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New Airmen, old fight: Polar Force



ABOVE: Air Force Senior Airman Mark Mugo, 773d Civil Engineer Squadron, puts on protective gear during exercise Polar Force 19-1 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Oct. 25. Exercise Polar Force showcases unit combat readiness while fighting in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense protective gear. (U.S. Air Force photos/Airman 1st Class Crystal A. Jenkins)



RIGHT: Air Force Staff Sgt. Zachary Roberts, 773d Civil Engineer Squadron, performs first aid on Airman 1st Class Travis Bittle, 773d CES.

BELOW LEFT: Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Carr, 773d Civil Engineer Squadron, picks up a HESCO barrier for construction. Sections of the collapsible barrier were linked together and filled with dirt to provide added protection at the entry control point of the exercise.

BELOW RIGHT: Air Force Airman Nicholas Simonin and Airman Gabriel Montoya Lopez, both from the 773d Civil Engineer Squadron, hold their M4 carbines while acting as extra entry control center security during a mock attack.



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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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AF extends high year tenure for E-4s to E-6s

By Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

The Air Force is extending the high year of tenure for senior airmen through technical sergeants beginning Feb. 1, 2019.

The memo, signed Oct. 18, extends the high year of tenure from eight to 10 years for senior airmen, from 15 to 20 years for staff sergeants and from 20 to 22 years for technical sergeants.

Airmen in these ranks who reach their HYT prior to Feb. 1, 2019, or those who are currently approved for separation or retirement under the previous HYT limits, may submit a request to extend their HYT beginning Oct. 24 to the updated limit if government funds have not been expended on their separation or retirement, such as moving expenses.

“This is just one of the ways we are working to manage the talent we currently have,” said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright. “Adjusting the high year of tenure policy will allow us to keep Airmen we’ve trained and developed

over the course of their careers, and allow them to continue to serve their nation to the best of their ability and pay it forward, by training the next generation of Airmen who are right behind them.”

The Air Force will use the flexibility to retain talented Airmen to provide training, leadership and mentoring to the growing number of accessions who are joining.

“As we grow the force, we need to retain technically skilled experts across our ranks,” said Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel, and services. “By extending high year of tenure, we’re able to leverage our talented, seasoned professionals to train, develop, and lead new Airmen to accomplish current and future mission requirements.”


The Air Force will consider using career job reservations and noncom-

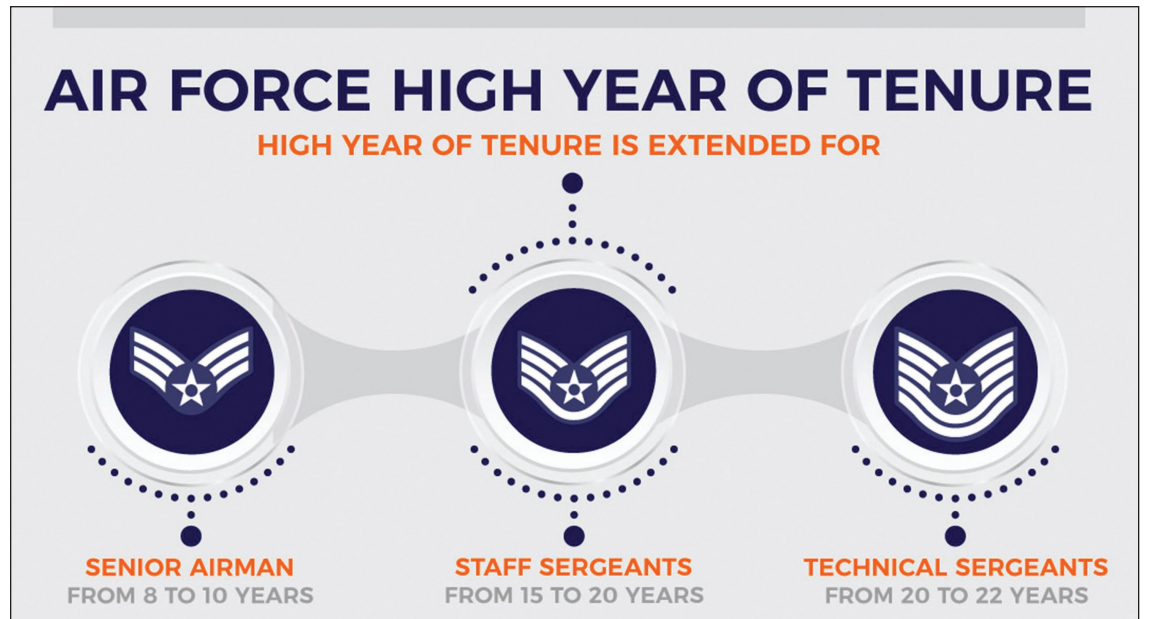
missioned officer retraining programs as needed to ensure that its growth is deliberately targeted to meet the needs of the National Defense Strategy.

“These force-shaping tools are critical to ensuring the investment we’ve made in enhancing our Airmen’s technical skills are leveraged and allocated across the force deliberately,” said Kelly.

Senior airmen through technical sergeants with an HYT of Feb 1,

2019, and later, will automatically have their HYT adjusted by AFPC in accordance with this policy. Those hitting HYT prior to Feb. 1 can request an extension via the virtual manpower and personnel flight.

“Service in the Air Force is an honor, not a right or an entitlement,” Wright said. “Supervisors and commanders will continue to ensure that proper conduct and mission performance are the primary factors in determining continued service.” 



(Courtesy graphic)

Grab your gear: Cold weather is here

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
CAITLIN RUSSELL**
JBER Public Affairs

With the return of winter, the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson occupational safety office encourages base residents to follow some safety guidelines to prevent winter-related hazards.

“The key to preventing possible hazards is being proactive,” said David Spellman, 673d Air Base Wing occupational safety specialist. “Wearing the proper personal protective equipment, having a snow removal plan, and sticking to a risk assessment plan can aid in being injury-free.”

With the right preparation, people can prevent weather-related injuries. During the winter, walking can become extra hazardous, Spellman said. Slips, trips

and falling incidents escalate during winter; pay attention to foot placement and watch for icy areas while walking.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, most incidents involve slips, trips or falls. As of 2017, the Air Force Safety Center reported 670 incidents.

Spellman recommends for residents to watch out for black ice. While black ice can appear as a spot of moisture, the thin ice is very slick and can be extremely dangerous.

“Wearing a traction device on your shoes is one way you can prevent a slip or fall,” Spellman said. “Maintaining three points of contact when you enter and exit a vehicle can also help sustain balance.”

Three points of contact refers to a driver having three of their limbs in contact with

the ground, vehicle or steering wheel.

While each driver must clear off their vehicle following a snowfall, units are encouraged to follow a snow removal plan for the work center.


“Ensuring pathways stay clear throughout the day and after it snows can prevent mishaps from happening,” Spellman said. “Hazards are not just present on the ground, they can also come from above. People should be wary of icicles falling from awnings or roofs, and knock the icicles down if possible.”

Aside from weather-related hazards, Alaska winters also bring extended periods of darkness. Everyone is encouraged to wear a reflective belt or reflective clothing

during hours of darkness and/or inclement weather.

Spellman said that as the amount of daylight drastically decreases, the need to be seen increases. Without a reflective belt, it can be difficult for drivers to see pedestrians and cyclists.

Being proactive towards potential hazards and knowing how to react is everyone’s responsibility. If an emergency arises, call 911.

For more information about winter safety, contact the 673d ABW safety office at 552-6850. 



An Airman at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson puts on ice cleats before negotiating an icy path. Cleats can prevent slips on ice. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Javier Alvarez)

Trick-or-treaters have scary fun



TOP: Members of the 773d Logistics Readiness Squadron distribute candy to JBER trick-or-treaters during the annual Trunk-or-Treat at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Oct. 26. The event featured games, candy and a contest for the best trunk, and provided Halloween fun away from the chilly night. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Master Sgt. Matthew McGovern)

ABOVE: Jamison, 2, places candy in his basket during the annual 673d Medical Group trick-or-treat event at the hospital on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Oct. 26. For the event, 673d Medical Group Airmen distributed candy to JBER trick-or-treaters; each clinic throughout the hospital was decorated with a theme for the event. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Master Sgt. Matthew McGovern)

LEFT: Costume Fun Run participants run toward the finish line at the Elmendorf-Fitness Center at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Oct 26. The fitness center hosted two races - one for kids 9 years old and younger, and another for those 10 and older. Prizes were awarded to the top three finishers in each race. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Javier Alvarez)

Friday

Member Appreciation Day

The PermaFrost Pub hosts Thanksgiving appetizers from 4 to 6 p.m.

For more information, call 552-3669.

Open Swim

Make a splash at the Polar Paradise Pool from 4 to 8 p.m. with our free first Friday. For more information, call 384-1369.

Saturday

Santa Breakfast Tickets

Kick off the Holiday season at the Arctic Oasis. Tickets for Breakfast with Santa on Dec. 1, will be available for pre-sale and must be purchased in advance.

For more information, call 552-8529.

Season Pass Sale

Visit Hillberg Ski Area from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to purchase passes, season rentals, book lessons, or pick up pre-purchased items.

For more information, call 552-4838.

UFC Fight Night

Don't miss out on UFC 230. Make sure to swing by the Igloo Lounge starting at 4 p.m. to put your fight night knowledge to the test and win exciting prizes while watching the fight action.

For more information call 753-7467.

Capes and Crowns

Dress up as your favorite superhero or princess at the Arctic Oasis from 2 to 4 p.m. for this free event. Complimentary desserts will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information, call 552-8529.

Saturday-Sunday

Holiday Gift Festival

The Holiday Food & Gift Festival at the Dena'ina Center is a fun, family oriented event with about 100 vendors offering a wide variety of unique gifts from Alaska and around the world. Santa and his elf will be there so you can take a memorable photo. For more information, call 272-5634 or visit anchoragemarkets.com/food-festival/.

Wednesday

Indoor Rock Climbing

Scale the climbing wall at the Outdoor Adventure Program from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Receive a belay certification for use at Buckner Fitness Center. Must register prior to class date. Open to ages 12 and up. For more information, call 552-2023.

Nov. 8 and 9

Veteran Business Forum

The local veteran business community hosts this event about business development, government contracting opportunities and more at the BP Energy Center from 1:30 to 6 p.m. both days.

For information, call 271-4850 or visit alaska-veteran-business-forum.eventbrite.com.

Ongoing

Elmendorf Pool Closure

The Elmendorf Fitness Center Pool will be closed for annual maintenance throughout November. Buckner Fitness Pool and the Polar Paradise Pool will be under normal operations. For more information, call 552-5353.

Polar Nights First Friday

The Anchorage Museum's Friday After Hours program

has live music, art activities, food and more on Friday nights. The museum stays open Fridays through April with free admission from 6 to 9 p.m. on the first Friday of the month.

For more information, visit anchagemuseum.org.

Civil Air Patrol

Adult members of the Civil Air Patrol meet at the Aero Club Hangar the first and third Tuesdays of each month; cadets meet Saturdays. For more information, call 350-7951.

Thursday science club

Youth are invited to the JBER Library to conduct experiment and think about science from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

For more information, call 384-1640.

Library story times

The JBER Library hosts preschool story times Tuesdays and Thursdays

from 10 to 11 a.m.; Toddler Tales is Wednesdays from 10 to 10:30 a.m. All-ages story time is Tuesdays from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

For more information, call 384-1640.

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. They also host an open house every third Saturday through April; everyone is invited.

For more information, call 552-4353 or visit facebook.com/msmrrre.

Evening Hike

These hikes hit a different route each time. Mondays are easier and are great for families; Thursdays are moderately difficult. Hikes begin at 6:35 p.m. sharp. For location and more information, call 440-9934.

Chapel services

Catholic Mass

Sunday
9 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
Monday and Wednesday
11:40 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
Tuesday
Noon – JBER Hospital Chapel
Friday
Noon – JBER Hospital Chapel

Confession

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

Protestant Sunday worship services

Gospel
9:30 a.m. – Midnight Sun Chapel
Contemporary
11 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
Traditional
11 a.m. – Heritage Chapel

Religious Education

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

First snow of the year



A member of the 773d Civil Engineering Squadron operates snow removal equipment, while an F-22 Raptor flies by during the first day of snow at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Oct. 29. The snow barn works to keep runways and roads clear for emergency missions 24/7. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jonathan Valdes Montijo)

Love best demonstrated by helping others

By **ARMY CHAPLAIN (CAPT.)
BRIAN S. PHIPPS**
725th BSB Chaplain

When we think about love, we often think about an emotion or a feeling. Most people feel this emotion when they fall in love with their mate or first see their newborn child. For others, love goes deeper than just a feeling. Love will cause them to do anything for someone.

Paul writing to the Corinthian church describes love this way: "Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails."

If we think about love in this way, we are required to move past loving just the people in our life that we are close to and look at how we can help others. We see this kind of love demonstrated in a story told by

Watchman Nee, a Chinese Christian teacher and church leader.

In Nee's book "Sit, Walk, Stand," he described the struggle of a Christian man in southern China, who used a hand-worked water wheel to lift water from the irrigation stream that ran at the base of the hill to his field. His neighbor had two fields below his, and one night he made a hole in the dividing wall and drained out all the pumped water to fill up his own two fields. The Christian man was distressed. He laboriously pumped water into his own field, only to have the act of stealing repeated. This happened three or four times. At last he consulted his Christian brethren. "What shall I do?" he asked. "I have tried to be patient and not retaliate. Isn't it right for me to confront him?" The Christians prayed, and then one replied, "If we only try to do the right thing, surely we are very poor Christians," he said. "We have to do something more than what is right." The Christian farmer was impressed with this advice. So the next day he went out and pumped water for the two fields below his and then, after

that, worked throughout the afternoon to fill his own field. From that day on the water stayed in his field.


Another act of love is demonstrated in a story told by Dr. John MacArthur.

He related that in World War II, a group of American Soldiers lost their buddy in battle. They carried his body to the only cemetery in the area, which happened to be Catholic. When the priest was told the dead man was not Catholic he said, "I am sorry, but he cannot be buried here." The disheartened Soldiers decided to do what they thought was next best, and they buried their comrade just outside the cemetery fence. They returned the next morning to pay their last respects, but they could not find a grave outside the fence. When they told the priest of their quandary, he said, "The first part of the night I stayed awake sorry for what I told you. And the second part of the night I spent moving the fence."

When I read this story for the first time I was a little taken back by how the Soldier was not allowed to be buried in the cemetery. For many of



(Courtesy photo)

us it would be easy to stop there and be angry. The reality is in the end the love the priest had for his fellow man prevailed and he spent the time moving the fence to take care of the fallen Soldier. Many go out of our way to show love towards other people every day by meeting a need or simply smiling at someone as we pass them. My challenge to you as we move into the holiday season is to go out of your way to demonstrate the love we see in these stories. How many people's lives do you think we could change if we simply loved them for who they are and came along side of them? I pray that this will challenge you and encourage you. 

Firewood permits

There is a cost of \$35 per cord of firewood, and \$17.50 for a half-cord. To receive a permit, an iSportsman permit is required. For information, visit <https://jber.isportsman.net/Firewood.aspx>.

Law School applications

The Office of The Judge Advocate General is accepting applications for the Army's Funded Legal Education Program. The Army projects sending up to 25 active-duty officers to law school at government expense beginning the fall of 2018; officers will remain on active duty while attending.

Interested lieutenants and captains should contact the Staff Judge Advocate at 384-2434 for information.

Main Pharmacy hours

The main JBER pharmacy, on the first floor of the JBER hospital near the Bear entrance, is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The pharmacy at the Exchange is open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays

through Fridays for civilian prescriptions and refills, and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for refills only.

iSportsman enrollment

Anyone choosing to recreate in JBER training areas must obtain an iSportsman permit and sign in and out using the iSportsman system prior to recreating. A pass costs \$10; \$5 for those 60 and older and disabled persons. Passholders may also need an installation access pass. For information, visit isportsman.jber.net or call 552-8609 or 384-6224.

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 participating in the Reserve, which may mean a break in service. Even if you're unsure about transitioning

to the Air Force Reserve, the 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. For holes in housing areas, contact Aurora Housing at 753-1051. Other requests will be tracked by 773d CES. Note the location, including cross-streets or building numbers. Then email 773ces.ceoh.potholerepair@us.af.mil or call 552-2994 or 552-2995. Include contact information in case crews need to follow up.

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 items may have a cost.

U-Fix-It allows occupants to make minor improvements and repairs.

The JBER-E location, at 6350 Arctic Warrior Drive,

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.

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.

DLA Document Services

Defense Logistics Agency Document Services duplicates and prints documents, including color, large-format photos, engineering drawings, sensitive materials, manuals and training materials. They design, print and distribute business cards, letterhead, invitations and programs, and provide devices to print, scan, copy and fax while providing maintenance and ink cartridges. They offer document automation and content services for building digital libraries.

To register, go to <https://www.dso.documentservices.dla.mil>. For information, visit documentservices.dla.mil or call (808) 473-1699 or (315) 473-1699.

OTC pharmacy counter

The pharmacy at the JBER hospital has over-the-counter medication for DoD beneficiaries from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m., Monday through Friday. Flyers and those on personnel reliability program status, pregnant, or under the age of 2 are not eligible.

The clinic offers pain relievers; cough, cold and allergy medications; ointments; constipation and diarrhea medications, and others. For information, visit facebook.com/JBERPharmacy.

ASYMCA Bargain shop

The ASYMCA Bargain Shop, 8515 Saville Ave. on JBER-E, is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For information, call 753-6134.

Alaska Air Guardsmen rescue snowmachiner

By **DAVID BEDARD**
176th Wing Public Affairs

Airmen with the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th, 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons rescued a snowmachiner Oct. 27 approximately 15 miles northeast of Paxson.

According to Alaska Air National Guard Capt. Daniel Dickman, Alaska Rescue Coordination Center, the mission was opened in response to a request for assistance from the Alaska State Troopers.

The troopers were notified when the two snowmachiners riding with the injured individual called 911 on their cell phone.

The friends reported the injured snowmachiner had fallen into a deep ditch located on a steep slope of a mountain ridge.

They were afraid he was badly injured, and so made the decision to call authorities.

An HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter from the 210th Rescue Squadron and an HC-130J Combat King II from the 211th Squadron launched from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Aboard the helicopter were three pararescuemen – highly trained personnel specializing in rescue operations.

After receiving report of the distressed individual, the AKRCC tasked the Guardsmen to respond.

The HH-60 aircrew found the three snowmachiners based on coordinates they gave from their phone's GPS receiver.

Because of extremely limited visibility, the rescue crew asked the injured snowmachiner's friends to place their snowmachines around the ditch with lights on to help guide them.

The HH-60 landed, and two pararescuemen went on foot to the injured snowmachiner. While the parares-



An Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 Pave Hawk with the 210th Rescue Squadron conducts a training flight near Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in February 2013. (U.S. Air Guard photo/Capt. Bernie Kale)

cuemen were carrying out the rescue, the Pave Hawk rendezvoused with the HC-130 to air-to-air refuel.

Once on site, the pararescuemen carefully packaged the injured snowmachiner into a Stokes litter, fitting the snowmachiner with a cervical collar to immobilize the individual's neck before hoisting the snowmachiner to the helicopter.

Alaska Air National

Guard Capt. Lane Williams said although the weather was calm, the fresh snow was blown up by the helicopter's rotor wash to create white-out conditions.

He used his night-vision goggles, the light from the snowmachines, and guidance from the pararescuemen to precisely hover over the ditch.

A pararescueman hoisted up with the injured snow-


machiner, and the other pararescuemen went up in a subsequent hoist.

The injured snowmachiner was flown to Providence Alaska Medical Center's rooftop helipad.

The pararescuemen unloaded the patient and briefed Providence medical personnel on the snowmachiner's condition.

Dickman highlighted the importance of carrying a personal locator beacon or another satellite communication device into remote areas – devices that are not reliant on Alaska's sparse cellular network.

"In this situation, the friends were lucky to get cellphone coverage to make a call to 911," Dickman said. "We encourage Alaskans going into remote areas to pack a satellite phone or an emergency beacon."

For the mission, the 210th, 211th and 212th rescue squadrons and AK RCC were awarded one save. 

Mother's cautionary tale of heartbreak, loss

By **AMY ROLLINS**

Wright-Patterson Public Affairs

Dr. Laura Sidari is speaking out because her family suffered a horrendous loss last Christmas Day.

The Air Force psychiatrist at the medical center on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, and her husband, Dr. Anthony Sidari, a rheumatologist, lost their 4-year-old son, Leon, to complications of influenza. He passed away from bacterial pneumonia following the flu, two days following onset of symptoms on Dec. 23.

Although the Sidari family had vaccinated for the flu in prior seasons, Leon died before receiving his flu shot that season, Sidari said. His appointment was for Jan. 3.

"Last year, if I had seen a story like my own, I would have prioritized the flu shot differently," she said. "As a physician, even I was unaware of the significant risk that the flu posed to my healthy child. Through reaching out to others, including other physician parents, I have discovered that I am not alone in that misconception."

"Leon's story places a name and a face – a beautiful and loved and special human being – behind the numbers that are often buried in databases and scattered across headlines,"

Sidari said. "As difficult as it is for me as a mother, I share Leon's story so that someday other families may not have to. As I have devastatingly learned through Leon, flu-related complications are often aggressive and difficult to treat."

Healthy children may be more at risk for suffering a flu-related death. Research of flu-related deaths shows evidence for the shot providing a 65 percent reduction in risk for flu-related mortality in healthy children, and a 41 percent reduction for children with pre-existing medical issues. About 80 percent of children who die each year of flu-related complications didn't get a shot that year.

"Being healthy is a risk factor for rapid death," Sidari said. "I didn't even know that as a physician. Compared to other pediatric populations, they die more quickly."

As of Oct. 6, more than 180 children have been lost to the 2017-2018 flu season, according to information published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Many died before reaching the hospital.

Sidari is quick to point out that she is speaking only from her perspective as a mother – not a pediatric specialist – who made sure her children received every vaccination recommended. After Leon's death,



An Allergy and Immunizations technician fills a syringe with flu vaccine at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Oct. 5, 2016. (Air Force Photo/Airman 1st Class Christopher Morales)

she tried to learn as much as she could about flu in the hope the family's then 2-year-old son, Tristan, and 7-week-old son, Cameron, would not also pass away.

"I really wanted to understand the likelihood that we were going to lose our other children," she said. "That's how I found this information."

The Sidaris want to dispel the misconception that good health affords protection against the flu.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC recommend the shot for everyone older than 6 months, with few exceptions.


The Sidari family faces this holiday season without their first-born.

"Nothing prepares you as a parent for coming home and having to un-

wrap Christmas presents for a child who never can," she said.

"As parents, there are many demands on our time and energy, particularly around the holidays," Sidari said. "The flu shot can too easily and understandably slip through the cracks due to busy schedules."

"It is worth prioritizing this time of the year. This is a necessary appointment. Bringing awareness to the flu shot will not bring Leon back. I do, however, believe in the healing power of connecting with others," she said.

"It is my hope that Leon's story can help save lives," Sidari said. "I encourage families to consider making the flu shot a priority, this season and every season." 

POLAR FORCE AT MAD BULL

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
CRYSTAL JENKINS**
JBER Public Affairs

Personnel assigned to the 673d Air Base Wing participated in a semiannual operational readiness exercise known as Polar Force 19-1 at Camp Mad Bull on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Oct. 22 to 26.

“This exercise is our premier opportunity to evaluate our Airmen’s readiness capabilities in an austere or deployed location,” said U.S. Air Force Col. Michael Staples, commander of the 673d Civil Engineer Group. “We have to make sure they can perform their core tasks in a contested environment as well as demonstrate their ability to survive and operate, which you just can’t really do at a main base.”

The scenario for PF 19-1 arranged for personnel to gather at a simulated deployed environment with minimal facilities available and figure out how to get the mission accomplished.

For this iteration, more than 300 Airmen from 10 units participated, all of which had support functions enabling each other to get the mission accomplished, Staples said.

“This type of preparation is a paradigm shift back to the way we used to train more than 15 years ago,” said Chief Master Sgt. Shaun Krautkremer, the 773d Civil Engineer Squadron superintendent and PF 19-1 wing inspection team member. “It didn’t just provide worthwhile training, it also established a baseline for a way to move ahead and provided the Airmen an opportunity to build relationships with their teammates.”

The situations gave way to an opportunity for some of the Airmen who have deployed multiple times, to difficult locations, to share their experiences and knowledge with these younger folks, Staples said.

“This exercise showed me that our senior noncommissioned officers are more than desk personnel,” said Airman 1st Class Edwin Alpizar, a 773d CES structures apprentice. “They really took the lead and showed us how to build and manage things correctly in a location that requires you to adapt. I realized they knew more about our job than what I gave them credit for and more about being able to adapt to things you hadn’t planned on.”

Although adaption is a key to success, management and the skills learned through tangible experiences



TOP: Airmen with the 773d Civil Engineering Squadron tear down tents after exercise Polar Force 19-1 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Oct. 25. Exercise Polar Force showcases unit combat readiness while fighting in chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defense protective gear. (U.S. Air Force photos/Staff Sgt. Westin Warburton)

LEFT: Airmen with the 773d Civil Engineering Squadron repair damage on a flightline after a mock attack during exercise Polar Force 19-1 at JBER Oct. 24.

are also essential.

“These valuable, hands-on skills aren’t found in computer-based or upgrade training, you can only learn them by being in the field from some of the personnel who have already been there,” Staples said. “This method of training is a great opportunity to get to know your fellow Airmen and build your team. After all, you may not know how your brothers and sisters in the logistics readiness squadron, force support squadron, emergency management shop or other units contribute to the overall mission.”

This exercise provided a distinctive opportunity to put the phone down and learn what each unit brings to the fight, which ultimately brings


unit cohesion, morale and resiliency.

“I think it’s important to remember that our Airmen do their jobs really well every day, regardless of whether they are finance, vehicle dispatch, electrical craftsman or mission support,” Staples said. “The thing is, they get to practice those things daily. Rarely do they get the chance to execute their deployed mission and purely remove themselves from their everyday base jobs and leave them behind to focus on their contingency mission. Giving them the time and space to do that is incredibly valuable.”

“During these scenarios, we really liked seeing how the Airmen innovated, learned from their mistakes and built their experience database, so to

speak,” he added. “Of course, your hope through this type of testing is that you are validated, knowing your Airmen are already prepared for what they might face.”

Regular Polar Force exercises allow personnel to work through obstacles, so when the time comes, JBER can respond efficiently and effectively.

“I’m a structures guy by trade and I can’t tell you about every doorknob I have tightened or roll-up door I have fixed,” Krautkremer said. “But I can tell you about every exercise I have been in and the creative things I learned from them. I hope everyone embraces the mission and perpetuates that atmosphere forward in the future.” 

BRING THE HAMMER

USARAK's ARCTIC ANVIL



ABOVE: Pfc. Ty Nugent, 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, lays a collimator – critical for howitzer shot placement – during Arctic Anvil near Fort Greely. The joint, multi-national, force-on-force training exercise is designed to provide the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division a tough, realistic training event that validates their ability to fight and win as a combined arms team in preparation for their rotation at the Army's National Training Center in California early next year. (U.S. Army photos/John Pennell)

RIGHT: Paratroopers from the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division jump into Donnelly Training Area Oct. 9 to kick off Arctic Anvil. **ON THE COVER:** Cpl. Alexander Rogers, 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment howitzer gunner, looks through a panoramic telescope sight, calculating deflection and elevation to hit a target.



