

ESPORTS warriors wanted: Army seeks Soldiers for competitive online gaming team

Michelle deGuzman-Watson
U.S. Army Recruiting
Command Public Affairs

U.S. Army Recruiting Command is seeking current Soldiers to become part of the new U.S. Army esports team.

This team is being developed to compete at the local, regional and national level on behalf of the U.S. Army. The team members will build awareness of skills that can be used as professional Soldiers and use their gaming knowledge to be more relatable to youth.

“If we are going to be successful in recruiting, then we need to be where young people are – and they are operating in the digital world,” said Maj. Gen. Frank Muth, commanding general for U.S. Army Recruiting Command. “There are already thousands of current Soldiers who are competitive online gamers. Now we are giving them a chance to use their talents to help us relate to and connect with other young gamers. They will have the ability to start a dialogue about what



U.S. Army Recruiting Command is seeking current Soldiers to become part of the new U.S. Army esports team. (Photo Credit: U.S. Army)

it is like to serve in our Army and see if they are interested in joining.”

The complete initiative has been in development since September.

See ESPORTS on page 7

2018 Overseas Cost of Living Allowance Overseas Living Patterns Survey

This survey is used to track the shopping patterns of uniformed service members stationed overseas. The data collected will assist in the determination of Overseas Cost of Living Allowance paid.

This survey runs through Dec. 31. Participation in this survey is voluntary. However, maximum response is encouraged so that data will be representative of your location of assignment.

This data is instrumental in updating OCOLA indices. Incomplete surveys cannot be used as this might result in inaccurate analysis of shopping behavior. To ensure that this survey results in valid OCOLA, please answer questions for all applicable categories.

To prepare for the survey, determine where you purchase groceries, clothing, household furnishings, entertainment, communications and transportation. Estimated time to complete the survey is 40 to 50 minutes.

To complete the survey between the Dec. 1 to Dec. 30 open period, visit <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/colaSurvey.cfm?ID=alaska> or scan the QR code.



Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area opening

Courtesy story

Fort Wainwright’s Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation announces that the Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area is open Dec. 15 and 16.

The main lift will be open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and the tubing hill will be open

As the season officially starts, stay the most up to date by signing up for the

free Birch Hill text messaging service to receive updates directly to your phone by texting “WainwrightSki” to (206) 929-4040.

For more information about Birch Hill, visit <https://wainwright.armymwr.com/programs/ski-snowboard>.

Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area will be closed Friday, Dec. 14 for additional snow making and grooming.



With a mild start to winter, the Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area on Fort Wainwright has been making snow 24/7 in anticipation of opening the recreation area for the 2018/2019 season. (Photo by Daniel Nelson, U.S. Army Garrison Alaska Fort Wainwright Public Affairs)



Time running out to opt into Blended Retirement System

Gary Sheftick
Army News Service

Less than a month remains for Soldiers to opt into the Blended Retirement System, and so far only 19 percent of those eligible have switched to the new plan.

Pentagon officials are concerned many Soldiers will be missing out on benefits under BRS that they can take with them if they leave the Army before serving 20 years.

One key benefit of the new retirement system is that Soldiers can keep their money from the Thrift Savings Plan – including government contributions and matching funds – when they leave the service.

Under BRS, Soldiers will receive matching funds from the government every paycheck for their TSP contributions on up to 5 percent of their earnings. And if they decide to leave service before retiring, they will be able to keep those funds.

“This is an opportunity for Soldiers to get something, whether they serve to retirement or not,” said Henry Manning, a senior official with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

He and Maj. Yungsong Han with that office have travelled to a number of installations across the Army to brief Soldiers on the new retirement system.

“We find 80 percent of the people in the audience say that they’re going to retire,” Manning said, “while the reality is that probably only 20 percent of them will actually retire.”

“If you’re somebody who plays the odds, chances are opting in



A graphic represents service members from around the world who are eligible to participate in Blended Military Retirement System. (Graphic by Defense Media Activity)

would be a better thing for you to do,” he said.

The clock is ticking, though, he added.

While all military members who began their service this year automatically fall under the new retirement plan, Congress gave existing troops until Dec. 31 to opt into BRS.

Active duty Soldiers who had fewer than 12 years of service as of Dec. 31, 2017 are eligible; and so are reserve component members with fewer than 4,320 points.

For those who do not stay in 20 years, opting into BRS is definitely beneficial, Manning said. “At least when you walk away, you walk away with the funds that the government has contributed (to TSP).”

About 350,000 active duty service members have opted into BRS so far, but the percentage of Marines who have chosen the new system is double the percentage of Soldiers. About 48 percent of eligible Marines have switched to BRS.

Manning explained that’s because the Corps required all Marines to fill

out a form, whether they wanted to stay with the legacy plan or opt into the new. Other services only required those who want to change to go online and sign up.

All eligible Soldiers, however, were supposed to take online training this year concerning BRS.

A total of 93 percent from both active and reserve components have completed that online training, Han said.

Installation personal financial managers have also been training in BRS and can provide free counseling to service members and their families. In addition, MilitaryOneSource provides free financial support 24/7 at 1-800-342-9647, and a BRS calculator is at <https://militarypay.defense.gov/Calculators/BRS/>.

“Soldiers are still vacillating on whether they want to opt in,” Manning said. “If you’re not certain, you definitely want to opt in, because at least you walk away with some money at the end of your tour.”

(BRS Website: <https://militarypay.defense.gov/BlendedRetirement/>)

WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Partly cloudy, with a high of negative 8 degrees and a low of 15 below.

Saturday



Partly cloudy, with a high of negative 5 degrees and a low of 16 below.

Sunday



Partly cloudy, with a high of negative 12 degrees and a low of 12 below.

WINTER DRIVING TIPS

When preparing to drive, clean off vehicle completely. Cleaning off all lights and signal lights from excess ice and snow will allow you to see and be seen. Scrape all windows and mirrors and sweep all snow off the vehicle.

Prepare to leave earlier than usual; five to 15 minutes or more will allow extra time for safe travel.

Reduce your speed to match conditions; most accidents are the result of excessive speed. Driving at reduced speeds can allow for quicker stops when roads are icy.

Using turn signals sooner than usual gives other drivers more time to react

Cadets revel in annual rivalry as Army wins third straight against Navy

Joe Lacdan
Army News Service

Despite being his fourth time seeing it, the annual Army-Navy game did not lose any significance for Cadet Jack Ray Kesti as he cheered from the stands in the frigid temperatures.

The rivalry has become an annual tradition in the Kesti household. Kesti, who hails from nearby Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, had his parents and girlfriend cheering for the Black Knights from the stands, too. Kesti's younger brother Sam, a freshman, also attends the U.S. Military Academy, and was at the game.

"Seeing people in your class, and seeing them do well on the football field is a really cool feeling," Kesti said.

Cadet Hope Moseley, a freshman, attended her first game in which the Black Knights upended Navy 17-10 and held off a late Midshipmen surge Saturday night. It was the No. 22 Black Knights' third straight win over their rival.

Army improved to 10-2 and will play Houston in the Armed Forces Bowl Dec. 22. If Army gets 11 wins this year, it will be its best season since 1958 when it went undefeated with one tie and finished No. 3 in the country.

Moseley said the buildup to the contest had been mounting all week. Cadets hung banners in the student barracks, played flag football games and burned a boat in anticipation of Saturday's game.

"It's a great experience of tradition," said Moseley, a native of Belton, Texas. "Even though it's a rivalry, it shows how strong our bond is to our country."

Moseley said she was inspired to apply to the academy by her cousin, Maj. Andrea Baker, a West Point graduate stationed in San Diego.

President Donald Trump officiated the coin toss and also briefly visited the sidelines of both teams. During the first half, Gen. James McConville, the Army's vice chief of staff, enlisted 21 Army recruits in a special ceremony. McConville, who graduated in West Point's Class of 1981, said he has attended quite a few Army-Navy rivalry games during his career, and said the contest's significance cannot be overstated.

"It's America's game," McConville said. "Why it's special is because of the extraordinary young men and women who represent the best of America and they are here today."



Army Black Knights football coach Jeff Monken leads the team onto the field for the Army-Navy game in Philadelphia on Dec. 8, 2018. Army won 17-10 for its third straight win over their archrival. (Photo by Sean Kimmons, Army News Service)

Sporting black and red uniforms in honor of the 1st Infantry Division and its efforts during World War I, Army stormed to a 10-0 lead. After turnovers by both teams, Navy scored on a late drive midway in the fourth quarter to cut the deficit to 10-7. Army junior quarterback Kelvin Hopkins then scored on a 1-yard sneak for the go-ahead score with 1:28 left in the game.

Cadet Jay Demmy, a sophomore center on the Army rugby team, said the friendships he has formed with fellow athletes on the Black Knights football team makes the contest even more meaningful.

"There's so much history behind this game and so much passion that to me, it's awesome to be a part of it," said Demmy, who hopes to join the infantry after graduation. "Playing a sport here... rugby, coming to the football games and seeing all the guys I know – all the brothers I'm going to be fighting with in the near future on the field and off the field is nice."

The game takes on a larger significance,

making the contest meaningful for so many nationwide, Demmy said.

Many cadets have friends attending the U.S. Naval Academy. Kesti attended high school with Midshipman Joe Ellis and the two engaged in friendly trash talking and texting each other during the game. The annual prisoner exchange in which students from both service academies attend a semester on the opposite campuses, further extends the bond between the two schools.

"I think [the game] is about camaraderie and coming together," Moseley said, "and knowing that even though you can have a friendly competition, in the end, we're all fighting the same fight for the people of America."

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey, clad in his Army Greens uniform, said that all Soldiers can embrace the history and pageantry of the game, which was attended by celebrities such as actor Mark Wahlberg and former Dallas Cowboys great and Navy graduate Roger Staubach.

"This is a long-standing history of rivalry between two of the finest schools in America," Dailey said. "When we're on the battlefield, we're all friends. But one day out of the year we come together for good camaraderie, good fun, but it is a true test of will for us and the Navy."

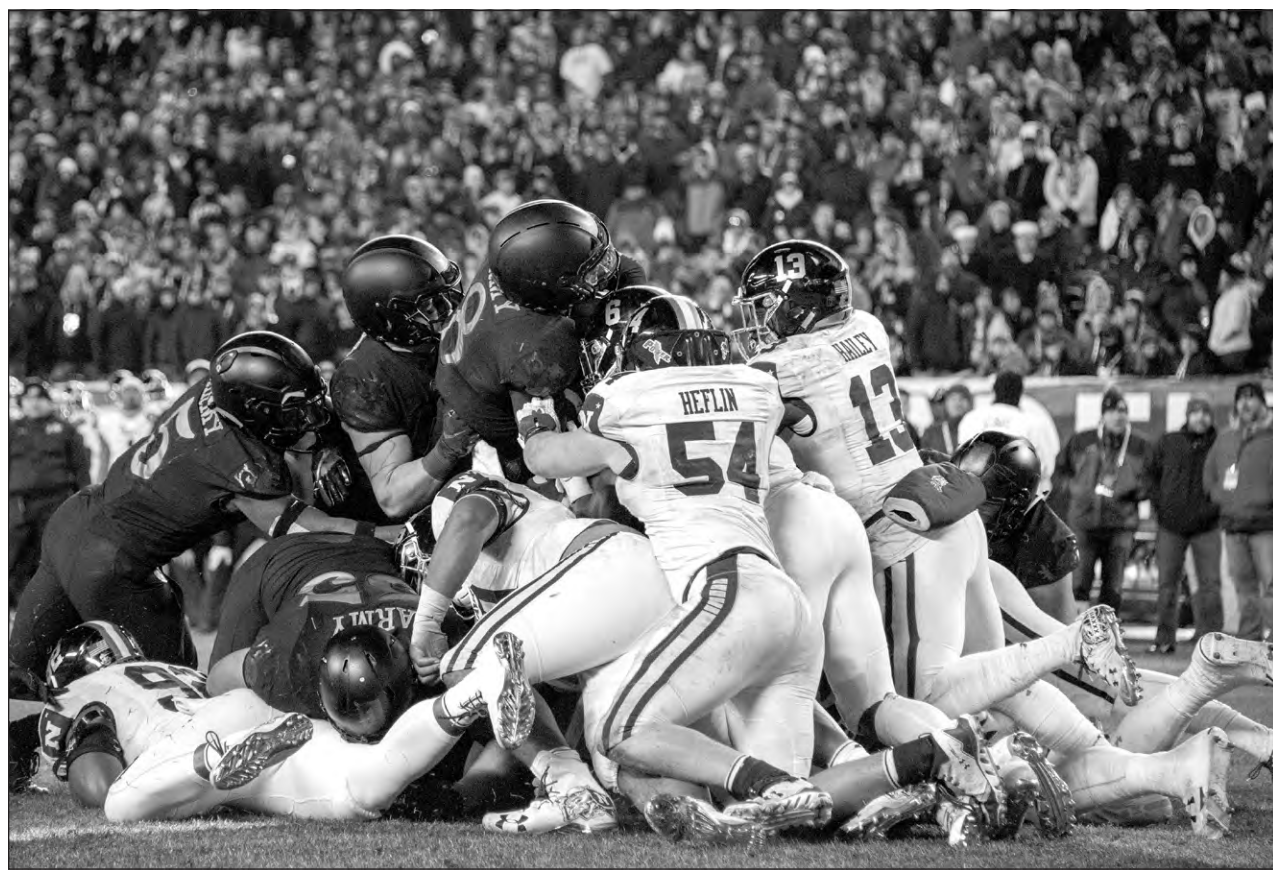
"This is the quintessential American football game right here, Army-Navy. It doesn't get better than this."

After the game, Army junior running back Rashaad Bolton proposed to his girlfriend on the field. Although Navy has struggled to a 3-10 record this season, Bolton said the Midshipmen were still a formidable foe.

"Navy's a well-coached team," Bolton said. "We just fought. Our coaches did a great job preparing us these three weeks."

Army coach Jeff Monken, who improved to 43-30 during his five seasons at Army, has credited the West Point student section with providing a much-needed boost to the players. There has been a resurgence of the Army football team, which has gone 20-5 since ending Navy's 14-game winning streak in 2016.

"When the football team's playing well, I feel like it brings our school together more, because you get that unity and you get fired up," Demmy said. "Coach Monken preaches that we're the 12th man on the field. Having that good student section, having that uproar brings fire to the people on the field."



Army quarterback Kelvin Hopkins (center), scores the final touchdown of the Army-Navy game in Philadelphia on Dec. 8, 2018. Army won 17-10 for its third straight win over their archrival. (Photo by Sean Kimmons, Army News Service)

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The Chaplain’s Corner

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Paul Fritts
Fort Greely

What family holiday tradition unmistakably signals to you that the Christmas season is upon us? Is it tailgating in shopping mall parking lots for Black Friday sales? Is it stopping for your favorite pumpkin spice or peppermint flavored beverage served in festive holiday cups? Or is it trimming the Christmas tree with heirloom decorations, eating a slice of Grandma’s pecan pie (Grandma makes everything taste better) or watching certain football games and seasonal movies? For many families, their holiday tradition absolutely includes watching Frank Capra’s 1946 classic *It’s a Wonderful Life*, starring Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed.

Jay Serafino, writing for Mental Floss online magazine (<http://mentalfloss.com/article/90135/how-its-wonderful-life-went-box-office-dud-accidental-christmas-tradition>) on Nov. 30, 2018, describes an

interesting back story to the movie, which, when it premiered in 1946, was a box office dud. Furthermore, director Frank Capra never intended the movie to be the holiday standard it has surely become. Serafino quotes Capra: “I didn’t even think of it as a Christmas story when I first ran across it. I just liked the idea.”

Besides *It’s a Wonderful Life*, is there something else celebrated this time of year that looked like a dud in the beginning and ended up being something totally different than what people expected at first? Luke 2:11 records the city of Jesus’ birth: “For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” While Jesus was actually birthed in Bethlehem, the city of David, Joseph and Mary were from the city of Nazareth in the region of Galilee. (Luke 2:4). Eventually, Joseph, Mary and Jesus returned to their home in Nazareth.

Think of the smallest, most remote, obscure little “one-horse” town in the state where you grew up. That

was Nazareth, Jesus’ hometown. Nazareth’s reputation was so provincial that the Gospel of John records Nathaniel’s reply to Philip (who had just responded to Jesus’ call to “Follow Me”), “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46). Yes, it can. And something wonderful DID come out of Nazareth!

It’s a Wonderful Life was a box office flop in 1946. Nobody, not even the movie’s director, thought it would ever amount to much. Few probably ever thought the carpenter’s son from Nazareth would ever amount to much. About 33 years later at the time of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the crowd viewed him as a “Messiah flop.” They wanted a military leader, like King David, who would expel and destroy the Roman occupiers from Jerusalem instead of an itinerant rabbi from Nazareth who preached “love your enemies.” It’s a wonderful Christmas story and, like Frank Capra, I just like the idea. Perhaps you do too.



Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Paul Fritts

The Fort Greely Chapel community is open and accessible to everyone in the Delta Junction/Fort Greely community – even non-military. We are a traditional, protestant Army chapel service meeting on Sundays at 10 a.m., with a weekly Communion observance. Interested?

Please call 907-873-4397 to arrange for gate access. “Like” our chapel Facebook page by searching “Fort Greely Chapel” or use your web browser to go to <https://www.facebook.com/FGAChapel>.

For God and Country,
Chaplain Fritts

Fort Wainwright MILITARY STAR cardholders get double the value Dec. 24

Katarayna Flatt
Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

MILITARY STAR® card shoppers will get double the bang for their holiday buck with double rewards points Dec. 24.

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service retail card, which typically earns cardholders two points for every \$1, will earn last-minute shoppers four points per \$1 on every present and purchase made at Exchange locations, including ShopMyExchange.com. Shoppers automatically receive a \$20 rewards card every 2,000 points.

Travelers who fuel up at Fort Wainwright Express will also receive the double points, in addition to the everyday savings of 5 cents off per gallon.

“There’s always so much to do at the last minute to prepare

– checking off final items on wishlists, decorating the house, traveling to see family,” said general manager Gloria Sylvia. “MILITARY STAR is giving a little bonus during all the excitement that will help Soldiers and their Families earn rewards even faster.”

Shoppers who do not have a MILITARY STAR card can sign up at the Fort Wainwright Exchange or online at MyECP.com and save 10 percent on all purchases made the first day.

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1/5 IN Soldiers prepare for upcoming Winter Games



Pfc. Jacob Rice, a Fort Wainwright Soldier assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, conducts cross-country skiing in preparation for the upcoming U.S. Army Alaska Winter Games. The skiing also provides an added physical training value for Rice as he maneuvered down a trail alongside the Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area. (Photo by Daniel Nelson, U.S. Army Garrison Alaska Fort Wainwright Public Affairs)

Holiday Party at Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area



Fort Wainwright kicks off the holiday season Dec. 7 with its 2018 Holiday Party at the Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area. The annual event is held to celebrate the holidays with a Tree Lighting Ceremony where Col. Sean Fisher (right), U.S. Army Garrison Alaska commander, along with the help of a service member's child turned on the Christmas tree lights in both the lodge and at the top of the hill. Additionally, several participants helped welcome Santa to the event with a Santa Shred where skiers and snowboarders dressed as Santa Claus raced down the hill. (Photo by Daniel Nelson, U.S. Army Garrison Alaska Fort Wainwright Public Affairs)

Child and Youth Services talent development solution



Sparkel George (far left), Exceptional Family Member Program systems navigator; Dena Smith (left), Fairbanks Northstar Borough School District Special Education coordinator; Georgia Sandgren (right), FNSB School District military student support coordinator; and Michael Campbell (far right), U.S. Army Garrison Alaska school liaison officer and acting EFMP coordinator, participate in the Army Community Service hoted FNSB School District Special Education Department Lunch and Learn Workshop "Behavioral Concerns" on Nov. 20, at the North Haven Communities Community Center. (Courtesy photo)

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Fort Wainwright Family & MWR

Weekly Events

December 14 – 21

15

Breakfast with Santa
December 15
9 a.m. to Noon

Ho! Ho! Ho! It's time for some Cosmic Bowling and breakfast with Santa and his elves! Chow down on a plate full of pancakes, eggs, breakfast meats, and juice with Ol' Saint Nick. Then head over to the lanes for non-stop bowling with friends.

Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, building 3702
Call 353-2654, reservations recommended

15

Gingerbread House Decorating
December 15
5 to 7 p.m.

It's that time of year again...When candy canes and sugar plums dance in our heads! That must mean it's time to decorate gingerbread houses at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center! Bring the entire family along for this child-friendly festivity.

Last Frontier Community Activity Center, building 1044
Call 353-7775, reservations recommended

17

Grow and Giggle
December 17
9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Join the New Parent Support Program every Monday for an interactive play group for both parents and children. Learn developmentally-appropriate play techniques to help your child improve their social, cognitive, and motor skills.

Last Frontier Community Activity Center, building 1044
Call 353-2101

21

Winter Solstice Party
December 21
5:30 to 8 p.m.

The light will soon be returning to the skies, as Winter Solstice is here! Come celebrate the season with friends while enjoying crafts, family activities, and more!

Last Frontier Community Activity Center, building 1044
Call 353-7775

21

BOSS Night Out: BumbleBee at he Movies
December 21
Time: TBD

Hey Single Service Members, Singles with Dependents, and Geo-Bachelors! Want to go to the movies for free? BOSS is headed out to see BumbleBee in theaters, and you're invited!

BOSS, building 1045, Suite 31
Call 353-7648, registration required

Please be aware of schedule adjustments due to the upcoming holidays. See www.wainwright.armymwr.com for updated information.

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Lieutenant Academy challenges junior officers

Staff Sgt. Christina J. Turnipseed
1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs

Bobcat battalion of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, conducted a four-day Bobcat Lieutenant Academy from Dec. 3 to 7 on Fort Wainwright.

The 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, Lieutenant Academy mission statement says their purpose is “to train our lieutenants on the fundamentals of America’s Big Six [modernization priorities] while sustaining key leader proficiency in preparation for the upcoming National Training Center rotation.”

America’s Big Six is a list of modernization efforts, which include warrior tasks and battle drills, physical fitness, maintenance, marksmanship, medical training and mission command, according to an I Corps news article on army.mil.

The battalion also explains that part of the academy’s mission is to “increase lethality and improve the readiness of the unit” for their lieutenants.

As a result, the four days involved 11 events, including special physical training courses, effectively neutralizing the enemy threat, calling for fire, individual medical tasks and close quarters marksmanship.

“We’re taking the time to orient the lieutenants to a different type of close quarters marksmanship training and to update the doctrine that’s been put out in the last two years,” said Capt. James Fiser officer in charge of the range. “We are giving them tools to train Soldiers they are with on a day-to-day basis, either out on the range or in garrison inside the company operations facility every day.”

1st Lt. Aditya Sunaresan of 1/5 IN expressed his appreciation for the CQM training.

“It’s a good chance for officers to get to do some shooting that we don’t normally get to do,” he said.

The training culminated with a Right Arm Night, an event designed to build relationships, build esprit de corps and increase camaraderie across the battalion.



Lieutenants from the 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, Lieutenant Academy practice close quarters marksmanship Dec. 6 at Fort Wainwright, Alaska. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Christina J. Turnipseed, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs)

National Guard Birthday

Provided by Army National Guard

The National Guard is the oldest military force in the Department of Defense and will celebrate its 382nd birthday on Dec. 13, 2018. The Guard traces its lineage to the Massachusetts militias that defended their settlements and colony against attack. The National Guard has answered the nation’s call since 1636 when the first militias in North America were organized into three permanent regiments: East, South and North Regiments.

These regiments symbolize and evolved into the founding of all the state, territory, and District of Columbia military forces that collectively make up today’s National Guard.

What are the current and past efforts of the Army?
The 343,500-strong Army National Guard force remains a vital part of the Total Army. Currently, nearly 23,000 Soldiers are mobilized overseas supporting Combatant Commands.

Army National Guard Soldiers conduct combat and peacekeeping missions overseas in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, Poland and the Balkans.

The National Guard protects the homeland, leveraging

combat capabilities and equipment to provide rapid, overwhelming capabilities after disaster strikes.

The National Guard has the people, equipment and capabilities to save lives; minimize suffering; preserve or restore civil order; protect property; and maintain or re-establish communications. Guard members live and serve in more than 2,600 communities across the nation, less time and distance equals more lives saved. National Guard members were activated by their governors more than 200 times and logged more than 2.1 million man-days supporting domestic response in FY18.

The National Guard builds global partnerships. For more than 25 years, through the State Partnership Program (SPP), the National Guard has developed 75 enduring, cost-effective partnerships across all six geographic combatant commands. 28 SPP partner countries have co-deployed forces to combat missions in Afghanistan and Iraq since 2003. At any one time, up to 48 SPP partner countries provided more than 35,000 personnel to all 14 active United Nations peacekeeping operations.

What continued efforts does the Army have planned?
The Army maintains constant vigilance during periodic Army reorganizations that have an impact on Army National Guard force structure, ensuring the preservation of



the Army National Guard’s lineage and history.
Why is this important to the Army?
The Army stays connected with American communities and affirms its rich Citizen-Soldier heritage and “Minuteman” spirit by celebrating the history of the National Guard. The National Guard continues its legacy of homeland defense and as an essential supporter of national security objectives.



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What is the Clean Air Act?

Kristina Smith
Fort Wainwright Department of Public Works
Environmental Air Program Manager

The Clean Air Act is one of the most comprehensive federal laws that regulates the emissions produced from stationary and mobile sources such as power plants and vehicles. It regulates hazardous air pollutants to protect public health and welfare

The CAA became law in 1970, followed by amendments in 1977 and 1990. Clean air is one of the Environmental Protection Agency’s main missions. The CAA has been successful in helping cut ground-level ozone emissions, reducing mercury emissions, reducing the pollutants that contribute to acid rain, phasing out the production and use of chemicals that contribute to the breakdown of the ozone layer and helping reduce the lead content in gasoline.

The challenges posed with cleaning the air has spurred innovation in cleaner and better technologies that reduce emissions from primary sources such as power plants, refineries and vehicles.

One way that the CAA is successful is by establishing healthy air standards using National Ambient Air Quality Standards, which update on a regular basis as new information and scientific studies are completed.

There are currently six primary NAAQS: sulfur dioxide (SO2), particulate matter (PM), nitrogen oxide (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O3) and lead (Pb). Each of these NAAQS establish a maximum level of concentrations for a pollutant that is considered a reasonable health standard to achieve. These concentration levels help set goals for air management programs.

The CAA itself calls for all 50 states and the EPA to solve multiple air pollution problems. It directs the states to develop State Implementation Plans to achieve the standards set by the NAAQS. The EPA helps states by issuing federal emission

standards for new motor vehicles and non-road engines, national emissions standards for categories of new industrial equipment, and technical and policy guidance for SIPs. This in turn helps U.S. Army Garrison Alaska in meeting the requirement of the SIPs to help contribute to the clean air within our installation and communities.

All of this is important because air pollution, even pollution that is not readily visible, can be harmful to your health. Newer scientific studies have demonstrated that pollutants can be harmful even at very low levels.

As an example, episodes of harmful fine particulate matter can lead to increased hospital admissions and emergency room visits for heart attacks and strokes. Some cases of premature death and harmful effects on the cardiovascular system have been linked to fine particulate matter as the main culprit. This can result from both long- and short-term exposure to fine particulate matter.

Did you know that there are monitors established for the Fairbanks North Star Borough, which USAG Alaska is a part of, for episodes of increased fine particulate matter in the air?

If you are curious about USAG Alaska’s current air quality or any particular region within the Fairbanks North Star Borough, be sure to check the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation website for the current air reading to see if maybe there is harmful air near your location at <http://dec.alaska.gov/air/anpms/communities/fbks-pm2-5-curtil-alert/>.

A human being breathes in air at a rate of five to 10 liters (or 1.3 to 2.6 gallons) a minute while at rest and nearly 10,000 liters (or 2,642 gallons) a day. Just like food or water, it is important to understand what we are breathing and bringing into our bodies. We do not always have a choice about what is in the air that we are breathing, but taking steps to protect the air we breathe can help us have a healthier life.

with the driver and wait for the signal to cross.

- Dress for cold weather conditions. Even if you wait in a vehicle at the bus stop, you still need warm clothing. In the event of an emergency and the bus must be evacuated, you must be prepared to stand outside for up to 30 minutes.
- Do not play or run at bus stops. Watch for traffic and be prepared to get out of the way of an out-of-control vehicle.
- Do not climb or play on snow berms.
- Walk to bus stops or to school in groups. Larger groups are more visible and safer.
- Never walk behind a bus or between two buses in the school loading zone.
- Sign up for late bus notifications.

Instructions for this are on the transportation website at <http://www.k12northstar.org/transportation>.


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