

TERN  
MIGRATION

249th AS takes  
their show on  
the road

By Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton  
176th Wing Public Affairs

The arctic tern is a seabird native to both arctic and subarctic regions. Of its many traits, the tern is known for its long-range migratory patterns. Here, there is another flock of terns that frequent the skies — the 249th Airlift Squadron of the Alaska Air National Guard, and this year, they migrated south onboard their C-17 Globemaster III aircraft to Gulfport, Miss., on a simulated deployment for their two-week annual training Jan. 8 through 18.

Exercise Tern Migration was an opportunity for the Terns, as the 249th AS is known, to practice a squadron-wide deployment, according to Lt. Col. Ken Radford, director of operations, 249th AS.

“We typically don’t get to deploy as a squadron,” said Radford. “Typically, we send one crew at a time. We wanted to exercise the scenario of our whole squadron deploying together to see if we could meet that capability in the event we got that call.”

Based out of the Mississippi Air National Guard-operated Combat Readiness Training Center at the Gulfport International Airport, the Terns and their support crew from the 176th Maintenance Group and the 176th Operations Support Squadron were busy training on a host of different missions



Paratroopers with the 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C., sit aboard a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft from the 249th Airlift Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, Jan. 11 during a joint airborne air transportability training mission. The 249th AS, from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, conducted a squadron-wide mock deployment with several missions during their two-week annual training, based out of Gulfport, Miss., Jan. 8 through 18. (Courtesy photo)

including assault zone training, low level training, approach at unfamiliar airports, as well as a simulated astronaut rescue mission in the Atlantic Ocean.

The rescue mission was a joint effort between the 920th Rescue Wing; Detach-

ment 3, 45th Operations Group; and the 45th Space Wing, all based out of Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.; NASA; and the Alaska ANG.

Speaking about the astronaut rescue mission, Tim O’Brien with NASA’s Ground

and Mission Operations Office explained the importance of working with Department of Defense assets.

“Exercises like this are extremely

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Use caution when taking dietary, performance supplements

By Staff Sergeant Wes Wright  
JBER Public Affairs

The term “snake oil” may conjure up Old West images of a smooth-talking salesman touting what is essentially a bottle of booze from the back of a covered wagon, proclaiming it to cure everything from gout to arthritis. While modern consumers have become more wary of supplements and medications they buy, knowing the real benefits and risks of products marketed as health supplements still has a learning curve.

Enter Operation Supplement Safety, a Department of Defense educational campaign to inform leaders, providers, warfighters, and their families about potential health risks and what steps to take before deciding to use dietary supplements. Locally, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson’s OPSS working group is composed of representatives from the 673d Medical Group, Army and Air Force Exchange Service, Defense Commissary Agency, base fitness centers and public affairs.

“The safety and well-being of our Airmen, Soldiers and community are my top priority,” said Air Force Col. Brian Bruckbauer, 673d Air Base Wing and JBER commander. “[The OPSS working group’s mission is] to support informed, safe and responsible choices and communicate consistent, coordinated and widespread messages on dietary supplement safety.”

The term “dietary supplement” has a specific legal definition, but in translation it refers to any vi-

tamin, mineral, botanical, amino acid, or other substance you can take by mouth, alone or in combination, that adds to a person’s overall diet. Dietary supplements come in forms such as tablets, capsules, liquids, or powders, and must be identified on the front of the product label as dietary supplements.

“Being as informed as possible on the risks and benefits of dietary supplements is critically important for anyone considering taking them,” said Lisa Schuette, 673d Medical Group health-promotion coordinator and registered dietician. “Consequences can run the gamut of wasting your money to even death. We are not here to vilify the supplement industry, as many products can be beneficial, but to help people make the most informed choices.”

Schuette said one of the major concerns with supplements is that they are not regulated by the FDA.

According to the DoD’s Human Performance Resource Center, by law, dietary supplement manufacturers are responsible for ensuring their products are safe before they are marketed. Unlike drug products, there are no provisions in the law for FDA to “approve” dietary supplements for safety or effectiveness before they reach the consumer. Once a product is marketed, FDA must show that a dietary supplement is “unsafe” before it can take action to restrict a product’s use or remove it from the marketplace.

“Essentially, companies can put things in a supplement and not have it on the label, or put it on the label and not have it in the



Supplements, despite the hype, often don’t help you achieve your goals – and may be risky. (U.S. Air Force photo illustration/Staff Sgt. Alexandre Montes)

supplement,” Schuette said. “This is why it is so important people be informed. To that end, the most powerful resource we have is the HPRC website, [hprc-online.org](http://hprc-online.org). It’s a one-stop shop for information on just about every dietary supplement you can imagine.”

John Limon, Buckner Physical Fitness Center director, said supplement concerns include unknowingly ingesting harmful substances, overdosing and over-reliance on supplements to attain workout goals.

“People should examine their own lifestyle choices,” Limon said. “Much of the time, simple and con-

sistent alterations of lifestyle will do more to get them to their goal than a supplement could. People should set attainable goals. Not all of us are going to be discovered by the NFL during our workout. Make sure nutrition, consistent physical activity and rest are solidified before considering a supplement. When doing research on a supplement it is just as important to look up the manufacturer as it is the supplement title.”

One resource is the Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database, where people can make informed decisions and get ratings on dietary supplements and natural

products, as well as information about product ingredients.

“If you have a .mil email address, it’s free,” Schuette said. “Last year, it was \$50 to \$200. You can put in the name of your supplement, and it will tell you what the research shows on individual ingredients. It is the best reference I have seen for dietary supplements.”

Schuette offered another tip for people looking to mitigate the risks associated with ingredients companies purport are in their products.

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It's here again

TAX TIME

JBER's consolidated  
tax preparation center  
opens to all Monday;  
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skip the waiting, Page B-6



# Air Force’s Trusted Care program comes to JBER

By Airman 1st Class Kyle Johnson  
JBER Public Affairs

Last fall, the Air Force Medical Services established the Trusted Care program, a new initiative designed to the reduce risk of harm to patients at Air Force medical treatment facilities.

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson’s 673d Medical Group is one of nine facilities scheduled to begin the program this month.

“In all hospitals in America, there’s a certain risk of harm to patients in the facilities,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Scott Cummis, 673d Aerospace Medicine Squadron commander. “The Trusted Care

initiative is focused at minimizing any potential for harm that would come to our patients while they are under our care.”

Trusted Care is based on proven safety science from aviation, nuclear, and manufacturing industries. The program consists of three parts – or phases – with the first being the diagnostic phase, Cummis said.

During the diagnostic phase, scheduled to begin Jan. 25, AFMS representatives will arrive at the 673d MDG to assess the current culture of safety in the facility, Cummis said.

“The first two days of the visit will be spent reviewing data from past safety events in the hospi-

tal and reviewing the policies and procedures in our facility,” Cummis said. “They take all this information and build a standardized database which will allow for further tracking of safety events in the facility.”

Then, they will interview staff members at all levels of the facility to get an understanding of what their perception of the safety climate is within our medical group, Cummis said.

“They will also be doing some data analysis to establish for us where we are at the present time in terms of our assessment of individual patient risk,” said Air Force Col. Teresa Bisnett, 673d

MDG commander. “It’s an assessment that is data driven and interview-driven.”

The representatives will take their findings and develop a comprehensive assessment of the culture of safety in the 673d MDG and a plan to enhance it.

“A main outbrief will be done one month later, and they will come back in February and share their findings,” Cummis said. “That will be the beginning of the implementation phase.”

After AFMS shares their findings, they will provide training tools and guidance to show the way forward, Cummis said.

Once the implementation

phase is complete, the 673d MDG will follow the new safety guidance and maintain an ongoing relationship with the program as part of the sustainment phase.

“The delivery of healthcare in the United States is certainly not perfect, anywhere. While perfection is not achievable, the goal is to get as close as possible to a ‘no harm’ system,” Bisnett said. “We’ve been going in a direction which I feel is very good; this is a change in the lens of looking at success.”

“You need to know where you are at the present time in order to make steps to get to where you want to be.”

## CENTCOM bringing theater course to JBER for two sessions

### Instruction for SOF aviators helpful for all Soldiers, Airmen

By Staff Sgt. Wes Wright  
JBER Public Affairs

The U.S. Central Command Theater Course is coming to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson the first week of February.

Two separate three-day iterations of the course are being offered: Feb 1 to 3 and Feb 3 to 5.

The course is designed for special operations personnel who will be operating in the CENTCOM theater, with emphasis on special operations forces aviation.

The focus audiences include combat aviation advisors, aviation special tactics personnel, and standard and non-standard aviation mission planners.

Other audiences include non-aviation SOF and those who support them.

One of the training organizers, Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Bliss, 703d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander, said the course is beneficial to any Airman or Soldier of any rank or career field.

“For decades, SOF have been involved with face-to-face cross-cultural interaction,” Bliss said. “In today’s high operations tempo environment, regular Airmen and Soldiers are involved in cross-cultural interactions that previously would have only involved SOF.”

“Cross-cultural training is beneficial for you no matter if you’re in intelligence picking targets or in civil engineering making road repairs. Every year, many units and people from JBER deploy to the CENTCOM theater, and 2016 will be no exception.”

Some of the topics covered include the history of Islam; Arab social and military culture; introduction to Iraq and Syria; Islamic radicalization and terrorism; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development; U.S. foreign policy and the Arab spring; Iran: engagement vs. containment;



**Air Force Capt. Ryan Weld talks with villagers during a wroowali mission to Bakorzai village, Afghanistan, in 2011. Wroowali, or brotherhood, missions are designed to bring the Afghan people closer to their government. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Brian Ferguson)**

Yemen; Pakistan and India; the drawdown in Afghanistan; Central Asia; and Afghanistan Transition and Development.

“This orientation course is important for all military members as we work to understand the layered complexities of the Middle East and Central Asia,” said Air Force Maj. Justin Hickey, Deputy Division Chief for Theater Engagement at the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School at Hurlburt Field, Florida. “Simultaneously, it will help our people better appreciate our CENTCOM allies and their culture, regardless of the type of deployment.”

“The training originates from the SOF schoolhouse, but has been tailored to intro-

duce Airmen and Soldiers of all backgrounds to CENTCOM’s culture and security concerns,” Hickey added.

Bliss said the training initiative’s purpose is to develop Airmen.

“Equipping our Airmen with knowledge, understanding, and training to better accomplish their mission is our mission as tactical and operational leaders,” Bliss said. “Cross-cultural (political and historical) knowledge are areas of focus that will only grow in importance. It’s been said, ‘an intimate understanding of culture’s effects on human behavior is crucial to mission success.’”

Hickey, one of the course instructors,

said the main takeaway he hopes to give students is to encourage them to critically think about the complex security issues in CENTCOM.

The training will be hosted at the 517th Airlift Squadron auditorium, Hangar 21, on the second floor.

The Feb. 1 to 3 course runs from 8 a.m. to 2:50 p.m. on days one and two, concluding with lunch at noon on the third day.

The Feb. 3 to 5 course runs from 1 p.m. to 3:50 p.m. on the first day, 8 a.m. to 3:50 p.m. on the second day, and from 8 a.m. to 1:50 p.m. on the third day.

For more information or to register for the course, call 522-5522.

## Security Forces Squadron weighs options for arming JBER personnel

By Air Force Lt. Col. John Newton  
673d SFS

Several national news agencies have recently highlighted programs which could potentially increase the number of service members who would be authorized to carry weapons on military installations.

Implementation across installations will vary based on the local threat, the perceived usefulness of each of the tools available, and the mitigation of risks associated

with additional weapons on the installation.

Potential initiatives include: Security Forces Staff Arming, the Unit Marshal Program, and the Law Enforcement Officer Safety Act program.

The 673d Security Forces Squadron is currently analyzing these programs to determine whether any or all of them are needed on our installation.

The Security Forces Staff Arming program is an internal program

that can be used to increase the number of 673rd Air Base Wing Security Forces personnel who are carrying weapons each day on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

The Unit Marshal Program is a potential tool the installation commander can use to help mitigate the threat of active shooters and workplace violence by selectively training and arming military personnel.

Unit marshals are not first

responders and are not expected to “move to the threat.” They are armed personnel who enhance threat deterrence and provide on-site defense to protect Department of Defense personnel in an active-shooter event.

Finally, the LEOSA program allows present and retired military policemen to concealed-carry privately owned firearms on base if they meet specific program requirements.

Personnel with LEOSA creden-

tials are currently not authorized to carry privately owned firearms on JBER.

Personnel who desire to obtain LEOSA credentials should visit [www.leosaonline.com](http://www.leosaonline.com) for more information.

As we learn more and complete our review of these programs, we will put out additional information.

If you have further questions, call the 673rd Security Forces Squadron at 552-4304.

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“It’s not a be-all-end-all, but there are third party certifiers some companies use that test their products to ensure what’s on the label is what’s in the product. It’s not saying it works or listing the pros and cons. It’s simply verifying that what is on the label is what’s in the supplement.”

According to HPRC officials, third party certification organizations provide independent testing to evaluate supplements and their ingredients. Although this does not

ensure the effectiveness of a product, certification programs do verify that a product is of high quality, consists of the ingredients listed on the label, and does not include any undeclared ingredients.

They also conduct safety reviews to evaluate whether the combinations of ingredients in these products might pose harm. A seal is provided to appear on the label of the approved product upon completion of the certification process.

A list of third-party companies and what their seals look like is on the HPRC website.

One commonly asked question the

working group receives is whether there is an all-encompassing list of dietary supplements that are banned or illegal for use by military personnel.

The HPRC website addresses this question by stating, “The Department of Defense does not maintain a list of dietary supplements or supplement ingredients that are either allowed or banned. If the Food and Drug Administration or the Drug Enforcement Administration has not banned or declared an ingredient or dietary supplement product illegal, then DoD does not consider it banned or illegal.”

While dietary supplements have known benefits, Schuette pointed out that, ideally, people should attempt to get proper nutrition through real food.

“If you’re trying to have an overall healthy lifestyle, you are able, with a little planning to get all the vitamins, minerals and nutrients you need through food alone,” Schuette said. “Also, dietary supplements will not fix a bad diet. You have to eat healthy. You can’t exercise or supplement your way out of a bad diet.”

For more information, visit <http://hprc-online.org/dietary-supplements>.



# Biomedical Sciences Corps celebrates birthday with networking

By Airman Valerie Monroy  
JBER Public Affairs

The Air Force recognizes the achievements of the men and women who comprise the Biomedical Sciences Corps by designating this week as BSC Appreciation Week. This year is the 51st anniversary of the Biomedical Sciences Corps.

The BSC enhances Air Force combat capability and effectiveness by providing world-class customer service and scientific expertise, resulting in peak force performance, productivity, and quality healthcare to their beneficiary population.

With 2,400 officers supported by 5,800 enlisted members in parallel career fields, BSC members can be found at 81 locations around the world and in multiple settings.

“In my mind, the purpose of the BSC week is to take all 18 specialties that the corps has and give them the opportunity to pause and reflect on the different missions that each of us have,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Chad Johnson, 673d Medical Group clinical social worker and Biomedical Sciences Corps executive.

“It’s a chance for people to get together to see what the different specialties actually do and to provide education to the community and the medical group about what kind of capabilities we offer.”

The BSC is the most diverse corps in the Air Force Medical Service, comprised of 15 primary specialty codes and 18 career fields, which include physical therapy, optometry, podiatry, physician assistants, audiology, speech pathology, clinical psychology, clinical social work, occupational therapy, aerospace and operational physiology, dietetics, bioenvironmental engineers, public health, medical entomology, pharmacy, biomedical laboratory, healthcare facilities architects and engineers and health and medical physics.

“We’ve got this really unique corps that is represented by people with varied levels of education that all work together to get the



**Air Force Capt. Lauren Funder, 673d Medical Group optometrist, checks the phoropter and writes down a prescription at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson hospital Aug. 11. Optometry is one of 18 career fields which make up the Biomedical Sciences Corps. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman Christopher R. Morales)**

mission done,” Johnson said.

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson is unique because it is one of the few locations where the majority of BSC career fields are represented, explained Johnson.

“For us locally, that’s a great opportunity,” Johnson said.

Air Force-wide, bases are encouraged to plan activities like community service or a mentoring activity, said Air Force Maj. Jennifer Laack, 673d Aerospace Medicine

Squadron audiologist.

“I think what’s most beneficial is the time to interact with each other to get to know the other folks,” Laack said.

Laack explained that going to gatherings for the BSC helps her meet people with different capabilities.

“Making those connections can help you later on down the road and the relationships you build can foster over the years,” Laack said. “Networking is very critical in all of

our career fields.”

Johnson said that many BSC personnel have jobs that require them to see patient after patient every day and to be able to stop that day-to-day mission to reflect on what other people are doing offers great opportunities.

“To be able to interface with people that may work down the hall but you never see because of different schedules or disciplines, I think that’s the value for me,” Johnson said.

## From TERNs • A1

important to the development of tactics, techniques and procedures for the DoD forces as well as practicing and refining communication protocols between the flight crew and ground support teams, both NASA and DoD,” he said. “While Air Force pararescuemen jumped from the C-17 aircraft and practiced their hands-on skills, real-time coordination took place between those rescue forces, a simulated flight crew, the aircraft, and NASA/DoD command centers in order to execute a safe rescue scenario. Every time we conduct an exercise like this, we learn and improve our processes.”

The 249th AS is no stranger to working with pararescue assets. The Terns are co-located with the 210th, 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons of the Alaska ANG, and have been developing long range search and rescue TTP’s to support their rescue missions. Typically, C-17s perform strategic airlift missions, and this developing capability contributed to the 249th AS being selected to support the astronaut rescue exercise.

“From my understanding, this was the first simulated astronaut



**Guardian Angels from the 304th and 308th Rescue Squadrons jump from C-17 Globemaster III aircraft from the 249th Airlift Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, over the Atlantic Ocean near Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., Jan. 14 during a simulated astronaut rescue mission. The 249th AS worked with NASA, the 920th Rescue Wing, the 45th Space Wing and Detachment 3 of the 45th Operations Group to develop tactics, training and procedures to quickly and safely recover astronauts in the event they would need to abort their spacecraft. (Courtesy photo/Senior Airman Zac Heinen)**

rescue mission out of a C-17,” said Radford.

Flying from Mississippi to Florida, two C-17s landed at Patrick Air Force Base and picked up personnel and equipment from the

304th and 308th Rescue Squadrons – both from the 920th Rescue Wing – and loaded them up for the mission. Additionally, a pararescueman from the 212th Rescue Squadron was in each of the C-17s.

“The [212th RQS Pararescuemen] were there because they are intimately familiar with rescue tactics, training and procedures from a C-17,” Radford added, “and the 304th and 308th had limited experience with the C-17.”

Aside from dropping the Guardian Angel teams (made up of pararescuemen and combat rescue officers) and their equipment at the astronaut’s location, they also tested the ability to communicate directly with ground units during the mission.

“We tested the pararescuemen’s portable radios by connecting them to aircraft antennas,” said Radford. “This helps turn any aircraft into a combat search and rescue aircraft and allows us to talk directly to the survivor, ascertaining important information such as their status, position, threats and extraction information. Even if the survivor is unable to talk, you can still extract information from their radio. We were able to establish communication with the survivor from over 45 miles.”

All in all, he explained, the exercise was a success.

This sentiment was consistent throughout the entire annual training, which he described as being

very busy.

“It was excellent training,” said Radford. “We flew more sorties in seven days than we would at our home station. We had planned for 17, but two cancelled, and so we executed 15 missions. With only two aircraft and a limited number of maintenance support personnel, that’s a pretty good undertaking.”

Other missions included flying to Pope Field in North Carolina, picking up Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division and performing joint airborne air transportability training.

They also flew to Oklahoma to perform medical evacuation training, and performed seven air refueling missions with four different air refueling units over the course of Exercise Tern Migration.

“It was a monumental time,” added Radford. “It was really good to see all of us come together to deploy as a squadron.

“It was a very large effort, with all of our drill status Guardsmen taking on additional duties to make it happen,” he said. “From various projects, building missions and planning sorties, the entire thing was just awesome to see.”



# Election-year etiquette for armed forces

By Tech. Sgt. Vernon Cunningham  
JBER Public Affairs

*Editor's note: This article corrects information previously published.*

During this election cycle, all Department of Defense personnel, military and civilian, should be mindful of the proper way to participate in the political process.

According to DoD Directive 1344.10, Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces, it is the policy to encourage DoD civilians and active duty members to carry out the obligations of citizenship without endorsing or implying an endorsement for a political party.

Although guidance for political conduct is communicated through a variety of instructions, below are some basic rules to remember.

### Social media

Civilian and military personnel are allowed to express their personal views on public issues or political candidates via social media platforms.

However, if the person is identified by a social media site as a DoD employee, the posting must state that the views are those of the employee only.

Active-duty members and restricted civilian employees may follow, friend, or like a political party or candidate running for office, but may not post links to, share or re-tweet comments from the account of a political party or candidate running for a partisan office.

Service members must also be sure not to comment, link or post anything that violates the Uniform Code of Military Justice or service regulations, like showing contempt for public officials, releasing sensitive information, or posting unprofessional material that is prejudicial to good order and discipline under the UCMJ.

### Active-duty service members

‘Active-duty’ includes those who are on full-time and annual training duty, at a service school, retirees, members of the Reserve components not on active duty, full-time National Guard duty, and members of the National Guard even when in non-federal status.

Active-duty personnel may register to vote, encourage other members to exercise voting rights, and express personal opinions on candidates and issues. They may also join a political club and attend meetings when not in uniform, sign petitions for specific legislative action or to place a candidate’s name on the ballot.

Written letters to an editor expressing personal views are also permitted as long as it’s not part of an organized letter-writing campaign or solicitation of votes for or against a partisan political party or candidate. When participating, the letters are required to have a disclaimer that the



Posters encouraging Marines to engage the political systems they defend hang in various locations throughout Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. According to Department of Defense Directive 1344.10, Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces, it is the policy to encourage DoD civilians and active duty members to carry out the obligations of citizenship without endorsing or implying an endorsement of a political party. (Courtesy photos)

views are those of the writer and not the DoD when the letter identifies the writer as DoD personnel or the association can be reasonably assumed.

They can make monetary contributions to a political organization, party, or committee; display a bumper sticker on their vehicle or attend fundraising activities, meetings, rallies, debates, conventions or other activities when not in uniform and when no appearance of sponsorship or endorsement can be reasonably drawn.

Participation in local nonpartisan political activities is allowed as long as the member isn’t in uniform and does not use government resources or property, the event doesn’t interfere with duty, and there is no implied government position or involvement.

Active-duty members are not allowed to campaign for a partisan club, or speak before a partisan gathering. They also may not publish partisan political articles or letters that solicit votes for or against a partisan political party, candidate or cause.

In addition, active-duty members can’t participate in any radio, television, or other program or group discussion as an advocate for or against a partisan political party, candidate or cause. Nor may they serve in an official capacity as sponsor or advocate for or against a partisan political party, candidate or cause.

### Civilian employees

According to the Hatch Act, DoD civilians’ participation in political activities are regulated by a combination of categories which list them as “further restricted” or “less restricted.”

Further restricted employees include those appointed by the president of the United States and confirmed by the Senate, individuals serving in non-career senior executive service positions or career members of the SES, contract appeals board members, and some others. Specific lists are available at [www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov), the U.S. Office of Special Counsel website.

Other DoD civilian employees are qualified as less restricted.

These employees may volunteer with a political campaign or organization while in their personal capacities, like organizing political rallies and meetings, making phone calls on behalf of the candidate, or working for a political party to get out the vote on Election Day. They are, however, prohibited from soliciting or receiving political contribu-

tions.

No matter which type of civilian employee, neither may engage in political activity while on duty or in a federal building.

Forwarding political emails, posting political messages to a Facebook page or engaging in political tweets while in a federal building (to include when off duty or when using personal equipment) is prohibited. Also, government equipment must never be used to engage in political activities.

For the full list of directives and guidance, refer to DODD 1344.10 at the [www.dod.mil](http://www.dod.mil) library and the Hatch Act (5 USC 7321 through 7326) at the U.S. Office of Special Counsel website, [www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov).





**Tax center to open**

Active duty members, reservists, retirees, and their family members can receive free tax return assistance and preparation at JBER’s tax centers beginning Monday.

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

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

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

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

Filers can make appointments beginning by calling 384-1040. Alternatively, customers can make an appointment with one of the unit tax advisors, who may be able to complete tax returns at his or her workplace and forward it to the tax center.

**Exchange closures**

The main Exchange will close at 6 p.m. Thursday for annual inventory and reopen at 9 a.m. Friday. The Express at the Joint Military Mall will close at 10 p.m. Tuesday and reopen at 6 a.m. Wednesday.

**Legal services available**

The Anchorage team of the Army’s 6th Legal Operations Detachment will offer legal services for eligible members of the JBER community beginning Saturday.

Services are hosted once a month at the USARAK legal office; for appointments, call 384-0371.

Those eligible are retirees (medical or full term), active duty, and reservists, plus their family members who have a valid ID card.

Attorneys can help with will preparation, estate planning, divorce and separation issues, child custody or support issues, adoption, landlord/tenant issues, and debt.

**Volunteer submissions**

Volunteer coordinators urge volunteers to ensure all hours for ensure all hours for January through December 2015 are submitted to Unit Volunteer Coordinators or organizational points of contact by Feb. 9 for eligibility at the April awards ceremony. For more information, call 384-1517 or 552-4943.

**Pothole repair**

The 773d Civil Engineer Squadron encourages all Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson personnel to report potholes. In housing areas, contact Aurora Housing at 753-1051/1091. All other requests will be tracked by 773d CES.

Take note of the location – including street and cross-street names or building numbers. Then email [773CES.CEOH.PotHoleRepair@us.af.mil](mailto:773CES.CEOH.PotHoleRepair@us.af.mil) or call 552-2994 or 552-2995. Include your name and contact information so crews can follow up about location or the severity.

Weather and mission permitting, potholes are repaired within 24 hours of reporting.

**M&FRC relocation**

The Military and Family Readiness Center (Log Cabin), located in Building 8535 Wewak Drive has temporarily relocated to Building 8124 Doolittle Avenue (near the Polar Bowl) to allow for renovation. The temporary location will be open Monday to Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For information, call 552-4943 or visit [jber.af.mil/mfrc/index.asp](http://jber.af.mil/mfrc/index.asp).

**Home buying seminar**

Volunteer realtors and mort-

gage 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. The seminar covers loan pre-qualifications, offers and acceptance, inspections, title searches, types of loans, and the closure process.

For information or to sign up, contact the 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 information, call 353-6507.

**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](http://www.documentservices.dla.mil), visit the office at 984 Warehouse Street, or call 384-2901.

**Rental Partnership**

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

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

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

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

This program provides active-duty military personnel, enlisted and officers, accompanied and unaccompanied with affordable off-base housing.

An allotment must be executed under either option of the RPP for the rental payments, made directly to the landlord resulting in a more trouble free transactions.

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

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

**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 policy is in place with the priority going to military members PCSing.

For more information, call 375-5540.

**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 move.

The program allows spouses to register for Department of Defense positions and be considered for jobs offered internally.

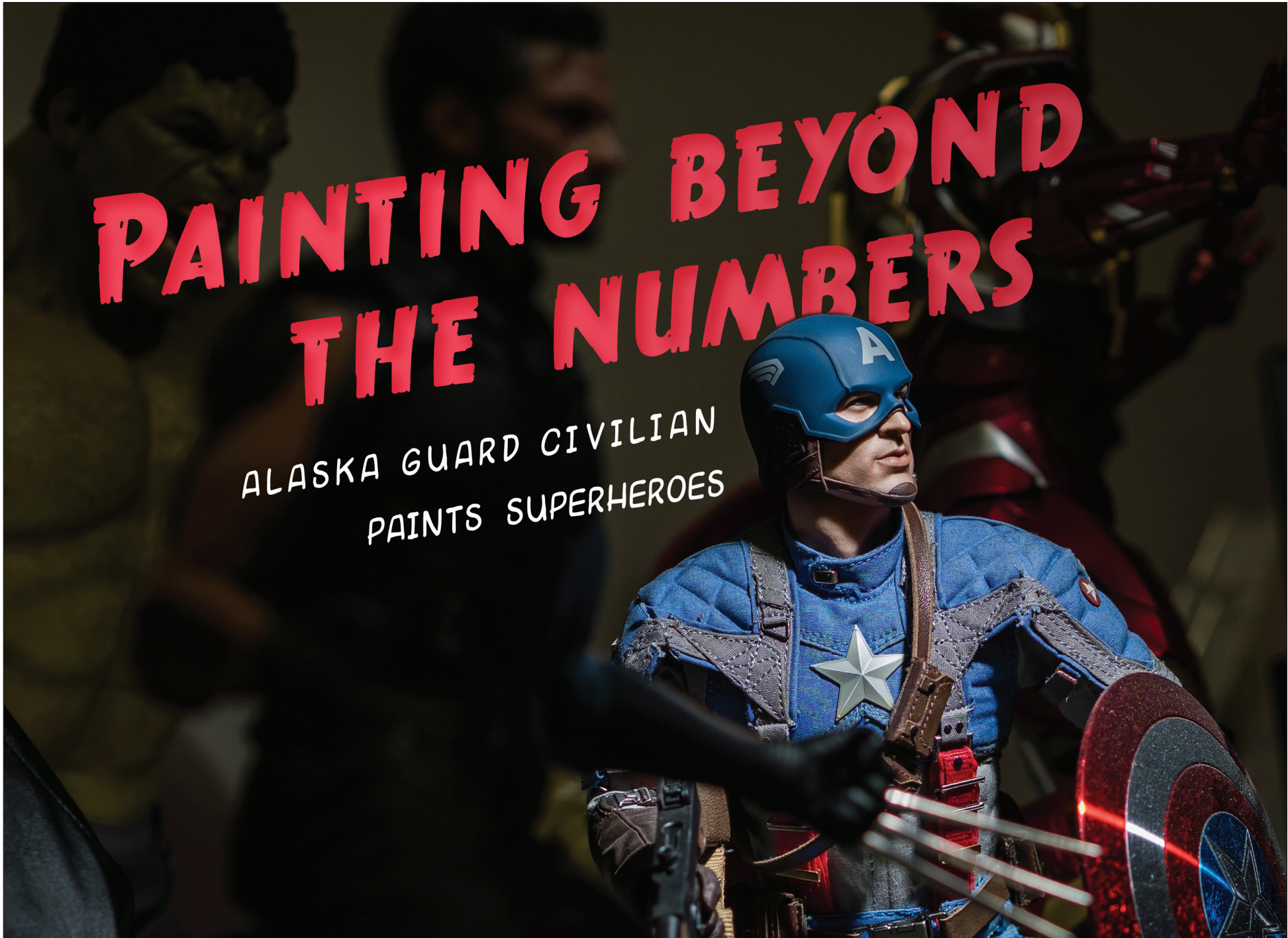
Spouses are matched with jobs based on their qualifications and preferences.

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, even those who have never filled a federal position, can now register at the either of the JBER personnel offices.

For more information about the program or to register, call 552-9203.





Life like replicas of superheroes adorn Richard Cornwell's office at the Alaska National Guard Central Issue Facility on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Friday, Jan. 22. Cornwell is a CIF materials handler and artist who paints murals and art focusing on super heroes as a hobby. (U.S. Air Force photo/Justin Connaheer)

By David Bedard  
JBER Public Affairs

**S**EPT. 11, 2001 was a grievous day for everyone. It was Richard Cornwell's 25th birthday, and the terrorist attacks proved to be the straw that shattered the camel's back.

The then-Marine Corps lance corporal had recently suffered a major relationship breakup, his close great grandmother died, and 9/11 only deepened his overshadowing depression.

In the comic books Cornwell loves, superheroes use extraordinary powers to save ordinary people from dire circumstances. It would be those same heroes who would save him from his depression, but it would be by his pencils and paintbrushes rather than the supers' otherworldly and quite fictional abilities.

## Pursuing a passion

Cornwell, a civilian materials handler at the Alaska Army National Guard Central Issue Facility, said he has been drawing comic book characters since he was in kindergarten.

Though he could only draw stick figures, they were Hulk and Superman stick figures capable of incredible feats within the confines of their two-dimensional realm.

His sketches were the beginning of a single-minded interest in all things fantastic, all things amazing that could be dreamed up and captured on the pages of a comic book. Cornwell said he doesn't dodge being identified as a nerd, geek or similar moniker.

"I've been a dork all my life," he said with a grin. "I've been such a geek about all this stuff. I grew up watching scary movies and sci-fi movies – Star Wars and all that stuff. You grow up with these movies, and you want to draw some of these characters."

Cornwell said his artistic impulse is genetic. His Saturday morning routine of watching Thundarr the Barbarian was interrupted when his mother would set up her easel and tune into The Joy of Painting, hosted by the soft-spoken Bob Ross.

"Every Saturday, when I could be watching cartoons or a movie, she would turn it to [The Joy of Painting]," Cornwell recalled. "It was only half an hour, but it was an excruciating half an hour. Then, when I would watch him paint, and he would make this masterpiece in half an hour. I was amazed."

In the same manner Ross created landscapes from the pastures of his mind, Cornwell would grow up to conjure scenes of superheroism from his fervor for the fantastic. After high school, he sent his portfolio to the Kubert School in Dover, New Jersey – founded by DC Comics artist Joe Kubert – and was accepted.

His curriculum included computer-aided coloring, animation, narrative art, lettering, character design and airbrushing. Cornwell said he was surprised his strong suit was painting.

"I didn't even know I knew how to paint, and I was one of the top three stu-



A painting by Richard Cornwell, Alaska National Guard Central Issue Facility materials handler, portrays Marvel Comics' Spiderman. Cornwell uses acrylic paints and a mix of comic book and traditional techniques. (Courtesy artwork by Richard Cornwell)

dents in the class [of 20]," he explained. "I was surprised."

Though he found success in painting, he struggled in other areas. Cornwell said it was difficult to keep up with the pace necessary to produce a monthly comic book.

"I wanted to be an artist, and then I found out the pressures it took with the deadlines and stuff," he said. "It was actually really hard for me to actually draw comic book panels – to tell a story. I had to have a lot of help."

Cornwell completed two of the school's three years. He had run out of money and said he suspected making a living with his art may be out of his grasp.

The artist placed his dreams on hold.

## Semper fi

Cornwell returned to his home in Exeter, California, where he worked odd jobs. He wasn't using the skills acquired at school, and he wasn't forging ahead in a new career. The artist was aimless.

His father noticed. Soon, the younger Cornwell came under pressure to move out and join the military. He met with recruiters from every military service. The last one he met with, a Marine, hit a nerve.

United States Marine Corps Recruit Training is widely regarded as the toughest boot camp the U.S. military offers, and Cornwell said his friends and family didn't think he could do it. He wanted to prove them wrong, and if he couldn't be a comic book artist, then he was determined to be a Leatherneck.

"Hearing the term 'starving artist' – not knowing where your next paycheck is going to come from as opposed to paying the bills – didn't really appeal to me," Cornwell said. "I wanted something a little more stable,



Richard Cornwell, Alaska National Guard Central Issue Facility materials handler, stands by a mural he painted for 38th Troop Command. Cornwell is a school-trained comic book artist. (U.S. Air Force photo/David Bedard)

so I joined the military for stability, and I joined the Marine Corps for myself to see if I could do it."

His naysayers were partially correct. Recruit Training was even more difficult than he imagined, but he would prove he had the grit necessary to hack the 13-week-long trial.

"Everyone was surprised I made it," Cornwell said. "I wanted to quit every day, but I wasn't going to."

Cornwell qualified as a motor transport operator and took assignments at Camp Pendleton, California, and Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan. Though he walked away from a potential career in comic books, his passion followed him to the parade field and the motor pool.

His peers and leadership quickly discovered his artistic skills, and they put his talents to good use. At MCAS Iwakuni, he was commissioned to paint a gigantic mural of the Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 logo. Though most artists use a projector to assist them in tracing a large logo, Cornwell said that method didn't cut the mustard for him. Instead, he used a drafting technique he didn't learn at art school.

With the assistance of another Marine, Cornwell graphed a picture of the 171 logo into 1-inch squares. He graphed the mural wall into 1-foot squares. He could then free-hand paint the logo with the accuracy of a trace, adding artisan quality to a process of precision.

## Grappling with depression

It was during his Marine Corps enlistment when terrorists plowed jetliners into the twin towers and the Pentagon. It was after 9/11 when depression tried to get the best of Cornwell.

He said he self-medicated by drinking too much and by indulging in his painting. Unfortunately, his passion had turned into a drudgery.

"I would not go anywhere, and all I would do is paint," Cornwell elaborated. "It got to the point where I was cranking out all of these paintings, and they didn't mean much to me. It was just something to pass the time."

Cornwell said he recognized he was walking down a dark path. He saw a counselor and was prescribed antidepressants.

Eventually, he vanquished depression

with the help of counselors and stopped taking prescription drugs.

"I try not to keep the weight of the world on my shoulders – so much pressure," Cornwell explained.

## Avengers in Wonderland

Today, Cornwell said he has regained his passion for bringing superheroes to life. His work area at the Central Issue Facility looks like Doctor Strange transmogrified a ComicCon expo into Cornwell's personal miniature pantheon of the amazing.

Comic book characters from Marvel and DC mingle with stormtroopers and Star Trek starship models. Paintings of Superman, Hulk and other fantastic fictional characters – all with a military aspect like a ballistic helmet added in – embellish the walls.

"Even though I'm paying back loans to the school I went to, and I'm not really making any money at it, it's a passion for me," Cornwell said. "Doing these pieces isn't just to satisfy my art craving. Now, it's to entertain. I've had people bring their kids to see this stuff, and I'm just blown away sometimes. This is my museum."

Roberto Vina, a materials handler who works with Cornwell, said he admires how each painting integrates National Guard elements. He isn't the only one.

"There are customers who, every time they come here, they appreciate the way it shows the Guard," Vina said.

Cornwell is all too eager to show other comic book enthusiasts his portfolio. He flips through the parchments, cradling each piece like it's a tiny Renaissance painting.

He doesn't just talk about how he painted the artwork from a technical perspective. He talks about how he was feeling at the time – what was happening in his life. Each portrayal of hero or villain, zombie or ghoul, is a snapshot of Cornwell's contemporary experience.

The artist's favorite superhero is Spiderman, and perhaps Peter Parker's alter ego represents someone he can relate to – someone who has surmounted deaths of loved ones, regret over fateful decisions, and triumph through following his convictions.

"There's something about a person who has gone to hell and back and still does the right thing," Cornwell said of the webslinger. "That, and his costume's just cool."



## How much truth is in your mental artwork?

Commentary by Air Force Chaplain (Maj.) James M. Hendrick  
JBER Chapel Team

I’m amazed how frequently we paint mental pictures. That is, I’m amazed how frequently we interpret life on the mental canvas of our minds. It seems we paint pictures (draw concrete conclusions) about everything we experience positive and negative.

These pictures are not without impact. Negative experiences tend to result in dark mental pictures, whereas positive experiences tend to produce bright mental pictures. The colors of our mental paintings seem to directly influence the color of our mindset, attitude, and emotions – the direction of our very life.

Given the frequency of our mental artwork and the power of its influence, I think it wise to ensure we paint with truth. I’m disappointed with how long the color of my attitude and emotions can operate in darkness only to find that my initial artistic conclusions about an event or situation actually lack truth. In other words, I often find my attitude poor and my energy level low due to operating without all the facts or drawing the wrong conclusions about some-



**Do you ever find yourself upset or sad about a situation, person, or relationship only to find that your mental artwork – which is driving your emotions – lacks sufficient or truthful information? (Courtesy Photo)**

one’s motives in a situation or action.

How about you? Have you ever done this? Do you ever find yourself upset or sad about a situation, person, or relationship only to find that your mental artwork – which is driving your emotions –

lacks sufficient or truthful information?

Are you amazed how frequently this occurs in biased news media or personal posts on social media? In both, we find unneeded pain, frustration and fear; in both we find unnecessary relational

tension that is counterproductive to the relational life we all desire.

At a personal level, painting without truth (or all the truth) is poignantly seen and felt in work, marriage, and parenting relationships. Often we draw the wrong conclusion about a supervisor’s

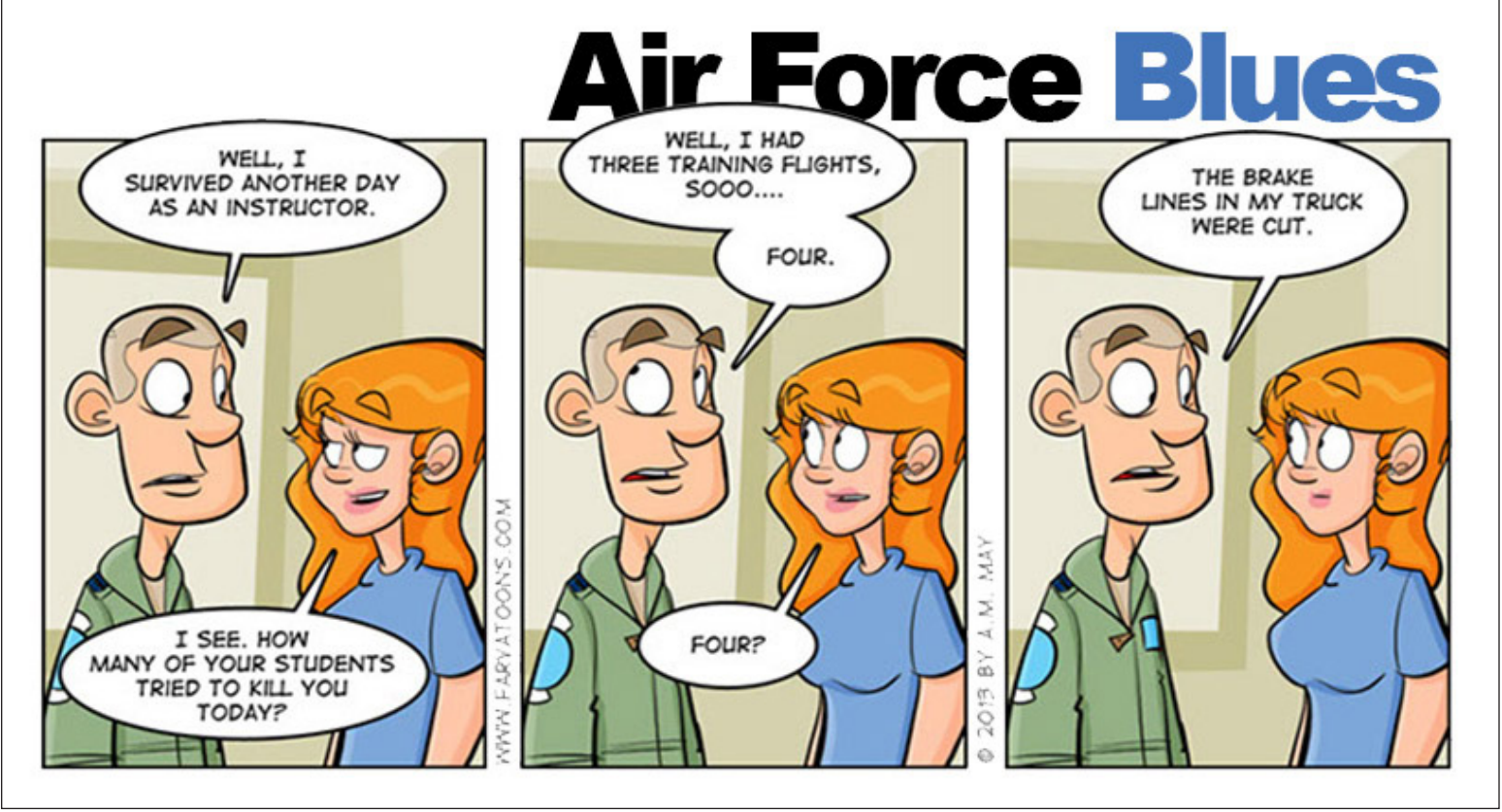
action without knowing all the details behind it. Often we assume the wrong motive in our spouse’s response – not considering their level of fatigue, wellness, or historical trauma(s). Often we miss the true intention of our child’s elevated behavior not recognizing the manner in which they’re processing stress or grief at their developmental level. Often we paint incorrectly.

This is why I, as a Christian, love the words of Jesus Christ when he said, “You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.” There is much emotional and relational freedom to be enjoyed by operating from truth – by painting with correct information.

Our spirit is prospered. Our attitude and emotions are prospered. Our relationships are prospered. Our life is prospered.

The question isn’t whether we’re going to mentally paint; the question is will we paint exclusively with truth? How much truth is in our mental artwork? What do we need to possibly repaint? How much truth will be in our future artwork?

These questions truly determine the course and quality of our lives. Therefore, may we all commit ourselves to the prosperity of painting with truth.





The Arctic Warrior Chapel will undergo a renovation from February through June. The 8:30 a.m. Catholic Mass and 11 a.m. Collective Chapel Services will meet at the Richardson Community Center on Hoonah Ave. during the renovation.

## SATURDAY Book Ball Blitz

Come out to the JBER Library for this family fun event. Enjoy games and crafts from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Open to all ages.

For information call 384-1640.

## Ping pong tournament

Put your skills to the test at this free ping pong tournament located at the Warrior Zone at 2 p.m. Cash prizes will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. Must be 18 or older to participate.

For information call 384-9006.

## TUESDAY Snowmachine safety class

This class at the Eagleleg Fitness Park from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. teaches the basics of safety for all riders. Minimum and maximum sign-up numbers apply to all trips and classes, and is weather-dependent.

For more information call 552-4599 or 522-2023.

## THURSDAY Extreme Scavenger Hunt

Compete at nine different stations inside Elmendorf Fitness Center at 11 a.m. Top winners receive prizes and t-shirts will be given to the first 30 participants.

For information call 522-5353.

## Hillberg dorm dwellers

Free tickets and rentals are available for all who live in the dorms/barracks for this weather-dependent special at Hillberg Ski Area from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Tubes not included)

For information call 522-4838.

## FEBRUARY 23 Blood Drive

Make a difference and donate with a friend in the Blood Bank of Alaska's LIFEmobile at the corner of 20th Street and Pease Avenue from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Eat well the day of the blood drive, stay hydrated, and bring a photo ID. To make an appointment, visit [tinyurl.com/zrszwpf](http://tinyurl.com/zrszwpf).

For more information call 580-2060, or 580-6353.

## ONGOING Visit Our Schools month

Parents, community members, and businesses are invited to visit any Anchorage School District school during February to learn more about the community's public schools. Visits takes place each Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. with an additional time of 6 p.m. on February 23rd.

For more information, visit [asdk12.org/visit](http://asdk12.org/visit).

## 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.

## Wildlife Wednesday

Stay warm and scientifically enriched this winter with the this free science lecture series on the second Wednesday of each month at the Alaska Zoo Gateway Lecture Hall. Each lecture begins at 7 p.m. and covers a different topic focused on wildlife research in Alaska.

For information, visit [alaska-zoo.org](http://alaska-zoo.org).

## Military Children Program scholarship

The scholarships for Military Children Program is accepting applications from eligible students at commissaries or online at [militaryscholar.org](http://militaryscholar.org).

For more information call (856) 616-9311.

## AER scholarships

Army Emergency Relief is taking applications for scholarships. Scholarships are available for children, spouses and other dependents of active, retired and deceased Soldiers. Applications and instructions are available at [aerhq.org](http://aerhq.org); submission deadline is May 1.

For information, call 384-7478.

## Richardson Spouses' Club scholarship opportunity

Applications are being accepted for the Richardson Spouses' Club Scholarship. Applicants must be military dependents, either graduating high school seniors or currently enrolled college students pursuing full time undergraduate studies.

Visit [richardsonspousesclub](http://richardsonspousesclub).

[com/scholarship](http://com/scholarship) to download full eligibility requirements along with the application.

Applications must be postmarked by February 26.

## NAF jobs

Looking for a fun job? Check out [nafjobs.org](http://nafjobs.org) for fun and exciting positions within the JBER Force Support Squadron. FSS is an equal opportunity employer.

## Kids in the Kitchen

The Two Rivers Youth Center hosts this event Tuesdays from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.; learn to help out by preparing meals.

For information, call 384-1508.

## Sunday bowling bingo

Every Sunday enjoy discounted bowling at the Polar Bowl and receive a bowling bingo card. Bowlers will attempt to cover the pattern of the day on their bingo card for a chance to win prizes.

For information, call 753-7467.

## Adult Writing Society

The Loussac Library hosts this multi-genre group the second Thursday of each month from 6 to 7 p.m. for writers 18 and up. Share your work and get constructive criticism and feedback.

For information, call 343-2909.

## Keystone meeting for teens

Keystone Club is a leadership development experience providing community service opportunities for young people ages 13 to 18. Meetings take place every Wednesday at 5 p.m. at the Two Rivers Youth Center.

For information, call 384-1508.

## 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](mailto:jber.ak.pwoc@gmail.com) or call 552-5762.

## 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/msmre](http://trainweb.org/msmre).

## 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., Monday, Thursday, or Friday 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.

## Library Story Times

Family Homecare Series: Tuesdays 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Toddler Tales: Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Preschool Story Time: Thursdays 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Surprising Science: Tuesdays 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Thursdays 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

# Chapel services

## Catholic Mass

**Sunday**  
**8:30 a.m.** – Richardson Community Center  
**11:30 a.m.** – Midnight Sun Chapel

**Monday and Wednesday**  
**11:40 a.m.** – Richardson Community Center  
**Tuesday and Friday**  
**11:30 a.m.** – Midnight Sun Chapel

**Thursday**  
**12:00 p.m.** – Hospital Chapel

## Confession

Confessions are available anytime by appointment or after any mass. Call 552-5762.

## Protestant Sunday Services

**Liturgical Service**  
**9 a.m.** – Heritage Chapel

**Gospel Service**  
**9:30 a.m.** – Midnight Sun Chapel

**Community Service**  
**10:30 a.m.** – Heritage Chapel

**Collective Service**  
**11 a.m.** – Arctic Warrior Chapel

**Chapel Next**  
**5 p.m.** – Chaplain Family Life Center

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

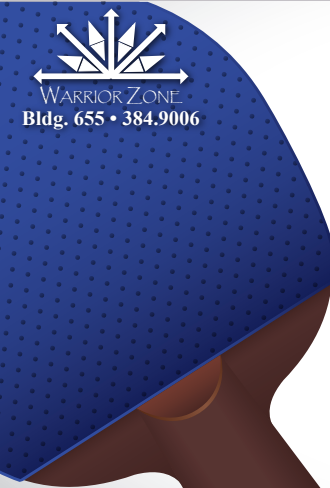
**Religious Education**  
For religious education schedules, please call the Religious Operations Center at 552-5762 or 384-1461.

# 673d FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON

## EXTREME SCAVENGER HUNT

FEBRUARY 4 • 11 A.M.  
T-SHIRTS FOR FIRST 30 PARTICIPANTS

HELD INSIDE THE ELMENDORF FITNESS CENTER  
COMPETE AT 9 STATIONS LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE FITNESS CENTER  
FASTEST OVERALL MALE AND FEMALE TIMES WIN!  
TOP WINNERS WILL RECEIVE A PRIZE!

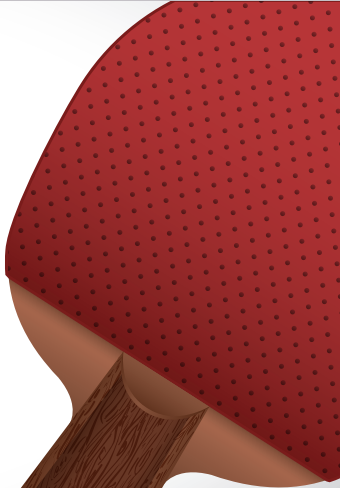


## PING PONG TOURNAMENT

JANUARY 30 • 2 P.M.  
HELD INSIDE THE WARRIOR ZONE

PRIZES  
1ST PLACE: \$100  
2ND PLACE: \$75  
3RD PLACE: \$50

COME OUT, HAVE FUN  
AND WIN CASH!



# Gettin' Steezy Ain't Easy TERRAIN PARK CONTEST FEBRUARY 6 • 2 - 4 P.M.

Bldg. 23400, 552.4838

COMPETITORS WILL SHOW US THEIR STEEZY MOVES IN  
THE TERRAIN PARK. WINNERS WILL BE SELECTED ON STYLE AND TRICKS

## JBER Library



January 30  
1 - 2:30 p.m.

Are you ready for some Book Ball?!  
Join us at the JBER Library for a game,  
craft, and fun filled afternoon! Open to  
all ages. Don't miss out on this  
great family time.

## Story Times

**SURPRISING SCIENCE**  
Tuesdays 4-5 p.m.  
Thursdays 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**TODDLER TALES**  
Wednesdays  
10 - 11 a.m.

**PRE-SCHOOL  
STORY TIME**  
Tues & Thurs  
10 - 11 a.m.



Stop by and see us!  
[www.facebook.com/JBERLife](http://www.facebook.com/JBERLife)  
[www.jberlife.com](http://www.jberlife.com)



# ASYMCA supports service members in Alaska

By Airman 1st Class Javier Alvarez  
JBER Public Affairs

The Armed Services YMCA has been assisting military members and their families since the days of the American Civil War. The organization came to Alaska in 1941, and for the past 70 years has been serving the Alaska military community through its mission of alleviating some of the stresses military life can present.

The headquarters of ASYMCA of Alaska is located on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. However, there are other locations throughout Alaska – on Fort Wainwright and the surrounding areas, including two military courtesy lounges at Ted Stevens and Fairbanks International Airports.

“We can be found throughout the U.S.,” said Buddy Whitt, executive director for ASYMCA of Alaska. “We work specifically with local commands to find out what the needs are. You can go to the local ASYMCA and look at all the programs and services offered. If you were to then make a permanent change-of-station to Fort Hood, Texas, and go to the ASYMCA there – there may be some similarities, but there are things they do that we don’t. It all depends on the local need.”

While the ASYMCA carries the YMCA name, there are some distinct differences in their purpose and function.

“What separates us from a traditional YMCA is our funding does not come from any sort of membership,” Whitt said. “We are not an organization that is run by monthly fees for services. Most of what we do is free or low cost.”

Offices are strategically located on or near military installations to better serve their target audience.

“[Non-military] can volunteer with us,” said Kyra Mailki, ASYMCA of Alaska program and funds development supervisor. “They can donate and participate in those ways. But as far as services, it’s only for military members and their dependents.”

The organization is largely funded through donations. And while they have paid employees, their staff is primarily composed of volunteers. “People will give us stuff to pass on to the military,” Mailki said. “We make sure the support that’s out there, and people want to give, makes it to the people they want to give it to.”

Currently, the ASYMCA on JBER offers more than 20 programs designed to meet the needs of the local community.

“We try to address the needs that are presented to us rather than pushing needs that we think exist,” Mailki said.

Some programs and services offered by the JBER ASYMCA include:

Teddy’s Child Watch provides two free hours of childcare for children six months to



**Lita McClain, marketing and public relations specialist for the Armed Services YMCA of Alaska, stocks shelves at the ASYMCA food pantry, on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Jan. 26. In 2015, the food pantries provided an estimated 15,032 pounds of food to military families in the JBER and Fort Wainwright communities. (U.S. Air Force photos/Airman 1st Class Javier Alvarez)**

twelve years at the hospital. There is a short registration process, but the service is available to anyone with access to the hospital.

“If you have a doctors appointment and you have a little one that you have to take with you, you’re not really going to get a lot done,” said Mailki. “It can be very distracting and it can be hard to pay attention to what the doctor has to say.”

An ASYMCA food pantry assists military families who may be hit with unbudgeted expense during the month.

“Maybe their car breaks down and they need a couple more meals to get through the month,” Whitt said. “Or it could be someone who just [transferred] up and they weren’t ready for the expense of living in Alaska.”

There are many other programs and services offered by the ASYMCA such as Y on Wheels, Operation Snack Attack and Operation Kid Comfort to name a few.

“We try to be helpful in multiple ways, not just getting someone who is in trouble get through until the next week, but maybe putting them on a path to success long term,” Mailki said.

“I like to consider ourselves as hero support,” Whitt said. “We have all these heroes working, and we don’t have those super



**The Armed Services YMCA of Alaska offers two food pantries on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. The food pantries on the installation assist military families who experience unbudgeted expenses during the month.**

powers. Our job is to make sure our heroes and their families have everything that they need to do their job.”

Those interested in volunteering, donating or inquiring about the many services offered by the ASYMCA can call the JBER-Elmendorf office at 552-9622 or the JBER-Richardson office at 384-9622.



# CABIN FEVER

## Reliever



Esmeralda Martinez, 10, displays her model clay creation at the Cabin Fever Reliever event on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Jan. 21. Families in attendance were able to discuss sensitive topics like depression and suicide at the CFR. (U.S. Air Force photos/Airman 1st Class Javier Alvarez)



Bright yellow bracelets, stating “you are not alone” were given to eventgoers at the Cabin Fever Reliever event. The CFR is an event where service members, spouses and their families learn resiliency tactics and suicide prevention.



Gabriel Martinez, 11, draws pizza, video games and other things that make him happy at the Cabin Fever Reliever event. CFR eventgoers were prompted to illustrate protective factors in their life that make them feel supported and connected to others.



Presenters deliver a lesson on suicide prevention. Recent studies have shown that suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the U.S.



# JBER Tax Center to open, offer free tax assistance

By Airman 1st Class Javier Alvarez  
JBER Public Affairs

The Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Tax Assistance Center, in Building 600 on Richardson Drive, is scheduled to open its doors January 25.

Free tax preparation and advice is available to active duty, Reserve, National Guard, retirees and their dependents through April 18, said Master Sgt. Jacob Wolf, 673d Air Base Wing, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate law office superintendent.

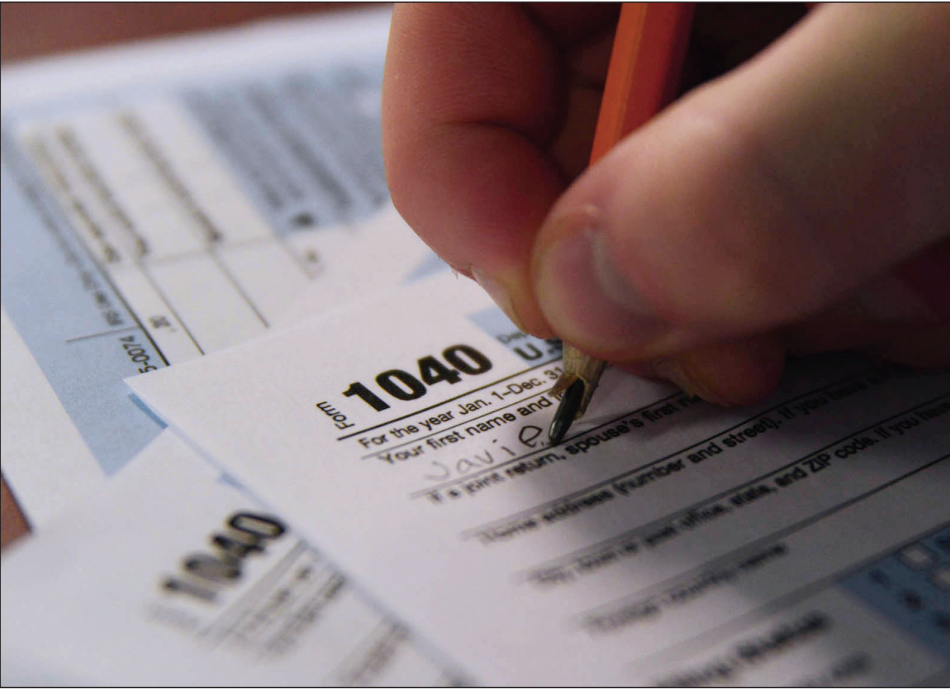
The tax center appointment line will begin taking appointments Jan. 21 at 384-1040, however, walk-ins are welcome.

Hours of operation for the tax center will be Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Thursday from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.; and the second and third Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Those preparing to file taxes in 2016 will notice new requirements this tax season.

One such change is the requirement to provide an IRS Form 1095: Employer Provided Health Insurance Offer and Coverage, said Master Sgt. Sousa, 673d Comptroller Squadron financial management flight chief.

Under the Affordable Care Act, taxpayers are required to prove they have minimum essential coverage and the IRS Form 1095 is the way to prove that, Sousa said.



**The Tax Assistance Center on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson is scheduled to open Jan. 25. The tax center will offer free tax preparation and advice to active duty, Reserve, National Guard, retirees and their dependents this tax season. (U.S. Air Force photo/Javier Alvarez)**

The form is available electronically through myPay under the taxes section.

In past years, base personnel have had two tax offices at their disposal. This year, in an effort to consolidate resources while still providing quality service, only one tax center will open.

“We feel confident that one tax center [will] support the needs of the number of patrons we’re expecting to have,” Wolf said. “We’ve had a steady decline [in patrons] over the years.”

Despite the fact there will be fewer locations, taxpayers can still expect the same

quality of service, Wolf said.

Last year the JBER Army and Air Force tax offices had the second and third highest acceptance rate from the IRS, Wolf said.

“[We have] teams of Soldiers assigned to the tax center,” Wolf said. “Those are the individuals utilized as tax preparers. This year we have those same individuals plus some of the best Air Force volunteers that have helped us over the years.”

The Tax Assistance Center suggests patrons not commit necessary information to memory, but should instead bring in all required forms to complete their taxes.

Some of these necessary forms, documents and information may include:

Social security cards or Individual Taxpayer Identification card (for non-residents) and birthdates for all dependents; previous year’s federal tax return; bank routing and account numbers; W-2 forms; IRS form 1095; and itemized deductions.

Amounts of other income, such as the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend, are also required.

For each daycare provider, please have its name, address, tax identification number and the total amount you paid for the year.

Military IDs can be used as proof of eligibility for the free service.

“The folks we have working at the tax center are very competent,” Wolf said. “We have volunteers who have done it for several years, primarily dealing with active and retiree taxes.”

## ‘All about Babies’ class is back, baby

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

There is no experience that compares to raising a child. Parenting is a difficult task for individuals who don’t know a thing about babies and even those who’ve read every single baby book they could get their hands on.

The Family Advocacy Program New Parent Support Program nurses have brought back the “All About Babies” class this year to share their knowledge outside of home visits with a three-hour class every quarter for anyone willing to participate whether they are single, married, expecting or already parents.

There is a big difference between reading how to do something and actually doing it. This class

provides hands-on training from qualified nurses and experienced parents.

“Most of us are moms and sometimes experience outweighs all the education,” said Pa Lou Vang, NPSP nurse. “We bring a lot of experience in child care to the table.

“We educate and bring awareness to parenting and newborn care,” Vang said. “The class will demonstrate hands-on swaddling, soothing, diaper changing and cleaning.”

The class will also talk about abusive head trauma, more commonly known as shaken baby syndrome, and other child-specific medical issues.

One stage of an infant’s life may be the most confusing and worrying for any parent, which would be the “period of purple crying”. The child doesn’t actually turn purple, but could experience extensive crying within the first two to five months of life as part of a normal and natural stage in child development.

This class brings to light factors

in a baby’s health and well-being that may be looked over by parents. If parents need support outside the classroom that is exactly what the nurses specialize in.

“This class is just another way to have additional support here,” Vang said. “Our priority is home visits, but we want to get our knowledge out there.”

The nurses work in the FAP clinic, located in the Lynx Wing of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson hospital, providing on-the-spot emotional support, child development knowledge and volunteer their time to instruct “All About Babies” classes.

The next class is scheduled for April 11 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the clinic.

Parents can turn to the NPSP for concerns, questions and methodology from pregnancy until their child turns three. The program is available to help parents be the best they can be, said Sarah Blanning, FAP outreach manager.

“When someone identifies [a] need for support, they are welcome to give us a call and we [are] glad to



**A doll lies in an unsafe infant sleeping environment as an example of what not to do at the Family Health Care clinic at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson hospital Dec. 23. Infants are at greater risk of suffocation when sleeping with plush toys, pillows and even blankets so it is recommended to have only a firm, safety-approved mattress with a fitted sheet. Information like this and more is covered at the ‘All About Babies’ class taught by New Parent Support Program nurses once a quarter at the JBER hospital family health clinic. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Christopher R. Morales)**

help, we never turn anyone away,” Blanning said.

To sign up or for more information, call 580-5858.