

# ARCTIC WARRIOR

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON'S SOURCE FOR NEWS

Aircraft inspection team

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Flying!*  
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ECRWS / PRSRT-STD  
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THE 673D MEDICAL GROUP HOSTED A POW/MIA RUCK MARCH AT JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON SEPT. 16. MORE THAN 200 PERSONNEL INCLUDING AIRMEN, SOLDIERS AND ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE MEMBERS, MARCHED FIVE MILES CARRYING AT LEAST 20 POUNDS EACH OF NONPERISHABLE FOOD TO DELIVER TO THE ALASKA FISHER HOUSE. (U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO/AIRMAN 1ST CLASS VALERIE MONROY)



**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/  
673d Air Base Wing Commander**  
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**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/  
673d Air Base Wing Vice Commander**  
Col. Timothy R. Wulff (USA)

**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/  
673d Air Base Wing Command Chief**  
Command Chief Master Sgt.  
Garry E. Berry II

**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/  
673d ABW Command Sergeant Major**  
Sgt. Maj. Ronald E. Sheldon Jr.

## ARCTIC WARRIOR

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# Nondestructive Inspection team keeps JBER’s aircraft flying

By **AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. MIKE CAMPBELL**  
*477th FG Public Affairs*

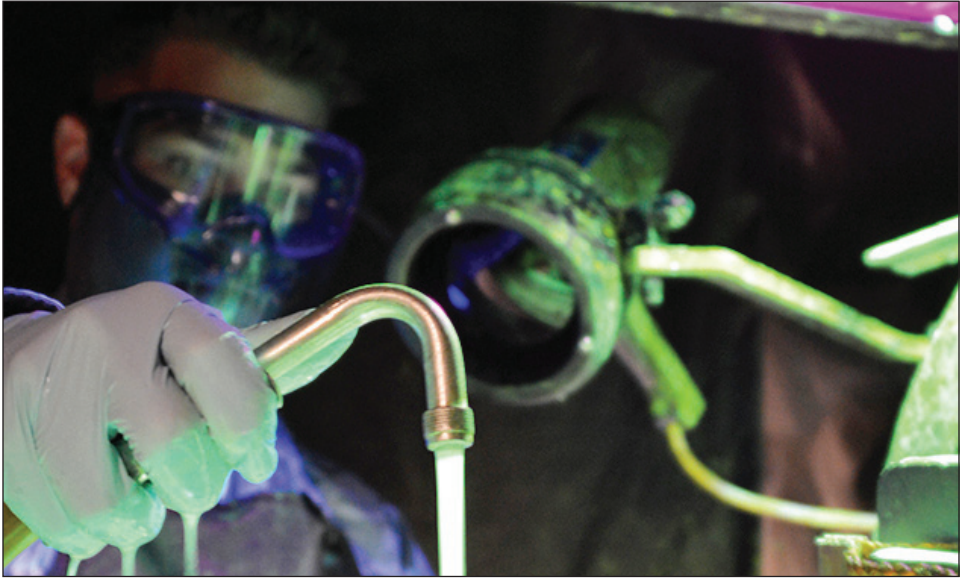
Hundreds of aircraft take off from the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson flight line every year to perform vital missions, and each one of those airframes requires safety inspections and certifications to ensure the mission is conducted safely and effectively.

The Airmen with the 477th and 3rd Maintenance Squadron’s Non-destructive Inspection lab perform professional testing and structural inspections that help keep the aircraft on base flying. The NDI goal is simple: to certify aircraft are safe for all JBER missions.

By performing specialized inspections, NDI Airmen ensure reliable aircraft performance and keep the mission going.

Aircraft preservation is a process that verifies the aircraft are safe for aircrews while saving military assets.

Inspections at all levels are carried out every day in the aircraft world. According to Air Force mas-



**Airmen from the 3rd Maintenance Squadron’s Nondestructive Inspection flight inspect aircraft parts Sept. 13 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff. Sgt. Michael Campbell)**

ter sergeants Sarah Jornacion and Megan Silva, NDI superintendents, the lab plays a vital role.

“We are capable of providing reliable assessments of the state of all airframes, including transit aircraft and support equipment.” Jornacion said.

Aircraft parts require regular observation at many levels, from crew chief maintainer inspections to NDI special inspections, sometimes in-

cluding level-three engineers.

Crew chiefs are the first line of defense and can observe and identify problem areas on the aircraft, while regularly scheduled NDI inspections identify hard-to-see damages. NDI performs non-invasive metal integrity inspections – using the latest technology such as digital x-rays and ultrasonics, to determine whether or not the airframe is structurally sound. Inspections reveal

whether parts need to be replaced or repaired.

At times, this work requires level-three engineers and specialty shops such as metals technicians for further direction.

“Level three engineers take findings from NDI inspections, whether a cracked or good finding, and determine inspection cycle repairs,” said 3rd Maintenance Squadron supervisor Tech. Sgt. Michael Wood. “The engineers also modify inspection criteria and engineering dispositions when required.” Engineers determine the specifications from aircraft manufacturer documentation and metal specifications charts.

“NDI is vital because there are parts that crack, or break,” said Staff Sgt. Dominick Dimartino, 477 MXS NDI technician. “Some issues are predictable; others are not, from internal components of engines and flight control surfaces to structural support.

“NDI inspects all material without causing any damage to aircraft, finding faults not visible to the human eye. That’s vital to keeping the aircraft in the air.” ●

# JBER ORGANIZATION ‘PAYS IT FORWARD’ WITH NEW INITIATIVE

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JAVIER ALVAREZ**  
*JBER Public Affairs*

Members of the Arctic Warrior Top Three performed their first random act of kindness through the Pay It Forward Initiative at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Sept. 16.

Junior enlisted service members and spouses of service members E-4 and below were given gift cards in various denominations as a thank-you for their service, without regard to branch designation.

The Arctic Warrior Top Three is a private organization whose members make up the top three enlisted ranks in the Air Force – master sergeant, senior master sergeant and chief master sergeant.

Ten Top Three volunteers in vibrant blue shirts distributed 71 gift cards at various locations on the installation – including the Exchange, AAFES gas station, commissary, and the Exchange food court, said Air Force Master Sgt. Candace Anthony, 673d Force Support Squadron military personnel section superintendent. By the end of the day,

\$1,350 in cards were given.

Funding for the cards came in part from the JBER Chiefs’ Group and Arctic Warrior Top Three.

The idea for the initiative was inspired by a similar program from a First Sergeants’ Council at a different installation, Antony said. In practice, the initiative was a no-brainer.

“I want to look at an Airman or Soldier and say, ‘Thank you for everything you do, every day to help this base run,’” she said.

“Making somebody’s day,” was the motto of the initiative.

“I think I’ve always worked for leaders who take care of their people, and find different ways to support them in their endeavors,” said Air Force Master Sgt. Carrie Todd, 673d Air Base Wing, Judge Advocate law office superintendent. “This is a way for us to not just pay it forward, but pay it back.”



**Jacquelynn Twiner, a military spouse, hugs Candace Anthony of the 673d Force Support Squadron at the AAFES gas station at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Sept. 16. Volunteers in blue shirts distributed gift cards at as part of the Pay It Forward Initiative. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Javier Alvarez)**

Recipients’ brows furrowed with confusion as they were handed gift cards. Some were reluctant to accept, though as the situation was

explained, their skeptical looks were overtaken by smiles.

“The Pay It Forward Initiative and random acts of kindness is something that everyone should be a part of,” Todd said. “But for the Top Three as an organization I think it’s very important for us to give back to the base and give back to the community and support [our troops.]”

The purpose of the Arctic Warrior Top Three is to promote professional development, esprit de corps, and morale of all enlisted personnel while promoting professional relationships and effective communication among the joint base community, Anthony said.

Senior noncommissioned officers interested in participating in the Arctic Warrior Top Three events can attend meetings, hosted the third Thursday of every month.



Legal Education Program

The Office of the Judge Advocate General is accepting applications for the Army’s Funded Legal Education Program.

The Army will send up to 25 officers to law school at government expense. Those interested should apply through command channels for the LSAT immediately.

For information, call 384-0313.

Reserve ‘Scroll’

Officers wanting to transition to the Air Force Reserve must have their commission transferred to a list called “the Scroll” and approved by the Secretary of Defense.

The process averages 120 days, but can take longer, and must be approved before the service member begins participating in the Air Force Reserve, which may mean a break in service.

Even if you’re unsure about transitioning to the Reserve, the Scroll process can be initiated.

For information, call 552-3595.

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. Other requests will be tracked by 773d CES. Take note of the location, including cross-street names or building numbers.

Then email *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 will be repaired within 24 hours of being reported.

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 offender release. 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 dupli-

cates and prints documents, including color, large-format photographic prints, engineering drawings, sensitive materials, technical manuals and training materials. They also do 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.

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*documentservices.dla.mil*, visit the office at 984 Warehouse Street, or call 384-2901.

U-Fix-It Store

The U-Fix-it stores, open to all Aurora Military Housing tenants, issue home maintenance items. Availability is subject to change and limits; some may have a cost. American flag kits and fire extinguishers are available. U-Fix-It work includes all home maintenance, allowing occupants to make minor improvements and repairs.

The JBER-E 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-R office 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; priority goes to those PCSing.

For information, call 375-5540.

OTC pharmacy counter

The main pharmacy at the JBER hospital has opened an over-the-counter medication clinic for DoD beneficiaries, open from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m., Monday through Friday. Select “over the counter drug needs” at the kiosk.

This does not replace a visit with a provider. Flyers and patients who are on personnel reliability program status, pregnant, or under the age of 2 are not eligible due to special needs.

The clinic offers basic pain relievers, cough, cold and allergy medications and others.

For information visit *www.facebook.com/JBERPharmacy*.

In-Home child care

Providing child care in your on-base housing comes with many responsibilities. The licensing process applies to anyone regularly caring for other families’ children more than 10 hours a week, but not those providing care in another family’s home or for occasional care. The licensing process comes

with training, support, a lending library of books, toys and supplies, and reimbursement for food costs. To become a provider, call the FCC Office at 552-3995.

Richardson Thrift Shop

The JBER-Richardson Thrift Shop, in Building 724 on Quartermaster Drive, is open Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesday from noon to 6 p.m., and first and third Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Consignments are accepted whenever the shop is open; for information, call 384-7000.

Priority placement

The Priority Placement Program and Executive Order 13473 provide non-competitive appointment for spouses of active-duty service members, including full-time National Guard and Reservists, relocating to accompany their spouse 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 eligible up to two years from the date of the PCS orders and are in the program for one year. Even those who have never filled a federal position can register at the either JBER personnel office.

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



ADS

PREPARES FOR BALL TO CELEBRATE 69 YEARS OF AIR FORCE SERVICE

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# ATRIAL FIBRILLATION: A POTENTIALLY DEADLY RHYTHM

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS CHRISTOPHER MORALES**  
JBER Public Affairs

**T**HE HEART IS THE MOST IMPORTANT muscle of the human body, but having a bigger heart doesn't make it better.

Atrial fibrillation is the most common heart rhythm problem and the second most common condition seen at the cardiopulmonary clinic at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson hospital, said Milisha Stevens, 673d Medical Operations Squadron cardiology physician's assistant.

A-fib increases the risk of stroke, heart attack and other cardiovascular problems. It occurs when the electric rhythm of the heart becomes abnormal due to the heart scarring, stretching or growing.

When this occurs the top two chambers of the heart, the left and right atria, can't pump blood out effectively, leaving blood behind. As the blood pools, it can form clots, which can travel to the brain through blood vessels and cause strokes.

Most cases of A-fib are found accidentally after a stroke because the symptoms are hard to tie to A-fib alone. They include; a mild chest 'tightness' or pain, feeling lightheaded, having trouble breathing during exercise and feeling as though the heart is racing or skipping a beat.

Some patients have 'grown' their atria to a point that they might have

A-fib for the rest of their life, but in other cases where the heart is a normal size, the disease can be acute or chronic.

The heart commonly grows due to high blood pressure and coronary heart disease. If the heart isn't exercised regularly, it can become weak and thin, resulting in a stretch of the atrium.

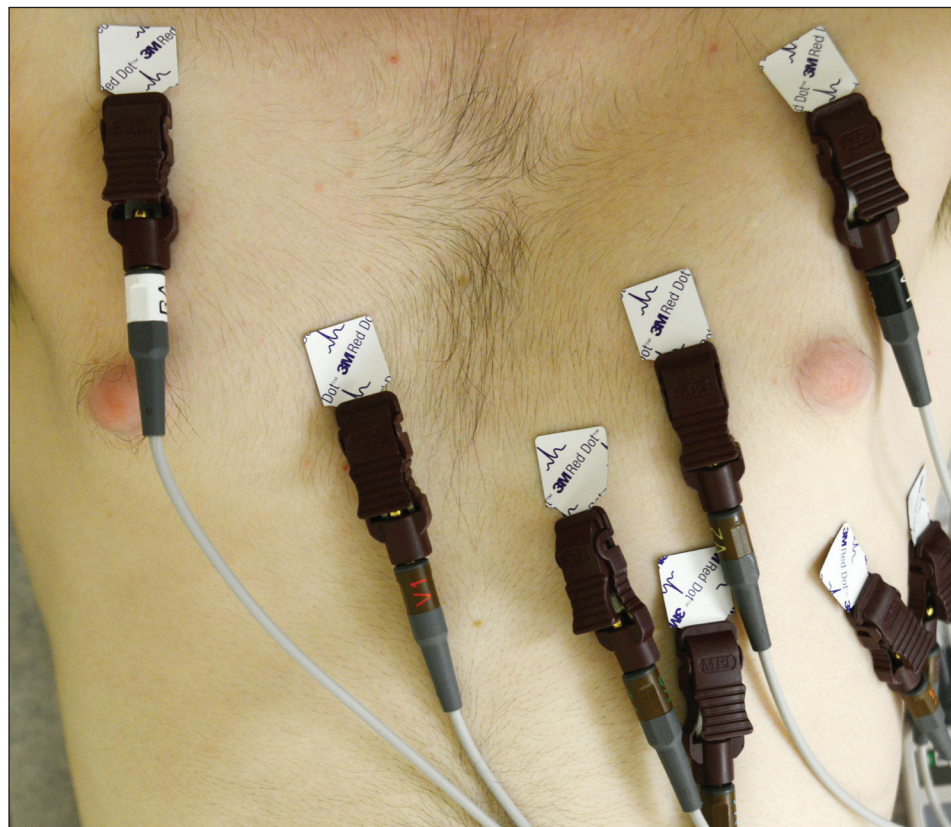
"Sometimes, we can attribute a sudden case of A-fib to an illness, like pneumonia ... and other times after a surgery [called] post-op A-fib, [that lasts] a day or two and then never shows up again," Stevens said.

To catch it early, identify the symptoms or use an automated blood pressure cuff, one is available at the JBER hospital in front of the pharmaceutical clinic. Newer models of blood pressure cuffs can catch an irregularity in heartbeat.

Additionally, the cardiopulmonary clinic has a few machines to catch this disease when tested. Electrocardiograms and echocardiograms are tests to check for A-fib, through electric waves monitored on a graph and an ultrasound for a visual display, respectively.

If the problem is recurring, they also provide a Holter monitor, which is a portable device that records the rhythm of the heart over the course of 24 to 48 hours by means of electrodes on the chest.

The cardiopulmonary clinic usu-



**A patient receives an electrocardiogram at the cardiopulmonary clinic at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson hospital Sept. 6. An electrocardiogram tests the sinus rhythm of the heart through electric waves and detects abnormalities in the flow of electricity in the heart. (Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Christopher R. Morales)**

ally provides treatment for A-fib if the patient shows more than two risk factors that can worsen the condition. If the patient has congestive heart failure, vascular disease, hypertension, diabetes, or history of a stroke, or is a female 65 years or older, they have a higher risk of further complications.

A-fib can be treated with medicine, either to regulate the speed of the heartbeat or to thin the blood to prevent clots from forming. It can

also be treated with 'cardioversion,' a procedure that applies a mild electrical current to the heart to fix its rhythm.

Anyone can control a few factors that help reduce the chance of getting this disease. Limiting caffeine and alcohol intake, as well as losing weight and exercising regularly are all ways to help regulate heart rate and heart pressure.

"The heart works well when you take care of it," Stevens said. ●

## SCHOOL'S IN: NOW IT'S TIME TO START THINKING ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS

By **SENIOR AIRMAN KYLE JOHNSON**  
JBER Public Affairs

The Arctic Warrior Airman's Advisory Council is hosting an essay contest in which the three best essays will each be given a \$100 scholarship.

"This is a great opportunity for all Airmen to gain scholarship essay writing experience for future scholarship applications," said Senior Airman Jetro Davies, AWAAC president. "Applicants must send their essays to the AWAAC treasurer, Senior Airman Joshua Moody."

The deadline for the competition is Oct. 5, Davies said.

Additionally, the education office has a plethora of services available to ser-

vice members looking to put such experience to use.

"There's probably tens of thousands of scholarships available to active duty [personnel] their spouses and children," said Darrin Kerschner, education specialist for the Elmendorf Education Center.

All those scholarships can be found in two particular books distributed by the Department of Defense and found in the base library: Financial aid for veterans, Military Personnel and Their Family and Scholarships, Grants and Prizes, Kerschner said.

Kerschner keeps copies of both books at the education office, and said he can explain how they

work to interested persons – in case they want a crash-course on the books before setting out on their own.

"When we lost the spouses tuition assistance [program], one spouse used these books right here and got 68 grand," Kerschner said. "She said that was the best \$340 in stamps she ever spent."

Air Force spouses used to have tuition assistance similar to their active duty counterparts, but it's since been replaced by a better alternative, Kerschner said.

That alternative is the Air Force Association's Mike and Gail Donley Spouse Scholarship and the General Henry H. Arnold Education Grant Program,

valued at \$2,500 and \$2,000 respectively.

The programs are annual and competitive, Kerschner said.

However, JBER applicants have the advantage of being stationed at a location that is considered overseas – and are a little more likely to be accepted into the program.

There's also a one-time, non-renewable \$4,000 grant offered by My Career Advancement Account and is open to spouses who are married to an O-2 or below and E-5 or below, Kerschner said.

Dependents can get a piece of the pie too, Kerschner said.

"If anyone has graduating seniors, the freshman year is when to start planning for that stuff," Kersch-

ner said. "Most of the time when [dependents] come in to ask, it's halfway through their senior year in high school. They need to prepare for this as early as their freshman year."

After sitting on several scholarship boards, Kerschner said the biggest barrier between an applicant and the money is an incomplete application.

"Most of the time when a package is declined, it is incomplete," Kerschner said. "Provide every piece of documentation. If it's missing something, it's not even seen. Millions go unclaimed every year because people don't put in for it or do so incompletely."

For more information on federal and local scholarships, visit or call the Education Office at 552-3164. ●





**Friday  
Food safety day**

Children ages 9 to 18 are invited to the Kennecott Youth Center from 4:30 to 6 p.m. for activities about food safety, healthy habits and a positive lifestyle.

For information, call 552-2266.

**Friday and Saturday  
Oktoberfest at Alyeska**

All things Bavarian are happening at Alyeska, with polka music in the day and rock/jam at night, schnitzels, bratwurst and more.

For more information, visit [alyskaresort.com](http://alyskaresort.com).

**Saturday  
Jim Creek ATV trip**

Head to the Outdoor Adventure Program building at 8 a.m. for this ATV trip; equipment and transportation is provided.

For more information, call 552-4599/2023.

**Ping-pong tournament**

The Warrior Zone hosts this tourney starting at 2 p.m. Show off your skills!

For more information, call 384-9006.

**Air Force Birthday Ball**

Commemorate the Air Force's 69th birthday in style at the annual ball at the Egan Center.

Tickets are available now; for more information, visit <https://jberafball.com>.

**Sunday  
Eklutna ATV trip**

Open to all single service members, the Outdoor Adventure Program will take you on this ATV ride from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; enjoy the weather while it lasts.

For more information, call 552-4599/2023.

**Moose processing class**

Got plans to bag Bullwinkle? Learn to disassemble a moose

and make delicious sausage at the JBER-E Outdoor Recreation Center from noon to 4 p.m.

For information, call 552-4599/2023.

**Monday  
Johnny Appleseed Day**

The JBER Library hosts this craft session and lesson about Johnny Appleseed from 6 to 7 p.m.

For information call 384-1640.

**Monday and Tuesday  
Predation in the military**

Learn about predation in the military at this series of briefings at the Talkeetna Theater.

9 a.m. for leaders; 10:30 a.m. for first responders and advocates; 1 p.m. for OSI, CID and legal; and 2:30 p.m. for community partners, Family Readiness Groups and spouses.

For information, call 551-2033.

**Wednesday  
Fighting Championship**

The Alaska Fighting Championship is back at Sullivan Arena starting at 7 p.m., featuring fighters from Alaska and around the U.S. Doors open at 6 p.m.

For information, visit [alaskafighting.com](http://alaskafighting.com).

**Oct. 6  
Purple Fun Run**

All JBER personnel are invited to the Buckner Physical Fitness Center at 7 a.m. for a 5K run/walk to raise awareness of domestic violence.

For information, call 384-2999.

**Oct. 8  
Disney symphony concert**

The Alaska Center for the Performing Arts hosts this celebration of cartoons produced by Disney between 1929 and 1939.

There are two shows, at 2 and 7:30 p.m.

For information, visit [\[kapac.centertix.net\]\(http://kapac.centertix.net\).](http://alaska-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

**Wolf Day at the Zoo**

Winter is coming! Enjoy a scavenger hunt, a touch table, wolf encounters, crafts and much more at the Alaska Zoo from noon to 4 p.m.

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

**Oct. 10 through 13  
Alaska Aces hockey**

The South Carolina Stingrays visit Sullivan Arena for three exhibition games against the Aces, nightly at 7:15.

For information, visit [alaskaaces.com](http://alaskaaces.com).

**Oct. 21 and 22  
Trick-or-Treat Town**

The 25th annual indoor event provides a safe, warm place to enjoy tradition. Trick-or-treat through replicas of historic Anchorage and maybe meet the Alaska Aces. There are multiple sessions; for information visit [Trickortreattown.org](http://Trickortreattown.org).

**Oct. 28 through 30  
Alaska Aces hockey**

The Aces take on the Rapid City Rush in the 2016 ECHL season opener. Games are nightly starting at 7:15 p.m. at the Sullivan Arena.

For information, visit [alaskaaces.com](http://alaskaaces.com).

**Ongoing  
Fitness skills: Sit-up and  
Push-up clinics**

Every first and third Wednesday of the month, the Elmendorf Fitness Center hosts these clinics designed to teach proper sit-up and push-up techniques.

Enhance your performance and raise your fitness test scores.

For more information, call 552-5353.

**JBER Wildlife Education  
Center activities**

Learn about Alaska's amazing animals and natural resources at

this free museum, with interactive displays for the kids too. The center, at Building 8481 on the Elmendorf side of JBER, is open Monday through Friday from noon to 4 p.m. (subject to staffing availability).

For information, call 552-0310 or email [jberwildlife@gmail.com](mailto:jberwildlife@gmail.com).

**Wildlife Wednesday**

Stay scientifically enriched with this free 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.

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

**Library Story Times**

Evening Story Time: Tuesdays 6:30 to 7 p.m.

Toddler Tales: Wednesdays 10 to 11 a.m.

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

Surprising Science: Thursdays 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

**Weekly hikes**

The Alaska Outdoors host easy to moderate hikes every Monday and Thursday throughout the year. Monday hikes are easy and suitable for parents with children; Thursdays are for more moderate hikers. For information, visit [alaska-outdoors.org](http://alaska-outdoors.org).

**PWOC meetings**

The Protestant Women of the Chapel meet Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. at the Arctic Warrior Chapel.

For more information, email [jber.ak.pwoc@gmail.com](mailto:jber.ak.pwoc@gmail.com).

**MCCW/CWOC**

The Military Council of Catholic Women and Catholic Women of the Chapel meet Tuesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Arctic Warrior Chapel.

For information call 552-5762.

# 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 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**

**Lunch and Learn**

**Fridays at 11:30 a.m.**

Kosher lunch provided.

At the CFLTC

Call 384-0456 or 552-5762.

**Religious Education**

For schedules, call the Religious Operations Center at 552-5762.

# INTRAMURAL WRESTLING

ISAIAH COLLIER ATTEMPTS TO PIN WYATT OWEN DURING AN INTRAMURAL WRESTLING MEET AT THE BUCKNER PHYSICAL FITNESS CENTER SEPT. 14. COLLIER IS ASSIGNED TO THE 1ST BATTALION, 501ST PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT, 4TH BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM (AIRBORNE), 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION AND OWEN IS ASSIGNED TO THE 3RD BATTALION, 509TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT, 4TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM (AIRBORNE), 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION. (U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO/AIRMAN 1ST CLASS VALERIE MONROY)





# Good dental hygiene habits especially important for pregnant women

By **AIR FORCE STAFF  
SGT. ASHLEY CRAIG**  
*673d Dental Squadron*

**O**ral health is an important part of your overall health, and good health habits not only help prevent problems during pregnancy, they also affect your child.

Recent studies have reported associations between oral disease, particularly tooth decay and gum disease, and the increased risk for poor birth and pregnancy outcomes, such as preterm birth, low birth weight, and gestational diabetes.

While pregnant, there are a few things to be aware of regarding oral health.

First, it is common for women to notice that their gums are bleeding more than before which is sometimes referred to as “pregnancy gingivitis.”

The symptoms of gingivitis are tender, red, swollen gums that bleed easily.

Second, you are at a higher risk for cavities while pregnant. Due to frequent snacking, there is a higher accumulation of plaque left on the teeth. The combination of sugar found in plaque and bacteria is what creates the acids that decay teeth.

Don’t forget cavities can be caused by carbohydrates



**Regular brushing and flossing will improve both your health and that of your child. (Courtesy graphic)**

– including energy drinks and sodas, but also breads, chips, and crackers.

Third, you may develop pregnancy tumors which are noncancerous growths in the mouth due to irritation of swollen gums.

All these conditions can be prevented with good oral hygiene at home.

What are considered good oral hygiene habits? Start with brushing twice a day with a soft-bristle toothbrush in a circular motion toward the gumline. Then make sure you are flossing once a day. Also, use an antimicrobial fluoride mouth-

wash to help kill bacteria and prevent cavities.

Fluoride can help prevent and reverse cavities when used correctly and consistently.

It is best to use a fluoride mouthwash right before bed after you have brushed, and refrain from eating or drinking. You should let the fluoride rest on your teeth for at least 30 minutes without rinsing it off to have the maximum effect.

It is also important to note that if you are experiencing morning sickness, you should not brush your teeth right after.

The stomach acid makes the teeth softer and if brushed, could further wear away the enamel; rinse with water instead.

Additionally, try to limit snacking throughout the day and stick to three meals. The worst thing you can do for your oral health is to frequently snack throughout the day. Each time food is placed in your mouth, it takes 25 minutes for the pH to neutralize.

Additionally, the amount of food that you eat at one time does not increase the amount of acidity; a gallon of soda and a can of soda

have the same effects on your teeth.

Finally, if you do have a snack, it is best to drink water right after.

Wait about 25 minutes before brushing; when your teeth are in an acidic environment, it is easier for your teeth to be damaged by brushing vigorously.

Avoid sticky, chewy candies such as toffees, fruit chews and licorice.

Lastly, make sure you have routine dental care including annual exams and cleanings.

If you are active duty, please seek care at your respective dental clinic.

Dependents should be enrolled in MetLife Insurance and choose a provider in their area.

Most clinics will have a six month cleaning option for pregnant patients.

Once your baby has his or her first tooth, you should schedule a dental check-up for them no later than his or her first birthday.

It is important to introduce dental care at an early age by wiping your child’s mouth with gauze even before they have teeth – and brushing and flossing once they do.

The most important thing you can invest in during your pregnancy is you. ●



# The Potter shapes us all; be flexible and don't worry if you fall

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**G**OD IS AN ARTIST. IN JEREMIAH 18 there is a passage about a potter, people and God. God is a potter shaping the destiny of the people.

Humankind has a lot in common with clay. We are formed from clay in Genesis 2. The journey of a vessel at a potter's studio can be likened to a faith journey. God molds, shapes and bends us. What God makes is good in Genesis.

I think the message about the potter and clay is threefold; be flexible in life, remember God knows you intimately, and God made humankind with good intentions, so live reverently. Here is a closer look into the main points on the potter and clay.

Point one, it is good to be flexible like clay; allow God to mold and shape you. Sometimes it is good to be reworked by God. It is a helpful concept regarding relationships with God.

Sometimes we mess up and fall

apart. We get spoiled like clay on the wheel and have to be re-worked by God. We need attention. Life is full of triumphs and failures. Ask God for help and pray when there are concerns for loved ones and yourself. Intentionally and sincerely seek forgiveness and make amends. God helped the people in the scriptures, and will guide us. Clay has a journey and so do we.

Clay is harvested from the ground, all different colors and consistencies from all over the world. Ceramics are multi-cultural. It is a journey for clay to become a vessel. The clay is mixed with water into a malleable state. Remember flexibility is key.

The vessel is formed; God molds us too. Clay can be thrown on a wheel or hand-built – it depends on the artist. God guides our lives. God is hands on!

Potters mold and sculpt clay. Once a vessel is complete, it dries.

Next, a glaze is applied.

The potter puts the piece into the kiln. Under high temperatures, the clay hardens and changes color based on minerals in the glaze.

The vessel is removed from the kiln. God is with us through all stages of life, the pits and peaks. The point is, be flexible with God.

Allow God to mold, form and melt you. Learn from the experience with faith and grace. Be patient with God and others.

Forgiveness and change are critical; don't fight the potter.

Point two, God knows us. Take for illustration purposes, the terra cotta soldiers from China.

Each Soldier has an individual sculpted face; the soldiers' bodies, armor and weapons are cast from molds. Chinese potters put forth great effort for the emperor; now the terra cotta army guards the emperor's tomb.

It is an amazing work of art and piece of history.

Psalm 139 states, "I will thank you because I am marvelously made. Your works are wonderful and I know it well."

Consider God's intentions. We are each crafted, trained in specific tasks. Why is this important? God knows us intimately; he formed our faces and breathed life into us.

We are not estranged from God, but created with meaning. God knows and searches us in Psalm 139. This is profound.

God traces our journeys and resting places. He knows us like a sculptor knows his work – he pays attention to detail.

Point three, remember you are God's creation and good. In Genesis 2:7, God forms humankind from the dust and breathes life into the first man. What a masterpiece, what an initiative, a living being.

God is the source of life. Without him, where is the purpose or direction? He had a vision. We are God's masterpieces; we are a work of his creation. We are uniquely sculpted of dust, and return to the earth and God when we die.

To recap, be flexible like clay – there is no telling what's next.

Point two, God loves and knows you; be grateful.

Point three, God created humankind with purpose to love, serve and revere the creator potter. God is our life source.

Thanks be to God, the wonderful artist, this day and always. ●



