

ALASKA POST

FREE

an edition of the
FAIRBANKS
Daily News - Miner

The Interior Military News Connection

Vol. 11, No. 29

Fort Wainwright, Alaska

July 24, 2020

1-25th SBCT uncases its colors following return from deployment

Col. Matthew Brown (left), 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Matthew Ladd (right), 1-25th SBCT command sergeant major, uncase the unit's colors July 23 signifying the brigade's return home from its recent deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. (Photo by Daniel Nelson, U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Wainwright Public Affairs)



Fort Greely employee joins Alaska Army Guard



U.S. Army Pfc. Katrina Hopper, an employee of the Fort Greely Child Development Center, graduated Army Basic Training on July 10. Hopper hopes to be approved for U.S. Citizenship by early 2021. (Photo Credit, Fort Sill Photography)

Angela J. Glass
U.S. Army Garrison
Alaska, Fort Greely
Public Affairs

U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Greely Child Development Center employee Katrina Hopper, a native of Manila, Philippines graduated U.S. Army Basic Training on July 10, and is now transitioning to attend Advanced Individual Training.

Pfc. Hopper joined the Alaska Army Guard as a 92Y Logistician, and will serve one weekend a month, plus two weeks a year. Once she has completed her AIT training, she will return to her CDC position at Fort Greely. Hopper's hope is to eventually acquire a position with the 49th Missile Defense Battalion.

Hopper's non-citizen status and age presented multiple

hurdles for her to cross before entering the Army Guard.

At the encouragement of her spouse, she completed the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and received high marks. Hopper then completed a request for an age waiver and solicited letters of recommendation from military members at Fort Greely.

Once the age waiver was approved, than the real work of Basic Training began.

"Basic Training was fun and challenging," stated Hopper. "I am joining only a few people from the Philippines that get the opportunity to serve for the U.S. Army and I am happy to have made it through."

Hopper hopes to be approved for U.S. Citizenship by early 2021.

MEDDAC-AK welcomes new commander

Brandy Ostanik
Medical Department Activity – Alaska
Public Affairs

Medical Department Activity - Alaska changed command during a ceremony July 17 at Bassett Army Community Hospital where Col. Constance L. Jenkins relinquished command to Col. Eli Lozano.

In an effort to comply with COVID-19 procedures for maintaining social distancing and limiting group sizes, the event combined the tradition of a change of command ceremony with technology, for a live-streamed virtual experience for would-be attendees.

In addition to limiting attendance, to cut down on travel between states, Regional Health Command – Pacific commanding general, Brig. Gen. Jack Davis, requested support from U.S. Army Alaska commanding general, Maj. Gen. Peter B. Andrysiak to host the ceremony.

See WELCOME on page 2

Nutrition Corner: Nutrition 101

Taste is at the top of the list that drives what food Americans choose. Making the choice to eat healthy does not have to be a sentence to have a bland diet. Make healthy eating taste good to help you keep up with your healthy lifestyle. Enhance the flavor of your meat, poultry, and fish with high heat/lower fat techniques such as pan searing, grilling, and broiling. These will help to brown meat and enhance flavor. Try this even with your slow cooked roasts and

you will see the difference in taste! Brush your vegetables with some herbs and heart healthy olive oil and roast them at a high temperature (450oF). Use different colors of peppers with different flavors to spice things up a bit. Even small amounts of hot pepper sauce can enhance recipes. Acidic ingredients like lemon and orange peel help to balance flavor. Don't forget the low calorie condiments like wasabi, salsas and mustards to add a delicious pop to your recipes.

When you use onions in your recipes, try caramelizing them in a small amount of oil to bring out their flavor. Remember that, most of the time, you can cut some sugar, salt, and/or fat from recipes without altering the flavor and quality. Don't blindly follow recipes – make alterations to make them both delicious and nutritious.

Featured Food:
Figs. Figs are a great snack on their own or as part of a recipe. Figs are naturally

low in fat and sodium but contain almost 1g of fiber per fig.

Recipe Spotlight: Chocolate Covered Figs:

¾ cup dark chocolate
12 fresh black figs
1/4 -1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts or pecans

•Melt chocolate in double boiler or microwave
•Dip figs into melted chocolate

•Sprinkle with nuts and place on parchment paper
•Refrigerate for 30 minutes

References:
Cunningham, Eleese. Seven ways to enhance the flavor of your meals. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website. <http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/planning-and-prep/cooking-tips-and-trends/enhancing-the-flavor-of-your-meals>. April 7, 2016.. Accessed April 11, 2016.

WELCOME

Continued from page 1

“The new environment we are in, none of us ever imagined that when we leave or come into command that this is how it would turn out,” said Andrysiak. “In a space where so few are invited, where you wear a mask and feel like you cannot really engage with one another. We are up on Facebook live, so while folks may not be here physically, they are out there and participating. We will make the best of it because this is a special day.”

Andrysiak suggest command is the most significant achievement of an officer’s career and is the ultimate vote of confidence from one’s superior officers as well as one of immense personal satisfaction and unrelenting pressure.

“She [Col. Jenkins] accomplished a lot in her two years of command and there is no way to list all the things she has accomplished. Her passionate support to staff and focus on quality healthcare for soldiers and families raised MEDDAC-Alaska to a new level of excellence,” said Andrysiak

“Your efforts to approve healthcare are extraordinary. You’ve definitely set us up for success on the readiness side and the care of soldiers, families and veterans. Aside from Tom [Col. Jenkins’ husband], I am your number one fan. Speaking for the entire US Army Alaska, on behalf of Big. Gen. Davis, Regional Health Command – Pacific, congratulations on a job well done.”

Jenkins, who took command of MEDDAC-AK in July 2018 will now be serving as Chief of Staff at Regional Health Command-Atlantic.

During remarks following the ceremonial passing of the colors, Jenkins spoke of MEDDAC-AK staff’s professionalism and their commitment to living the motto, ‘Above All We Care.’

“Above all we care in not sim-

ply our motto, it is more than just words, it is what we do every day,” said Jenkins. “Our team sees people when they are at their most vulnerable, when they are sick, when they are worried because their child is ill, when they are scared about a potentially life-changing diagnosis and when we are helping families reconcile the loss of a loved one. Above all is engrained in every fiber of this organization.”

Jenkins spoke of MEDDAC-AK receiving the Gold Seal of Approval from the Joint Commission after a rigorous accreditation process.

“We did not just meet the standard but exceeded it and we had one of the best surveys seen across the MEDCOM in years,” said Jenkins.

Jenkins closed her remarks by welcoming Lozano and his wife, Serena, to MEDDAC-AK and giving her confidence that they would continue to carry the torch of excellence.

Jenkins, a nurse, comes to Fort Wainwright from U.S. Army Medical Command in Fall Church, Va. where she served as director for talent management for the Office of the Surgeon General.

Lozano comes to Fort Wainwright from Martin Army Community Hospital at Fort Benning, Ga. where he served as Deputy Commander of Administration and Chief of Staff.

“The opportunity to command is a humbling privilege,” said Lozano, “and to be able to do it in the Golden Heart of Alaska is like winning the lottery.”

“Maj. Gen. Andrysiak and Brig. Gen. Davis, I am absolutely committed to working with you and your experienced leadership teams to ensure we provide highly reliable, quality healthcare to maximize the readiness of our force and health of our soldiers and their families.

History Snapshots

Memorializing the people of our past – Nysteen Road



1st Lt. Norman Alfred Nysteen served his country during World War II with the 28th Bomber Group, Heavy, 73rd Bomber Squadron. Born in 1917 in Oregon, he attended the University in Eugene and, on July 26, 1940, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps at Vancouver Barracks, Washington.

He was the co-pilot in a seven-person crew of a B-26 Marauder, tail number #40-1408,

with Howard Jaycox, Roy Jordan, James Lee, James Smart, George Thornbrough and Joseph Wiseman. On June 4, 1942, while returning from a mission to bomb a Japanese Task Force, they crashed in the Aleutian Islands. All crew members were all recorded as “Missing in action or lost at sea.” The crash site was found about 50 miles from Cold Bay on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula the following month.

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

Stay Vigilant
As COVID-19 numbers continue to climb, it is important to know many new cases cannot be traced to another COVID-19 positive person. This means community spread is here and it is important to be diligent whenever outside the home. Wash hands. Wear a mask. Avoid crowded areas.

Blood Drive
Help us help both our military and civilian community by donating blood at our Blood Drive July 29 and 30. Donations take about an hour and ends with much coveted snacks. To register, click the links on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BassettACH> or call 907-456-5645.

Body Composition Testing
Take a quick body composition test to determine body fat percentage and work with our Army Wellness Center to track progress. Call 907-361-2234 to schedule an appointment.

Youth Physicals
Bassett Army Community Hospital is offering sports and school physicals by appointment July 29, August 5 and 12 for children 5 to 18 for TRICARE Prime beneficiaries. To schedule, call 907-361-4000 and reserve a time for each child.

Patient Praise
“I need to express my gratitude to Mrs. Joan in mammography. I see her each year, for the past several years, for my annual mammogram. Year after year, she is a kind face, has a gentle manner and does her job to perfection. Some don’t realize how helpful and comforting it is to be greeted by this kind of person when you are about to have a decidedly unpleasant and often embarrassing experience. She eases the anxiety with her calm and kind manner and takes care of all who come through her door with the utmost professionalism, and she makes sure the time spent produces the best possible results. Thank you, Joan!”

ALASKA POST

The Interior Military News Connection

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The Chaplain’s Corner

Eat or die

Chaplain (Maj.) Daryl Densford
U.S. Army Garrison
Alaska Deputy Garrison Chaplain

Elijah was one of those Old Testament prophets who was bigger than life. He boldly confronted the political and religious leaders of Israel and successfully challenged their false gods. On one occasion, he actually put to death Israel’s false prophets after defeating them in a challenge between their gods and Elijah’s God. After the slaughter of the false prophets, the Queen of Israel com-

mitted to kill Elijah, so Elijah fled into the wilderness. We read in 1 Kings 19:4 that he became so distraught over Jezebel’s threat that he prayed to die: “...he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. ‘I have had enough, Lord,’ he said. ‘Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.’”

Elijah seems to have forgotten how God miraculously consumed not just the sacrifice but also the wood, stones and soil around the altar

during his competition with the prophets of Baal just a few day before (1 Kings 18). He also seems to have forgotten how birds miraculously brought him bread and meat to eat and how the flour and oil in Zarephath never ran out (both in 1 Kings 17). Elijah lost sight of God’s power and provision and was willing to just lay down and die.

God had not forgotten Elijah though. When he was ready to give up, God was there. In this instance, God sent an angel to give Elijah bread and water to

eat. So good was the bread God provided that Elijah was able to go on the strength gained from it for forty days!

How often do we allow our circumstances to get us down? Maybe the recent deployment really got to you this time. Perhaps the COVID-19 pandemic, and all of the related restrictions, are causing you to question if it’s worth it. Or maybe, it’s just the stresses of life that are piling up and making you feel like you can’t go on. Like Elijah, it is easy for us to forget all the good that God has done for



us when we are in the midst of trouble. Like Elijah, we may sometimes feel like just laying down to die.

But just as God did not forget Elijah, He does not forget us. When we face the troubles of life, God has a way for us to get through them. When we feel like there is no

way out or that death may be better than living through our circumstances, God is ready to help. But like Elijah, we have to accept God’s help. God may not send birds or an angel to show us He is there, but our simple prayer: “God help me!” will open the door to his aid.

God can redeem our past

Chaplain (Maj.) Sean Crow
49th Missile Defense Battalion Chaplain

I remember back when I was the chaplain for a local rescue mission how many people had come there for different reasons but one thing seemed to remain the same for all: that they wanted to erase the past.

Many there had arrived because of shortfalls of income. Some because of a falling out from their spouse or family and didn’t have a place to stay. Others had come because of the rejuvenation program our management had created for those coming from jail in order to help build individuals self-reliance and spiritual recognition of who they were under God’s law and grace.

When you look at the news of activists

today, many actions of what some call “cancel culture” result in anger. Anger that shows the epitome of the saying “an eye for an eye will make the whole world blind”. I’ve always disliked this saying because it aborts any sense of justice. Seeing the news of what activists are doing today however brings that moral to life, for many who are ‘casting the first stone’ have hardly any bearing of purity or righteousness to stand on and judge from. The same goes for using our beliefs or faith to correct societal wrongs of the past without recognizing God for the redemption he already offers instead.

C.S. Lewis had warned the public about even allowing religion or Christianity to be used as a blunt for “social justice”

to be as a means for change, and blinded to the change already made through repentance and forgiveness that God gives to our past for those who accept it. In a book Lewis wrote about two figurative spiritual enemy combatants, Screwtape, one of the characters, comments, “Certainly we do not want men to allow their Christianity to flow over into their political life, for the establishment of anything like a really just society would be a major disaster. On the other hand, we do want, and want very much, to make men treat Christianity [just] as a means.”

Our faith should never just be a means to correcting wrongs. Our desire should be tempered by faith. True faith in God and what he has done to correct past wrongs,

may be the right view towards healing, and the redemption of the past. If we as a people keep chasing down the descendants of those who did wrong in the past, no one will be righteous enough.

Romans 3:10-12 says it well that “As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.’” We have no standing to be sitting in judgement, only one does: our creator God, who loves and gives himself up as the qualifying sacrifice to pay for our past wrong doings.

As Soldiers we often see very well the records of our past through evaluation, After Action Reviews



and other means. Soldiers know what it means to have an “on-the-spot” correction. Correction of the past is not always possible, but the beauty of a relationship with God is that our correction of the past is paid by for by Him. It is our

job not to just pass on corrections to the past unjustly such as is being touted today by activists, but to rely on God’s redemption of our past. We should build each other up in community and reliance on God’s promises.

Army seeks environmentally friendlier ammunition

U.S. Army CCDC Army Research Laboratory Public Affairs

The U.S. Army uses a lot of bullets and explosives to fight and win on the modern battlefield. Known chemical compounds that explode, technically known as energetics, are lead-based primary explosives. In new experiments, Army researchers and their partners at Purdue University observed some new compounds that may be an environmentally friendly alternative.

In a peer-reviewed paper published by Chemistry – A European Journal, researchers from the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command’s Army Research Laboratory and Purdue University describe the synthesis of new environmentally friendly primary explosive materials. These green replacements could find application in small, medium and large caliber bullet and gun propellant ammunition.

What makes this research ground-breaking is that two unique backbones, known as heterocycles, that form the basis of energetic materials, were combined in a way never achieved before. Researchers said the result



Future American Soldiers may be armed with environmentally friendly ammunition if recent fundamental research translates into a manufactured product. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Bunn)

is very high energy, high-nitrogen content with a high gas generating ability, all desirable attributes for an explosive.

The Army has been searching for solutions for many years to develop lead-free primary explosives that satisfy environmental regulations associated with lead contamination.

This research supports the Army’s modernization goals of Long-Range Precision Fires and Soldier Lethality. Researchers said percussion primer mixtures, which contain primary explosives, are typically found in just about every bullet

that can be imagined that is shot from a gun or tank.

Prof. Davin Piercey, assistant professor of Materials Engineering and Mechanical Engineering at Purdue University, and his group, did the lion’s share of the work with the synthesis efforts for these materials, according to Army researcher Dr. Jesse Sabatini.

“The development of these materials provides a potential pathway for toward the development of lead-free technology,” Sabatini said. “We were just happy to have played a role in assisting his efforts here so that the molecules that

were pursued were the right ones.”

The Army’s corporate research laboratory and Purdue worked jointly to develop the synthesized targets on paper, but Purdue synthesized these materials in their lab, Sabatini said. The Army provided the historical context of primer development.

Explosives are used not just for blowing stuff up. Inside of a bullet casing there is a small amount of primary explosive which is used to ignite the powder inside the cartridge. One of the materials that’s used in there right now is lead styphnate.

“Right now, whenever you are shooting, you’re going to be spreading lead into the air around you,” Piercey said. “Any use of lead is going to end up polluting the environment in small amounts. The more lead that you remove, the better it is for the environment.”

Piercey pointed to a study that found that people who had been shooting a lot had elevated lead levels.

The joint effort between the Army and Purdue highlights the laboratory’s Open Campus business model, which allows for collaboration between Army researchers, academia, industry and

small business, both nationally and globally.

Sabatini said he hopes to see this research result in real world solutions for American Soldiers.

“If you aren’t making stuff that transitions, that leaves the lab and goes to formulators, then you should not even be in this business,” Sabatini said. “This joint research has the potential to be transitioned to our Army partners that work in primary explosives.”

Piercey pointed to a video his team made showing silver salt detonating when heated. He said the video shows the high performance of even small amounts of the new primary explosive.

Sabatini said he envisions future work with Professor Piercey’s team as they jointly develop ideas that we are interested in for the benefit of the Department of Defense.

This research has the potential to be transitioned to Army partners that work in primary explosives. Sabatini said there is interest from the CCDC-Armaments Center at Picatinny Arsenal, New Jersey, to explore these compounds for primary explosive-based applications for bullets and gun propellants. The next step is to find a transition partner.

Fort Wainwright BOSS Program awards volunteerism

Spc. Austin Mooney

The Fort Wainwright Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program awarded a total of thirteen Certificates of Achievement at the Installation BOSS meeting Jul. 16, 2020, to nine different Soldiers for their volunteer efforts through both the BOSS and Soldiers Against Drunk

Driving programs. These nine Soldiers stood out from the rest of the volunteers by providing more than 50 volunteer hours in quarter one and quarter two of fiscal year 2020. These volunteers alone have provided services equaling that of more than \$12,000 just within six months. Spc. Austin Mooney, BOSS president, and Staff

Sgt. Joseph McClure, BOSS vice president, have implemented a process of providing awards to volunteers who provide 50 or more hours of their free time to the BOSS and SADD programs within a quarter or three months. “We revamped the volunteer award system to not only encourage volunteers to participate with BOSS

and in the local community, but to make sure that we show the appreciation that all volunteers deserve,” Mooney said. “Volunteers are under appreciated, and we want to change that.” The Fort Wainwright BOSS program offers many volunteer opportunities not only to BOSS eligible Soldiers, but to all DOD card holders. The Fort

Wainwright BOSS Program serves to enhance the quality of life for single service members in the interior Alaska area, to include single service members with dependents and geographical bachelors, by offering recreation and community service activities, as well as facilitating any quality of life issues that service members may encounter.

Army looks to better attract gaming industry for training simulations

Sean Kimmons

Army News Service

The Army’s Synthetic Training Environment Cross-Functional Team soon plans to unveil new labs where it can tap into the innovation of vendors that could one day improve individual and collective training.

At its headquarters in Orlando, the team will open a renovated Technology Integration Facility this week. The facility creates a secured setting, where vendors with promising technology can run it on a military test network.

“We really want to revolutionize the way the Army trains,” said Maj. Gen. Maria Gervais, who leads the STE CFT, one of eight modernization teams under Army Futures Command.

The team’s goal is to establish a common synthetic environment, where live, virtual and constructive training can be converged, she said. The Army currently does that at 12 permanent sites, but they are mainly for the active-duty component and require long planning timelines and lots of resources such as contractors to operate the event.

“We’re trying to get after common standards, common data, common terrain and an open architecture” to enable rapid integration of future plug-and-play trainers, she

said Thursday during the Austin Dialogue on Innovation in Defense online event.

The team, along with its Navy partners, will also open a “Technology Grove” in early August. It will serve as an incubator lab where vendors, particularly small businesses, can demonstrate their technology.

“We’ll look under the hood and give you feedback right there if you’re on the right track or not,” she said, adding that promising technology may then move to the Technology Integration Facility for rigorous testing.

App store

The Army’s STE information system, which is currently in development, will serve similar to an operating system on a smartphone, she said.

When the iPhone was first released, she said, it only had a handful of standard applications developed by Apple. The company then created its App Store, which now has over 2 million apps available to download on iPhones.

The STE information system will have three baseline apps: training simulation software that will drive simulations; training management tools to plan, execute and assess training; and One World Terrain that will be 3-D and readily accessible either on hand or pulled from a commer-



The Synthetic Training Environment Technology Integration Facility serves as a place for Soldiers to provide feedback that helps in developing new training technologies. Vendors may also bring new technologies to the TIF for assessment, and those that meet a valid need may be integrated into the STE. (Photo by U.S. Army)

cial asset into simulators in less than 72 hours, she said.

Her team aims to build on those apps by leveraging the work of vendors in the \$100 billion-plus virtual, gaming and telecommunications industry, she said.

“We’ve seen that the gaming technology is advancing at a rate far faster than we can probably keep up with,” she said. “We want to understand what is in the realm of the possible, and work with innovative small businesses and academia.”

The team has already had success with the Squad Immersive Virtual Trainer, which will begin to be fielded next year as part of the Integrated Visual Augmentation System. The IVAS is a mixed-reality, heads-

up display that overlays simulated imagery within a Soldier’s view of the real world.

Future challenges

The team, though, faces many hurdles as it crafts new, realistic training systems. One of its top needs is training-specific artificial intelligence that can determine when to intervene with intelligent tutoring.

A second one is to develop free-thinking, non-scripted, non-player characters, which are still inadequate in today’s games and simulations, she said. Her team would like to apply machine learning techniques that could make characters more adaptive.

“We need to get to a free-thinking enemy, so that we can provide the best training pos-

sible,” she said.

A third challenge deals with automating the cleanup of terrain in simulations. Artists now manually do this, which takes time and additional resources.

Another effort to reduce overhead is human controller replacements. AI is still not mature enough to execute collective training simulations without human control, which can be very costly. In a corps-level exercise, for instance, the Army brings in about 1,200 contractors to help run simulations, she said.

“We’ve got to figure out a better way to make it less costly to the Army,” she said, “and also to drive down some of our planning timelines that are typically about 120 days to

execute those types of operations.”

And lastly, the team is looking for ways to effectively manage all the data that is associated with future warfare simulations. As an example, a brigade-level exercise has about 2 million entities that have to be replicated and handled. But for larger exercises using perhaps the terrain of a megacity, those entities can jump to roughly 10 million that all have to be synchronized and timed.

“We want them to be able to train on the actual terrain that either they’re going to fight on, or they’re going to conduct that mission on,” she said of Soldiers. “We want to do that with the realism and be able to replicate that operational environment.”

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HHC holds social distanced change of command

Headquarters and Headquarters Company held a change of command ceremony July 22 at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center. Outgoing company commander Capt. Christian Crevar relinquished command to Capt. Robert Humphrey in a time honored ceremony presided over by garrison commander Col. Christopher Ruga. (Photo by Eve Baker, U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Wainwright Public Affairs)



Army readies robots for underground tunnels

U.S. Army CCDC Army Research Laboratory Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command's Army Research Laboratory released a software suite that simulates the dangerous and unpredictable conditions of an underground tunnel network. Researchers interested in developing robots for subterranean environments can now use this software suite to virtually test new capabilities and techniques.

Autonomous robots have made steady progress in various environments above ground; however, scientists and engineers have yet to fully overcome the unique challenges found in underground locations, such as human-made tunnel systems and natural cave networks.

Army researchers believe that their software suite can facilitate the development of robots that can exploit underground environments and solve problems below the Earth's surface.

"Subterranean robots could one day be useful for mining disaster recovery, in future events like the Chilean mine collapse in 2010 as well as coal mining disasters we've had in the United States in the past," said Dr. John Rogers, an Army research scientist within the laboratory's Intelligence for Robotics branch. "In addition to disaster relief, this is a very Army-relevant problem. For any sort of tunnel operation, you might want to send robots into an unknown subterranean structure to gather information before you send Soldiers in."

The software suite

contains a dataset that simulates the subterranean environment of a Pittsburgh research mine, Army researchers said. Referred to as the SubT-Tunnel dataset, its simulation replicates the objective of the 2019 DARPA Subterranean Challenge Tunnel Circuit.

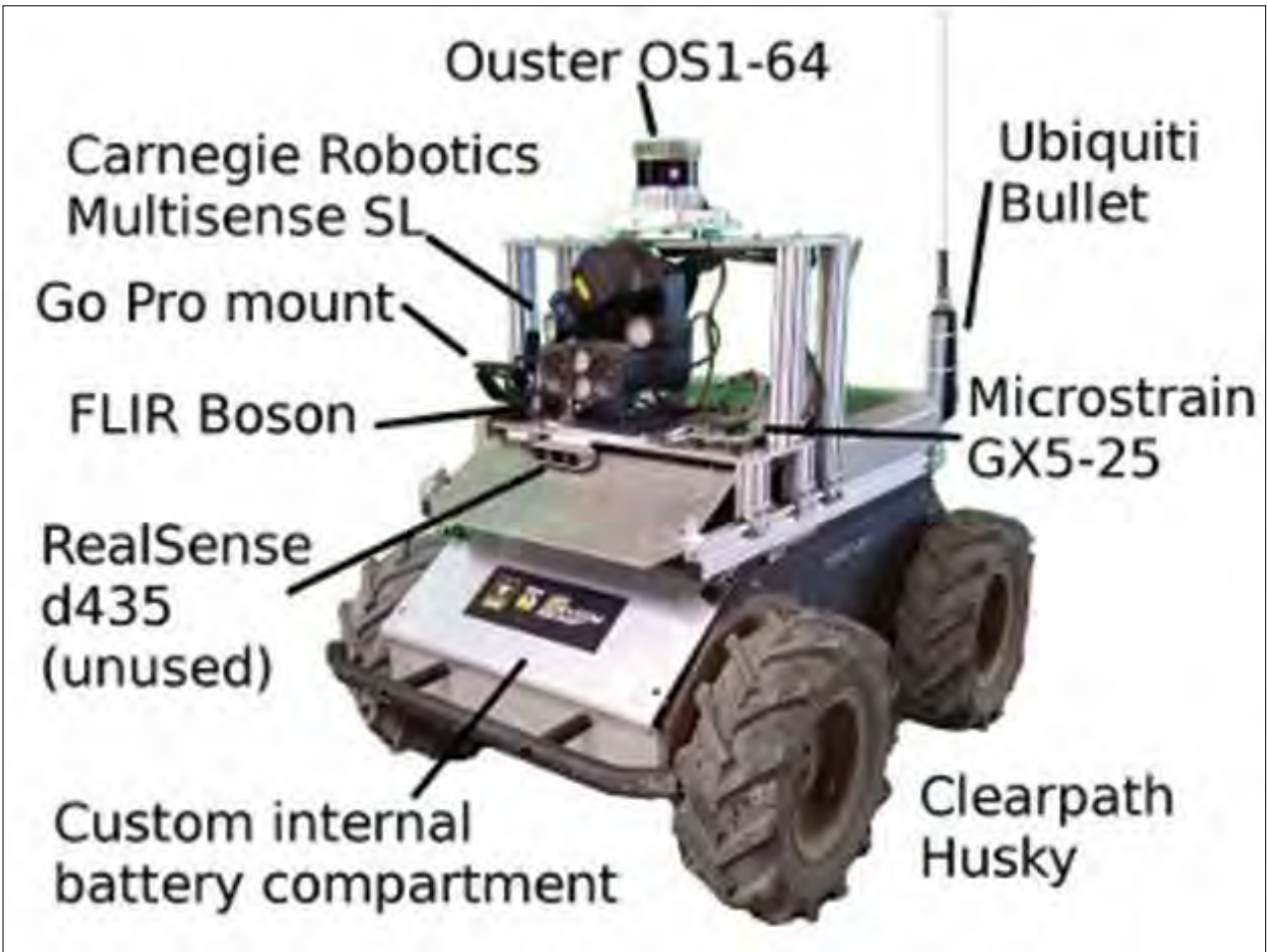
The dataset virtually positions an autonomous robot system at the entrance of an underground maze and determines how well it can obtain the location of five different types of items placed throughout the underground system.

With the SubT-Tunnel dataset, Rogers and his colleagues want to see the various solutions that people come up with for a problem known as simultaneous localization and mapping, or SLAM, in a subterranean environment.

"Localization means keeping track of where you are in the known world, and mapping is the process of building a map of somewhere when you know where you are," Rogers said. "SLAM is a classical problem in robotics where you can do one or the other quite easily but doing both simultaneously is very difficult."

According to Rogers, commercial approaches often rely on GPS to address the SLAM problem, but robots can't receive satellite signals underground. As a result, the Army has a vested interest in how other teams choose to overcome this obstacle in addition to a few other considerations.

"Typically, robot mapping technology is judged in terms of relative accuracy, where the location of the target is dependent on



Researchers use a Clearpath Husky robot to collect data for the Tunnel Circuit datasets. (Illustration by U.S. Army)

context clues like the location of surrounding objects," Rogers said. "[But we] wanted to emphasize this notion of absolute accuracy, so we can have one global frame of reference that we can use to pinpoint targets on an x-y-z coordinate."

The decision to prioritize absolute accuracy over relative accuracy stems from the fact that many external interactions with underground tunnels, such as drilling from above to ventilate or provide emergency supplies to survivors during an accident, require accurate absolute estimates of the survivors' locations, the experts said.

Users can implement their approach to the SLAM problem in the SubT-Tunnel dataset and gauge how well it locates and maps the robot as it travels through the under-

ground maze through a points-based system.

The simulation scores the performance of the robot and its SLAM approach based on how many items the robot finds and pinpoints on a map. At the same time, the SubT-Tunnel dataset also keeps track of other parameters of interest, such as how close the robot managed to get to each of the artifacts in finer grain detail.

"The software suite contains instructions on how to load your SLAM system into the dataset," Rogers said. "There's also a program running on the side that determines how well that SLAM

technique tracks the location of the robot. Whenever the robot sees something, the user knows exactly how accurate their SLAM was at that moment in time."

Army researchers created the SubT-Tunnel dataset to accommodate a wide variety of SLAM approaches. The dataset consists of laser-scan data taken from a robot's point of view as it was driven through the underground maze. In addition to LiDAR data, their robot also collected metrics such as camera feed, inertial measurement units and wheel odometry.

Once they built the

SubT-Tunnel dataset, Rogers and his colleagues used it to test several approaches, including Google's Cartographer and even the laboratory's original OmniMapper software program.

"We wanted to have a diversity of different types of data so that other approaches can be evaluated and not just ones that were the most similar to the way we do SLAM," Rogers said. "With the SubT-Tunnel dataset, anyone can plug in their own implementation of SLAM and then be able to evaluate how well they would have been able to score on the Subterranean Challenge."

FORT WAINWRIGHT
SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT HOTLINE

907-353-7272

DOD SAFE HELPLINE

877-995-5247

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Fort Wainwright Family & MWR

Weekly Events

July 25 - August 1

26

ATV Safety Course
August 2
1 p.m.

Completing an ATV Safety Course is required to register for ATV Trips or check-out an ATV. ATV Safety Course deadline is July 26. Cost is \$15 per person. Face coverings required.

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 4050
Call 361-6349/6350, registration required

29

Online Soldier Showdown
August 1
Varies

You Got Game? Prove it. Compete in the worldwide online Esports Soldier Showdown. This FREE gaming tournament is open to all Active Duty Army and National Guard. Saturday, August 1 tournament is FIFA (PS4). Registration opens July 29. Fort Wainwright Soldiers register for NA West.

Online Soldier Showdown
<https://www.armymwr.com/esports>, registration required

29

Resume Writing Workshop
July 29
10 - 11:30 a.m.

Spruce up an old resume or create a new one with Army Community Services. This workshop is for Soldiers, Family Members, Retirees, Veterans and Civilians.

Army Community Services, Bldg 3401
Call 353-4227, registration required

31

Warrior Zone Movie Night
July 31
Doors open at 5 p.m.

Join us for movie night at the Warrior Zone! Doors open at 5 p.m. and movie starts at 6 p.m. Spaces are limited. Don't forget to grab a bite to eat! Must be 18+ to enter.

Warrior Zone, Bldg 3205
Call 353-1087

1

Wickersham Dome Hike
August 1
9 a.m. - Noon & 1 - 4 p.m.

Come hike the Wickersham Dome trail with ODR! This trail offers diverse terrain. On a good day, we could see a variety of wildlife from moose, caribou, sheep, and bears!

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 4050
Call 361-6349/6350, registration required



Women in the Wilderness is taking on Hatchet throwing on August 2! Register by July 26. For more information, go to wainwright.armymwr.com.
@WainwrightMWR #WainwrightMWR

Big changes coming to Army procedure for recovering lost or damaged property

Army G-4

The procedure to recover lost or damaged property is going digital on an Army-wide basis today, thanks to an innovation by the Minnesota National Guard to improve its stewardship of property.

“We are moving from a 1977 Pontiac to a 2020 Ford,” says Col. Joe Ricker, G-4’s deputy director for Enterprise Systems. “It is certainly a big change.”

The change means all Soldiers can now initiate Financial Liability Investigation of Property Loss procedures electronically. The process, called eFLIPL, is similar to using online tax software programs, where users answer questions, and the forms are completed in the background.

The Army has billions of dollars of assets in inventories, and ensuring accountability and maintenance of it is not only important, but also a challenge. All Soldiers sign for individual equipment, but Soldiers don’t always realize just how expensive the equipment is until it is lost or damaged.

The Army uses the investigations to determine if

the proximate cause for the loss is based on negligence or willful misconduct, and if assessing financial liability is appropriate, says Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Johnson, senior logistics staff NCO in the G-4’s Property Accountability Division.

Johnson says the process includes several layers of review, can take months and involve many people. “With the electronic system, it will reduce the burden on commanders,” he says. “They will be able to have better oversight. There will be uniformity among all commands, the process will be easier to audit; it will help anyone at any level initiate a FLIPL; and it will let us spot trends, to see if policies need to be changed.”

Digital access helps in COVID-19 environment

Going digital also has several benefits in a COVID-19 environment, as everything will be paperless, and the system will be in a secure cloud. In fact, COVID-19 helped speed the process of getting the digital version in place.

eFLIPL is also a great example of the Secretary of the Army’s initiative

to employ technology to reform the way the Army works. Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy said last October at the Association of the U.S. Army’s annual conference: “The intent is to move the Army from the industrial-age processes to the information age of leveraging data as a strategic asset and utilizing private sector technology.”

Ricker says “eFLIPL drives at the secretary’s intent. It is using Microsoft’s Azure Cloud for FLIPL data availability and making data accessible in a multitude of systems to include Army Vantage.”

Army Vantage, which has been a great help in the COVID-19 response, enables the Army to see itself by providing a common integrated data platform for visualizing current and future states of the Army. The FLIPL team will establish a Vantage Data Connector order to automatically populate the Vantage Commanders’ Dashboard. This will allow commanders the opportunity to review the units’ eFLIPL actions, while reviewing readiness and other important items.

Minnesota National Guard Invented the Process

Like many great inventions eFLIPL started out as a simple idea by one Soldier – Maj. Chris Larson – in the Minnesota National Guard, who wanted to streamline a manual process. Larson had a team from the Minnesota Guard, who helped him build the automated system, and implement it. The team included Master Sgt. Keith Toenies, Jason Spillum, and Master Sgt. Jeremy Fish.

Their results were immediate. They found it cut administrative errors and inconsistent packets, and reduced the time it took to process the FLIPL.

The system received such good reviews by the Minnesota National Guard that the entire Army National Guard implemented it in October 2018. It has had a positive impact on how lost, damaged or destroyed property is assessed.

According to Chief Warrant Officer 5 Eric Crow, the Army G-4’s division chief for Property Accountability and Policy, the benefits of eFLIPL also spread to the Army Reserve, where 75 percent of its commanders

have been trained on its use.

“Everyone has been anticipating the release for some time,” he said, “and a lot of Active component Soldiers have reached out to their Guard and Reserve counterparts to help them train on how to use the system.”

Pilot Programs Provided Good Feedback

This past year, Army G-4 conducted pilot programs with Soldiers from III Corps units at Fort Hood, Fort Carson, Fort Riley and Fort Bliss; the 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell; and the United States Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg. Based on their feedback, system managers improved the eFLIPL system so the process can be done seamlessly and without errors.

So far more than 20,000 people have registered to use eFLIPL. Over the course of the next few months, there will be video training for Soldiers, especially for commanders, judge advocates and financial liability officers. All Army organizations need to be on the system by Oct. 1, 2020.

Army senior leaders discuss lessons learned from COVID-19

Devon Suits
Army News Service

The Army is considering adjustments to its fiscal year 2022 budget request, as senior leaders look to invest in the service’s ability to fight against infectious diseases or other chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive threats.

The rapid spread of COVID-19 across the globe has spurred many internal discussions concerning the Army’s future operating budget, said Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy Thursday during the NatSec 2020: Coronavirus and Beyond webinar.

“Over the course of most of our careers, we have seen swine flu, Zika and Ebola. In many cases, they were isolated in certain areas of the world,” McCarthy said. “Nothing has had the contagion and the proliferation like we have seen with COVID-19 since the Spanish flu of 1918.”

McCarthy was joined by other leaders during the online event to discuss lessons learned from the ongoing outbreak.

While McCarthy didn’t go into detail, the Army is looking into the “types of investments” necessary to support future operations during a CBRNE event. As the Army’s role in supporting the National Defense Strategy continues to remain the same, the impact of COVID-19 could justify the need for a larger Army end strength, he added.

Since March, the Army has been on the front lines of the pandemic with more than 50,000 Soldiers deployed around the country in response to it, McCarthy said. At the same time, more than 178,000 personnel have been deployed overseas, as the Army continued to deter near-peer threats

while also maintaining combat operations throughout the Middle East.

“Too much is asked of this institution not to be able to push for more funding, so that they can continue to perform the way they do so well,” McCarthy said.

The Army has also played a vital role in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine under the purview of Gen. Gustave Perna, the chief operating officer of Operation Warp Speed. The team looks to have a vaccine out before Jan. 1.

“We are blessed to have some of the finest scientists in the world getting after the COVID-19 virus,” said Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville. “The Army Medical Research and Development Command ... [is] on the forefront, working with civilian and other government partners [to develop a] vaccine. They have also been involved in the clinical trials as they try to find a therapeutic medicine that can help treat those infected.”

Through the COVID-19 environment, Soldiers learned to adjust quickly, as leaders established new standard operating procedures to adhere to public health and social distancing protocols, McCarthy said.

“COVID-19 has impacted everything we do,” McConville said. “But we still have to protect the nation. We are continuing to train [and] bring in new Soldiers.”

The Army has also recently conducted a rotation at its Joint Readiness Training Center, the first at a combat training center since pausing all collective training in March.

“You have to respect COVID-19,” McConville added. “But we can’t telecommute to combat. We have to



Lt. Col. Dolores Toney, a family nurse practitioner assigned to U.S. Army Medical Department Activity – Japan, poses for a photo May 11 in her examining room at the BG Crawford F. Sams U.S. Army Health Clinic Japan on Camp Zama, Japan. Toney, who has been in the medical field in the Army for 19 years, recently faced one of her most challenging and fulfilling experiences during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Photo by Noriko Kudo)

train and make sure our Soldiers are ready. Our Soldiers are doing a great job of operating in this environment.”

Modernization push

The Army continues to make remarkable progress toward its modernization priorities despite some minor setbacks brought on by the virus, McCarthy said.

“The defense industry has really stepped forward in getting the confidence behind their workforce to fight their way through the COVID pandemic,” McCarthy said. They have made “investment and management decisions to ensure that their employees take care of themselves.”

At the same time, both senior leaders are fighting to maintain the Army’s fiscal 2021 budget and beyond to fulfill its goal of fielding 31 signature modernization systems by 2030.

“The fiscal year 21 budget is about through the House Armed Services

Committee,” McCarthy said. “Both the Senate and the House authorizers are concluding with our marks. The Army’s modernization effort, in particular, is faring very well.”

The budget is slated to go to the House and Senate appropriations committees

in July. Receiving an approved budget for both fiscal 21 and 22 will be absolutely critical to the Army’s way ahead, he noted.

“We have been very consistent with industry, and we have noticed an exponential uptick in investment in [research and development] by defense

manufacturers that are pursuing products with the Army,” he said. “We know that if we can get four to five budgets in a row with tremendous consistency, the systems will start to land. They will have irreversible momentum to get us through these difficult times.”

MILITARY STAR salutes Exchange’s 125 years with 125,000-Point Giveaway July 25

Carina DeCino
Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

A big milestone deserves a big prize. To celebrate the Army and Air Force Exchange Service’s 125 years of serving the military community, the MILITARY STAR® card is giving away 125,000 rewards points to 10 lucky shoppers.

Every time Fort Wainwright Soldiers and Families use their cards on July 25, they will automatically be entered into the sweepstakes.

MILITARY STAR cardholders earn two percent in rewards points and a \$20 rewards card every 2,000 points, making the 125,000-point giveaway equal to \$1,250 for each winner. Rewards cards can be used anywhere Exchange gift cards are accepted.

“The more Fort Wainwright Exchange shoppers use their MILITARY STAR card on July 25, the more chances they’ll have to win,” said Fort Wainwright Exchange general manager Gloria Sylvia. “It’s a great way to thank our shoppers and celebrate 125 years of serving the best customers in the world.”

Shoppers can use their MILITARY STAR card and earn entries at any military exchange or

commissary, ShopMyExchange.com, myNavyExchange.com and ShopCGX.com.

Other benefits of the MILITARY STAR card include:

- The lowest flat-rate APR (10.24 percent) among store cards—rate is offered to all cardholders upon account approval.
- No annual, late or over-limit fees.
- 10 percent discount on first day’s purchases for new MILITARY STAR accounts.
- Free shipping on all ShopMyExchange.com and MyNavyExchange.com orders.
- Reduced-interest deployment plan with no payments required for eligible customers.

Honorably discharged veterans who have verified their eligibility to shop the Exchange online are eligible to win, too, as are all disabled veterans with in-store shopping privileges. Veterans can find out more on the Exchange’s community Hub page at <https://bit.ly/Vets4Life>.

Winners will be notified by Aug. 31.

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.

ARMY WELLNESS CENTER

WHAT IS MEDITATION AND HOW CAN IT BENEFIT YOU?

WHAT IS MEDITATION?
To meditate means to engage in reflection or mental exercise for the purpose of reaching a heightened level of spiritual awareness or to focus one's thoughts or project an intention of purpose.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF MEDITATION

- Focused attention
- Relaxed breathing
- A quiet setting
- A comfortable position
- Open attitude

WHAT ARE THE TYPES?

- Guided
- Mantra
- Transcendental
- Mindfulness
- Qi gong
- Tai chi
- Yoga

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?
Meditation can give you a sense of calm, peace and balance that can benefit both your emotional well-being and your overall health.

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