

ALASKA POST FREE

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Santa delivers deployed Soldier home

Daniel Nelson
U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Wainwright Public Affairs

When Santa Claus asks children what they want for Christmas, many ramble off a list of toys or games they hope to find under the tree Christmas morning. Children of deployed service members, however, might ask Santa to bring their parent home for Christmas.

That was the case for 2 1/2 year old Remington Grace when he told Santa that he wanted his dad, Capt. Jeff Grace, home for Christmas.

Capt. Grace was one of the many Soldiers of 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, who departed from Fort Wainwright, Alaska, earlier this year on a nine-month deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

Remington's mother,

Sara Grace, expected that her husband would be deployed the full nine months, with a slight chance of returning in the early months of 2020. Her son's request to Santa was just one Christmas wish that couldn't come true.

Capt. Grace had other plans though when he learned that he would be home in time for Christmas. Remembering Remington's reaction last year to the Fort Wainwright Fire Department's Santa Rides, he reached out to the fire department through social media and asked their help.

Chief Charles Gibbs said that department members were excited to help with the surprise return.

With a plan in place, and Capt. Grace home from his deployment, the Fire Department set out on the morning of Dec. 18 to give Remington his gift.

Three fire engines pulled up to the Grace's

home the morning of Dec. 18 with lights flashing as they played out the plan to respond to a notional alarm call. Once the crew verified that the house was clear they brought in Santa Claus to meet with Remington and give presents to him and his 4 month old sister Hailey.

That's when Santa asked again what Remington wanted most of all for Christmas this year and the boy asked for his daddy to be home.

With a queue from the fire crew, Capt. Grace entered the family's living room and surprised everyone with his early return home.

Santa Claus, with help from the Fort Wainwright Fire Department, was able to fulfill a gift request greater than any amount of toys or games a 2 1/2 year old could have asked for; he brought his dad home for Christmas.



Capt. Jeff Grace, hugs his wife, Sara, and son, Remington, after surprising them by returning home early from his overseas deployment with the help of Santa Claus and the Fort Wainwright Fire Department on Dec. 18. Grace deployed earlier this year with the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. (Photo by Daniel Nelson, U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Wainwright Public Affairs)

AutoBears Assemble: The Archangels' JRTC preparation

Soldiers from Alpha Battery, known as the Archangels, in the 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, diligently prepare for their upcoming 30-day training rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, Louisiana. The Archangels have been tasked to provide rotational augmentation support to JRTC, which is vital to the success of the JRTC mission and to the success of the rotational unit.

The mission for the Archangels is to serve as the Opposing Forces for the annual training rotation of 4th Brigade,

25th Infantry Division, stationed at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska. Archangels will accomplish this task by providing timely and accurate indirect fires throughout the rotation.

Supporting this tasking required timely and detailed preparation from the Archangels. Throughout the months of November and December, Archangels prepared for their upcoming mission by conducting Soldier Readiness Processing to ensure all Soldiers going were medically and administratively cleared to deploy. They executed marksmanship train-

ing in order to qualify Soldiers on the use of the M4A1 rifle.

Thorough maintenance on six Light Medium Tactical Vehicles and six M777A2 Howitzers were conducted to ensure they were ready to support the mission. Archangels also packed four CONEX containers in -10 degree weather with their mission-essential equipment.

Finally, the Archangels loaded their vehicles and howitzers onto the trains and shipped their equipment to Fort Polk. The Archangel Battery will attack any task given aggressively and to the best of their ability. Expect No Mercy!



Delta Junction VFW honors Voice of Democracy winner

Chris Maestas
Post 10450

Delta Junction Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10450 honored Elin Hicks for her participation in the VFW's 2019 Voice of Democracy competition Dec. 17 at the Delta Greely Moose Lodge.

Hicks' speech focused on "What Makes America Great."

"America is a nation of immigrants, people sharing roots from all over the world," wrote Hicks. "This diversity makes it a nation of culture, a melting pot where all points of human differences meet creating new traditions, passions and perspectives to enhance life and knowledge."

Hicks received \$100 in gift certificates for earning top honors during the competi-



Delta Junction senior Elin Hicks shakes hands with VFW 10450 President Mike Cassidy during an awards presentation for the VFW's Voice of Democracy contest Dec. 17.

tion. Hicks, a senior at Delta High School, plans on competing in the American Legion's Oratorical competition early next year.

Since 1947, the Voice of Democracy has been

the VFW's premier scholarship program.

Each year, nearly 40,000 high school students compete for more than \$2 million in scholarships and incentives.

SMDC welcomes new commanding general

Jason B. Cutshaw
U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command Public Affairs

U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Daniel L. Karbler assumed command of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command and the Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense from Lt. Gen. James H. Dickinson during a change of command conducted in the Von Braun III auditorium at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, Dec. 6.

During the ceremony, Gen. James C. McConville, Army chief of staff, placed a Superior Unit Award streamer on the USASMD colors before accepting them from Dickinson and then passing them to Karbler. He then thanked Dickinson and his wife, Angie, for all they have done for the Army and the command.

"Giving up the colors is never easy," McConville said. "But thank you for your steady hand and leadership of SMDC. I know the community here is sad to lose you and Angie, but we are

all excited that such a great team will be moving over to U.S. Space Command. I know the command there will be better for having you both."

McConville then welcomed Karbler and his wife, Leah, and challenged him to build upon the SMDC legacy.

"I have full trust and confidence that SMDC is in good hands," McConville said. "You have the skills and experience this command needs. We look forward to seeing you and Leah lead the SMDC team going forward. I know the community here will wrap its arms around you both, and I have no doubt that SMDC is better for your leadership."

The Army chief of staff also took a moment to talk about the impact of the command and the role SMDC Soldiers, Civilians and Family members have in maintaining peace around the world.

"I want to thank all of you for what you do every single day to make us the world's greatest mili-

See SMDC on page 3

WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Sunny, with a high near -26. Calm wind. Low near -28.

Saturday



Sunny, with a high near -27. Low near -34.

Sunday



Mostly sunny, with a high near -25. Low around -29.

SKATE WITH SANTA

December 21, 1:30 - 4 p.m.

Zoom around the Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink with Santa! Cookies and hot chocolate will be FREE while supplies last.

Physical Fitness Center, Bldg 3709

Call 353-7223

Nutrition Corner: Beverages count, too

In making your daily food selections, you should be particularly mindful of your beverage choices? While your beverage selection may seem inconsequential, they can impact your total daily caloric intake, which can contribute to unwanted weight gain and dental caries. It is easy to unknowingly consume 500 to 1,000 calories per day in beverages alone.

For example, one 20-ounce bottle of cola contains 240 calories. If you drank one per day for

a year, that can contribute up to a 25 pound weight gain. Not to mention the 65 grams of additional sugar, about 1/3 cup, per day, which ends up to be about 118 cups of sugar per year.

Imagine the impact that has on your dental health as well. This also goes for energy drinks, sports drinks, juice and other sugared drinks such as lemonade. Don't be fooled by juice. Just because it contains some vitamins does not mean it should be consumed in large

quantities. Rely on your whole fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, low fat dairy and whole grains for your vitamins and minerals. One eight-ounce cup of orange juice contains 110 calories, so if you do enjoy a cold glass of juice in the morning ensure it is 100 percent juice and limit yourself to four to eight ounces per day.

If you are hooked on drinking sugar sweetened beverages because plain water is boring to you, think outside of the box for some other options. A good

natural replacement is fruit infused water. It is quick, easy and low in calories.

A low to moderate intake of diet beverages (diet cola) and commercial zero calorie water flavoring powders are safe and effective for reducing calorie intake, when replacing sugared beverages, for most individuals.

Featured Food

Fruit Infused Water! All you need to do is make a pitcher or bottle of water and throw in your favorite

mix of fruits and vegetables.

Featured Recipes:

Cherry Limeade – Fill a pitcher with water and combine with one thinly sliced lime and six pitted cherries cut in half. Add a small piece of mint for an extra burst of flavor. Best when fruit is infused for a minimum of four hours.

Cucumber Lemon – Fill a pitcher with water and add 10 to 14 thinly sliced cucumbers and four slices of lemon.

Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area

For the most up to date information, please follow us on Facebook, Instagram and our website at WainwrightMWR. You can also sign up for the free Birch Hill text messaging service and receive updates directly to your phone by texting "WainwrightSki" to (206) 929-4040.

Birch Hill Hours of Operation

Check out Wainwright MWR on Facebook for updates, temperature delays, and more!

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	Closed
Friday	11 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Ski Hill) Closed (Tubing Hill)
Saturday	11 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Ski Hill) 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Tubing Hill)
Sunday	11 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Ski Hill) 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Tubing Hill)
December 24-25	Closed (Ski Hill & Tubing Hill)
December 26-30	11 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Tubing Hill) 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Ski Hill)
December 31 - January 1	Closed (Ski Hill & Tubing Hill)
January 2-5	11 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Ski Hill) 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Tubing Hill)

Contact

Birch Hill Ski & Snowboard Area
Building 1172
Telephone (907)353-1998

Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area is located within Fort Wainwright boundaries and requires military installation access. Visit the U.S. Army Garrison Alaska website to learn how to obtain access to Fort Wainwright and the Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area.

Keep the whole family busy and physically active during the long Alaskan winter. Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area offers skiing, snowboarding and tubing for all ages and abilities. With snow-making capabilities, Birch Hill is the first hill in the interior to open and boasts the only night-skiing venue in the Fairbanks area. Early bird passes are available for purchase at the beginning of each season.

Terrain Park

In addition to the skiing and snowboarding runs, a first rate Terrain Park has been constructed with mounds, rails and boxes to do tricks on. Alaskans identify Birch Hill as the best terrain park in the state.

Youth Ski Days

Holiday and Spring Break Packages are available to keep your children busy. Each package includes three 90-minute lessons, lift tickets, Certificate of Completion awarded.

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

Need a flu shot?

If you missed the family flu vaccination clinic last week, no need to worry. Beneficiaries 6 months and older can receive a flu vaccination at Bassett Army Community Hospital during regular walk-in immunization hours. Monday through Wednesday and Friday 7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. and Thursday 10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The clinic is located in primary care.

Tobacco cessation

Are you ready to quit tobacco? In the process but having trouble? Let our tobacco cessation educators assist you in the process. Classes are offered weekly at Preventive Medicine for beneficiaries. Call 361-4148 for upcoming classes and to register.

Patient Portal improved

Access is now easier, quicker and more user friendly! Schedule or cancel an appointment, talk with your provider, get test results and more. Check out the redesigned and upgraded Patient Portal at www.tricareonline.com.

Stressed? Depressed?

The Bassett ACH primary care clinic offers internal behavioral health consultations. Assistance with concerns such as stress, chronic pain, tobacco dependency, weight loss, depression, diabetes and more is being offered without the need of a referral. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call 361-5670.



The U.S. Army conducted a successful intercept test with the Integrated Air and Missile Defense Battle Command System, Dec. 12, 2019 at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. The test was executed by the IAMD Project Office and Soldiers of the 3-6 Air and Missile Defense Test Detachment (3-6 AMDTD). (Photo by U.S. Army)

Army Integrated Air and Missile Defense System successfully intercepts test targets

U.S. Army

The U.S. Army conducted a successful intercept test today with the Integrated Air and Missile Defense Battle Command System.

The test was executed by the IAMD Project Office and Soldiers of the 3-6 Air and Missile Defense Test Detachment (3-6 AMDTD).

Preliminary findings indicate that the planned flight test objectives were achieved and the targets were successfully intercepted. The Army will conduct further analysis in order to validate system models and inform future predictions for system capability.

The test, designated IAMD Flight Test 5, was the final developmental flight test prior to entering operational testing in 2020. IAMD FT-5 included multiple sensors contributing to a composite target track from the Army, as well as joint sensors from the Air Force and Marine Corps. The successful engagement was conducted using PATRIOT Advanced Capability-2 missiles against two cruise missile surrogates.

"We are extremely proud of the Soldiers who executed the test today and the performance of the system," said Col. Phil Rottenborn, IAMD Project Manager. "This test marks the first time Soldiers conducted a live engagement using IBCS in a developmental test, and demonstrates Soldier and system readiness for transition to the operational test phase."

Army Integrated Air and Missile

Defense integrates current and future Air and Missile Defense sensors and weapons into a common integrated fire control capability with a distributed "plug-and-fight" network architecture. IBCS is the fire control and operational-center capability that provides greater defense effectiveness than the current single sensor fire unit systems.

Soldiers from the 3-6 AMDTD executed the engagement using the IBCS, in addition to operating the PATRIOT and Sentinel radars and PATRIOT launchers. Marines from the Marine Air Control Squadron 24 operated the TPS-59 Radar and served as the Link-16 Higher Echelon Unit during the flight test, providing early warning and engagement decision to IBCS. Two Air Force F-35s also participated, contributing to the IBCS composite track.

Flight Test 5 was the fifth flight test for the IAMD Project Office, which is responsible for modernizing the air-defense mission-command systems and facilitating the concept of "any sensor, best shooter."

"Flight Test 5 is truly a large step forward in the implementation of IAMD with the joint community supporting Multi-Domain Operations" said CW2 Phil Holman, who participated in the engagement from the 3-6 AMDTD. "It is an exceptional honor to be part of a team of outstanding Soldiers and expertly knowledgeable civilians from multiple agencies."

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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

Politics and religion have always been in bed together. For example, a United Methodist Church in Claremont, California, recently displayed its traditional Christmas nativity scene depicting Joseph, Mary and Jesus as immigrants enclosed in separate, chain link cages rather than gathered around a manger.

According to Reuters reporter Norma Galeana, the Reverend Karen Clark Ristine said: "We don't see this as political at all, we see this as theological." With all due respect to Rev. Ristine, the local congregation may not see their nativity display as political, but for many of us, it is theological and political.

Not surprisingly, those who view this display as a political commentary on current immigration

policy will range along the full spectrum of political belief.

In the United States, at the intersection of religion and politics one frequently also finds issues of race. Authors Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey explore in their 2012 book, *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America*, how portrayals of Jesus have been exploited to legitimize politically motivated events from civil rights marches to cross burnings.

In an NPR interview the same year as the release of the book, Blum explains to host Terry Gross that white, Protestant Americans became concerned about how Catholic and Jewish immigrants pouring into the country during the late 19th and early 20th centuries might change it.

Subsequently, an image of Jesus with light skin, blue eyes and hair with blond

highlights became popular with religious and political leaders who advocated for immigration restrictions. Search for Warner Sallman's *Head of Christ*, 1940, for an example of the type of imagery exploited for anti-immigration purposes.

As I write this, the nativity scene our family purchased about 17 years ago is occupying its yearly place of honor across from our Christmas tree.

Since we are still in the Season of Advent, Jesus does not yet occupy the manger. He is safely hidden away on a bookshelf until Christmas Eve.

But every year as I place the tiny figure of infant Jesus in the manger, I ponder his pale skin, rosy cheeks and light brown hair. I confess, he is a beautiful child who seems to belong in my white, suburban, affluent home. But I wonder, what sort of "good news" does this Jesus

bring to poor, non-white, urban homes?

Would the good news of a historically accurate, Jewish, infant Jesus with dark skin, eyes and hair even be recognized or welcome in my home? What about your home?

The Message paraphrases in contemporary English these words from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians: "Even though I am free of the demands and expectations of everyone, I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I've become just about every sort of



servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life" (1 Cor. 9:19-22).

This is a powerful spiritual truth urgently needed for the culture of identity politics in our day. When we casually exhort one another to "keep Christ in Christmas" let's remember that the true Christ of Christmas is a Savior who has "become all things to all people so that by

all possible means [a brown-skinned, Jewish, immigrant Jesus] might save some" (1 Cor. 9:22, NIV).

For God and Country! The Fort Greely Chapel community is a traditional, Protestant Army chapel service meeting on 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.

SMDC: Karbler

Continued from page 1

tary," McConville said. "Today's ceremony is really about more than just passing the colors, it's a chance to recognize this command and the men and women who make it great. Winning matters in our profession. When we send the United States Army somewhere, we don't go to participate. We don't go to try hard. We go to win. There is no second place or honorable mention in combat.

"In providing missile defense and space capabilities, not only to our Army but to the joint force and our allies and partners around the world, SMDC is a key part in making sure we can do that and that we can win," he added. "SMDC deploys missile batteries, satellites, computers and sensors to enable warfighters to win, and that is what it is all about. It is our people in the Army here at SMDC who make us strong and make us special. In our Army we don't man equipment, we equip people because our Army is people. All of you define SMDC and your hard work is what makes this command great."

After placing a Joint Meritorious Unit Award streamer on the Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense colors, U.S. Navy Adm. Charles "Chas" A. Richard, commander of U.S. Strategic Command, presided over a Change of command where Karbler took the helm of JFCC IMD.

The SMDC commanding general also serves as commander for JFCC IMD and provides USSTRATCOM commander with synchronized missile defense plans, conducts ballistic missile defense, operations support and advocates for missile defense capabilities to deter adversaries and defend

the United States, deployed forces and its allies against ballistic missile attacks.

Richard then thanked Dickinson for his service to the nation and those who serve at SMDC.

"I could not be more proud of what Jim Dickinson and this command have done," Richard said. "He solved very difficult problems with Army can-do and SMDC know-how, and that is what I am always going to remember about him and this organization."

SMDC serves as the Army Service Component Command to USSTRATCOM, as well as supporting USSPACECOM, and conducts space and missile defense operations and provides planning, integration, control and coordination of Army forces and capabilities in support of missions of strategic deterrence, integrated missile defense, space operations and cyberspace operations.

Richard congratulated Karbler and said he looks forward to serving with him.

"Dan, I know you are going to crush it here. I am indeed very proud of you, and I look forward to working with you," Richard said. "I am confident you are up for the challenge and will continue to do great things."

Dickinson, who is assuming the position of USSPACECOM deputy commander, reflected on his time at SMDC and thanked everyone for his success during his three years at the command.

"I need to thank my

wife, Angie," Dickinson said. "Thanks for being here today and always being by my side and taking care of the families and taking care of me at the same time.

"Dan, I couldn't be more proud to pass these colors to you today," he continued. "You've got the absolute right background and right leadership skills to take this unit and organization to the next level. The interest could never be higher in both missile defense and space.

"This has been the absolute best job I have ever had in the United States Army," Dickinson added. "There wasn't a day that went by that I didn't thank God that I got this job, and was able to do some of the things we were able to do as an organization."

During the change of command, Karbler thanked everyone for their kind words and said he and Leah look forward to working with the SMDC team.

"To Team Redstone and the greater Huntsville area, we appreciate the warm welcome we have already experienced," Karbler said. "We look forward to being a part of this terrific community."

"To the SMDC team, we are humbled and honored to lead SMDC," he continued. "At no other time in my 32-plus years have I seen this command so relevant to the complex challenges that face us today and tomorrow. 21st century strategic deterrence is more than just nuclear deterrence, it demands we provide world-class support to



Lt. Gen. Daniel L. Karbler, commander, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command, passes the command colors to USASMDC Command Sgt. Maj. Finis Dodson during a change of command ceremony conducted in the Von Braun III auditorium on Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, Dec. 6, 2019. Karbler assumed command of SMDC as well as the Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense during the ceremony. (Photo by Cecil Longino)

space, missile defense, high altitude and emerging counter-UAS missions. In the face of adversaries who are ever-adapting, we must move fast, innovate and be willing to accept risk.

"What we do is critical to warfighting readiness and ensures our Soldiers can shoot, move and communicate on the complex battlefields of not only today, but also tomorrow," Karbler added.

"We are grateful for the privilege to lead the SMDC team and

for the opportunity to become key members of Team Redstone and the Huntsville community."

History Snapshots

The Forlorn/Clobbered Turkey, Ladd Field, c. 1946

The Forlorn Turkey – later known as The Clobbered Turkey – was a Boeing RB-29 variant designated the F-13A.

It was stationed at Ladd Army Airfield beginning in 1946 as part of the 46th Reconnaissance Squadron's involvement in Project Nanook. Among the objectives of Project Nanook was the long range reconnaissance of the Soviet Union's coast, especially within the Arctic.

On Tuesday, Dec. 23, 1947 the crew of The Forlorn Turkey took off from Ladd Field on a routine 15-hour training mission. Among the eight man crew was pilot Lt. Vern H. Arnett, co-pilot Lt. Donald B. Duesler, navigator Lt. Fredrick E. Sheetz, flight engineer Lt. Lyle B. Larson, radar operator Lt. Francis Schaack, electrical mechanic Tech. Sgt. Wilbur E. Decker, radio operator Sgt. Olan R. Samford, and photographer Staff Sgt. Leslie R. Warre.

On the return to Ladd Field the plane's altimeter failed and caused the aircraft to crash eighty miles east of Shishmaref. All eight members of the crew survived the impact, though three were injured. Due to the poor weather conditions, search and rescue efforts were delayed for four days.

Fearing for the crew's survival against the elements, Lt. Arnett and Lt. Sheetz decided to hike to Shishmaref, which they mistakenly thought was only twenty miles away; unfortunately they never made it.

On Saturday, Dec. 27, search and rescue crews were finally able to begin looking for the downed plane and found it, noting at least four survivors as they made an initial pass over the crash site. Anticipating that at least some of the crew may be injured and knowing



that all needed supplies, three Air Force paramedics parachuted to the stricken group. Tragically, all three of the paramedics died in the attempt as they were not experienced enough to make the jump in such poor weather and extreme temperatures.

On Sunday, Dec. 28, the Air Force sent a rescue plane with six men to the crash site, that plane crashed as well, all six men surviving unscathed. Given the dire

situation and 17 men needing rescue, the Air Force asked for local assistance.

Local bush pilots and mushers set upon the task and were able to access the site by Dec. 30. Using a four-seat 1933 Stinson Reliant Junior airplane and several dog teams, all of the crew members were brought to safety and, over the course of several weeks, all of the bodies of the deceased men were located and returned home.

The crash of The Forlorn Turkey was pivotal for the Air Force and precipitated a full review of rescue procedures. Subsequently, crash survivors were required to stay with the wreckage and only experienced paratroopers were allowed to participate in rescues.

Today, the remains of The Forlorn Turkey rest within the bounds of the Bering Land Bridge National Preserve.

(Photo courtesy of the 46th 72nd)

Merry Christmas from the 714th Railway Operating Battalion, 1944

Although the 714th was headquartered at Fort Richardson, its mission was to maintain and improve the rail line that enabled the reliable movement of materiel and personnel to Alaska's interior. Over 1,000 personnel arrived in spring of 1943 from Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, and stayed for over 25 months in order to assist the Alaska Railroad with backlogged maintenance and to mobilize the need repair materials from their backlog areas in Seward and Whittier.

(Cultural Resource Program file photo)



Service to the Armed Forces Holiday Dinner

Fort Wainwright | December 24, 2019

- ▶ Who: Single service members from Fort Wainwright and Eielson Air Force Base
- ▶ What: Join us for a holiday dinner with a movie, football and gifts/prizes, in fun and casual setting!
- ▶ Where: North Haven Community Center - 4268 Neely Rd, Fort Wainwright, AK 99703
- ▶ When: December 24, 2019 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- ▶ Why: Come and relax, celebrate the season and play some games before the meal!
- ▶ How: Please RSVP no later than Dec. 18 by calling, texting, or emailing Stephanie at (907) 444-9529 or stephanie.pflugrad@redcross.org.



Defense Secretary Dr. Mark T. Esper and Army Gen. Mark A. Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visit Bois Jacques, a wooded battlefield in Bastogne, Belgium, Dec. 16, 2019. The visit was part of a U.S. delegation's tour of the region to observe of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. (Photo by Army Sgt 1st Class Chuck Burden)

Esper, Milley commemorate Battle of the Bulge 75th anniversary

Jim Garamone
Defense.gov

Military and civilian dignitaries from Europe and the United States were in Belgium Dec. 16 to mark the anniversary of one of the most important battles of World War II: the Battle of the Bulge.

“There are times we must say, ‘No,’” King Philippe of Belgium said in Bastogne, Belgium. “‘No’ to the extreme evil perpetrated by a hateful ideology. This is what we did together 75 years ago.”

The Belgian people remember their American liberators, the king said, pointing to six veterans of the battle who were attending the ceremony.

Defense Secretary Dr. Mark T. Esper and Army Gen. Mark A. Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, attended the ceremony at Belgium's Mardasson Memorial. They met six veterans of the famed battle at the ceremony.

The battle marked the second time in World War II that Nazi forces stormed through the Belgian Ardennes forest. In May 1940, the first attack broke through and resulted in the British being chased from Europe and France being defeated.

In 1944, the Nazis' tanks ran into the U.S. Army.

The battle was the largest Army operation of the war. By its end in January, 10,733 Allied soldiers were dead, 42,316 had been wounded and 22,636 were missing in action.

The German attack began the night of Dec. 16, 1944, with a German artillery barrage followed by multiple Panzer divisions. It was a complete surprise to the divisions holding the line in the Ardennes. Hitler's vision was to split the Allied force and drive to Antwerp,

U.S. Army Center of Military History

What is it?

On Dec. 16, 1944, the German army launched a counteroffensive against the Allies in the lightly defended Ardennes region of Belgium. The German objective was to push through the Ardennes to capture Antwerp on the Belgian coast to cut off and annihilate the British and American units in the encirclement. The battle became known as the Battle of the Bulge.

What are the current and past efforts of the Army?

The Battle of the Bulge was a hard won tactical and strategic victory with enduring lessons of value in today's world. The need to endure and

Battle of the Bulge

prevail against a harsh environment and a determined enemy remains an essential element to victory.

On this 75th anniversary, the U.S. Army remembers the 610,000 Soldiers who fought in the Battle of the Bulge suffering more than 75,000 casualties.

As in WWII, U.S. forces continue to stand with European allies and partners to ensure a Europe that is whole, free, prosperous and at peace.

What continued efforts does the Army have planned?

Leaders and Soldiers will continue to adapt and learn the tactical and operational skills required for large-scale, multi-domain operations.

The need to endure and prevail against a harsh environment and

a determined enemy remains an essential element to victory.

As the U.S. Army modernizes, it will share new technologies with allies to enhance defense cooperation and improve interoperability.

Why is this important to the Army?

Commemoration of the 75th anniversary of WWII allows the Army to honor the service of more than 11 million American Soldiers who served in WWII so that their legacy can help inspire new generations of young men and women to serve.

In addition, the partnerships forged on the battlefield during WWII endure today as U.S. forces in Europe remain steadfast in their commitment to the European allies and partners.

Belgium.

Adding to the Germans' advantage was the weather: Because it was cloudy and foggy, Allied planes could not fly.

The U.S. formations were splintered, and many units lost cohesion. Yet, many more stood their ground and fought until they were overwhelmed. Each battle delayed the German timetable and gave time for reinforcements to come in.

One of those units was the 101st Airborne Division, which was rushed to Bastogne to stop the Wehrmacht - Germany's collective armed forces - from taking that crucial road junction.

Esper and Milley stopped at the Bois Jacques woods outside the town of Foy, Belgium, to visit with current Soldiers of the division from Fort Campbell, Ky. “This is our Gettysburg,” Army Maj. Gen. Brian Winski, the commander of the 101st Airborne Division said as he spoke to Esper and Milley. The fight for Bastogne was that crucial to the division and the Allied forces in Europe.

The division, known as the “Screaming Eagles,”

were completely besieged by German forces and carried out one of the most heroic defenses ever recorded in history, Esper said at the Bastogne memorial.

The Germans called on the 101st to surrender, but the commander - then Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe - just replied, “Nuts.”

“The American troops beat back repeated infantry attacks from all directions,” Esper said. “News of their fierce defense quickly spread, boosting morale of Allied forces all along the Western Front.”

The history of the battle is full of superlatives. Tanks broke through to Bastogne on Dec. 26, 1944. The weather cleared, and allied aircraft ripped the German armor and supply lines.

But the real reason for victory wasn't the technology or the plan; it was the heroism and fortitude of American Soldiers. “The Americans who fought here were led by some of our most revered military leaders of the time, but it was ultimately the intrepid and indomitable spirit of the American Soldier that fueled us to victory,” Esper said.

“In World War II, America was willing to commit everything we had to preserve freedom,” the secre-

tary continued. “And on this ground, where the outcome of the Battle of the Bulge hung in the balance,

American troops forged an incredible victory that assured the Nazi regime's defeat.”

CHRISTMAS LUNCH
DEC 23rd 1130-1300

ALL SOLDIERS, FAMILIES & CIVILIANS ARE WELCOME
PRICE \$5.60
DEPENDENTS OF E-4 AND BELOW \$4.25

MENU

- *ROAST TURKEY
- *BAKED CHICKEN
- *BAKED HAM
- *CORN BREAD STUFFING
- *GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE
- *MAC & CHEESE
- *COLLARD GREENS
- *CANDIED YAMS
- *CORN ON THE COB
- *ASSORTED PASTRIES & MUCH MORE

WOLVES DEN DINING FACILITY
BLDG 3728 NEELY RD

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Fort Wainwright Family & MWR

Weekly Events

December 21 - 28

21 Youth Sports Volleyball Registration
December 21 - 31
8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Join Youth Sports & Fitness for Breakup Season 2020 Volleyball! Youth ages 5 - 13 years old can sign up with Parent Central Services. The season runs March 16 - May 9. Cost per child is \$55. Last day to register is December 31.

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

21 Skate with Santa
December 21
1:30 - 4 p.m.

Zoom around the Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink with Santa! Cookies and hot chocolate will be FREE while supplies last.

Physical Fitness Center, Bldg 3709
Call 353-7223

23 POUND Fitness Class
December 23
5:15 - 6:15 p.m.

Channel your inner rockstar with this full body cardio-jam session inspired by the infectious, energizing, and sweat-dripping fun of playing the drums. Class cost: \$3, 1 punch on punch card, or #WainwrightBlueStar members: \$1.

Physical Fitness Center, Bldg 3709
Call 353-7223, registration required

26 Lego Club
December 26
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

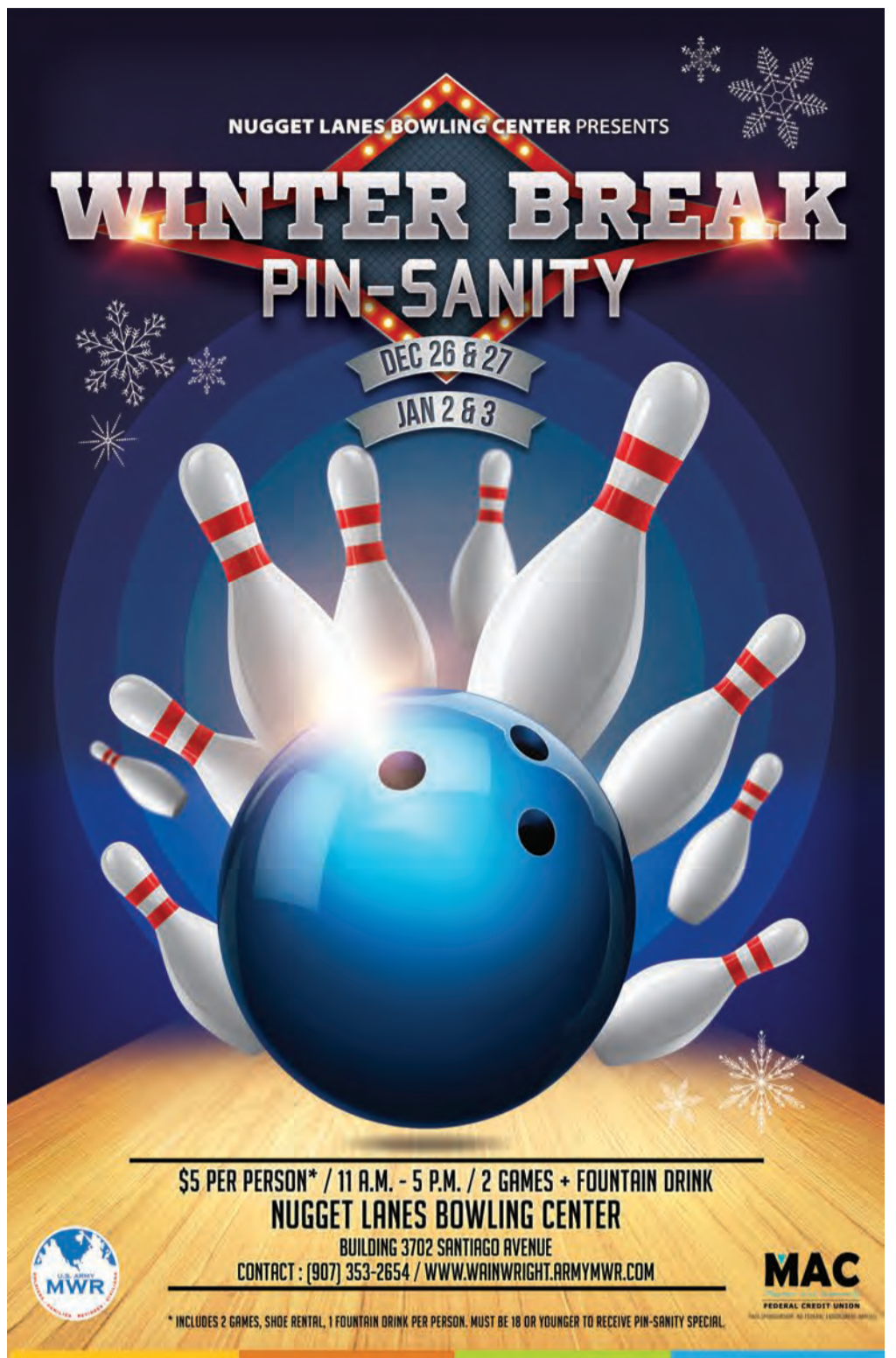
This is where friends and families can come and use their imaginations to build a lego masterpiece! This is yet another opportunity hosted by the LFCAC to meet new friends amongst our community here on Fort Wainwright.

Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Bldg 3709
Call 353-7755

28 Snowmachine Safety Course
January 4
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Want to take a snowmachine trip or rent a snowmachine? You'll need to take a Snowmachine Safety Course with Outdoor Recreation Center. Registration deadline for this Course is December 28.

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 4050
Call 361-6349, registration required



NUGGET LANES BOWLING CENTER PRESENTS
WINTER BREAK PIN-SANITY
DEC 26 & 27
JAN 2 & 3

\$5 PER PERSON* / 11 A.M. - 5 P.M. / 2 GAMES + FOUNTAIN DRINK
NUGGET LANES BOWLING CENTER
BUILDING 3702 SANTIAGO AVENUE
CONTACT : (907) 353-2654 / WWW.WAINWRIGHT.ARMYMWR.COM

MWR **MAC**
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

* INCLUDES 2 GAMES, SHOE RENTAL, 1 FOUNTAIN DRINK PER PERSON. MUST BE 18 OR YOUNGER TO RECEIVE PIN-SANITY SPECIAL.



Join Outdoor Recreation January 5 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. for Ice Climbing! Registration deadline is December 29. For more information, call: (907) 361-6349. Find out more at www.wainwright.armymwr.com @WainwrightMWR #WainwrightMWR

Fort Wainwright 2019-20 Holiday Worship Schedule

Everyone is invited, all are welcome!

20 Dec 19	Service of Lessons & Carols (with light dinner & Christmas crafts)	SLC	1700-2000
24 Dec 19	Cornerstone Protestant Christmas Eve Service	NLC	1600-1700
24 Dec 19	St. George Anglican Candlelight Christmas Eve Service	SLC	1800-1900
06 Jan 20	St. George Anglican Feast of the Epiphany Service	BACH	1200-1230
02 Feb 20	St. George Anglican Candlemas Service	SLC	1100-1200

"Home Blessing Kits" for the St. George Anglican & Good Shepherd Catholic communities will be available at SLC.

All regular services will continue as scheduled

Southern Lights Chapel (SLC), Corner of Neely Rd. & 8th St., 361-4261
Northern Lights Chapel (NLC), Corner of Rhineland & Luzon, 353-9825
Bassett Army Community Hospital Chapel (BACH), 4076 Neely Rd, 361-5002

For more information call the Religious Support Office at 353-6112



www.facebook.com/FWARSO





This past year, the Army approved standards for the Army Combat Fitness Test, introduced a new proficiency badge and altered how it promotes Soldiers. The Army also began the groundwork to better manage its talent, while a leadership shuffle brought in new top brass. (Illustration by Sean Kimmons)

Top stories of 2019: ESB, bonuses to talent management

Sean Kimmons
Army News Service

This past year, the Army approved standards for the Army Combat Fitness Test, introduced a new proficiency badge and altered how it promotes Soldiers. The Army also began the groundwork to better manage its talent, while a leadership shuffle brought in new top brass.

Below is a list of some of the biggest stories that impacted the force in 2019:

Expert soldier badge

On the Army's birthday in June, senior leaders introduced a new proficiency badge.

The Expert Soldier Badge is the equivalent of the Expert Infantry Badge and Expert Field Medical Badge, but for all other military occupational specialties in the Army.

To qualify for the ESB test, Soldiers must pass the Army Combat Fitness Test, qualify as an "expert" on the M4/M16 rifle and be recommended by their chain of command.

The test consists of another ACFT, day and night land navigation, individual testing stations and culminates with a 12-mile foot march.

The first 11 Soldiers to earn the badge were honored by senior leaders in October during the Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting and Exposition.

The badge looks exactly like the Combat Action Badge, minus the wreath. It displays the same M9 bayonet knife and M67 frag grenade inlaid against a solid, gray rectangular bar.

Merit-based promotions

The Army officially started its first major overhaul to its enlisted centralized promotion board in 50 years, as it looks to deliver "the right person, at the right job, at the right time," according to G-1 officials.

The effort centers on a transition from time-based to mer-

it-based policies and practices. Intended for active-duty Soldiers and those serving in an Active Guard Reserve capacity, the change ensures the best-qualified Soldier will be the first one eligible for promotion.

It will take three to four years to implement an improved merit-based promotion system, officials said.

The Army also released results from its first officer merit promotion board in October.

Army Human Resources Command conducted the board for prospective majors by incorporating a new initiative from the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act. It allowed promotion selection boards to recommend officers of particular merit to be placed higher on the promotion list.

In the future, merit-based promotions will apply to officers being considered for promotion to major, lieutenant colonel and colonel in select categories to be determined by the secretary of the Army, officials said.

Army Combat Fitness Test

In the fall, officials announced changes to the ACFT before all Soldiers will be required to take it next October.

Official testing standards, each one tailored to a Soldier's military occupational specialty, were revealed in September. The new test also became a graduation requirement for all new Soldiers and officers.

The arm-extension pushup replaced the hand-release pushup as one of the six events in the test, which is set to replace the current Army Physical Fitness Test that has been around since 1980.

The changes came after roughly 17,000 Soldiers from over 60 battalions took the test during its initial implementation phase.

In May, Army senior leaders approved the development of alternate assessments for selected Soldiers with permanent profiles. Instead of the 2-mile run, a Soldier can do

a 5,000-meter row, 15,000-meter stationary bike ride or a 1,000-meter swim. Each event will be completed in a set time, targeted at 25 minutes or less.

Parental leave

Parents of newborn infants received more good news earlier this year when the Army doubled the amount of parental leave given to fathers and other secondary caregivers, as well as provided more flexibility to mothers.

The directive increased parental leave from 10 to 21 days for Soldiers who are designated secondary caregivers of infants. The new policy made the Army's parental leave comparable to that of other services and in compliance with the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act.

Mothers can also now be granted six weeks of convalescent leave directly after giving birth and can be granted another six weeks of leave as primary caregiver to bond with their infant anytime up to a year after birth.

UCMJ Changes

A host of changes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice became effective Jan. 1, modernizing definitions for many offenses, adjusting maximum penalties, standardizing court-martial panels, creating new computer-crime laws and much more.

The changes strike a balance between protecting the rights of the accused and empowering commanders to effect good order and discipline, a military justice official said.

Among them were stiffer penalties for recruiters, drill sergeants and others in "positions of special trust" convicted of abusing their authority over recruits or trainees.

Many of the changes came about after a review by the Military Justice Review Group, consisting of military and criminal justice experts whose report made recommendations to Congress.

Esports

A new Army esports team hit the ground running this year, with thousands of Soldiers applying for a chance to be a part of it.

One of Army Recruiting Command's outreach efforts – which also includes a functional fitness team – the esports team represents the Army in competitions and events across the country.

Team members are not recruiters but they do link up with recruiters during events. They also receive a crash course on Army enlistment programs to answer questions from those interested in learning about the service.

While on the team, Soldiers still conduct physical training, weapons qualification and other responsibilities that come with being a Soldier. They will also need to maintain certifications in their military occupational specialty.

Re-up bonuses

The Army announced this year lump-sum bonuses up to \$81,000 – the highest amount in more than five years – in an effort to entice Soldiers to reenlist in some of the most in-demand careers.

In addition to critical fields, the fall announcement offered a wide range of cash options for Soldiers re-upping for longer commitments, or re-classifying into needed fields.

The payouts were based on critical skills and selective retention. The Selective Retention Bonus program is designed to incentivize Soldiers to maintain their current military occupational specialty or reclassify into another MOS based on demands for the individual jobs.

Tackling housing issues

Earlier this year, Army senior leaders placed housing as the No. 1 priority for quality of life, following complaints of health concerns inside homes and mismanagement of housing contractors.

In the past 10 months, the Army identified governance flaws, initiated commander-driven town halls and created 24-hour helplines to hear feedback directly from families, leaders said.

Backing these efforts, housing operations have now been assigned to the commander of Army Materiel Command, Gen. Gus Perna, who has delegated authority to slash incentive fees for housing contractors.

The Army has over 86,000 privatized homes. Of those, one-third need to be rebuilt and another one-third need minor repairs.

About \$1.1 billion in budget requests to improve housing is currently awaiting approval by Congress. An overall analysis of the Army's privatized housing requirements is also underway, leaders said, and is slated to be completed by the spring.

New leadership

A leadership carousel of sorts occurred this year following promotions and a retirement among the Army's top leaders.

After former Army Secretary Mark Esper became the current secretary of defense, Ryan McCarthy, who served as his under-secretary, was confirmed by the Senate to take over the Army's top Civilian post.

Gen. Mark Milley was also promoted to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, leaving the door open for Gen. James McConville to succeed him as the Army's chief of staff.

Gen. Joseph Martin, who served as the director of the

Army Staff, took over McConville's previous position as the Army's vice chief of staff.

Former Sgt. Maj. of the Army Dan Dailey then retired as Michael Grinston, the former senior enlisted leader for Army Forces Command, replaced him as the Army's top enlisted Soldier.

Talent management

The Army moved forward this year on the most comprehensive reform of its three officer personnel systems across the force since 1947.

The Army is developing a new talent management system to acquire, develop, employ and retain the best officers for the future. Congress granted new authorities that provide more flexibility for the Army to determine characteristics of the system.

A big part of it is the Army Talent Alignment Process, which is enabled by Assignment Interactive Module 2.0. ATAP is a decentralized, regulated, market-style hiring system that aligns officers with jobs based on preferences.

The majority of active-duty officers and units began to participate in ATAP in October for their summer 2020 assignments.

ATAP is slated to fall under the Integrated Personnel and Pay System – Army, an online human resources system designed to maximize Soldier talent through integrated personnel and pay data in a single system for all Army components.