

# ALASKA POST

FREE

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## Being 'there' with words that heal

David Perkins

U.S. Army Garrison Alaska  
Suicide Prevention Manager

Epic Warrior Training, a group of local veterans, is facilitating a weekly discussion of Homer's "The Odyssey" for combat veterans at the Morris Thompson Cultural Center on Saturdays at 10 a.m.

All active duty combat veterans are encouraged to participate along with those veterans who are no longer serving.

This is where you can get together and help another



veteran try to understand how combat has changed him or her. These are difficult times for our community, and this program will help you learn to be a more empathic leader or teammate, as well as gain new insight into your own



experiences in combat.

Why "The Odyssey"? It's an ancient classic story of homecoming that no living veteran participated in, which allows them to talk about a story that is not personal to them. In

addition, Homer's true-to-life writing is beautiful, and that is why it is a 3,000-year-old classic.

The book itself is really not the focus for the group, so don't worry if you haven't read it before. The focus is on our own stories as we discuss Homer's insights on combat and the struggles of coming home.

I participated in the discussion of "The Iliad" last year and found it very helpful. I was surprised at how easily other veterans were able to help me understand the situations I had

experienced even though they weren't there with me.

This is because they were "there" if, "there" is combat. That is the connection to the books of "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey"; they are about combat and coming home from "there." Veterans can see themselves in those stories because they are about combat, and we were "there." In the group, everyone's "there" is different, but we were all "there" and so we are all on the same page. Now we are

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70th Brigade Expeditionary Battalion's Echo Company moments after passing the U.S. Army Alaska Roadside Inspection. From left to right: 1st Lt. William Bates, George Byerly (U.S. Army Alaska CMT team), Pvt. Kyra Williams, Spc. John Moore, Ramiro Carrasco (USARAK CMT team), Sgt. Peretiso Mulitalo and Staff Sgt. Luis Martinez. (Courtesy photo)

## AutoBears assemble!

1st Lt. Nick Morales

Headquarters and Headquarters company, 70th Brigade Expeditionary Battalion

70th Brigade Expeditionary Battalion "Kodiaks" and 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment "Automatic" of Task Force 3, hereby known as the "AutoBears," welcome readers into a snapshot of their formation.

For the next several weeks, these battalions will be showcasing the hard work and dedication of their Soldiers. There will be Heroes of the

Week, news from the corps and so much more.

Engineering and field artillery involve a great amount of technical expertise, and the AutoBears want to share their stories with all of Fort Wainwright.

This week's Hero of the Week goes to both Pvt. Kyra Williams and Spc. John Moore of Echo Company, 70th BEB. These two AutoBear Soldiers displayed great order and discipline by passing a U.S. Army Alaska Roadside Inspection on Thursday, Oct. 31.

The path to excellence begins with attention to detail, and Williams and Moore are setting the standard. As a token of appreciation and achievement, Williams received a Kodiak battalion coin for her role as the vehicle driver.

Moore was awarded an Army Achievement Medal for his role as the truck commander.

Stay tuned for next week's article highlighting major accomplishments and actions that have happened from across the formation.

## Department of The Army prohibits tanning devices on Army installations

Staff Report

U.S. Army Garrison Alaska,  
Fort Greely Public Affairs

Recent updates to Army Medical Technical Bulletin 531 prohibit the use of indoor ultraviolet radiation systems on Army installations. In conjunction, the Army surgeon general identified indoor tanning as a detriment to health, wellness and readiness due to the dangers of exposure to artificial ultraviolet radiation.

The Fort Greely Physical Fitness Center has one tanning bed.

"Based on the TB's guidance, the surgeon general's recommendation and the dangers of exposure to artificial ultraviolet radiation, the Fort Greely tanning bed has been closed," said U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Greely commander, Lt. Col. Joel Johnson.

"Tanning beds are not safer than the sun. Science tells us that there is no such thing as a safe tanning bed, tanning booth or sun lamp. Just one indoor tanning session can increase the risk of developing skin cancer," said Fort Greely Army Medical Home chief nursing officer, Capt. Timothy Verreault.

"The evidence that indoor tanning dramatically increases one's risk of getting skin cancer is so strong, that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration requires warning labels on all indoor tanning equipment," said Verreault.

The body's natural production of vitamin D in the skin, which is accomplished with the help of radiation from the sun, is the primary connection between vitamin D and sunlight.

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## Boo the Flu offers tricks and treats

Brandy Ostanik

Medical Department  
Activity - Alaska

A long-standing tradition of providing a warm, snow-free place for trick-or-treating was not thwarted by temperatures in the 20's and grass still showing on the ground. Over 1,500 dinosaurs, transformers, lady bugs and super heroes flooded through the doors of Bassett Army Community Hospital on Oct. 31 during 'Boo to the Flu' cohosted by Medical Department Activity-Alaska and Directorate of Family, Welfare and Recreation.

While it is only the



Trick-or-Treaters line up outside Bassett Army Community Hospital for the eighth annual Boo to the Flu event. The event, co-hosted by Medical Department Activity - Alaska and Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation saw over 1,500 people through the doors during the 90 minute event. (Brandy Ostanik, Medical Department Activity - Alaska Public Affairs)

eighth official year of the event, the annual trick-or-treating event started 11 years ago

as a Family Readiness Group activity for MEDDAC-AK staff and family members.



A couple of super heroes receive candy from 'Stinky Pete' William Brenengan, husband of staff member Melanie Brenengan, a licensed practical nurse at Bassett Army Community Hospital during the eighth annual Boo to the Flu. (Brandy Ostanik, Medical Department Activity - Alaska Public Affairs)

As staff members began inviting friends the event grew until it was officially opened up to the public in 2011. With the large number of families

through the doors, the assistance by DFMWR in the way of three pallets of candy and outdoor heaters was

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Respiratory therapists, Sgt. Kristopher Engdall, dressed as Buzz Lightyear and Sam Atwell, dressed as Forky, hand out candy during the eighth annual Boo to the Flu event. Engdall and Atwell were two of the over 75 staff members who volunteered to staff the event co-hosted by Medical Department Activity - Alaska and Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation. (Brandy Ostanik, Medical Department Activity - Alaska Public Affairs)

### WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Sunny, with a high near 16. Low around -5

Saturday



Sunny, with a high near 16. Low around 8.

Sunday



Partly sunny, with a high near 18. Low around 9.

### BRIEFS

#### Dueling Pianos

Chris Combs - Jimmy James - Katy Marquardt

Saturday, Nov. 9 at the Warrior Zone

Doors open at 9 p.m.; show starts at 10 p.m.

18 and over; must be 21 to purchase or consume alcohol



# Nutrition Corner: Smart substitutions part 1

### Eating healthy means you have to give up all the foods you love – Myth.

There are many health alternatives for favorite foods that can be substituted in recipes or snacks without affecting the quality of your dish.

- Sausage or ground beef: using a turkey/chicken sausage or 90 percent lean ground beef.
- You may need to use extra sodium free seasonings like garlic and onion powder to season lower fat meats since fat helps carry flavor.
- Bread crumbs: For food such as meatloaf that use bread crumbs, try adding fiber by substituting the bread crumbs for rolled

oats.

- For snacks: skip on the canned fruits packed in heavy syrup. If you elect for the canned, look for fruit packed in water or opt for frozen.

Similar recommendations are true for canned vegetables. Aim for canned vegetables that are low in sodium or go for frozen or fresh.

- Syrup: Instead of using syrup on your pancakes or waffles, which is mostly sugar, try some pureed fruit or peanut butter.

Speaking of pancakes, try making your own batter including some fresh fruits (blueberries, bananas, etc.) and nuts like walnuts to add fiber, anti-oxidants, heart healthy oils and protein.

- Flour: Replace some of the all-purpose flour in your recipe with whole wheat flour for even more fiber.
- Salads: When you are planning your salads, skip the ice berg lettuce. There is nothing wrong with it, but the darker the leaves, the more nutrition your salad will offer.

Fresh spinach is a great option, but if you are not a fan, don't limit yourself as there are plenty of other options out there.

Try mixing in some kale and arugula!

For the dressing, opt for a reduced calorie dressing like a vinaigrette or flavored vinegar.

Some people even like to add flavor to their salad without adding high calorie dressings by using salsa or

a squirt of lemon juice.

When you are making healthy substitutions, make sure you are adding nutritional value — lowering fat content, lowering sodium, increasing fiber or vitamins/minerals, and/or increasing protein.

Also keep in mind that portion control is still key. Just because an ingredient is healthier, it may not be lower in calories. Often times they are but this is not always the case, so be sure to be mindful of your portion sizes.

- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 egg
- 1 1/3 cup skim milk
- 1 1/4 cup mashed ripe banana
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- Banana slices and/or peanut butter

In a bowl, combine the flour, oats, sugar, baking powder and cinnamon. Combine the egg, milk, banana and oil; stir into dry ingredients until moistened.

Pour batter by 1/4 cups onto greased skillet. Turn when bubbles form on top; cook until second side is golden brown. Serve with fresh banana slices and/or peanut butter.

**Featured Recipe**  
**Banana Oat Pancakes**

- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup whole wheat flour
- 3/4 old fashioned oats
- 1 tablespoon sugar

# The Army moves to a single entry criteria to enter the Warrior Care Program

Wesley Elliott

The U.S. Army is restructuring the Warrior Care and Transition Program to focus on its central mission of complex case management for wounded, ill and injured Soldiers. The new program and Warrior Transition Units will be renamed the Army Recovery Care Program and Soldier Recovery Units.

One of the key parts of the restructure is the implementation of a single entry criteria.

“Since the WCT’s inception in 2007, the program has updated the eligibility criteria to enter a Warrior Transition Unit several times,” said Col. Curtis Douglass, deputy chief of staff for Warrior Care and Transition.

Currently, there are two distinct eligibility criteria to enter a WTU. One is specific to the active component and based on a

complex care requirement and a six-month treatment timeline. The other is specific to the reserve components and based on a definitive care requirement and 30-day treatment timeline.

According to Douglass, the purpose of the single entry criteria is to concentrate medical and administrative resources on Soldiers with complex case management requirements prior to reaching their Medical Retention Determination Point.

MRDP is the point in time when a Soldier’s progress appears to have medically stabilized, the course recovery is relatively predictable, and where it can be reasonably determined whether that the Soldier will be capable of performing the duties required by their military occupational specialty, grade or rank. MRDP is reached within one year of medical

diagnosis but can be reached at any point within that 365 days.

As of Aug. 12, 2019, there were almost 2,500 Soldiers assigned to the WCT. The population was 55 percent active duty, 27 percent National Guard and 18 percent Reserve.

“We project that 60 percent of Reserve Component Soldiers who currently meet WTU entry criteria would not meet the revised SRU single entry criteria but these medically non-complex Soldiers are eligible for one of two remote management options depending on component,” said Douglass.

Non-complex USAR Soldiers will be eligible for Remote Medical Management and non-complex ARNG Soldiers will be eligible for the Reserve Component Managed Care Program.

RM2 and RCMC are remote management programs for USAR

and National Guard Soldiers that provide accountability, ongoing risk management, and reevaluation of medical case complexity. The programs allow Soldiers to return home on active duty orders to receive non-complex care.

“High risk Soldiers do not qualify for remote management programs and will be placed in an SRU. If a remote management program Soldier shows an increase in complexity level they may warrant a return to a SRU,” said Douglass.

SRUs will provide remote case management for Army Reserve Soldiers and the Army National Guard will remotely manage National Guard Soldiers. The remote management option is specifically designed to provide medical and administrative management to Soldiers that do not meet single entry criteria but are entitled to evaluation and treatment while remaining on active duty orders.

Remote management program Soldiers are assigned to a duty site such as a Reserve Center or National Guard Armory, which is their place of duty when not attending medical appointments. The duty site will usually be the assigned Reserve unit whenever practical, if that unit is within reasonable commuting distance given the Soldier’s circumstances.

The SRU remote management staff en-

sures accountability by interacting daily with the Soldier and the duty site supervisor, as well as periodic interactions with the local network medical providers to ensure the Soldier attends medical appointments and progresses through the treatment plan.

Non-complex USAR and ARNG Soldiers who entered a WTU prior to the new single entry criteria will remain in the program and follow their existing Comprehensive Transition Plan. Incoming non-complex Reserve and National Guard Soldiers will be assessed into the component appropriate program after Jan. 1, 2020.

SRU-ineligible Reserve Soldiers will remain on, or return to, active duty to complete the medical evaluation and treatment. They will be placed on active duty evaluation orders and will temporarily enter the SRU to conduct a medical evaluation and diagnosis.

“The SRU is open to all Soldiers, regardless of how they are injured or become ill in the line of duty, who meet the entry criteria,” said Douglass. “The Army’s greatest asset is our people and we are committed to taking care of our Soldiers.”

The SRU entry criteria states that a Soldier has, or is anticipated to receive, a profile of more than six months, with duty limitations that pre-

vent the Soldier from training or contributing to unit mission accomplishment. The complexity of the Soldier’s condition requires either clinical case management or the Soldier’s psychological condition is evaluated by a qualified licensed medical or behavioral health provider as posing a substantial danger to self or others if the Soldier remains in the original unit.

Determining what constitutes complex care is primarily a clinical responsibility with medical leadership oversight and the Army defines it as, “A medical professional’s aggregate assessment based upon the severity of illness, degree of impairment, required level of comprehensive care management, and commitments of time and resources.”

For each Soldier, ARCP leadership will review their application for entry into the SRU with the ARNG and USAR providing recommendations for COMPO 2 and 3 Soldiers. The Army senior commander or a delegate will approve or deny all SRU entry decisions after reviewing the packet.

The new entry criteria is effective in January 2020. WTUs will begin the transition to SRUs in March 2020 and are estimated to be fully operational under the new structure, policy and processes by August 2020.

# MEDDAC Minute

**Important Phone Numbers**  
**Emergency:** 911  
**24 Hour Nurse Advice Line:** 1-800-874-2273 Opt. 1  
**Appointment Line:** 361-4000  
**Behavioral Health:** 361-6059  
**Benefits Advisor:** 361-5656  
**Immunizations:** 361-5456  
**Information Desk:** 361-5172  
**Patient Advocate:** 361-5291  
**Pharmacy Refills:** 361-5803  
**Tricare On-Line:** www.tricareonline.com  
**United Health Care:** uhcmilitarywest.com, 877-988-9378

incontinence, overactive bladder, pelvic organ prolapse and fecal incontinence without a referral from your primary care manager? Call 361-4000, option 4, option 1, option 1 to request an appointment with Dr. Christa Lewis.

### Self refer

Family members in need of a behavioral health appointment can self-refer to an in-network TRICARE provider for no extra cost. To find a list of in-network providers go to www.tricare-west.com

### TRICARE Open Season

TRICARE Open Season is the annual period when you can enroll in or change your health plan for the next year. The 2019 TRICARE Open Season begins Monday, Nov. 11 and ends on Monday, Dec. 9. During TRICARE Open Season, you can:

- Do nothing. If you want to stay in your current TRICARE health care plan, you don’t have to take any action. You’ll continue in your current health plan through 2020 or as long as you’re eligible.
- Enroll in a plan. If you’re eligible for a TRICARE Prime option or TRICARE Select but not enrolled, you can enroll in a plan now.
- Change plans. If you’re already enrolled in a TRICARE Prime option, or TRICARE Select, you can switch plans and switch between individual and family enrollment.

### Specialist available

Did you know you can see a specialist right here at Bassett urinary

### Update your info

All contact information for beneficiaries is pulled from the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System. If you change phone numbers, move or change family status, beneficiaries must change their information in DEERS for Medical Department Activity – Alaska to have the most up-to-date information.

Correct information is vital to determining eligibility and contacting beneficiaries.

### Handling food?

Did you know food employees or any military, civilian or dependent who will be preparing, handling, cooking or serving food on the installation, including at garage and bake sales, are required to have a food handler’s card?

Contact Public Health at 907-750-9293 to register for our next class being held Nov. 14 at 8 a.m. or Nov. 18 at 1 p.m.

# ALASKA POST

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The ALASKA POST – The Interior Military News Connection



# The Chaplain’s Corner

**Chaplain Paul Fritts**  
U.S. Army Garrison  
Alaska, Fort Greely

Jesus said, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

We commonly know this moral principle as “The Golden Rule.” And it’s been around a long time. Jesus was actually quoting Leviticus 19:18, “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.”

As a general rule governing our moral behavior, it works well most of the time. Occasionally, however, thorny ethical questions emerge that demand we give The Golden Rule more thought than we

otherwise might have given it in the course of our daily routine.

The death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the subsequent media coverage of comments made by public officials upon announcing it this past week gave me pause to think about such thorny ethical questions.

My concern, however, is not so much with al-Baghdadi’s death itself. He was a violent terrorist who lived and died by the sword. If the world is now even a bit safer as a consequence of his no longer walking it, that seems to be a worthy end justified by the violent means to actualize it.

My concern is more about what the expressions of unbridled joy at his death reveal about us as human beings.

My imperfect mem-

ory recalls a seminary class lecture long ago that included a parable about why a person should not kick a passive dog. On the assumption that some people are just mean and would do that, the point of the story was that it injures the dog and the human.

The dog, of course, has just been kicked for no reason and physically wounded. But the person delivering the kick has sustained a moral wound and thus diminished his humanity.

An assumption of The Golden Rule is that all parties involved have the will to apply it. Consequently, people who do not care about diminishing their humanity have no scruples about kicking a peaceful dog, exploiting others and generally running amok doing unto oth-

ers however they darn well please.

I can no longer do unto al-Baghdadi as I would want him to do unto me. And since he probably would have considered me a chump to take The Golden Rule seriously in the first place, I am now clearly in the realm of “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44).

But how can I love my enemy al-Baghdadi now that he is dead? The necessity of his death notwithstanding, I “love” my fallen enemy by refusing to celebrate his death.

Publicly speaking ill of the dead, even an enemy, amounts to kicking the dog and diminishing our collective humanity. That we should care about our diminished humanity but do not, because of ignorance



or negligence, is an indictment of our times.

Immanuel Kant famously wrote, “Morality is not properly the doctrine of how we may make ourselves happy, but how we may make ourselves worthy of happiness” (Critique of Practical Reason). Become worthy of happiness. Do not mourn al-Baghdadi’s death, but do not

celebrate it either. For God and Country! The Fort Greely Chapel community is a traditional, Protestant Army chapel service meeting Sundays at 10 a.m. with a weekly Communion observance. Interested? Please call 907-873-4397 or “Like” our chapel Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/FGAChapel](http://www.facebook.com/FGAChapel).

# Epic: Discussion opportunity

Continued from page 1

there for each other.

Some of us love the books and the history, and we talk about that at length after the meeting. For some of us the book is just a pretense to get a discussion going. There are so many passages in those texts that have an impact on someone in the group, as we bring them up and we talk about them all of a sudden we are not talking about the book any more. We are talking about our own experiences and finding out how much we all have in common.

A typical discussion might begin: Odysseus did something in the story that reminds me of one of my experiences, so we talk about that. Then that changes the conversation from “Odysseus did something” to “I saw something,” which might lead to “Odysseus was a terrible leader,” and “I had a crappy leader too.” Once we get to that point, we all have our own examples, and the group comes together.

We learn to honor our own past and respect what we have done by respecting and supporting each other. We learn that those experiences shape who we are and that all of us deserve to be whole, fully home and safe.

Words don’t come easily for most of us. I was amazed at how difficult it was for me to describe those things that upset me. I knew I was upset, I just didn’t really understand why. Other veterans in the group help figure it out pretty

quickly.

Normally, veterans talk with each other about the weather, work or family. Generally, we can’t talk about combat with our significant others even if we were married to them then. They weren’t there, and we like to protect them from those memories. We may worry that they will think less of us, worry about us, or be frightened. Many reasons, same result; we don’t talk.

This discussion group process allows us to talk about those important past experiences as we move together through the text and process our own experiences.

We find that by listening to someone else and helping them tell their stories, it actually helps each of us look internally at how combat changed us. Combat does change us. The new “us” is not bad or broken, just different, and sometimes we don’t quite understand how or why. That’s when talking with others helps.

Studies show that the best person to talk to a veteran about veteran issues is a fellow veteran. You don’t need to be a counselor or an academic or an expert on Homer to participate. You just need to be willing to share your story and listen to others.

The more we talk about our experiences the better we become at accepting them as just a normal part of our past. This is true whether it is a bad memory, a loss of a friend, post-traumatic stress event or thoughts of suicide. Many of us have a lot of memories we

buried away and have built an emotional cocoon around because we don’t know how to process them or are afraid to.

It hurts less every time you drag that old memory out and talk about it. The less it hurts the more we are able to work on it, talk about it, get comfortable with it and no longer have to try to keep it buried. Older veterans know that those things won’t stay buried on their own, they will come back and likely not when or how you want them too. Sharing them on your own terms is a much better alternative.

The purpose of Epic Warrior Training is to provide a safe, welcoming space for veterans to talk about their experiences. The objective of Epic Warrior Training is to build a team of battle buddies who can understand you and the unique experience of combat that less than one percent of the population has experienced. Our Epic Warrior Training veterans also bond into a happy few, a band of brothers and sisters that you stick with for life. It has worked; I am still in touch with the group from a year ago. Most are back this year, and we are eager to welcome new members.

We get together Saturdays at 10 a.m. at the Morris Thompson Cultural Center conference room. If you are a combat veteran interested in joining the discussion, feel free to stop in. We have free books and some snacks. For more information and the schedule visit our Facebook group at: <https://www.facebook.com/>



Based on the dangers of exposure to artificial ultraviolet radiation, which can increase a person’s long-term risk for health problems to the skin and eyes, the Fort Greely tanning bed has been closed.

# Tanning

Continued from page 1

What are some alternatives for obtaining a healthy source of vitamin D?

“Vitamin D, both over the counter or through a prescription are great sources,” said Verreault. “Happy Lights are also effective and safe ways to compensate from our lack of vitamin D producing sunlight in Alaska. Happy Lights do not produce excessive ultraviolet radiation, nor do they cause harm to your skin or increase one’s risk for skin cancer.”

According to Johnson, the removal of Fort Greely’s tanning bed reaffirms the garrison’s commitment to preserve the health of Soldiers, Civilians and their Families.

# Boo: Hundreds turn out

Continued from page 1

welcomed by the staff and participants.

Most events offered by MEDDAC-AK offer a little bit of fun with the majority of the emphasis being on health education, but Boo to the Flu is organized to do just the opposite. While trick-or-treating, a haunted house and a place to have a fun, warm community gathering was the focus of the event, flu vaccines were given to 176 beneficiaries, more than twice the number from 2018.

“This was phenomenal group effort,” says Beth Hughes, public health nurse educator for Medical Department Activity – Alaska. “Our public health screeners and immunizations rocked it; getting patients through the process and back to the fun of trick-or-treating.”

This was the first year of experiencing the event for lead

While trick-or-treating, a haunted house and a place to have a fun, warm community gathering was the focus of the event, flu vaccines were given to 176 beneficiaries, more than twice the number from 2018.

organizers, maternal newborn unit clinical staff nurse Capt. Gabrielle Quintero and Sgt. Amber Gowdy noncommissioned officer in charge of Aurora Clinic. For Gowdy, the event was even more than she had expected.

“The night was fantastic!” said Gowdy. “Such a great way for us to build morale within the community and show exactly what we do, especially for those who have just PCS’d here.”

In the weeks leading up to the event, staff members donated bags of candy to supple-

ment the DFMWR donation, and organized section themes, decorating their respective areas of the hospital in themes such as Toy Story, Star Wars, Mario Kart and The Addams family.

“The event was fun for the families that came through,” said Gowdy, “but I think it was just as much fun for our staff. Over 75 volunteers came together to decorate their sections, hand out candy, provide security and crowd control; it was really like a team building experience for us in the clinics.”

## Estate Notice

Anyone having claims against or who is indebted to the estate of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ryan C. Sweesy, of India Company, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, may contact 1st Lt. Joshua Peltier, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, Fort Wainwright, Alaska 99701, phone (803) 931-6199.



# History Snapshot: The Barrow Sparrow

At the start of the Cold War from June 1946 to October 1947, the 46th/72nd Reconnaissance Squadron flew over 100 extremely hazardous reconnaissance missions over the North Pole. It was their job to assess the Soviet threat on and around the polar ice cap within the operation code-named "Project Nanook."

The crew of the Barrow Sparrow, a B-29 Superfortress assigned to the 46th/72nd and stationed at Ladd Field from 1946 to 1955 includes: Top, left to right – Unidentified, LT Bruss, LT Stout, LT Haney, LT Purdy, LT Franks, F/O Hickey (RCAF), and LT Quinn. Bottom, left to right – Unidentified, LT Wheeler, SSG Elvy, LT Schaack, Unidentified, T/SGT Banks, and M/SGT Stewart.

File photo, Cultural Resources Program



# Two years after launch of Online Exchange Benefit, veterans have saved more than \$6.6 million in sales tax

**Julie Mitchell**  
Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

In the two years since the Army and Air Force Exchange Service welcomed home all honorably discharged veterans to ShopMyExchange.com, the online shopping benefit continues to make a difference.

Nearly 100,000 veterans have shopped their Exchange online, saving more than \$6.6 million in sales tax since becoming eligible for ShopMyExchange.com benefits Nov. 11, 2017.

"It has been such an honor to serve veterans again over the last two years," said Exchange Director/CEO Tom Shull,

a Vietnam-era Army veteran who worked to secure the change in Department of Defense policy to give all honorably discharged veterans shopping privileges at military exchanges online. "This benefit continues to acknowledge their service and sacrifice while reconnecting these heroes to their military community. They remain Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and Coast Guard members for life."

Word about the online benefit is still spreading. Francis Cordero Medina, who served for 10 years in the Army and now lives near San Juan, Puerto Rico, learned she could shop tax-free with military-exclusive

pricing this summer.

"This is a big deal," said Medina, a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 12057. "I have an additional benefit, just like I had when I was in the service. It's like I'm still part of it — I'm not forgotten."

Veterans can determine their eligibility to shop at ShopMyExchange.com/vets.

# Photonics brings to light the use of lasers on the battlefield

**Brandon OConnor**

Initially it seems like nothing happened. The command, "Laser on" is given, but the laser itself isn't visible to the human eye. Then, sparks fly and the middle of the steel plate placed as a target for the laser beam starts to melt.

It is a common occurrence in the high energy laser lab in the basement of Bartlett Hall at the U.S. Military Academy where Capt. Joseph Fasone and cadets are doing research for the academy's Photonics Research Center.



Class of 2021 Cadet Jacob Bohnemann and Capt. Joseph Fasone aim the 1 kilowatt laser in the high energy laser lab in Bartlett Hall. (Photo by Brandon OConnor)

For now, they are only burning holes in steel plates, and one time by accident the wall in the lab, but in the coming years the technology they are testing will hopefully be used to take down drones and mortars on the battlefield.

The idea of using lasers for defense has been worked on within the Department of Defense since the 1980s starting with the Strategic Defense Initiative, which was also referred to as the Star Wars program. The initial goal was to develop a way to defend from Soviet Union nuclear weapons.

More than 30 years and countless Star Wars films later, the idea of using lasers as a weapon on the battlefield is closer than ever.

With the fall of the USSR, the research moved on from the idea of zapping a nuclear missile out of the air, but to the ability to use a high energy laser to take down

an unmanned aerial vehicle or other munitions is moving closer to being a part of the Army's arsenal.

"For a projectile, like a mortar or a rocket, that's moving at a relatively high rate of speed, as soon as you can track that projectile and you hit that on button, you're instantly depositing that energy on the target," Fasone said. "In the case of a rocket or a mortar round what you're trying to achieve is some kind of an ignition of the primary charge in that explosive device. For an unmanned aircraft, what you're really doing is you have the ability to pinpoint and precisely destroy a component of that aircraft."

At West Point that research is currently being done in the Photonics Research Center. The center was started in 1987 as one of the first research centers at the academy. Currently,

there are 27 research centers at West Point working in fields ranging from robotics and cyber research to terrorism studies and warfighting in the 21st century.

The center studies a wide range of topics all dealing with photonics, which is the study of light. While some of the research being done in the Photonics Research Center sounds like it was ripped from the pages of a science fiction novel, the researchers in the center are also working on a wide range of projects dealing with energy storage, conductive materials and more.

The center includes researchers from West Point's departments of electrical engineering, physics and nuclear engineering, and chemistry and life sciences. They also partner with researchers throughout the DOD and at universities from coast to coast.

"There are so

many things that combine with materials, chemistry and physics, but it all has to do with photons," Enoch Nagelli, an assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry and Life Sciences, said. "Every overarching project has some tie-in with photons, whether you're working on a materials problem or you're working on a high energy laser or you're working with bacteria that can actually absorb infrared."

Cadets across all four classes at West Point also take part in research. They have the chance to get involved in projects as plebes (freshmen) and the goal, said Lt. Col. Kirk Ingold, who is the director of the center, is for them to be able to publish research in academic journals by the time they graduate.

"We use research as a teaching mechanism," Ingold said. "We don't just interact

with our students in the classroom where we're standing in front of a whiteboard or blackboard lecturing. We bring the students into the lab. They receive hands on experience, and they learn some of these advanced topics that they wouldn't necessarily see in the classroom."

The physicists in the center work largely with lasers, including the defense applications of high energy lasers. The electrical engineers involved in photonics research work with optical and nanoscale lasers that can be used for communication or everyday uses like facial recognition on an iPhone, Ingold said. The chemists and life scientists are able to study how to use light as an energy source to detect materials through spectroscopy and any other applications.

One project currently taking place

within the center is studying how to use organic proteins from organisms such as algae, which is easily renewable, to convert sunshine into power and cost effectively store it.

"Energy is a problem wherever you go," Kamil Woronowicz, an assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry and Life Sciences, said. "Sunlight is present most places during the day, so we need to store it, but at the same time it's a complex issue. There's a whole different set of challenges when using proteins on electrodes."

Col. John Burpo, Nagelli and their team are working on finding ways to turn nanoscale materials into robust electrical connectors. That would enable devices to shed considerable amounts of weight by turning the structure itself into a battery instead of requiring a separate battery to be included. The goal is to potentially harness solar power to make the energy source self-renewable, which builds upon the work being done by Woronowicz's team.

"We do research that's on par with tier one universities that are doing research," Ingold said. "We're presenting at the same conferences. We're doing research that's comparable. We're collaborating with these universities that are tier one universities. When we present, we're advertising ourselves as a university that is doing good quality, basic and applied research."



Weekly Events

November 9 - 16

- 9

**Dueling Pianos**  
November 9  
10 p.m. - Midnight

Two pianos, each played by a pro performer who sings and plays hits from all genres of music! Doors open at 9 p.m., show starts at 10 p.m. Must be 18+ to enter the Warrior Zone. Childcare available through Child & Youth Services.

Warrior Zone, Bldg 3205  
Call 353-1087
- 12

**Lunch & Learn: Childhood Diagnosis and The Next Steps: Intervention, Referral, & Child Find**  
November 12  
11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Childhood Diagnosis and The Next Steps: Intervention, Referral, & Child Find in the Lunch & Learn Series. Join us in person with lunch provided for registered participants.

Army Community Services, Bldg 3727  
Call 353-4460
- 16

**Parents' Day Out**  
November 16  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Looking to have some "You" time or attend an adult function without the kids? CYS has you covered! Children must be registered with Parent Central Services. Register by November 13.

Parent Central Services, Bldg 3414  
Call 353-7713, registration required
- 15

**Welcome to Winter**  
November 15  
6 - 8 p.m.

Learn how to properly "winterize" your vehicle, discover what to wear in the bitter cold, know how to drive on ice, learn how to care for your pets in extreme conditions, find coping mechanisms for the long, dark days!

Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044  
Call 353-7755
- 16

**Dinosaur Day at the On Post Library**  
November 16  
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.


Step back in time to the Jurassic age and walk among the dinosaurs at the Post Library. Dinosaur games and crafts will get you roaring! You can even become a paleontologist and dig for fossils.

Post Library, Bldg 3700  
Call 353-2642

Cosmic Bowl with a Thanksgiving twist!

TURKEY BOWL

NOVEMBER 16, 7-10 P.M.



X One strike in the 10<sup>th</sup> frame

XX Two strikes in the 10<sup>th</sup> frame

XXX Three strikes in the 10<sup>th</sup> frame

Win dinner rolls\*

Win a pie\*

Win a turkey\*

\*Limit one prize per customer

\$15 per person, includes shoe rental


For more info, go to [wainwright.armymwr.com](http://wainwright.armymwr.com).  
Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, Building 3702  
Call 353-2654



THANKSGIVING  
craft night

GOBBLE!  
GOBBLE!  
GOBBLE!

Join us November 15 at Last Frontier Community Activity Center for a FREE Thanksgiving Craft Night!  
For more info: [wainwright.armymwr.com](http://wainwright.armymwr.com)  
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Good Shepherd Catholic Community, the Knights of Columbus & St. George Anglican Parish


Invite the Ft. Wainwright Community to Dinner!


Menu: Breakfast for Dinner!


Tuesday, 12 November 2019, 5:30pm-8:00pm

Southern Lights Chapel

Sponsored by the FWA Religious Support Office









November 8, 2019

# Trust, brotherhood helped Special Forces detachment overcome all odds

**Devon L. Suits**  
Army News Service

At a young age, Master Sgt. Matthew Williams learned the values of humility, honesty, hard work and trust quickly. Instilled in him by his parents, Williams carried these values with him as a husband and father, and throughout his Army career, he said.

However – on April 6, 2008 – the trust and brotherhood of Williams and his fellow Soldiers from Operational Detachment Alpha 3336 and their Afghan counterparts, were put to the test during an operation in Shok Valley, Afghanistan.

“Dad was right — being a person to trust builds strong bonds,” said Williams, as he addressed a crowded Pentagon auditorium during his Hall of Heroes induction ceremony, Thursday.

Williams received the Medal of Honor on Wednesday for his actions in 2008, which helped save the lives of four critically-wounded Soldiers and stopped the enemy from over-running the team’s position.

“We trusted one another to get the job done, all while facing overwhelming odds in the worst of situations. No one in ODA 3336 wavered,” Williams said.

While Williams is thankful for the trust he had in the whole team, he was also grateful for the confidence the detachment had for then-Staff Sgt. Ronald Shurer II, the team’s medic. During that day, Shurer provided care to the four wounded Soldiers, all while under duress, he said.

For his actions, Shurer was awarded the Medal of Honor and inducted into the Hall of Heroes last year.

Williams was also thankful for the teams trust in the Joint Tactical Air Combat Controller, now-retired Air Force Master Sgt. Zachary Rhyner, he said.



Master Sgt. Matthew O. Williams is inducted into the Hall of Heroes at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, Oct. 31, 2019. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James C. McConville, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston, and Williams’s wife, Kate, were all there to honor him for his actions on April 6, 2008 in Shok Valley. (Photo by Sgt. Keisha Brown)

He played a vital role in delivering precision airstrikes to suppress and destroy the enemy, often in danger-close proximity of the team.

Further, Williams and the detachment put their trust in then-Staff Sgt. Seth Howard, the team’s sniper, he said. Howard played a critical role in eliminating threats at range, allowing them to move down the mountain safely.

“We never quit – even when faced by our own mortality. We fought and lived another day,” Williams said.

## HALL OF HEROES

Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James C. McConville, and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston were honored to induct Williams into the Department of Defense’s Hall of Heroes.

Williams’s wife Kate, his family and his former teammates from ODA 3336 were also in attendance for the day’s event

“Master Sgt. Williams will be the first to tell you that his actions that day in Afghanistan weren’t about him. They were about the Soldiers he was fighting with, and about the Soldiers he was fighting for,” McConville said.

ODA 3336 is the only detachment to have two Medal of Honor recipients on the same team. The

ODA could also be the most highly-decorated detachment in Army history, however the force will need to verify that fact, McCarthy said.

“The fact that we now have two Medal of Honor recipients from the same unit should tell you how strongly our troops have embraced the attitude of, ‘Team over self,’” Esper said.” It is this attitude that ensured every American [during] the April 6th battle, returned home alive. And it’s the reason we continue to be the strongest fighting force on the face of the planet.”

## LOVE FOR FAMILY

Raised in Boerne, Texas, Williams met his wife, Kate, during physical education class in elementary school. The two started as line dancing partners, both naive to the idea that they one day be married, Esper and McCarthy shared.

Williams and his family later moved to Houston, where he graduated high school. He eventually attended Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas, and obtained his bachelor’s in criminal justice and a minor in business administration.

“The Army wasn’t my first choice. I actually planned to work in federal law enforcement, but when 9/11 happened, my plans changed,” he said. “While my decision to join the Army was driv-

en by purpose, it was not a hasty one.

Wanting to be the “best of the best,” Williams remained steadfast towards his goal – to earn the highly coveted Green Beret, he said. Once he was selected for the program, Williams immersed himself in the Special Forces community and grew as 18B Special Forces weapons sergeant.

“One of his former teammates remarked that Matt is known for remaining calm, cool and collected, and these qualities allowed him to do the extraordinary,” McCarthy said. “He will be the first person to drop what he’s doing and help everyone around him. He’s a consummate professional and the vanguard of Green Berets.”

Williams eventually joined ODA 3336 and the team later deployed to Afghanistan. This was his first deployment and he was grateful for the degree of preparation he and the team received, starting with his time during the Special Forces Qualification Course.

“Since September 11, an entire generation of young Americans has gained a new understanding of the value of freedom and its cost in duty and in sacrifice,” said Esper, quoting former-President George W. Bush as the U.S. entered into Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001.

Williams understood “that our freedom is

worth every cost and every sacrifice,” Esper added. “And on that day in Shok Valley, the day that earned him the Medal of Honor, he was prepared to sacrifice it all.”

Upon his return from his deployment, Williams reconnected with Kate during a friend’s wedding. At that moment, the “past and present converged,” and the couple later married. They now have a 3-year-old son named Nolan, McCarthy said.

“Your dad loves hanging out with you and your mom the most,” said McCarthy, directing his message to Nolan, who could not attend the event. “Nolan, your dad, is just like every other dad, but [he is] more so to us. Your dad is a hero.”

“Matt didn’t come

about these superhuman qualities after being bit by a radioactive spider. Master Sgt. Williams’s superhuman feats come from his grit and determination. He is the quintessential humble warrior,” McCarthy said.

## DETERMINED TO SERVE

When asked to consider a new position in Washington D.C, Williams politely declined, McCarthy said.

“He desires to return to his detachment and continue to do what he does best,” McCarthy added. “The nation needs Master Sgt. Williams leading its operators. Williams inspires us to be the best version of ourselves.”

As a team sergeant in the 3rd Special Forces Group, Williams now has an opportunity to shape and lead a cohesive team. He plans to use the invaluable lessons he has learned throughout his career to help his teammates, he said.

“To all the Green Berets around the world quietly doing the work of our nation – thank you,” Williams emphasized. “I wear this medal for the great men of ODA 3336, the 3rd Special Forces Group, the Green Berets, the U.S. Special Operations forces [community], and for all those who went before us.”

## Dueling Pianos

CHRIS COMBS  
JIMMY JAMES  
KATY MARQUARDT

**Saturday, November 9**  
**Warrior Zone**  
Doors open at 9 p.m., show starts at 10 p.m.  
Free entry

Must be 18+ to attend the Warrior Zone / Must be 21+ to purchase or consume alcohol

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## WINTER ROCKS!

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