linda DeFrancesco, mother of Senior Airman Lawrence DeFrancesco, places her hands on a plaque with her son's name on it during a quiet moment before a ceremony at the Yukla 27 memorial. American and Canadian airmen assigned to the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron, distinguished guests, and surviving family members of the crew of the E-3B Sentry, Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft, call sign Yukla 27, gathered for 20th anniversary memorial ceremonies on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Tuesday. On Elmendorf Air Force Base, Sept. 22, 1995, Yukla 27 from the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron encountered a flock of geese and crashed shortly after takeoff on a routine surveillance training sortie, killing all 24 U.S. and Canadian Airmen aboard. (U.S. Air Force photos/Justin Connaher)

Families mark
20 years since
tragic loss of
AWACS crew

By Airman 1st Class Kyle Johnson
JBER Public Affairs

Friday, Sept. 22, 1995 started out peaceful enough. Overcast skies were giving way to the heat of the sun, taking with them the last testimony of rain from the night before. Scattered clouds ranged from 5,000 to 20,000 feet, and visibility was 15 miles.

For Elmendorf Air Force Base flightline personnel, it was to be a light work day; the F-15 Eagle squadrons had water-survival training, and the 517th Airlift Squadron had several aircraft on rotation to Japan.

Regional flooding in the Kenai Peninsula dominated the state headlines, accounting for an estimated \$5 million in combined private and public damages.

Somewhere on the flightline, crew members of E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System 77-0354, call sign “Yukla 27,” methodically completed their pre-flight checklist.

After the essential checks, the tower gave approval for launch.

“Yukla Two-Seven Heavy clear for take-off, runway five,” said Capt. Glenn Rogers over the crackling radio.

“Clear for take off, crew,” came the tower’s response.

At 7:46 a.m., Yukla 27 rolled down Runway Five, the din of its four TF-33-PW-100 turbofan engines piercing the calm morning air as it began a routine reconnaissance flight.

A flock of about thirty Canada geese had been on the flightline, and just as Yukla 27 left the runway, so did the geese.

“Lot of birds here, we took one, we took two of them!” Rogers said. “Elmen-



Master Sgt. Torey Moore, an Air Surveillance Technician assigned to the 962nd, shows emotion during the Yukla 27 memorial.

dorf tower, Yukla Two-Seven Heavy has an emergency.”

Despite the severity of their situation, Yukla 27’s crew began their emergency procedures with practiced professionalism.

“Lost number two engine, we’ve taken some birds,” Rogers announced as Canada geese were sucked into the aircraft’s engines.

“Start dumping fuel.”

“Start dumping,” a different crew member responded.

Rogers grappled with physics, attempting to control the aircraft well below its stall speed.

“Yukla Two-Seven Heavy, roger, say intentions,” The tower radioed the crew – a different voice this time.

“Yukla Two-Seven Heavy coming back around for an emergency return.”

Yukla 27 only made it about 270 feet into the air before vanishing into the birch forest 3,500 yards northeast of the flightline.

It was 7:47:12 a.m.

“We’re going down,” Rogers radioed his last transmission. “Two-Seven Heavy, emergency.”

On its tragic 14,058th hour of flight, the 18th E-3 manufactured at the Renton, Wash., factory became the first sentry to fall in the line of duty.

Its 24 crew members, including two Canadian Armed Forces personnel, all perished.

Families and community members saw a mushroom of black smoke above an orange fireball from miles away, as roughly 125,000 pounds of JP-8 jet fuel exploded, immediately destroying the aircraft.

In a matter of 42 seconds, the peaceful

Friday morning turned into a nightmare, which still haunts families and the community two decades later.

Sept. 22, 2015, 20 years to the day after the Yukla 27’s final flight, more than 150 friends and family members gathered in a frigid Alaska morning, having flown in from all over the world to honor the 24 crew members lost that day – each with their own reason, their own memories and their own story.

The current 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron stood in formation in full service dress honoring the professionalism of those who came before them.

“It was a day much like this, the only

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Be prepared

National Preparedness Month is incentive to get kits, plans ready, Page B-1



Nations assemble for historic airborne SUSV drop

By Army Staff Sgt. Balinda O’Neal Dresel
Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

Members of the Alaska National Guard and U.S. Army Alaska worked together to perform a sequential airborne drop of two Small Unit Support Vehicles from an Alaska Air National Guard C-17 Globemaster III onto Malemute Drop Zone on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Sept. 16.

The sequential drop was the first recorded airborne operation of its kind in Alaska.

The two Alaska National Guard SUSVs were rigged by USARAK’s 4th Quartermaster Company, and air dropped by Alaska Air National Guardsmen from the 176th Wing’s 249th Airlift Squadron as NATO participants observed the historic drop.

The SUSV, also referred to as the Bandvagn 206, was developed by Haggblunds for the Swedish Army. They are fully-tracked all-terrain, amphibious vehicles designed to support platoon-sized units in arctic and mountainous conditions.

“The U.S. Army has the aerial delivery lead in all types of situations: Training, war, and humanitarian aid,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ismael Ramosbarbosa, with the 4th QM. “The 4th Quartermaster Company is the theater Aerial Delivery Support Company. As such, it is our duty to ensure all airborne operations and aerial delivery operations are accomplished on time and without any incidents.”

During the rigging process, the Soldiers followed precise safety procedures focusing on proper parachutes, load configuration and release sequence in preparation for the drop.

Each rigged SUSV load weighed approximately 17,000 pounds.

At nearly 35,000 pounds of cargo dropping from the air, safety measures are of the utmost importance.

“We rigged all approved load configurations in accordance with their respective training circular and field manual,” explained Ramosbarbosa. “Our riggers are proficient in rigging several loads at a time.”

Despite heavy rainfall, observers watched as each SUSV, requiring four 100-foot-diameter cargo parachutes weighing 250 pounds each, was safely carried to the ground.

“With USARAK, Alaska National Guard, and NATO participants watching, the 4th Quartermaster Company was honored to be able to share our aerial delivery expertise with our allied forces,” added Ramosbarbosa.

A user group supporting the NATO Support and Procurement Agency witnessed



Alaska Army National Guardsmen and German Army soldiers with the NATO Support Agency work together to collapse and fold a parachute that had been used to safely drop a Small-Unit Support Vehicle from C-17 Globemaster III aircraft from the 249th Airlift Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, during a joint airdrop operation at Malemute Drop Zone on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Sept 15. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Sgt. Marisa Lindsay)

the momentous drop during its semi-annual conference hosted by the Alaska National Guard.

“We have never seen this before,” declared Federal Defense Forces of Germany Lt. Col. Andreas Prengel, chairman of the BV206 user group. “I wouldn’t believe that it was possible to air drop a vehicle so smoothly.”

The BV206 user group meets semi-annually to exchange information about their delegation’s respective vehicle fleets. This is the first time the U.S. has hosted the summit since the group’s establishment in 2005.

“The purpose of the meeting is to set up and maintain common logistics with focus on spare parts and spare parts contracts,” explained Prengel. “The NSPA as an official entity drafts contracts within the industry with very good conditions in terms of pricing and lead times. All the nations working together have a larger need and requirement for spare parts than any single nation.”

“Participation of delegations was com-

posed of the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Finland and the U.S.,” added Prengel. “There are also a couple of other European nations missing that normally participate, to include Spain, Italy, Lithuania, Estonia, the United Kingdom and Denmark.”

Representatives from several organizations including the National Guard Bureau, USARAK, Red River Army Depot, and other foreign nations attended the summit to discuss sustainment of the SUSV platform and learn about best practices.

Apart from the regular meeting agenda and SUSV airborne drop, the user group was briefed by the Red River Army Depot, a military facility that maintains and repairs the Army’s tactical wheeled vehicle fleet, on setting up a production line for an entire refurbishment of the SUSV.

Alaska Army National Guardsman Sgt. Maj. Charles Hooper, 38th Troop Command operations sergeant major, explained that the Alaska National Guard is hoping to get a subcontract to rebuild the vehicles here.

“This user group meeting not only provided the latest and greatest information from other delegations and nations, but it will help us with our own rebuild program if it is approved,” Hooper explained.

“This was also a great opportunity for our National Guardsmen to witness and assist the 4th Quartermaster Company with rigging operations,” Hooper said. “Everyone was able to watch the operation from the top to bottom and it successfully ended with the SUSVs driving off the drop zone.”

The Alaska National Guard currently has 56 SUSVs and are only joined by four other states that operate the all-terrain vehicle which include the Colorado, Maine, Minnesota and Vermont national guards.

“Apart from the weather, all delegations were very happy to be here,” added Prengel. “The U.S. were exceptionally friendly hosts.”

Alaska Guardsmen are scheduled to attend the next user group meeting that will take place in the Netherlands in March 2016.

Medical Corps looks to robots, UAVs for next-gen health care

By C. Todd Lopez
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Most Americans have seen at least one war movie in which a young private is wounded. He calls out for the medic, whose quick reaction just may save his life.

In the future, it may no longer be another Soldier who comes running; it might be an Army-operated unmanned aerial or ground vehicle, said Maj. Gen. Steve Jones, commander of the Army Medical Department Center and School and chief of the Medical Corps.

“We have lost medics throughout the years because they have the courage to go forward and rescue

their comrades under fire,” Jones said. “With the newer technology, with the robotic vehicles we are using even today to examine and to detonate [improvised explosive devices], those same vehicles can go forward and retrieve casualties.”

Jones spoke at an Association of the U.S. Army-sponsored conference in the capital Tuesday.

“We already use robots on the battlefield today to examine IEDs, to detonate them,” he said. “With some minor adaptation, we could take that same technology and use it to extract casualties that are under fire. How many medics have we lost, or other Soldiers, because they have gone in under fire to retrieve a casualty? We can use a

robotic device for that.”

The UAVs could do more than just recover Soldiers, he said; they could provide medical support.

“What happens when a member of the team comes down with cellulitis or pneumonia? We’ve got to use telemedicine to tele-mentor them on the diagnosis and treatment,” Jones said, adding UAVs could deliver antibiotics or blood. Other technology, he said, already exists; sensors to monitor vital signs, for instance, might also one day make their way to the battlefield, worn by Soldiers full time.

“Army Medical Research and Materiel Command is actually developing physiological sensors Soldiers can wear,” Jones said.

“And in a few years, they will be able to field this. They can be wearing the sensors and we can just monitor them.”

The general likened the sensors to something like a “Fit Bit,” which Soldiers might wear now to monitor their heart rate and steps taken.

“This is just a step forward that will monitor other physiological parameters,” he said. “Do they need to push more water? How many calories have they consumed? There’s a lot of information we can provide commanders that they can use to manage their Soldiers.”

The sensors could be used to triage casualties, so injured Soldiers whose vital signs are the

worst are rescued first.

“If you see a casualty whose heart rate is way up, whose respiratory rate is way up, that may be an indication they lost a lot of blood, and need treatment now, as opposed to a casualty whose vital signs are stable and you wouldn’t have to treat as quickly,” he said.

Jones also discussed the use of “GoPro” cameras on Soldiers to document wounds and treatment.

Video sent in real-time to follow-on facilities could be used by physicians there to better understand exactly what treatment a Soldier has received.

It could also provide feedback to the medics, helping them to improve their skills.

354th EOD Airmen dispose of deteriorating dynamite in Delta Junction

By Staff Sgt. Shawn Nickel
354th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

DELTA JUNCTION — Three explosive ordinance disposal Airmen from the 354th Civil Engineer Squadron at Eielson Air Force Base were dispatched 78 miles to support a volunteer fire department and Alaska State Troopers Sept. 20.

The technicians removed and disposed of 65 deteriorating sticks of dynamite and other explosives in an operation under a defense support to civil authorities agreement.

“The explosives were from the late 60s and were deteriorating to the point where they could have been dangerous if handled incorrectly,” said Master Sgt. Harold Horton, the 354th CES noncommissioned officer in charge of EOD.

The seeping box of TNT was found in a resident’s garage and reported to law enforcement. Officials said explosives were common in the area when gold mines and farms were being developed.



Tech. Sgt. Michael Alexander II, a 354th Civil Engineer Squadron explosive ordinance disposal technician at Eielson Air Force Base, removes two of four buckets containing 65 sticks of deteriorating dynamite from a garage in Delta Junction Sept. 20. The EOD flight responded to the report of the explosives at the request of local authorities. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Shawn Nickel)

Local state troopers and the local Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department have neither the equipment nor the expertise to dispose

of explosives, so the Air Force technicians spent days planning the disposal with the local officials.

“The closest bomb squad is in

Valdez or Anchorage, eight hours away, and it’s not feasible for them to respond to places like this,” Horton said. “This kind of operation

not only helps the community, but it gives us an opportunity to expose our newer Airmen to situations to develop safety habits in a semi-controlled environment.”

After the explosives were removed from the property they were safely disposed of by controlled detonation on the dry bed of the Tanana River. Troopers and the fire department provided security and traffic control.

“We have never been trained, or have experience with something like this,” said Tim Castleberry, the Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department chief. “When we inform citizens around the affected area they are much more comfortable knowing we have the experts here to do things safely, that’s just not something we could do without the support of the base.”

Eielson’s EOD technicians, the smallest operational flight in the Air Force, respond around the northern part of the state – an area larger than the state of Texas – when authorities call for aid.

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673d Air Base Wing Command Chief**
Command Chief Master Sgt.
Garry E. Berry II

**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/
673d ABW Command Sergeant Major**
Command Sgt. Maj. Eugene J. Moses

ARCTIC WARRIOR

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JBER Public Affairs Chief
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flying that day was the AWACS because the jets had finished flying,” said then-Chief Master Sgt. Tracy Matthews, Operations Group superintendent in charge of maintenance for the 3rd Operations Group at the time, and one of the guest speakers at the memorial service.

“The aircraft took off, but as soon as you heard it go down the runway, you knew something was wrong. I had the corner window right there,” Matthews said as he gestured to the south side of the 3rd Operations Group headquarters building. “I ran to the other side of the building. You could see the smoke. From that point on I knew we were dealing with tragedy.”

Matthews now works as an emergency planner in disaster management for the Federal Aviation Administration. He said he still wonders how much Yukla had to do with his civilian career path.

The 3rd Wing hosted the memorial service at the Yukla 27 monument outside the 3rd Operations Squadron headquarters building. The service was followed by a private ceremony at the site of the crash exclusively for family members and ended with a reception in Hangar 1 where family and friends could meet the families of the other crewmembers.

“Over the past few years, I’ve had several conversations with members of the community who have expressed their thoughts, memories and emotions about that day: Sept. 22, 1995,” said Lt. Col. Erik Gonzalez, 962nd AACS commander. “I’ve come to realize Yukla 27 is indelibly wrapped into the fabric of the Anchorage community, the JBER community and larger Alaska history.”

Gonzalez was the first of many guest speakers at the memorial, and he shared how the crash affected him as a young lieutenant.

“In 1999, as a newly minted lieutenant, I arrived at the 962nd,” Gonzalez said at the ceremony. “Some of the more seasoned pilots in the squadron took me out to the crash site my first September in Alaska, where we offered a toast to fallen aviators. In that moment, the idea of fraternity became a salient one. In that moment I experienced a bond with men I had never met. In that moment, I understood what it meant to walk on hallowed ground.”

After Gonzalez opened the event, several speakers came forth, one of whom was Kerry Long, an Alaska-region administrator for the FAA at the ceremony.

“We celebrate the 22 American and two Canadian aviators who sacrificed their lives upon the altar of freedom as crewmembers of Yukla 27,” Long said as he addressed the crowd.

Long explained how, after leaving the runway, jets are instructed to proceed to a point roughly 15 miles in the air created by the FAA. This point for Yukla 27 was known as the AWACS fix.

“The FAA is renaming the AWACS fix to the Yukla fix,” Long said. “From now on, when an AWACS jet uses the Yukla departure and fix, her crew, the controllers, and all of us will be reminded of these 24 warriors.”

Col. Karen Mansfield, assistant adjutant general for the Alaska Air National Guard spoke next.

“The 962nd was my second active-duty station,” Mansfield said. “As a lieutenant and a captain, I flew at the squadron from 1991 until August of 1995.”

Mansfield was reassigned to a different duty station just one month before the accident, now she has brought with her a bit of good news to an understandably somber event.

“A scholarship fund has been created to support those families and each individual has written a paper in admiration of one of the 24 that we lost that fateful day,” Mansfield said. “At the start of the next semester, the Yukla foundation will purchase all textbooks needed to further your scholastic career.

It’s been my honor to be able to be a joyful part of the presentation and part of contributing to the family members of the Yukla 27.”

Col. Jay Bickley, the vice commander of the 12th Air Force, and E-3 Sentry aircraft commander from February 1992 to May 1995, wrapped the speeches up.

“You always hope – and [this] goes across the board for aviators – that you



ABOVE: An Airman pays his respects to the 24 U.S. and Canadian airmen who were killed during the crash of their E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft, call sign Yukla 27. The Sentry crashed after hitting a flock of Canada geese Sept. 22, 1995. Since the tragic crash, improvements have been made to the Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard program, which is now administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Every E-3 crew experiences the Yukla 27 scenario during flight simulation, teaching them there are times little can be done during dire circumstances. (U.S. Air Force photos/Justin Connahey)

LEFT: American and Canadian airmen assigned to the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron, distinguished guests, and surviving family members of the crew of the E-3, call sign Yukla 27, gathered for the 20th anniversary memorial ceremonies on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Tuesday. On then-Elmendorf Air Force Base, Sept. 22, 1995, the Yukla 27 aircraft, from the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron, encountered a flock of Canada geese and crashed shortly after takeoff on a routine surveillance training sortie, killing all 24 U.S. and Canadian airmen aboard.

would handle yourself in a crisis situation well,” Bickley said. “That you would discharge the duties well and faithfully, that if you were ever faced with that tragic situation in an airplane ... that you would act well.

“I will tell you, my entire career I’ve been overwhelmed and blown away by the unbelievable professionalism of that crew.”

After the guest speakers expressed their condolences for the families gathered in front of them, and they recalled how the tragedy has shaped them in some way over the past 20 years, the narrator announced the names of each fallen crew member.

As the names were called out, a current member of the 962nd AACS placed a flower on the individual memorial of a fallen crew member and rendered a salute.

Nothing disturbed the reverence of the moment. Other than the muffled snuffles of the family members and the occasional click of a camera, the entire ceremony was wrapped in silence.

Then, every military member present rendered a sharp salute, and the silence was broken by the mournful cry of bagpipes playing taps. An E-3 flew over the gathered mourners.

“To the family members, I truly can’t understand what this day means to you,” Bickley said as he neared the conclusion of his speech. “I wouldn’t even pretend to try. It must bring back a wound, a wound that probably never fully closes.

“I know it must be a memory of a knock on the door or a phone call. That horrible, horrible phone call we all hope never comes,” Bickley continued.

“But I also hope today as you look around at the newest members of the 962nd, those of us who truly stand on the shoulders of the giants who perished that day – I hope as family members, you understand we don’t forget, we will never forget their sacrifices and they will always be our brothers in arms.”

The significance of this wasn’t lost on the family members who traveled thousands of miles for the observance.

“My brother was Steven Tuttle,” said Deanne Frank, who took time off work and

traveled from Fredericksburg, Virginia “I’m the middle child out of the family; Steven was the oldest, I’m one of five – four remaining. We came up for the 10-year memorial and, at that time, there had been questions about whether the squadron would continue, so for us it’s been nice knowing they haven’t been forgotten.”

Mike Miranda, from Old Town, Idaho, visited for the first time since 1995 to honor his youngest brother, Stephen O’Connell.

“It’s important, everybody suffers in different ways,” Miranda said. “It’s important to be here. I’d like to see it happen as often as possible.”

In his speech to the crowd, Bickley said Yukla 27 was one of the top 10 percentile of aircraft investigations in which no fault was found in the crew in any way.

It is now standard procedure for E-3 pilots to fly the Yukla 27 scenario in the simulators – not to see what could be done differently, but to see that even when a crew does everything right, everything can go wrong.

“Everyone who has a history with AWACS will know exactly where they were when they heard the words of Yukla going down,” Bickley said. “It impacted the community in ways we’ll never really know. It made us more aware, it made us better; it made us do things differently to try and avoid such a tragedy from ever happening again.”

To that end, the Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard program was heavily modified and passed into the hands of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Every time the program successfully clears wildlife from flightline areas, the memories of Yukla 27 potentially save lives.

“There’s a memorial in a cemetery in northeast India to the allied dead who, in 1944, repulsed a large enemy force during a decisive, two-month long Battle of Kohima,” Long said. “The memorial consists of a stone pedestal with a cross at the top and a bronze panel just below it.”

“Known as the Kohima Epitaph, the text on the panel reads: ‘When you go home, tell them of us and say, for their tomorrow, we

gave our today.””

“For our tomorrows, they gave their today, may we always be worthy of their sacrifice,” Long said.

- Yukla 27 crew**
- 1st Lt. Carlos A. Arriaga, weapons director**
- Tech. Sgt. Mark A. Bramer, flight engineer**
- Staff Sgt. Scott A. Bresson, airborne radar technician**
- Tech. Sgt. Mark A. Collins, communications systems operator**
- Senior Airman Lawrence E. DeFrancesco, communications systems operator**
- Tech. Sgt. Bart L. Holmes Sr., flight engineer**
- Lt. Col. Richard G. Leary, navigator**
- Master Cpl. Joseph J.P. Legault, Canadian Forces, communications technician**
- Capt. Robert J. Long, senior weapons director**
- Master Sgt. Stephen C. O’Connell, advanced airborne surveillance technician**
- Capt. Bradley W. Paakola, co-pilot**
- Tech. Sgt. Ernest R. Parrish, area specialist**
- Sgt. David L. Pitcher, Canadian Forces, battle director technician**
- Capt. Glenn “Skip” Rogers Jr., aircraft commander**
- Airman Jeshua C. Smith, airborne surveillance technician**
- Staff Sgt. Raymond O. Spencer Jr., airborne surveillance technician**
- Maj. Richard P. Stewart II, mission crew commander**
- Tech. Sgt. Charles D. Sweet Jr., airborne radar technician**
- Maj. Marlon R. Thomas, mission crew commander**
- Tech. Sgt. Timothy B. Thomas, computer display maintenance technician**
- Maj. Steven A. Tuttle, airborne surveillance officer**
- Tech. Sgt. Brian K. Van Leer, advanced airborne surveillance technician**
- Airman Darien F. Watson, airborne surveillance technician**
- Senior Airman Joshua N. Weter, computer display maintenance technician**

AWACS tragedy spurred safety improvements

By Staff Sgt. William Banton
JBER Public Affairs

“Lot of birds here ... We took one! We took two of them,” called out Capt. Glenn Rogers Jr., aircraft commander, over the radio. “Elmendorf tower, Yukla two-seven heavy has an emergency ... lost number two engine we’ve taken some birds.”

On Sept. 22, 1995, an E-3B Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System, call sign Yukla 27, crashed, killing all on board. Upon investigation, it was determined that up to 33 Canada geese near the flightline struck the aircraft that day.

Each year, civilian and military aircraft report thousands of bird strikes. According to the Department of Defense Partners in Flight webpage, the Federal Aviation Administration annually reports approximately 2,300 wildlife related incidents involving civilian aircraft; the Air Force and Navy

usually report an additional 3,000. The DoD is constantly striving to improve its aviation safety programs.

One of these programs, the Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard program, was created to preserve war-fighting capabilities and provide pilots with safe operating environments, through the reduction of wildlife hazards.

“After the Yukla two-seven accident, the BASH program went through a serious modification,” said Rob Hahn, then-Elmendorf Air Force Base chief of flight safety, in a documentary produced by Morningstar Entertainment for Discovery Channel in 2003. “We went to the experts at the Department of Agriculture and had them do an assessment of the current BASH program and how we can make it better.”

The program began to be managed by the USDA on Elmendorf Air Force Base in 2000. The USDA wildlife specialists coordinate with

the airfield manager and other base officials to maintain consistent reporting of strike events while trying to identify the species involved.

The goal is to try and better understand why certain species are attracted to particular areas or training routes and to implement procedures which will keep pilots safe while preserving local wildlife.

“When I got here I was pretty much told not to mess with the birds,” said then-Chief Master Sgt. Tracy Matthews, former 3rd Operations Group superintendent in charge of maintenance. “You look back and [the crash] changed everyone’s attitude about that, and not just here, but throughout the community.”

The immediate response to the crash was to bring in propane cannons, which put out a loud acoustic sound to scare off wildlife. At that time a bird hotline, 552-BIRD, was also implemented to help pinpoint problem area around the base.

Since 2000 JBER added fences around the airfield and implemented a habitat modification, which has greatly reduced the numbers of wildlife in that area.

Habitat modification can be anything from removing low spots that create standing water to controlling grass height, said Jerry Morrill, USDA wildlife specialist. Geese like to eat the new short grass, so if you keep the grass about 11 inches high there is no food for them to eat.

To limit bird strikes, flying limitations based on the migration patterns of common local birds are sometimes placed on pilots.

“A lot of birds will migrate in the evening or at night, so if you are doing low-level flying [then] you’re going to have more bird strikes,” Morrill said.

In recent years the installation has installed electric fences and removed unnecessary trees and foliage.

These have reduced the number

of mammals on the flight line and eliminated nesting opportunities and black bear dens.

The USDA also has a raptor-trapping program, to help relocate large birds of prey off the runway. So far the USDA has yet to see relocated birds return to the area.

Similarly, the USDA worked with pest control and airfield management this summer to help decrease an unusually large number of grasshoppers on JBER, due to an overly dry spring. Grasshoppers are attracted to the flightline on warm sunny days, making an easy-to-find food source for birds.

Morrill said when all is said and done the BASH program is working toward a singular goal.

“Our focus is to get these guys down safe so they can get back to their families, we don’t want more Yuklas” Morrill said. “That was a terrible tragedy and unfortunately it should have never happened, but it did – and it was a valuable lesson learned.”

Dining facility closure

The Gold Rush Inn permanently closes Friday, Sept. 25.

The Wilderness Inn will remain open with new hours as follows:

Breakfast: 7 to 9:30 a.m.

Lunch: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Dinner: 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Drug takeback event

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson hosts a prescription drug take-back event Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the JBER Exchange.

Several JBER agencies join forces with the Drug Enforcement Agency to safely dispose of unneeded or expired prescription and over-the-counter medications.

For more information about drug takeback, visit dea.gov or call the DEA hotline, (800) 882-9539. For information about the installation event, call 384-1418.

JAG law school programs

The Office of The Judge Advocate General is accepting applications for the Army's Funded Legal Education Program. Up to 25 active-duty officers will be selected to attend law school while on active duty and at government expense beginning in 2016.

The program is open to lieutenants and captains. For information and eligibility requirements, visit www.jagcnet.army.mil/sites/jaronsf or call 384-2434.

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 web-

site 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 provides 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 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 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.

MiCare registration

MiCare, the online personal health record and secure messaging application, has been available to patients and medical group staff at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson since 2011.

Patients can take advantage of the ability to communicate with their primary care clinicians online.

Registered patients also have access to electronic records, allowing them to view and maintain their health records.

Once registered, patients have the ability to participate in the study by completing a short series of surveys during the course of the next year. This provides an opportunity for all active-duty, retired and dependent patients to have an impact on shaping the future of Air Force health services.

To register, visit the Military Treatment Facility, where enrollment specialists are available in each primary care clinic. All beneficiaries who are enrolled in the family health, pediatrics, flight medicine and internal medicine clinics are eligible to participate.

Patients need to show a military identification card and provide information, including name, social security number, birthday and email address.

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

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 more information, call 552-9203.

Richardson Thrift Shop

The JBER-Richardson Thrift Shop, 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 information, call 384-7000.

JBER Bargain Shop

The JBER-Elmendorf Bargain Shop, located in Building 8515 Saville across from the log cabin, is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 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. Volunteers are always welcome.

For information, visit jberspousesclub.com or call 753-6134.

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).

JBER MyBaseGuide

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

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

Cleanup of Nome contaminated soil uses landfarming

By John Budnik
Army Corps of Engineers - Alaska District

For environmental engineers at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Alaska District, “land farming” doesn’t mean vegetable crops and livestock.

It is a method used to clean contaminated soil associated with an obsolete fuel storage tank in the Arctic.

Within the Corps’ Formerly Used Defense Sites program, experts are challenged to find new and cost-effective means to clean up defunct military infrastructure leftover from earlier generations.

Alaska’s remoteness, Arctic climate and logistics pose the biggest challenges to accomplishing these missions. Engineers must consider expensive mobilization costs and availability of local resources when deciding how the sites will be remediated.

“Alaska is an entirely different environment than the rest of the U.S.,” said Aaron Shewman, environmental engineer and innovative technology advocate for the Alaska District. “Our objective is to mobilize as few times as possible to get the work done and get a ‘cleanup complete’ designation from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.”

Landfarming is a potential solution to meet the needs of the FUDS program across Alaska. The process includes removing contaminated soil from the source location, spreading it across an expansive area one to two feet thick, tilling consistently, and letting nature take control.

If a balance of warm soil temperature, moisture, aerobic activity and constant monitoring is achieved, then conditions are ideal to increase microbial activity that will degrade the pollutant.

“What landfarming does is attempt to accelerate nature’s process that would take many years,” said Will Mangano, environmental engineer and technical lead on the FUDS Tank Site E project near Nome.

Four miles north of downtown Nome, a World War II-era fuel storage tank leftover from the Army Air Corps had deteriorated over time and tainted the surrounding soil.

The vessel could store about 1 million gallons of diesel fuel at one time.

During the summer, the Corps removed the rusty steel container and its foundation, but was left with about 30,000 tons of petroleum-contaminated material to remediate.

Tank Site E is one example of a project presenting logistical difficulties that raise mobilization costs.

With a population of about 4,000 and



A dozer begins grading a landfarming cell near the Tank Site E project near Nome, Alaska. Landfarming is a potential solution to meet the needs of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Alaska District’s Formerly Used Defense Sites program across Alaska. The process includes removing contaminated soil from the source location, spreading it across an expansive area one to two feet thick, tilling consistently and then letting nature take control to degrade the pollutants. The Tank E site is where a World War II-era fuel storage tank, containing up to a million gallons of diesel fuel, had deteriorated. The Corps removed the tank and its foundation, and is now cleaning up about 30,000 tons of contaminated soil. (Courtesy photo/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

located more than 500 miles northwest of Anchorage, the city of Nome is only accessible by sea or air.

The Corps considered potential contractor proposed solutions that included burning the pollution out of the soil on-site, excavating and barging the dirt off site, and finally landfarming.

The latter presented a cost savings of about \$3 million, Mangano said.

“So many innovative technologies that are developed are electricity or power intensive and require a lot of maintenance and monitoring,” Shewman said. “Landfarming saves the government money. Excavating the soil, treating it and then possibly reusing it as fill is a money saver with less mobilization required.”

Spread over 12 acres, the Corps is landfarming the soil at the Nome site and is expected to meet the state’s cleanup require-

ments by 2019. If the conditions are not met, the contractor will remove the material off site, Mangano said.

However, there are significant challenges associated with the process. Contractors have to cover the soil with plastic liners to create a greenhouse effect to keep the area warm due to Nome’s cold climate.

Therefore, spring and summer months are the most effective for the procedure – because the ground and material are thawed.

“Nome will definitely provide the wind (aeration),” Mangano said. “The summers are going to be when we aggressively keep the heat, moisture and tilling up.”

Furthermore, the method’s efficiency is determined by the type of waste being eradicated.

If contaminants degrade through evaporation or microbial activity more easily, then there is a greater chance for a successful

operation.

For example, gasoline degenerates faster than heavy tars, Mangano said.

“We are confident it will work (at Nome),” he said. “I think it will be a good opportunity for the contractor to demonstrate that landfarming is a viable option even for the middle range hydrocarbons like diesel the Corps sees at FUDS sites.”

Indeed, landfarming is a flexible technology that can be customized as needed to the specifics of each case, Shewman said.

Additives, such as fertilizers, help microbes do their job, Mangano added.

Either way, the environmental cleanup method has the potential for positive results.

“Landfarming is not just a passive technology; you still need to engage it,” Mangano said. “We jumped on the idea to pull this material out of the ground and let natural ambient conditions take over.”

National Preparedness Month

Plan for the worst before it's too late

By David Vergun
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Virginia isn't known for large earthquakes, but at 1:51 p.m., Aug. 23, 2011, one struck.

While the magnitude 5.8 temblor wasn't large by West Coast standards, it surprised many residents, who are not used to being rolled and shaken.

On the day of the quake, Virginia Army National Guard Sgt. Maj. Joel Fix was in Afghanistan. As he tells it, before he learned there were no known deaths and relatively few injuries as a result, he was scared, wondering if his wife and two children were okay.

But Fix and other like-minded individuals had a plan — and that offered some reassurance.

Fix, who is the emergency management program manager for the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army — and others, disclosed that plan at the Emergency Preparedness Fair in the Pentagon Courtyard, Sept. 16. Soldiers and other first responders had information booths set up and were eager to chat about it.

The plan

The first part of the plan is to have a plan. The second part of the plan is to have a kit. And, the third part of the plan is to get involved, said Maj. Anthony Kazor, who is chief of the Army Emergency Management Branch.

Everyone's plan will be different, Kazor said. It should be tailored to the needs of the individual and his or her family and their surroundings.

By surroundings, he said there are some installations and com-

munities that are more prone to flooding, wildfires, tornadoes, earthquakes and other events. Likely events should be factored into the plan, which could include maps, evacuation routes and storm shelters.

Besides natural disasters, there are other kinds of events that are just as deadly, he said. For instance, there are chemical and fertilizer plants close to some installations. Knowing what to do or where to go in the event of a fire or explosion at the plant would be part of the plan.

Another kind of disaster might be technological, he said, for example: the power grid going offline. A good plan would address what to do without electricity. Perhaps a backup generator and a way to start a fire to keep warm and cook.

Then there are active-shooter and terrorist attacks. A plan would cover this too, he said, and would address escape and evasion, places to hide and items that could be used as weapons as a last resort.

The kit

Every plan should come with a kit, Kazor said. Like the plan itself, the kit would be tailored to the needs of the individual.

The key point about having a kit is to have it all in one place, perhaps in a bag or suitcase that's easily accessible.

The kit could include:

- food and water, including water purification tablets or filter
- first aid kit
- hand-cranked or battery-operated radio (with spare batteries) to hear news and weather
- flashlights, candles
- fire-starters for heat, cooking
- tools



Maj. Anthony Kazor, chief of the Army Emergency Management Branch, shows a kit that would be useful in the event of an emergency. He and others were at an Emergency Preparedness Fair in the Pentagon Courtyard, Sept. 16. (U.S. Army photo/David Vergun)

- maps, money
- important documents in case a fast evacuation is required
- medications
- food for pets
- rope, tape, plastic bags

In addition to the kit, family members should have a rendezvous point, where they assemble if their neighborhood is destroyed by a blast, fire or tornado, Kazor said.

Typically, parents would be at work and kids in school and if the neighborhood is gone, they'd need alternate assembly sites to link up.

Family members should also have a list and phone numbers of people to call such as friends, family, police, fire, etc.

Fix advised having more than one kit. He said one kit could be in the home and a smaller kit could go in the truck of the car.

Being stuck in a remote desert or snowy area without extra clothing, food or water could be deadly.

A kit at work might be prudent as well.

Get involved

Getting involved means sharing the plan with members of the family or in the case of work, with co-workers, Kazor said. Everyone needs to know what to do in the event of different types of emergencies. As well, family members should familiarize themselves with items in the kit and know how to use them.

Installation commanders too can get involved by holding emergency preparedness exercises and ensuring Soldiers are made aware of the importance of a kit and a plan.

"Some Soldiers will listen to the message because they want to be prepared," he said. "Others may think that in times of an emergency, everything will be provided for them, which isn't the case. That's why it's imperative we get the

message out."

Fix, who is still in the Guard, said he coaches his Soldiers about having an emergency plan and kit.

He cited an event he witnessed that took place recently, where there was a plan in place, but people hadn't practiced using it. It involved a fire in an office building, where people evacuated according to plan, but panicked as well. Some fell and bones were broken.

Practicing to evacuate ahead of time might have prevented the injuries. The entire incident is still under investigation so Fix said he was not authorized to provide more specifics.

Kazor said having a plan and a kit doesn't constitute being a survivalist like some who have appeared on the reality TV show "Doomsday Preppers." Kazor admits he's watched the show and has been entertained by it, but he doesn't have a fallout shelter — at least not yet.

National Preparedness Month: Volcano edition

By Airman 1st Class Christopher R. Morales
JBER Public Affairs

Editor's Note: (The following story is the last of several in a series highlighting the importance of preparedness in Alaska.)

Suddenly, an explosion shudders the ground and spews black arrows of soot, covering the surrounding area in a layer of ash, suffocating life all around.

Alaska is home to approximately 130 volcanoes and volcanic fields; more than 50 have been active since 1760. Twenty-seven of those volcanoes have had 230 confirmed eruptions according to the Alaska Volcano Observatory, which studies and monitors Alaska's volcanic activity.

"In Alaska, ash is [the] primary hazard because we have so many volcanoes," said Kristi Wallace, U.S. Geological Survey geologist. "Things like lava flow and mud flow aren't an issue because nobody is near."

An emergency kit is necessary for weathering any natural disaster. It should contain rations, a radio, and copies of important documents, among other items recommended by ready.gov.

The best way to avoid a volcanic eruption is to be nowhere near it. Follow the Alaska Volcano Observatory and up-to-date news outlets on volcano progression if there is a call to evacuate.

"In the event there is a major volcanic eruption, it is going to spit out this very fine volcanic dust that airplanes really hate," said Capt. Ted Lebadz, 773d Civil Engineer Squadron Readiness and Emergency



Redoubt Volcano as it erupts in 2009. A short 108 miles from Anchorage, the eruption spewed ash clouds up to 65,000 feet into the atmosphere — halting air travel and causing many government and civilian agencies to enact emergency preparedness plans. (Courtesy photos, U.S. Geological Survey)

Management Flight commander. "That will cause a lot of problems for the base; when we did receive a coating of volcanic dust

[from the 2009 Mount Redoubt eruption], it was a big mess."

Typically, ash is carried from the vol-

canoes in the Cook Inlet on strong winds. Ash is an issue due to abrasions, though is also electrically conductive and chemically corrosive, especially when wet.

"Volcanic dust is really hard on electronics, so pack some duct tape, plastic bags, tarps and things," Lebadz said. "Electronics, like computers, [televisions], things like that, you want to shut them down, cover them up and get them sealed."

"You also won't want to be driving much because not only will there be reduced visibility, but the ash will clog up the airflow in your car," Lebadz said.

Ash fall can affect the weather by increasing the air's density. Often, when ash falls, so does rain. Sometimes strong winds can carry ash great distances so it is paramount to be prepared, in any location.

Mother Nature is a force to be reckoned with and being prepared is one step in the right direction.

Some helpful links are: www.fema.gov, www.pdc.org, www.avo.alaska.edu, and www.ready.gov/build-a-kit.

For more information, visit the JBER Emergency Management office or call 551-7526.



An aerial photo taken March 21, 2009, the day before Redoubt Volcano first erupted, shows the glacier that filled the crater collapsing due to the increase in ground temperature underneath.

The Jewish – and American – holiday of Sukkot

Commentary by Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Micahel Bram JBER Chaplain

“On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall celebrate the Lord’s festival for a seven day period. You shall dwell in booths for a seven day period; every native in Israel shall dwell in booths,” Leviticus 23:39-42.

These Biblical verses introduce the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, or Feast of Booths. The seventh month of the Jewish calendar falls in September and October. This year, Sukkot begins at sundown on Sept. 27.

On Sukkot, Jews leave their homes, construct temporary “booths” (sukkah), and dwell in them during the holiday. The obligation to dwell in the sukkah is interpreted as eating and sleeping at a minimum.

Why are Jews commanded to leave their comfortable homes and spend a week “camping out” in what is typically an insubstantial and non-climate controlled dwelling?

The Bible is not in the habit of giving reasons for commandments, but in this case the next verse gives

a reason. “So that your generations will know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I took them from the land of Egypt,” Leviticus 23:43.

We dwell in the sukkah as a reminder that God cared for the Jewish people during their wanderings in the desert after leaving Egypt before entering the promised land.

On one level, we are reminded that during those wanderings, the Jews lived in temporary homes that were easily deconstructed and transported. But there’s a deeper meaning.

Life in the desert is hard even under the best of circumstances, but even in peacetime without modern conveniences like air conditioning, a dining facility to provide food and a security forces squadron for protection, it can be deadly.

The sukkah is not just a reminder of the temporary huts used in the wilderness – it is also a reminder of the protection given by God during the nation’s wanderings.

We leave the comfort and security of our homes and live in a sukkah that offers little protection to remind us that it is not our walls or our own efforts that protect us.

This is a profound lesson. Whatever each of us believes, all of us agree that our success does not come from our efforts alone. Ask any successful person, or attend any promotion ceremony and you’ll hear a long list of thank-yous to the people who enabled that success. Rarely do people succeed on their own. In reality, it is through the support and efforts of those who care about us.

Sometimes we need a reminder of the lesson that those around us contribute to our success and survival. That’s what the sukkah does for us.

You may ask a question that turns out to be especially relevant in Alaska; If the holiday of Sukkot reminds us of the divine protection in the wilderness, why isn’t Sukkot in the spring?

The holiday that commemorates the exodus from Egypt is Passover. If Sukkot is related to the exodus and the years immediately following it, then the Passover observances should be in the sukkah. Why separate two observances that relate to the same event?

I’m from Wisconsin, and my mother often makes the following observation that both asks and

answers this question: If the Jews had wandered in Wisconsin, then would Sukkot be in the spring when it’s more comfortable?

She’s absolutely correct. Eating and sleeping in the sukkah in Wisconsin in the fall, and even more so in Alaska, can be a bit chilly. It’s much nicer outside in the spring. It’d be much nicer to eat in the sukkah in April.

That’s exactly the reason why Sukkot is in the fall. In the spring many people have picnics, eat outside, and go camping. It wouldn’t be noticeable that Jews were fulfilling a religious obligation. But in the fall, when it’s getting cold, it’s less common to go outside to eat or sleep.

It’s precisely because it’s less common, and therefore more conspicuous, that we perform this observance in the fall.

We want it to be clear that we are fulfilling a divine command and not doing something just because it makes us happy or just because we enjoy it.

Hopefully I do enjoy it and hopefully it does make me happy, but happiness and enjoyment aren’t the ultimate ends unto themselves. Doing what my beliefs require

of me is.

Each of us has our own set of beliefs. For some it’s a religion, for others it may be something different. That’s part of what defines our free society and what chaplains are here to protect.

Whatever your beliefs, there will be times when it’s easier to hold to them and there will be times when it is more difficult.

What makes us who we are is how we behave and how we stick to our values when things are difficult.

Do we abandon our principles for what is easy or do we stick to what we know to be right even when it is more challenging and possibly unpopular?

It’s not an easy choice sometimes, but it can make the difference between holding on to our integrity and our values and succumbing to societal pressures and giving up what’s important to us. Make sure you’re prepared to make the right choice.

JBER will be observing Sukkot with a sukkah barbecue on Sept. 30 at 6 p.m. outside the Joint Religious Operations Center on JBER-Elmendorf at Kuter and 19th Streets; all are welcome.



**THROUGH WEDNESDAY
COLA survey**

The Out-of-Cycle Cost of Living Allowance Living Pattern Survey is available through Wednesday.

This survey is the ONLY opportunity offered to all service members and their spouses every three years to report their shopping behaviors and patterns at the overseas location they are assigned.

It's imperative participants not guess when filling out the survey because doing so will skew the data, and could have negative ramifications on COLA entitlements.

To take the survey, visit <http://tiny.cc/fsfs2x>

**FRIDAY
Dining facility closure**

The Gold Rush Inn permanently closes Sept. 25.

The Wilderness Inn will remain open with the following new hours:

Breakfast: 7 to 9:30 a.m.
Lunch: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Dinner: 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Youth movie night

Youths ages 9 to 13, come enjoy a free movie night from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the Kennecott Youth Center. A current G or PG movie will be shown in the computer lab.

For information, call 384-1508.

**SATURDAY
Muldoon Farmer's Market**

There's a new market in town. Enjoy new vendors offering locally grown and caught, baked and cooked foods, as well as locally made arts and crafts. Shop, eat, play and chat with fellow community members at the Muldoon Farmers Market at Begich Middle School from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For information, visit muldoon-farmersmarket.org.

9-hole mini-golf tourney

Feel it getting a little cold for outside golfing? Get some green time indoors and a chance at cash prizes during a free 9-hole mini-golf tournament starting at 2 p.m. in the Warrior Zone.

For information, call 384-9006.

**SUNDAY
Eklutna ATV trip**

Head to Eklutna on a guided ATV tour from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sign up at JBER-Elmendorf Outdoor Recreation Center.

Bring weather-appropriate

clothing and lunch.

To sign up or for more information, call 552-4599 or 552-2023.

**MONDAY THROUGH OCT. 2
Winter gear swap at CDC**

Children grow up fast. Parents, bring last-year's winter gear into Child Development Center and swap with other families for the next size up.

For information, see your child's CDC staff.

**TUESDAY
RecOn kayak training**

Looking for some new outdoor skills? Learn the ins and outs of kayaking in Alaska with this kayak training course offered by the Outdoor Adventure Program at the Elmendorf Fitness Center pool from 6 to 8 p.m. This course is part of the RecOn program which provides discounted trips and services to service and family members.

For information, to register, call 552-4599 or 2023.

**WEDNESDAY
Run to be ready 5K**

Disasters could happen any time, are you ready? The 773d Civil Engineer Squadron hosts a 5K fun run to raise awareness on National Preparedness Day. Run starts at 8 a.m. outside Hangar 5.

For information, call 552-5058.

**OCT. 2
Education Benefits 1-2-3**

Seeking information about your GI Bill benefits? Need more information on the Montgomery and Post 9-11 GI Bills? Have questions on which GI Bill is best for you? Come to the Education Benefits 1-2-3 briefing from 10 a.m. to noon at the Community Education Center, Bldg. 7 on JBER-Richardson for answers to your questions.

For information, call 384-0970.

**OCT. 10
Wolf Day at the zoo**

Join the Alaska Zoo for a howling good time celebrating wolves. Zoo guests will enjoy a wolf fact scavenger hunt, canine touch table, wolf-themed storytime and wolf kids craft and coloring station and much more.

For information, visit alaska-zoo.org.

**ONGOING
Football on NFL Ticket**

Looking for a place to watch

your favorite NFL football team? Join the staff at the Warrior Zone or Polar Bowl and never miss a game.

For information, call 384-9622 or 753-7467.

Anchorage museum tours

Visit the Anchorage Museum for a guided tour with a docent. Learn about the history of Alaska and Anchorage, the indigenous people, and art. These 45-minute tours are free with admission.

For information, visit anchorage-museum.org.

Guided nature walks

Join a docent at the Eagle River Nature Center at 1:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays for a 3/4-mile walk around Rodak Loop.

Learn about the history and flora and fauna of the Eagle River Valley.

For information, visit ernc.org.

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.

Many outings are offered at deep discounts 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.

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 arguing 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.

Protestant Women of the Chapel meetings

Women are invited to meet

with the Protestant Women of the Chapel. Bible studies are Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. at the Arctic Warrior Chapel, JBER-Richardson.

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

Model railroading

The Military Society of Model Railroad Engineers meets at 7 p.m. 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.

Wired Cafe for Airmen

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

For information, call 552-4422.

Eat and play weekdays

What goes great with lunch? A free game of bowling. Present your receipt at the front counter totaling more than \$5 from Ten Pins or Topios (located inside the Polar Bowl) between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., Mon., Thurs., or Fri. and receive one free game.

For information, call 753-7467.

Help for homebuyers

JBER Volunteer Realtors and Mortgage Lenders present an hour-long home buying seminar every Wednesday alternating between the JBER-Elmendorf or JBER-Richardson Housing Management Offices from 1 to 2 p.m.

These seminars explain the buying and selling process in the Anchorage, Eagle River and Wasilla/Palmer areas.

For more information or to sign up, contact either HMO office; JBER-Elmendorf at 552-4312 or JBER-Richardson at 384-3088.

Conservator's Corner

Go behind the scenes at the Anchorage Museum and see conservators in action.

Ask questions while they repair objects at a mobile conservation station, and learn how they maintain displays, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For information, call 929-9200.

Storytime for Toddlers

Pre-school-aged children can

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

Sukkah barbecue

Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Religious Operations Center

Religious Education

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

join zoo staff for stories about an animal, followed by meeting animals featured in the story, starting at 10:30 a.m. Mondays at the coffee shop.

For information, email camp@alaskazoo.org.

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68 Years: Proud Past, Promising Future

By Air Force Maj. Angela Webb
JBER Public Affairs

Although downtown Anchorage was flooded with those in pirate costumes, another celebration brought together almost 700 military members, families and other distinguished guests dressed in their finest attire to honor the Air Force’s legacy at the Dena’ina Convention Center, Saturday.

U.S. Air Force installations across the globe celebrated the 68th Air Force birthday in some fashion, and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson threw a party to remember a proud past and promising future.

While it was a night of celebration, the Air Force birthday and POW/MIA Recognition day are on the same day – so there was also a solemn moment to honor

America’s prisoners of war and those missing in action, with a missing-man table and honors ceremony.

The evening’s guest speaker, the Hon. Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senator for Alaska and U.S. Marine Reservist, spoke about family, service and sacrifice.

He included several anecdotes of Air Force and other military leaders who began this journey more than 68 years ago to construct today’s U.S. Air Force.

“I feel that the warriors of the sky are all toasting along with you tonight to celebrate one of the greatest services that they helped to create,” Sullivan said.

“Trust and take pride in your service, sacrifice and dedication in protecting this country.”

From the Air Force Ball Committee’s production of JBER historical and present-day photos to

the youngest and oldest Airman in the room cutting the cake and the singing of the Air Force song, the night showcased the esprit de corps and pride of the Air Force.

Before the birthday celebration ended, there was a round of applause for all Airmen and their families in the room.

“Thank you for everything you do, day in and day out, to make our Air Force the very best in the world,” said Col. Brian R. Bruckbauer, JBER and 673d Air Base Wing commander, during closing comments.

“As we walk out these doors, let’s continue to make history.”

To learn more about the missing man ceremony, visit www.pow-miafamilies.org/events.

To view more photos from the 2015 JBER Air Force Ball, go to <http://tiny.cc/80ur3x>.



U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan addresses attendees at the Air Force's 68th birthday ball at the Dena’ina Center in Anchorage Sept. 19. (U.S. Air Force photos/Maj. Angela Webb)



An ice sculpture crafted by a local artist adorned the ballroom where JBER celebrated the Air Force’s 68th birthday at the Dena’ina Center in Anchorage Sept. 19.

Hispanic heritage: A look back at Maj. William Cordero

By Tech. Sgt. Meredith Mingledorff
SECAF Public Affairs

WASHINGTON — Hispanic Americans have been a vital part of American society since before the country unified. William Edward Cordero was welcomed into one of these pioneering families on July 20, 1935, in Santa Barbara, California.

His father, Walter Cordero, and his mother, Helen, had early Spanish explorer roots in California, which were traceable back to the 1700s. Perhaps it was this lineage that gave William the ambition to seek new opportunities and test boundaries.

Walter and Helen had limited educations. They worked multiple jobs to support their young family during the Great Depression, but Walter was best known as a blacksmith and Helen as a mom raising William in humble surroundings. Eventually William had a step-mother, Ida, who spent the majority of her time working for Catholic charities. All three parents instilled a faithful, devoted work ethic in the young man.

As he grew, William was an avid Boy Scout and developed an interest in sports, becoming a high school football player. Despite being an average student, he had aspirations of higher education and saw the opportunity when Loyola University introduced him to the ROTC. Here he received both a solid college education and a career with the Air Force. As luck would have it, this path led him to his wife.

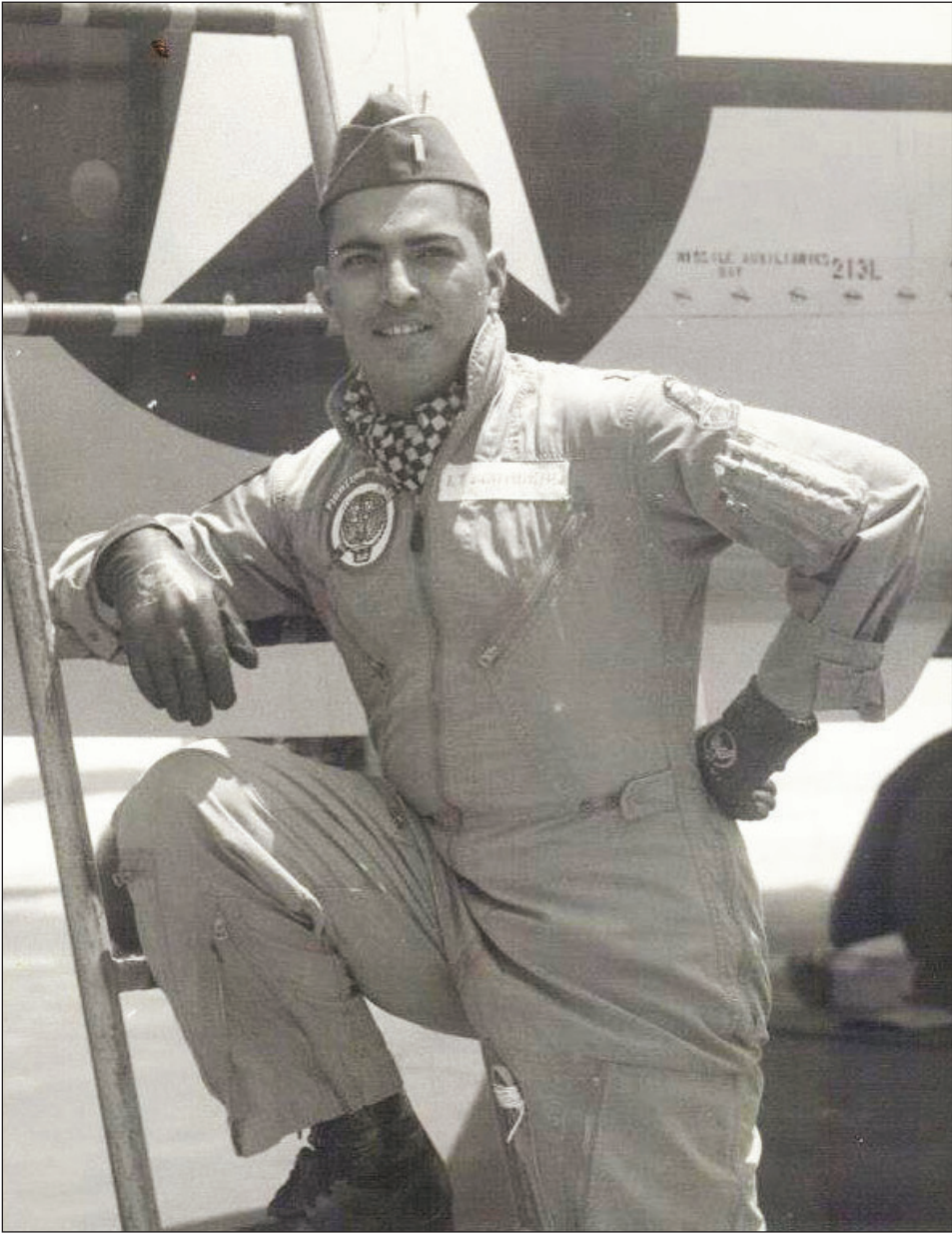
William met Kathleen at a dance for Air Force ROTC students and nursing students from Mount St. Mary’s College. They were married in December 1957 and immediately began their life together as an Air Force family.

Their first assignment was in Texas, where the family began to grow. Their first two children were born in the Lone Star state, before the young family found themselves assigned to Oxnard Air Force Base, California, in 1961. There, the family of four became a family of six, as two more Corderos were born into the world.

Just before Thanksgiving 1963, Cordero, a captain at the time, left his growing family in the U.S. for a deployment to South Vietnam as an adviser with the 1st Air Commando Group.

For nearly a year, his family would live without him; but in the summer of 1964, an assignment to Clark AFB, Philippines, reunited the family.

“In the brief time he had with us, he doted on us,” recalled his son Tony Cordero. “He took us to Sunday mass. He made sure we had a ‘nipa hut’ playhouse when we arrived at Clark. He even took us on vacation



1st Lt. William Edward Cordero during flight training. (Courtesy photo)

in the Philippines.”

Tony recounts dinners at the officer’s club and trips to the base swimming pool, leaving the memory of an attentive, committed and patriotic father on the young boy.

At only four years old, Tony recalled the time apart from his father was difficult on his family, and his mother was not particularly happy her husband volunteered to navigate a late night mission on June 21, 1965.

On that evening Cordero climbed into his B-57 Canberra with his pilot, Capt. Charles K. Lovelace. The pair departed Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Vietnam, at approximately 5 p.m. accompanied by their wingmen in another B-57, Capt. John J. Adler, and 1st Lt. Russell H. Bonner Jr.

According to Bonner, the three-hour flight to Da Nang, Vietnam, was uneventful.

There the two crews JADE 21 and JADE 22 – were briefed on their Rolling Thunder mission, armed-reconnaissance flight number 19G-5. They were heavily loaded with bombs, and were to be aided by a C-130 Hercules, AZTEC 2. They were briefed the weather would be overcast, and at 11:40 p.m. they departed Da Nang.

The three aircraft stayed together, traveling between 6,000 and 10,000 feet along the way. Despite scattered clouds, they maintained visual contact with one another most of the flight. At approximately 1:15 a.m., AZTEC 2, the C-130, began dropping flares.

JADE 22 radioed to JADE 21, “Are you clear down there?”

JADE 21 replied, “Yes, but it’s raining.”

As the weather worsened, the three found themselves in increasingly heavy cloud

cover, with smoke from the first bombing run hindering their vision even further. According to Bonner, the two crews made a couple of additional orbits, then began their ascent.

JADE 21 radioed to JADE 22 for a fuel check and got no response – after another try, still silence. JADE 21 then asked AZTEC 2 if they can radio JADE 22, to which they replied, there was no answer.

Kathleen, then pregnant with the couple’s fifth child, would live with that silence for four long years. Her husband, a loving son, caring father and devoted Airman, was missing in action.

The family eventually flew back to California, sending regular care packages to the Red Cross with the hopes Cordero was being held as a prisoner of war. The family grew numb, according to Tony, waiting for word to come. When the casualty report was delivered in March 1969, the family felt isolated.

The political climate and negativity surrounding the Vietnam War left them feeling that they couldn’t share their father’s story outside of the home.

“My dad saw himself as an Airman first,” Tony said. “He didn’t think about being Hispanic when approaching his duties, but he was descended from Spanish explorers, indigenous peoples, sheep shearers and blacksmiths. All were marginally educated. “He grew up to navigate a jet bomber with some of the Air Force’s most advanced technology of that time. He was a trailblazer.”

According to Dr. Richard Wolf, the director of Air Force Historical Support Division, statistics for the Vietnam War did not generally break out demographics as the Air Force does today.

Wolf’s office ran a search of casualties from 1960 to 1965 and found almost no Hispanic surnames at all – none in the officer corps. At the time, Hispanic Airmen were thought to make up only 4.5 percent of the Air Force population, putting Cordero among one of the first Hispanic officers killed in Vietnam, if not the first.

Today, Tony feels his father opened the door for other Hispanic men and women following in his footsteps.

Tony is a college graduate and has started Gold Star Sons and Daughters in Touch. The support group is for children of the Vietnam War – children who, like him, missed out on growing up with their parents.

Cordero was promoted to the rank of major posthumously, and 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of his and Lovelace’s loss. Cordero would have been 80 years old this year.

Tony said he believes his father would tell the Airmen of today, “Everything is possible.”

Exploring Denali in recognition of military appreciation

By Tech. Sgt. John Gordinier
Alaskan Command Public Affairs

Each September Denali National Park and Preserve hosts a “road lottery” where winners can drive as much of the Denali Park Road as weather allows. Sept. 19 was Military Appreciation Day, and 400 lottery tickets were given to military members throughout Alaska.

On normal business days, the park only allows visitors to drive to mile 15 of the Denali Park Road, but weather permitting, lottery winners can drive all the way to the end around mile marker 85 near Wonder Lake.

Winners are afforded the opportunity to see wildlife, spectacular scenery and closer views of Denali.

According to the National Park Service website, “Military Appreciation Day began in the late 2000s, in the style of the road lottery. It occurred the day after the main lottery ended, all fees were waived and road passes were given out by the military to 400 Alaska-based servicemembers. In 2014, park superintendent Don Striker made this an annual event.

“Denali is honored each year to formally recognize the longstanding contributions of the (military) to national parks in general and to Denali specifically,” Striker said. “We are humbled to do our small part to thank our military families who sacrifice much to protect us, and we hope a visit inspires a deep connection to the democracy that national parks represent so well.”

This year, the park decided that it made more sense to offer Military Appreciation Day on the weekend of road lottery, rather than on a Tuesday, and rearranged the dates of the public lottery to accommodate this change.

“I was thrilled when I found out I was a



A Denali National Park ranger welcomes servicemembers to Denali National Park Sept. 19, during the park’s Military Appreciation Day. Approximately 400 Alaskan servicemembers and their families received a free pass to drive the Denali Park road. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Monik Chhim)

lottery winner and was chosen to drive the Denali Park Road,” said Air Force Staff Sgt. Monik Chhim, 11th Air Force commander’s support staff NCO. “It was beautiful; we saw a huge herd of caribou, a few dall Sheep, a couple of bears and one huge bull moose.”

“I thank the National Park Service and their personnel for allowing me and my

fellow servicemembers the opportunity to enjoy all of Denali National Park amenities,” Chhim said. “I was greeted by many park rangers along the way and they were all so courteous and polite. It was truly amazing and a once-in-a-lifetime adventure.”

Sentiments felt were mirrored by park rangers. “I met hundreds of servicewomen

and men and their families, and it was an absolute pleasure and privilege getting to meet all of them and to chat briefly with them,” said Cass Ray, acting public information officer for Denali National Park and Preserve.

“We recognize and thank members of the military and their families for their service and contributions to our nation.”



A bull caribou heads north during the Denali National Park military appreciation day in 2014. (Courtesy photo)



A Dall sheep is spotted just off the road during Denali National Park military appreciation day Sept. 19. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Monik Chhim)