

# ALASKA POST

an edition of the  
FAIRBANKS  
Daily News - Miner

The Interior Military News Connection

Vol. 11, No. 9

Fort Wainwright, Alaska

March 6, 2020

## Delta Junction VFW honors Patriot's Pen winner

Chris Maestas  
Post 10450

Delta Junction Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10450 commander, Mike Cassidy, honored Delta Junction Jr. High student Kathy Kravets for her third place achievement at the Alaska VFW's Patriot's Pen Youth Essay Competition Feb. 19 at the school gym.

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

Kravets received \$125 in gift certificates for earning third place at the state competition, and she encourages all eligible students to compete.

"The VFW's Patriot's Pen essay competition instills patriotism and Americanism in young children," said VFW 10450 commander Mike Cassidy.

Each year, more than 125,000 students in grades 6 to 8 enter the VFW's Patriot's Pen youth essay contest. The first-place winner from each state competes for national awards totaling \$55,000, with each first-place state winner receiving a minimum of \$500 at the national level.



Delta Junction Jr. High student Kathy Kravets is presented with a certificate from VFW 10450 commander, Mike Cassidy, in recognition of earning third place at the VFW's Patriot's Pen Youth Essay Competition Feb. 19 at the Delta Junction Jr. High gym. (Courtesy photo)

## AutoBears Assemble: 2-8 Field Artillery Regiment Hero of the Month

**1st Lt. Flor Gaxiola**  
Headquarter and Headquarters Battery, 2-8 Field Artillery Regiment

1st Lt. Imelda Fink of Headquarter and Headquarters Battery, 2-8 Field Artillery Regiment has been named as the Hero of the Month for February 2020.

Fink, a native of Los Angeles, has already distinguished herself in her nearly 10 months of time with the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team here at Fort Wainwright.

Upon arriving, she was placed as a targeting officer with 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment's Fires Cell, a position normally reserved for an experienced field artillery chief warrant officer.

Fink was in this position for four months. When it came time for the brigade to participate in Operation Inherent Resolve, this

Artic Warrior was sent forward on the deployment where she continued until being required to fill a second role as a fire support officer in the squadron.

Following a total of eight months in these critical positions, of which four were spent deployed, Fink was rotated back to Task Force 3 "AutoBears" where she immediately was placed into another critical position – supply officer in charge for HHB, 2-8 FAR.

Despite the presence of two aviation battalions, several infantry and cavalry battalions, and dedicated engineer and support units, Fink and her supply specialist, Pvt. 1st Class Henderson, manage the largest and most valuable property book across the entire installation.

Although she has had no prior experience or training in the meticulous art of Army property manage-



1st Lt. Imelda Fink, assigned to Headquarter and Headquarters Battery, 2-8 Field Artillery Regiment, diligently executing supply and property book operations. (Courtesy photo)

ment, her diligence has led to success across her one

month of time in the position. For all these reasons,

she has been deservedly nominated.

## 144th Airlift Squadron provides rescue resupply for Arctic Eagle 2020



C-17 Globemaster III pilot, Maj. Ray Jang, 176th Wing, 144th Airlift Squadron, prepares to land after a rescue resupply mission off the coast of northern Alaska in support of exercise Arctic Eagle 2020, Feb. 26. The Alaska National Guard is hosting exercise Arctic Eagle 20, a joint-training exercise, Feb. 20 to Mar. 6, throughout Alaska, including JBER, Eielson Air Force Base, Fort Wainwright, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and as far north as Harrison Bay. As a homeland security and emergency response exercise, Arctic Eagle 20 is designed to increase the National Guard's ability and effectiveness to operate in the extreme cold-weather conditions found in arctic environments. (Photo by Senior Airman Xavier Navarro)



An Alaska Air National Guard C-17 Globemaster III assigned to the 144th Airlift Squadron, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, readies for a rescue resupply mission off the coast of northern Alaska, in support of exercise Arctic Eagle 2020, Feb. 26. The Alaska National Guard is hosting exercise Arctic Eagle 20, a joint-training exercise, Feb. 20 to Mar. 6, throughout Alaska, including JBER, Eielson Air Force Base, Fort Wainwright, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and as far north as Harrison Bay. As a homeland security and emergency response exercise, Arctic Eagle 20 is designed to increase the National Guard's ability and effectiveness to operate in the extreme cold-weather conditions found in arctic environments. (Photo by Senior Airman Xavier Navarro)

### WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Patchy freezing fog.  
High: 2F.

Saturday



Chance of snow.  
High: 8F.

Sunday



Chance of snow. High:  
17F.

### IN BRIEF

The Defense Department is making plans to combat the coronavirus, DOD leaders said yesterday during a news conference.

For the past six weeks, defense leaders have been meeting to plan for any possible scenario with the virus that first surfaced in China. "We've issued a variety of [memoranda] and directives advising the force on how to deal with coronavirus," Defense Secretary Dr. Mark T. Esper said.

Read more on page 7



# Nutrition Corner: Food Budget

Contrary to popular belief, eating healthy does not have to break your budget. It is possible to stay within a grocery budget and eat healthy at the same time. Just like anything, healthy eating has to be a priority. If other priorities get in the way it may seem as though healthy eating is out of reach financially. How much of the monthly budget is spent on alcoholic beverages, snacks, restaurants (including fast food) and end cap purchases? Separate it out to see just where the money goes. It may be surprising just how much money is left to purchase healthy foods when

getting rid of junk food. Try making a menu for the week on an index card. Then, flip it over and make a list based off the menu and anything needed for lunches and healthy snacks that week. Stick to it! Much of the money wasted at the grocery store is spent on food that spoils before it is eaten. Leave the extras like chips, soda, cookies and snack cakes off. These extras make paying the grocery bill unbearable. Not to mention these items can contribute towards excessive calorie consumption and weight gain. Instead, buy nutrient dense items.

Aim for lower calorie foods that pack in fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals such as fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy and lean proteins. Buying frozen and canned fruits and vegetables are more cost effective and are just as nutritious. Do not go grocery shopping when hungry. This can lead to impulse purchasing and maybe even lead to indulging on a few unhealthy snacks. Try going earlier in the day when there is still time to go home and cook the evening meal. Be sure to load up on low-cost, nutritious, and versatile foods such as

eggs, beans, peanut butter and canned tuna. It is also wise to stretch costly meals, crock-pot meals for example, by adding a bag of frozen vegetables, beans, peppers, and/or onions. You can actually add another day or two worth of meals just by adding a couple dollars' worth of frozen vegetables or beans. **Featured Food:** Beans. These small morsels are inexpensive and versatile. They can be added to several recipes even if the original does not call for beans. They offer many nutritional benefits such as protein, fiber and iron.

**Recipe Spotlight:**  
Simple Black Bean and Corn Salsa  
**INGREDIENTS:**  
16 ounces bag of frozen corn  
16 ounces jar of salsa or pico de gallo  
1 can of black beans  
Fresh cilantro, chopped for garnish  
Tortilla Chips  
**PREPARATION:**  
Step 1: Combine corn, salsa/pico de gallo and beans. Top with fresh chopped cilantro.  
Step 2: Serve with tortilla chips or on top of your favorite taco salad recipe.

# History Snapshot: WACs Arrive at Ladd Field, April 1945



Ladd Field eagerly anticipated the WAC's arrival in 1945. A headline in the 1944 St. Patrick's Day edition of The Ladd Field Midnight Sun newspaper declared, "Girl GIs Coming to Six Stations." Units were expected to arrive at their various duty stations by July 1945. The article just below this announcement praised the wife of a former Fairbanks colonel on her promotion to corporal. Despite the slander campaign denouncing women in the military, the soldiers of Ladd Field understood the women's ability and their importance to the war effort. One soldier, writing for the paper responded accordingly when asked the question "What can a woman do in the Army?" "Well," he said, "the gals in the WAC are doing 155 different Army jobs and doing them damn well. Some of these jobs are hard, some are tedious and routine. But every one of them is a job, which must be done if we're to win the war." The average WAC recruit in 1945 was reported to be a mature woman, 25 to 27 years old, healthy, single and without dependents. A high school graduate with some clerical experience, she already knew how to type or operate a camera, radio, adding machine or telephone switchboard. She had leadership experience, aviation experience, mechanical, secretarial, educational and book keeping. Their value was quickly understood and understood to be highly under anticipated. (Photo courtesy Betty Etten Wiker)

# 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.tricare-online.com  
**Health Net:** www.tricare-west.com, 1-844-8676-9378

## Walk-In Clinic

Patients 18 and older can use the Walk-in Clinic Nurse option when needing to be seen for some illnesses. Performed in the clinic are strep throat screening, urinary tract infection screening, pregnancy testing, blood pressure monitoring, suture removal, wart removal and sexually transmitted disease checks. The clinic is open 7:30 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3:30 pm, Monday through Wednesday and Friday. Hours for Thursdays are 1 to 3:30 p.m. For more information, call 361-5833.

## Fuel For Health

The Army Wellness Center is hosting a Fuel for Health class March 3 at 2 p.m. in building 4077. Nutrition plays a large role in weight management and overall health. Call 907-361-2234 to register.

## Limited Services

In order to provide our beneficiaries with the highest quality of care, Medical Department Activity – Alaska has added one day a month to our training calendar to ensure staff are up to date on all training requirements. Limited services will be available from 7:30 to 10 a.m. on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month.

## Tobacco Cessation

Are you ready to quit tobacco? In the process but having trouble? Let our educators assist you in the process. Public Health holds classes weekly for beneficiaries. Call 361-4148 to register.

## Slow Down

We have had several narrow escapes this past week with pedestrians almost being hit by drivers going too fast through the parking lot. We ask that staff and patients both follow the five miles per hour speed limit to ensure the safety of everyone.

## Help Us Help You

Your feedback helps us to improve services. The Joint Outpatient Evaluation System is randomly mailed to beneficiaries, and emailed to active duty, after appointments. Your response assists MEDDAC-AK leadership to improve your overall experience. Look for your envelope in the mail!



An HC-130J Combat King II aircraft flies beneath a KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft for refueling conducted by the Alaska National Guard 168th Wing on Feb. 27 during exercise Arctic Eagle 2020. The 168th Wing Refueling Group is the only Arctic region air-refueling unit in the United States. (Photo by Spc. Kierra Harris, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

# Alaska Air National Guard refuels HC-130J Combat King II at 20,000 feet

**Sgt. Ian Withrow**  
139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Pilots crowded around a long, wooden table inside a briefing room early on the morning of Feb. 27 to receive their mission. The day's tasks: a series of touch-and-go landings followed by mid-air refueling.

The KC-135 Stratotanker crews prepared to board would meet up with an HC-130J Combat King II in the air over Fairbanks, Alaska, to pass fuel, which would allow the C-130 to push further north as part of Arctic Eagle 20, a joint, multinational, arctic exercise being conducted across Alaska and hosted by the Alaska National Guard.

This act, known colloquially as "random air refueling," is just one skill that these highly trained experts keep in constant practice, alongside other technical maneuvers. In theory, the action is a simple one. The KC-135 is equipped with a long, remote controlled boom that enables it to move fuel from its tanks to those of a properly-equipped friendly aircraft. The C-130 simply pulls up behind and below, and maneuvers itself into position, where the boom links with a port above the cockpit.

"We'll be at 20,000 feet over the Fairbanks VOR [local navigation-

al area], and we'll meet up with them [the C-130]," said Capt. Julie Keeney, an Alaska National Guardsman and pilot with the 168th Air Wing.

The reality, however, is that the aircraft are a combined 230 feet long, and each is moving in excess of 240 miles per hour. Careful piloting and constant radio communication allows the two aircraft to act as one in the hands of the operators.

Ultimately, the lynchpin of a refueling operation is the boom operator, an airman who lies prone in a special cradle and directs the movement of both aircraft as well as the boom itself. Air Force Tech. Sgt. William Sartin is one such operator, an Alaska National Guardsman of 10 years, who has been stationed out of Eielson since 2013.

"Instead of sitting in an office, and just sitting at a desk, I get to go fly every day and refuel airplanes at high speed," Sartin said. "It's pretty awesome."

The refueling mission was a small but vital piece of the larger exercise, and one of many such pieces that together allow a massive, multinational effort to be successful.

The difficulty inherent in performing such aerial feats seems nothing short of a miracle, but for these professionals, it's just another day at work.

# ALASKA POST

## The Interior Military News Connection

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# The Chaplain’s Corner

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

As defined by the online Cambridge dictionary, a meme is “an idea, image, video, etc. that is spread very quickly on the internet.” Along with Grumpy Cat, other memes that have spread quickly on the internet feature Pepe the Frog. A recent article by Brandy Zadrozny, “What is the ‘boogaloo’? How online calls for a violent uprising are hitting the mainstream,” details how anti-government hate groups in the United States use memes to find acceptance for their messaging on mainstream social media platforms. A mascot of the alt-right, Pepe the Frog is part of a system of white nationalist code that includes slang and dog whistles used in a joking, ironic manner to disguise hate speech in ways that are generally acceptable to the public. The “boogaloo” is

a reference to the 1984 movie “Breakin’ 2: Electric Boogaloo” but is actually a code for armed violence against non-whites in the form of a new Civil War.

Memes featuring Pepe the Frog and other white nationalist hate messaging are not a harmless pastime of the culture wars. It is information warfare. No longer the sole purview of military propaganda units, hate memes ooze from the internet fever swamps into our everyday Facebook and Instagram feeds. An insightful article by Douglas Haddow published by The Guardian in 2016 notes ominously that “...slowly, before anyone can even take note, memes are ruining democracy” (Meme warfare: how the power of mass replication has poisoned the US election). The insidious weaponization of political memes such as Pepe the Frog aids in the grooming of our cultural awareness to accept hatred against racial, ethnic, political,

or religious groups that the current system of domination perceives as a threat. Whether the attack upon our democracy takes the form of memes or murder, hate undermines liberty for all.

It is naïve to think that hate memes will be overcome by memes of equally extreme beliefs from the opposite end of the political spectrum. Cultural meme warfare will not be won on the internet. What is a 21st century Christian to do? Here are three possibilities drawn from scripture. First, we must be aware of the culture and self-aware of how we unknowingly participate in the hate. The Gospel of Matthew records Jesus commissioning the disciples with the warning: “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16). Educating ourselves about the ways hate and prejudice permeate

our lives from authoritative sources like the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Anti-Defamation League help defeat it.

Second, speak the truth in love. The Apostle Paul encourages Christians in Ephesus to be mature and unified in their faith when he writes: “Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ” (Ephesians 4:15). Speaking the truth in love probably will not happen by sharing a meme. As a result, we all should exercise our relational skills more by speaking to one another, face to face, and to say the hard truth when necessary.

Third, become unsatisfied with just speaking. Let us all expand the limits of our comfort zones by putting down the smart phones and doing acts of love and kindness for those who might challenge our limits. The



Message, a paraphrase of the Bible by Eugene Peterson, captures the essence of Jesus’ invitation to love our enemies with this: “If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that. In a word, what I’m saying is, Grow up. You’re kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live gener-

ously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you” (Matthew 5:46-48). No meme could have said it better. 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](http://www.facebook.com/FGAChapel).

# Alaska Army Guard medic participates in Arctic Eagle 2020

**Spc. Grace Nechanicky**  
Joint Force  
Headquarters

Alaska Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Conner, a member of the 297th Infantry Battalion medical platoon, participated in Arctic Eagle 2020 at the search and extraction mass casualty simulation venue at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, Feb. 25.

At this venue, military members from the Marine Corps, Air Force, Army, Air National Guard, Army National Guard and civilian emergency response agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency worked together throughout the three-day event to assess damages of a hypothetical helicopter crash scenario, as well as search for, decontaminate, treat and transport casualties of the crash.

Conner’s role in the event was in the

medical portion as a facilitator of ambulance transport for the casualties to Bassett Army Community Hospital and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital as appropriate. He was present as a member of the 297th IN BN medical platoon, but he is also a full-time emergency responder as a civilian.

“I’m the fire chief at Ester Volunteer Fire Department,” said Conner.

He has been with Ester Volunteer Fire Department since July of 2019. Prior to that he worked at Fairbanks Fire Department for 25 years and the Seattle Fire Department for five years before that.

Conner has served in the military for 16 years, but did not start as an Army Guardsman.

In 2004, on his 40th birthday, Conner joined the Navy Reserves as a hospital corpsman with the Marine Forces Reserve, 4th Recon-

naissance Battalion, which he deployed to Iraq with. After six years, he transitioned to the Alaska Army National Guard and has served as a combat medic since then.

“I wanted to get in because of the Iraq war,” he said. “I really just wanted to help out.”

Conner chose a military path that aligned with his civilian career because he enjoys the teamwork aspect of emergency response with the end goal of helping people.

An example of this teamwork was portrayed when Chena Goldstream Fire and Rescue provided an ambulance for the search and extraction training after the military ambulance broke down.

“Chena Goldstream is our partner at Ester,” he said. “That’s why, when I asked them, they agreed to participate in this drill and provide their ambulance on short notice.”

Conner pointed out that his fire department is a trained first responder unit but does not have ambulances, which is why he was grateful for Chena Goldstream’s help.

Although the training is a mass casualty simulation, it can be applied to other areas of emergency response as well.

“I would say the big takeaway from this is that all of these different units are working together, and that’s probably the biggest part of it,” he said. “We can end up working



with these agencies in a real-life situation for a number of different reasons; that’s why this training is so important.”

Conner enjoys overcoming the challenges and adversity he faces as an emergency

responder.

“There’s an element of objective hazard,” he said. “In emergencies, you have to function as a team, and you have to utilize your skills in what are very stressful environments, just like combat.”

# CH-47 Chinooks go to Deadhorse for Arctic Eagle



U.S. Soldiers with the Alaska Air National Guard assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment, help navigate CH-47 Chinooks into a hangar at Deadhorse, Alaska, Feb. 24, 2020. The Alaska National Guard is hosting Exercise Arctic Eagle 2020, a joint-training exercise, Feb. 20 to March 6, 2020, throughout Alaska, including Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Eielson Air Force Base, Fort Wainwright, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and as far north as Teshekpuk Lake. As a homeland security and emergency response exercise, Arctic Eagle 20 is designed to increase the National Guard’s ability and effectiveness to operate in the extreme cold-weather conditions found in Arctic environments. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Amy Picard)



# AutoBears Assemble: 70th Brigade Engineer Battalion Hero of the Week

**1st Lt. Nick Morales**  
Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 70th Brigade Engineer Battalion

The 70th Brigade Engineer Battalion recognizes Sgt. Jerome Townsend, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Reconnaissance Platoon team leader. Townsend has been with 70th BEB for three years, and in this time has stood out among his peers in a multitude of ways.

When Task Force 3 “AutoBears” stood up,

Townsend was asked to take on a leadership role of acting-platoon sergeant of the CBRN Reconnaissance Platoon. Without hesitation, Townsend embraced his new role and executed, not only the CBRN mission but also any task or mission needed to support the company.

Townsend quickly became one of the most reliable NCOs in HHC. He served as the HHC barracks manager facilitating the relocation and consolidation of over 75 enlisted Soldiers from multiple companies while overseeing the maintenance and

equipment of 10 Unaccompanied Personnel Housing areas.

He ensured the serviceability and viable occupancy of over \$22,000 worth of Army barracks property and equipment. Townsend also maintained accountability of three M1135 Stryker Nuclear Biological Chemical Reconnaissance Vehicles, associated equipment, as well as all sets, kits and outfits allocated to the CBRN Reconnaissance property book during Task Force 3 operations. Townsend was responsible for over \$14,000,000 worth of

Sgt. Jerome Townsend (right) being awarded the Army Commendation Medal from Maj. Pat Mahoney (left) for his hard work and dedication to HHC, 70th Brigade Engineer Battalion. (Courtesy photo)

equipment with zero losses or damages.

This week 70th BEB expresses their utmost gratitude as Townsend prepares for his permanent change of duty station. The outstanding hard work and dedication he exhibits has earned himself the Army Commendation Medal. The AutoBears will miss this amazing



NCO. Best of wishes luck in Fort Bragg, Townsend and good North Carolina!

# Alaska Guardsmen gain lethality with arctic survival, new M17 pistol training in the Arctic

**Sgt. Christopher A. Garibay**  
139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry Regiment, based in Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson took part in arctic survival, helicopter-hoisting exercises, movement-to-contact and weapon familiarization training in support of Arctic Eagle 2020 at Eielson Air Force Base, Feb. 20 through March 2.

The unit used UH-60 Black Hawks to hoist gear and move Soldiers from forward operating bases to more remote arctic locations to engage in small unit infantry tactics. The exercise is meant to test and validate field skills, gear capabilities, remote communications, transportation capabilities and best practices for survival in an arctic environment.

The 1-297th INF BN began the field portion of the exercise Feb. 25 by establishing a tactical operations center at Winter Camp Forward Operating Base in the Yukon Training Area, which involved setting up a 10-person tent equipped with a heater and generator. Over the next two days, the unit set up their sleeping quarters at Winter Camp, practiced movement to contact and conducted various cold weather training.

“Out here in the Arctic, the greatest enemy is the weather,” said Army 1st Lt. Eric Gorman, company commander of Delta Company, 1-297 INF BN based in Fairbanks, Alaska. “The most important part of the Alaska National Guard is to be able to operate in an arctic environment in order to defend the homeland.”

The training is meant to validate the equipment and

to give Soldiers the confidence they need to endure harsh weather conditions.

“Our piece of Arctic Eagle is acquiring arctic skills; to survive and thrive in some of the roughest weather there is,” said Army Sgt. 1st Class Matt Romine of Huntington, West Virginia, with Bravo Company, 1-297 INF BN based in Wasilla, Alaska. “We wanted to make sure our guys gained confidence in their equipment and trust each other. The temperature is always a challenge in -30 degree weather.”

Romine said there was training leading up to the exercise that helped them overcome the challenges the arctic temperatures posed.

For Alaska Guardsmen, this was the first time Soldiers in the state used the weapon system they will be issued for future deployment operations.

“It’s important for us

to be proficient with our weapon systems, including the new M17 service pistol,” said Gorman. “This is a big part of our marksmanship program and close quarters combat, and it was important for us to get familiar with this new weapon system.”

The SIG Sauer M17 weapon system is the newest service pistol for the U.S. Army and has made its way to Guard units across the country. There were key differences in the M17 versus the previous service pistol, including safety features in the weapon system itself.

“There’s a lot of safety features built into the weapon, so it’s important for our guys to get used to drawing the weapon, getting a site picture, firing and then holstering the weapon again,” said Army Staff Sgt. Sean Davis of Anchorage, with B. Co., 1-297 INF BN.

“The new trigger on these is much lighter; and there’s less recoil, so it’s important for guys to gain some muscle memory on the new weapon system.”

Davis said the weapon system performed well in the arctic climate.

“It’s below zero, and there wasn’t a single weapon that jammed,” said Davis. “Being an MP [Military Policeman] for 10 years, for being as cold as it is, the weapon performed excellent.”

The various training exercises allowed for mentorship of younger Soldiers to prepare them for future operations.

“To me this is another opportunity to train younger Soldiers and NCOs [non-commissioned officers] to pass on the knowledge I’ve acquired over the years,” said Romine. “I’m having a blast.”



March 6, 2020

# Civil Support Team conducts CBRN training alongside federal, state, local agencies

**Sgt. Ian Withrow**  
139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Members of the 103rd Civil Support Team, based in Anchorage, Alaska, and part of the Alaska National Guard, alongside local, state, and federal partners ranging from the local Fairbanks Fire Department to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, participated in a joint training exercise February 24th and 25th, 2020 as part of Arctic Eagle 20. The exercise, which involved the participants responding to a simulated Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear ‘all hazards’ response call, began with a mid-morning raid carried out by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies.

Teams of gear-laden first responders from the Fairbanks Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Alaska State Troopers entered the target, a dilapidated building that had been converted into a chemical and biological agent lab by the scenario designers, and provided the initial contact and assessment of the scene. Upon determining that the incident they responded to (a hostage situation) was part of a larger and more hazardous scene, the various law enforcement agencies pulled back and brought in the Fairbanks Hazardous Materials Unit. “Today our mission was to do an initial [reconnaissance]



Members of the Fairbanks police force, alongside Alaskan State Troopers and federal partners listen to an after action review after they breached a building for training purposes. Training such as Arctic Eagle 20 allows partnerships to work better together and better prepare for cold weather operations. (Photo by Spc. Kierra Harris, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

of the building to identify any hazards and materials inside,” said Sean Heaney, a hazmat technician with the Fairbanks North Star Borough Hazmat Team and Fairbanks resident. “For us being a response team, but also a volunteer team, typically we’ll arrive on scene after someone else has called us in.” The hazardous materials team provides an initial walkthrough and threat assessment when potential chemical, biological, or radiological dangers are encountered. “We’re prepared to deal

with most any threat,” Heaney said. “[But] The main types of incidents that we respond to, or would be prepared to train for, would be chemical incidents. An incident like this is a little bit more far-reaching, and usually requires the aid of military assistance.” When local teams determine the threat warrants it, they further elevate the site to the attention of the Civil Support Team, who immediately mobilize to take control of the situation. “We are responding to an incident commander call for suspected hazmat related substances,” said

Sgt. Fabiana Kirtley, an Italian-born member of the Alaska National Guard’s 103rd Civil Support Team out of Anchorage, Alaska. When a CST is called up by an incident commander, the team has one hour in which to respond and accept the mission. Shortly after activation an initial element heads out to set up a staging area, prepare equipment, and in most cases establish a decontamination line. The teams hone their craft not only through relentless unit level training, but also by participating in large scale exercises like

Exercise Arctic Eagle 20. Executing missions in differing climates and environments ensures their skills are up to any challenge. By combining harsh conditions with a widely varied assortment of participants, each of the groups involved develops the ability to quickly form cohesive, successful bonds with any given partner organization. “We train at a section level on a weekly basis,” said Kirtley, who serves as a survey team member. “And at a unit level on a monthly basis. We recreate scenarios kind of like this one. We train to meet our standards and exceed them. We train to perfection.” This site is one of seven training venues being utilized for Arctic Eagle 20, which is playing out across Alaska throughout the next several weeks. Arctic Eagle 20 provides a unique opportunity for participants, adding the complexities that come with conducting operations in an arctic environment to an already challenging and dynamic field. Agencies from across the country, the state, and the world are brought together to rehearse and train for a wide variety of dangerous situations, perfecting their skill sets in the blistering cold. As an arctic nation, this operation demonstrates a crucial capability to promote regional stability, and is a critical piece in improving interoperability and maintaining an arctic-ready force.

## Fort Wainwright Exchange’s ‘You Made the Grade’ Program rewards stellar military kids year-round

**Carina DeCino**  
Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

For 20 years, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service has celebrated the resiliency of military children who work hard in school, awarding them nearly \$550,000 through its You Made the Grade program. Fort Wainwright students in first through 12th grades who maintain a B average or higher are eligible to receive a \$5 gift card each grading period. Students who qualify for a gift card also have a chance to win a \$2,000, \$1,500 or \$500 Exchange gift card by filling out a sweepstakes entry form. “Military students

face unique challenges,” said Exchange general manager Gloria Sylvia, Fort Wainwright. “In fact, according to the Department of Defense Education Activity, military children move an average of six to nine times while they are in school. These young members of the military family also cope with their parents’ deployments, making new friends and the stresses of daily classwork. They deserve to be recognized and rewarded for excelling.” To receive the gift card and sweepstakes entry form, military students can bring their report card to the Fort Wainwright Exchange Main Store Admin Office. Ho-

meschooled students can participate by providing written affirmation of their grades from a parent or other community-authorized education provider. Students can submit one sweepstakes entry for each grading period. Students can send completed sweepstakes forms to: You Made the Grade PO Box 227398 Dallas, TX 75222-7398 “The Exchange is all in to make military communities the No. 1 place to live and work,” Sylvia said. “It has been a privilege to reward military students’ academic excellence for the last 20 years.”

## Fort Wainwright Families save with Exchange’s exclusive brands for the brave

**Carina DeCino**  
Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

Soldiers and their Families can make their dollars go further with the Army and Air Force Exchange Service’s exclusive brands, which deliver variety and quality without a big price tag. “The Exchange’s brands for the brave offer exclusive savings available only to the military community,” said Fort Wainwright Exchange general manager Gloria Sylvia. “Fort Wainwright Soldiers, retirees, veterans and military families have earned the benefit of tax-free shopping at the Exchange. These brands help the Exchange make military communities the No. 1 places to live and work.” Clothing brands such as Passports, PBX Pro, Junction West, Big Sky and more offer a variety of men’s and women’s basics, active wear and fashion apparel starting at \$7.99. Shoppers of all ages can update their wardrobe with the latest fashions, fitness apparel, loungewear, career clothing and more, while saving 50 to 65 percent when compared to name-brand equivalents. The littlest fashionistas can also find their styles at affordable prices. Gumballs, Buzz Cuts and PonyTails have military brats covered from newborns to teens,


with apparel priced at \$5, \$7.50, \$10, \$15 and \$20. Shoppers can save 20 to 50 percent over brand names by looking for these Exchange exclusive brands: •Simply Perfect offers the latest in fashionable home décor and kitchen wares. •Powerzone has savings on phone chargers, headphones, HDMI cables and more. •Exchange Select has military shoppers’ everyday needs covered, from health and beauty items to household goods like paper towels, cleaning supplies and diapers. •Patriot’s Choice offers nuts and snacks for shoppers on the go. “The Fort Wainwright Exchange delivers a spirit of savings to the military community,” Sylvia said. “These brands are just for them. We know that military shoppers have a lot of options, and we want to earn their business with great products at great prices.” Every purchase at the Exchange supports the military community. 100 percent of Exchange earnings are reinvested in the community, including through Quality-of-Life programs that support readiness and resiliency.

U.S. Army Garrison Alaska  
Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Division


# Storm Water Opinion Survey

Complete the online survey, link at:  
<https://home.army.mil/alaska/index.php/fort-wainwright/storm-water>

or scan the QR code to go directly to the survey!



Your honest answers help the Storm Water Quality Program improve public education and outreach, and ultimately to enhance the Garrison as a place for Arctic Warriors, families, and civilians to live, thrive, serve, and train.



Let minnow what you think!

If you would like to enter the drawing to win eco-friendly prizes, make sure to submit by April 7th, 2020!

5 to 10 minutes can make a king-sized difference to Sergeant Salmon!





EST. 1942

# ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF

\$2 BILLION IN ASSISTANCE PROVIDED SINCE 1942, INCLUDING MORE THAN \$1 BILLION SINCE 9/11

2019  
YEAR IN REVIEW

## OUR MISSION

FOUNDED IN 1942, ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF IS THE ARMY’S OWN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO PROVIDING EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SOLDIERS, RETIRED SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES DURING TIMES OF DISTRESS



FINANCIAL READINESS = FAMILY READINESS = ARMY READINESS

\$70 Million

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED IN 2019

40,000

SOLDIERS AND FAMILIES ASSISTED

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INTEREST-FREE LOANS & GRANTS

BASIC LIVING EXPENSES	\$29M
PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION	\$20M
EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS	\$8M
EMERGENCY TRAVEL	\$7M
FUNERAL EXPENSES	\$2M
OTHER	\$1.5M
MEDICAL & DENTAL	\$1.5M
PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION	\$1M
<b>TOTAL ASSISTANCE</b>	<b>\$70M</b>

## CAMPAIGN IMPACT SOLDIERS HELPING SOLDIERS

### SOLDIER CONTRIBUTIONS

ACTIVE DUTY	\$2.6M
RETIRED	\$3M
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5.6M</b>

## CAMPAIGN IMPACT SOLDIERS HELPING SOLDIERS

PROGRAM SERVICES	90%
ADMINISTRATION	7%
FUNDRAISING	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## A LEGACY OF CARING TOTAL IMPACT SINCE 1942

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED	\$2.0B
SOLDIERS SERVED	4M



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ARLINGTON, VA 22202



# U.S. Navy kicks off ICEX 2020

Commander, Submarine Forces officially commenced Ice Exercise 2020 in the Arctic Ocean with the construction of a temporary ice camp, Camp Seadragon, and the arrival of two U.S. Navy fast-attack submarines March 4.

ICEX 2020 is a three week biennial exercise that offers the Navy the opportunity to assess its operational readiness in the Arctic and train with other services, partner nations and allies to increase experience in the region, and maintain regional stability while improving capabilities to operate in the Arctic environment.

The Seawolf-class fast-attack submarine USS Connecticut (SSN-22) from Bremerton, Wash., and the Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS Toledo (SSN-769) from Groton, Connecticut, will conduct multiple Arctic transits, a North Pole surfacing and other training evolutions during their time in the region.

“The Arctic is a potential strategic corridor - between Indo-Pacific, Europe and the U.S. homeland - for expanded competition. The Submarine Force must maintain readiness by exercising in Arctic conditions to ensure they can protect national security interests and maintain favorable balances of power in the Indo-Pacific and Europe if called upon,” said Vice Adm. Daryl Caudle, commander, Submarine Forces. “ICEX 2020 provides the opportunity for the Submarine Force to demonstrate combat and tactical readiness for sustained Arctic operations in the unique and challenging Arctic environment.”

The Navy’s Arctic Submarine Laboratory, based in San Diego,

See ICEX on page 7

# New Hampshire’s 12th Civil Support Team trains in frigid Alaskan weather

**Spc. Kierra Harris**  
139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

U.S. Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Sara McPherson, the decontamination NCO and acting noncommissioned officer in charge with the 12th Civil Support Team out of New Hampshire, set up a sick call for local native Alaskans to seek medical treatment in Bethel, Alaska, on Feb. 29, during exercise Arctic Eagle 2020.

The CST exercise scheduled to take place in Bethel Feb. 29 through March 1 was canceled because of near-whiteout conditions. However, even in inclement weather, Staff Sgt. McPherson and the, approximately, 29 other Alaska National Guard, Alaska State Defense Force, and 12 CST personnel continued their domestic operations mission to support the people of Bethel.

“We had to adjust fire due to inclement weather,” McPherson said. “A lot of our berms [decontamination equipment] were extremely icy. We had to game plan in our head ‘It’s super slippery, how do we mitigate that for safety.’”

Undeterred by the weather, the CST conducted critical site surveys of the armory, port, water treatment facility, and grocery store. Traveling throughout the town of Bethel in a Small Unit Support Vehicle provided the opportunity to successfully test their cold-weather, decontamination and communications equipment and long-range communications equipment in subzero temperatures. The team also helped the armory manager perform maintenance on his Humvee after it was damaged plowing snow.

“We didn’t get to do the key leader meeting,” McPherson said. “But we weren’t miserable. The commander got us pizza, we watched a movie together. It wasn’t awful, we’re still going to do cold weather training outside. We’re still building the comradery and our bond.”

Alaskan weather can be unpredictable. Winter temperatures can rapidly drop below -40 degrees. In Bethel it is not uncommon for a blizzard to blow through unexpectedly causing the town to become isolated and logistics challenging.

To boost morale, Alaskan State Defense Force Col. John James took personnel on a tour of the local area in a SUSV. The town of Bethel has no roads leading in or out. Individuals have to either fly or arrive by boat. In the winter, when boating becomes impossible and the river freezes over, locals and the military personnel utilize the frozen waters as a sort of improvised highway.

Training alongside AKNG and ASDF personnel provided McPherson and the rest of 12 CST an incredible opportunity to test new equipment, refine sick-call and decontamination procedures, while developing invaluable relationships.

“We’re trying to utilize as much time as we can here while we’re in Alaska,” Lt. Col. Brian Ferdandes, 12th CST commander, says. “This is an opportunity that many people don’t get. Even if they get a chance to go to Alaska, they’re on a cruise ship or coming on vacation, so doing true arctic training in Alaska with native Alaskans is a once in a lifetime chance.”



March 6, 2020

Fort Wainwright shoppers can save more with Military Star!  
New accounts save 15% on first-day purchases March 5 to 19

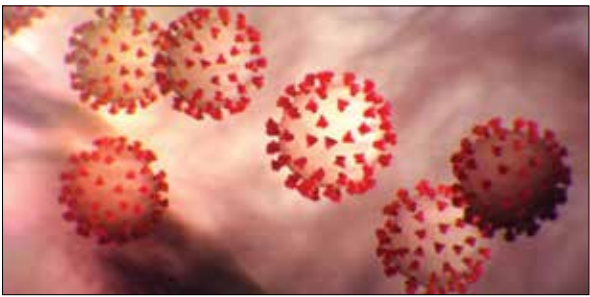
**Carina DeCino**  
Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

Spring is in the air ... and so are savings with Military Star. From March 5 through March 19, Fort Wainwright shoppers who apply and are approved for a new Military Star account will receive 15 percent off all purchases made the first day instead of the 10 percent discount regularly offered. The discount will appear as a credit on the first monthly billing statement. "With special discounts and cardholder-friendly terms, the Military Star card is

a financial benefit to military members and their families," said general manager Gloria Sylvia. "Opening a new account during this special promotion means extra on top of the everyday savings shoppers get with Military Star." Cardholders receive two points for every dollar spent with Military Star and automatically earn a \$20 rewards card every 2,000 points. Other benefits of the Military Star card include: •The lowest flat-rate APR (11.74 percent) among store cards—rate is offered to all cardholders upon

account approval. •No annual, late or over-limit fees. •Reduced-interest deployment plan with no payments required for eligible customers. The Exchange recently welcomed 4.1 million Veterans with service-connected disabilities, Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war and certain primary caregivers back to in-store shopping privileges at exchanges and commissaries. These new shoppers can also apply for a Military Star card for more opportunities to save money and earn rewards. New accountholders will receive the 15

percent discount on all first-day purchases at military exchanges and commissaries, as well as online at ShopMyExchange.com, myNavyExchange.com and ShopCGX.com. New accountholders who use Military Star to make an Armed Forces Recreation Center resort stay one of their first day's purchases from March 5 to 19 can take advantage of the 15 percent discount. The Military Star card is administered by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and is accepted at all military exchanges and commissaries. For more information, visit MyECP.com.



The Defense Department is making plans to combat the coronavirus, DOD leaders said today during a news conference. (Illustration by U.S. Army)

DOD makes plans to combat coronavirus

**Jim Garamone**  
Defense.gov

The Defense Department is making plans to combat the coronavirus, DOD leaders said yesterday during a news conference. For the past six weeks, defense leaders have been meeting to plan for any possible scenario with the virus that first surfaced in China. "We've issued a variety of [memoranda] and directives advising the force on how to deal with coronavirus," Defense Secretary Dr. Mark T. Esper said. The DOD civilian and military leadership, including all the service secretaries and combatant command commanders, have worked together to ensure the department is ready for short- and long-term scenarios, as well as domestic and international situations. Esper stressed that commanders at all levels have the authority and guidance they need to operate. "(U.S. Northern Command) remains the global integrator for all DOD efforts and entities," Esper said. "My number one priority remains to protect our forces and their families; second is to safeguard our mission capabilities and third [is] to support the interagency whole-of-government's approach. We will continue to take all necessary precautions to ensure that our people are safe and able to continue their very important mission." Army Gen. Mark A. Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the military has existing plans to combat an infectious disease outbreak. The military is executing those plans. DOD is communicating regularly with operational commanders to assess how the virus might impact our exercises and ongoing operations around the world, the general said. A command post exercise in South Korea has been postponed, but Exercise Cobra Gold in Thailand is continuing. Milley also said that military research laboratories are working "feverishly" to try to come up with a vaccine. Commanders are taking all necessary precautions because the virus is unique to every situation and every location, Esper said. "We're relying on them to make good judgments," he said. As new issues come up, DOD planners will work with all to combat the spread of the virus.



**Garrison pre command course**  
Installation Management Command's commanding general, Lt. Gen. Doug Gabram, spoke to inbound installation leaders at a garrison pre command course. "You are going to be challenged. You're not getting graded on how many bad things happen to you, but how you respond. How you get back up and keep your garrison in the fight." (Courtesy photo)

Sustainment package delivery and PJ jump for Arctic Eagle

U.S. Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer Brandon Raile, public affairs, waits in the cold for the exercise to begin near Deadhorse, Alaska, in support of Exercise Arctic Eagle, Feb. 25, 2020. The Alaska National Guard is hosting Exercise Arctic Eagle 2020, a joint-training exercise, Feb. 20 to March 6, 2020, throughout Alaska, including Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Eielson Air Force Base, Fort Wainwright, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and as far north as Teshekpuk Lake. As a homeland security and emergency response exercise, Arctic Eagle 20 is designed to increase the National Guard's ability and effectiveness to operate in the extreme cold-weather conditions found in Arctic environments. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Amy Picard)



ICEX: Kicks off Continued from page 6

serves as the lead organization for coordinating, planning and executing the exercise involving five nations, two submarines and more than 100 participants over the three weeks of operations. "The United States Submarine Force has been operating in the Arctic for decades, as our Navy is called upon to protect United States sovereign

rights, the Submarine Force is expected to play a large role in our Arctic defense. Exercises like ICEX 2020 provide us with the opportunity to train and integrate the undersea domain into our Arctic defense," said Caudle. Ice Camp Seadragon is a temporary ice camp that was established on a sheet of ice in the Arctic

Ocean, known as an ice floe. Seadragon will serve as a temporary command center for conducting submarine operations and under-ice navigation exercises. The camp consists of shelters, a command center and infrastructure to safely house and support more than 45 personnel at any one time. "ASL serves as the focal point for submarine Arctic operations by planning, embarking experienced Arctic operations specialists, maintaining the Navy's corporate knowledge on submarine Arctic matters, and developing/installing special equipment used to enhance the safety and efficiency of submarine Arctic operations," said Howard Reese, director, Arctic Submarine Lab. The camp gets its

namesake from USS Seadragon (SSN-584), the first submarine to transit the Northwest Passage. During the transit, Seadragon conducted the first hydrographic survey of the Northwest Passage and became the first vessel to navigate under an iceberg. Since the success of Seadragon's Arctic navigation initiatives, Arctic operations have been a crucial part of the missions conducted by nuclear submarines. For more than 70 years, submarines have conducted under-ice operations in the Arctic region in support of inter-fleet transit, training, cooperative allied engagements and routine operations. The U.S. Submarine Force has completed approximately 100 Arctic exercises.



On March 1, we celebrate the U.S. Army Enlisted Medical Corps Anniversary and salute those who've committed to our Army and to our Nation. Thank you for your many contributions and sacrifices and being the backbone of Army Medicine. (Courtesy illustration)

