



176th Wing • Alaska Air National Guard

# eGuardian

July 30, 2020

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## August 2020 Drill

### **CAPTAIN KOCH PROMOTION CEREMONY** *AUGUST 1*

All are invited to attend Capt. Daniel W. Koch's Promotion Ceremony on Saturday, 1 August 2020 at 1115 at 176th CES Court Yard. Please remember to be safe and ensure you adhere to COVID-19 safety protocols during this event. Please RSVP at the following e invitation link: <https://einvitations.afit.edu/inv/anim.cfm?i=563466&k=0767410D7D51>

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## EVENTS / OPPORTUNITIES

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### **PTL-B CERTIFICATION AND FINGERPRINTING SERVICES**

#### **Training:**

Services will be doing PTL-Basic certification training on Saturday, August 1. SSgt(s) Boswell and McFeron will instruct the class. The location is outside in the pavilion adjacent to Bldg. 17441 (Wing HQ). The class will run from 1300-1400. If you are interested please respond to MSgt Franz Deters or TSgt Allen Wilson NLT Friday COB.

Respond to:

[Franz.deters@us.af.mil](mailto:Franz.deters@us.af.mil)

[allen.wilson.4@us.af.mil](mailto:allen.wilson.4@us.af.mil)

#### **Fingerprinting Services:**

SSgt Zuzzy McFeron is accepting appointments for fingerprinting services. Her availability for appointments will be on Sunday, August 2, from 0730-1630. The location is Room 112 (FSF) Bldg. 17441 (Wing HQ).

Respond to:

[Franz.deters@us.af.mil](mailto:Franz.deters@us.af.mil)

[zuzzy.mcferon@us.af.mil](mailto:zuzzy.mcferon@us.af.mil)

## **STRONG BONDS - CALLING ALL SINGLES**

Single wing members, you are invited to register for a free weekend in Homer, Alaska.

Your 176<sup>th</sup> Wing Chaplain Corps is pleased to present "Got Your Back" for singles at the marvelous Land's End Resort July 24-26.

Register at this link on a first-come, first-served basis: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/singles-retreat-in-homer-tickets-77062412751> You will likely NOT be able to register using a DoD computer, and will have to click this link and register on a personal device.

Space is limited. Event includes two nights at the resort, five meals, and training program — all for free.

This "Got Your Back" training is specially designed **for singles** to build resilience by helping participants improve their self-awareness, their understanding and acceptance of others, and their decision-making skills in dating/partner relationships.

\*Friday, July 24: Check in to the resort and with the chaplains in the lobby between 1600 and 1800. Enjoy a complimentary dinner, then participate in the evening Strong Bonds session.

Saturday, July 25: A hot breakfast will be provided at 0800. The program will begin at 0830 and continue until ~1500. Lunch is included. You are free for the rest of the day but dinner is provided at the resort at 1730.

\*Sunday, July 26: Breakfast will be available at 0800. There will be an optional worship service at 0830, and the session will begin at 0900. The program will conclude by noon. Lunch is not provided.

Important Notes: This event is free but participation at ALL sessions in full is required. This is a singles retreat for unmarried wing members. Child care is not provided; single parents should find safe care for their children for the full weekend. The drive to Homer from JBER is a minimum of 4.5 hours with no stops, and can easily be over five hours in the summer. Please give yourself plenty of travel time and drive safely! We can help coordinate carpooling, if desired.

For more information, call your 176th Wing Chaplain at 907-229-0010, or email Chaplain Benjamin McEntire.

### **LAUGH YOUR WAY TO A BETTER MARRIAGE!**

Free weekend marriage retreat for 176 Wing Members Friday-Sunday, Aug. 21-23 for 176th Wing Married Members at Alyeska Resort in Girdwood.

Two nights hotel, five meals and marriage resiliency program are all provided at no charge.

Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/laugh-your-way-to-a-better-marriage-tickets-110906416076>

For more information, call your 176th Wing Chaplain at 907-229-0010, or email Chaplain Benjamin McEntire.

### **CATCH PROGRAM VIRTUAL FISHING TOURNAMENT**

Greetings from the Alaska National Guard Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (SAPR) Program.

Until Aug. 31, our office is hosting a virtual fishing tournament as part of our July and August "Not Just April" event to raise awareness of the CATCH a Serial Offender Program. Find more details and enter to win a fishing chair at <https://www.facebook.com/events/892351097921650/>

What is CATCH? CATCH is a program that allows individuals who have filed a Restricted Report of sexual assault to anonymously share information about suspects with Military Criminal Investigative Office's (MCIO's) to potentially identify serial offenders. For more information about CATCH contact your SARC or go to SAPR.mil and check out the Fact Sheet under Quick Links. (<https://www.sapr.mil/catch>)

### **211<sup>TH</sup> RESCUE SQUADRON CSO HIRING BOARD**

The 211<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron will host a hiring board Nov. 7-8, 2020, over drill. Selectees will attend Undergraduate Navigator Training (UNT) to become Combat Systems Operators (CSOs). Completed undergraduate degrees and AFOQT scores are required for this rated commissioning opportunity.

Contact a 176th Wing recruiter for dates and times of AFOQT testing. Check out the wing website at <https://www.176wg.af.mil/Careers/Flying-Officers/> for application details. Applications are due Oct. 1, 2020. Feel free to contact the

211th RQS via [176WG.CSO.UNT@us.af.mil](mailto:176WG.CSO.UNT@us.af.mil) or stop by Hangar 18 on the second floor, room 230.

### **GUARD BABIES WELCOMED WITH BUNDLES OF BOOKS AND BLANKETS**

Air National Guard dependent infants have been receiving gifts through the Bundles project.

Key Spouse Volunteers, Kendra Gladwell and Karen Jenkins, started the initiative, which provides every new baby of an Alaska Air National Guard member with a tote bag filled with baby books and a hand-crochet blanket. Karen, an educator at Hiland Mountain Correctional Center, has coordinated the volunteer efforts of several incarcerated women who want to give back to their communities by crocheting blankets and sewing tote bags.

The program was first orchestrated for 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron; however, it is now serving the entire 176th Wing.

The popularity of the program has meant more materials are needed and the Bundles Project has renewed their request for donated yarn and new baby board books.

To give donations or to assist with this project, please contact Master Sgt. Melissa Erhard at 552-6135, or at [melissa.erhard.1@us.af.mil](mailto:melissa.erhard.1@us.af.mil).

### **ONGOING FREE COUNSELING SERVICES**

Military Family Life Counselors (MFLC) provide short term non-medical solution-focused counseling to support military families with the challenges of deployments, reintegration, parenting, relationship issues, conflict resolution, anger management and other life issues. They provide free, confidential services on and off military installations, flexible service delivery in non traditional settings and times. With the exception of child abuse, domestic violence, mandatory reporting, and duty to warn situations, services are confidential.

In response to COVID-19, MFLCs are providing services via secure, encrypted video teleconference.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, call Husch Hathorne-Cantil at 382-1407. Appointments are available within 24-48 hours.

**STATUS OF DISCIPLINE LINK**

The status of discipline for the wing can be found at the following link and accessed on a computer networked to the wing Share Point:

<https://cs2.eis.af.mil/sites/12468/Pages/176th-Wing-Status-of-Discipline.aspx>

**MILITARY ONESOURCE RESOURCES**

Did you know that Military OneSource is bigger than a 24/7/365 toll free number? The program offers more than just free non-medical counseling. It also provides assistance for the deployment readiness cycle. Military OneSource is a Department of Defense funded program that aids eligible service and family members with building resiliency; both within the military culture and on the homefront. To help strengthen one's resiliency skillset, Military OneSource offers many activities that you and your family members can partake in. For example:

**MWR Digital Library:**

- Ancestry.com Library Edition - unlock the story of your family using more than 8,000 resources.
- Consumer Reports – are you looking to make a purchase? Use this online library to access 1,000+ ratings, reviews, expert buying advice, product comparisons, consumer user reviews and product video clips.
- EBSCO Audiobooks - more than 2,000 audiobooks in different subjects and categories available for free download.
- Mango Languages - check out this digital language learning program for learners of all levels, with courses in more than 70 different foreign languages, 21 English language courses, and 44 specialty courses.
- Morningstar Investment Research Center - find information and advice on mutual funds, stocks, exchange-traded funds, and market returns. Track

investments, access daily market news and commentary, view snapshots on investments, and interact on the research center forums.

- PressReader Digital Newspapers - unlimited digital access to more than 7,000 newspapers from 120 countries in more than 60 different languages. These newspapers are provided in full-color, full-page format, and appear on your screen exactly as they appear on the news stand, many providing instant translation and audio.
- Stingray Qello Concerts - enjoy more than 1700 live moments in music history with the world's largest collection of full-length concerts and music documentaries streamed on-demand to just about any digital device. From the 1920s to today's hottest artists, Qello Concerts spans more than 30 genres, from classical to rock, reggae to country.
- Small Business Builder - helps patrons interested in planning and optimizing their businesses or nonprofits. Built for aspiring entrepreneurs and those with existing small businesses, it provides a step-by-step process supported by a rich variety of recognized tools that enable users to produce complete business plans and other documents essential for gaining access to capital and growing their enterprise.
- Universal Class - over 500 online courses to aid with personal and professional interests: including FREE CEUs, plus online books, movies and music for all ages. Over 40 different references to use.
- Weiss Financial Ratings - Enjoy access to financial literacy tools on retirement planning, home and mortgage, insurance strategies, and saving for your child's education.
- Chill Drills: An overview of four simple drills to help reverse the symptoms of stress. These drills can help slow your heart rate, lower your blood pressure and reduce the level of stress hormones in your body. By doing these drills regularly, you can lower your baseline stress level and be better prepared to deal with stress in the future. Order yours online (free shipping) or download to your smartphone.
- MilTax - free tax services, which provides easy-to-use software that is designed specifically for the military community and is available mid-January through mid-October. MilTax also offers free consultations with experts trained to help military members and their families take command of their taxes.

Many other resources are located online with just a click of the mouse or online chat with a trained consultant to provide more guidance with your ideal topic. See: [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil)

### **AIRMAN SAFETY APP**

If there was a way to anonymously and quickly make safety reports on your phone, would you use it? There's an app for that. The Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) a voluntary, identity-protected means of reporting safety issues that increase the risk to Aviation, Occupational, or Weapons Safety. The goal of the program is to prevent future mishaps and strengthen a culture of safe, effective mission accomplishment. The two ways to submit an ASAP report are on the website (<https://asap.safety.af.mil>) or the smartphone app "Airmen Safety App." Contact: your friendly safety office (551-7604, [176wg.se.176wg@us.af.mil](mailto:176wg.se.176wg@us.af.mil))

### **UPCOMING AWS DAYS**

The 176th Wing is essentially shut down for business on the upcoming Alternate Work Schedule days. RDs (rescheduled drills) and AT days should not be scheduled for these times. The full AWS calendar can be found on the new Wing SharePoint in the Resource Library.

August: 7, 21  
September: 4, 18  
October: 9, 16 & 30  
November: 13, 27  
December: 11, 24

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## **ALASKA NEWS**

### **ALASKA AIR NATIONAL GUARD RESCUES HIKER ON PIONEER PEAK**

By Maj. Elizabeth Mangini  
176th Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Responding to a request for assistance last night from the Alaska State Troopers, the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing rescued an injured hiker.

Airmen with the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th and 212th rescue squadrons rescued the distressed hiker who was stranded on Pioneer Peak, a mountain that rises over six thousand feet from its base near Knik River flats, about 35 miles north of Anchorage.

An HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter launched from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Aboard the aircraft were two pararescuemen (PJs), highly trained personnel specializing in evacuating individuals, even in the most challenging conditions.

Alaska Air National Guard Capt. Daniel Dickman at the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center knew exactly what to do to enable a quick response.

"After a quick plot of the location, we knew the 210th and 212th would be our first option due to the location and challenging terrain," said Dickman. "The hiker was in cell phone range and was able to call the Alaska State Troopers for help."

According to Dickman, cell phone coverage is not usually an option due to the remoteness of the terrain and limits of cell phone range.

Outdoor enthusiasts have turned to using two-way communication devices with global positioning system (GPS) trackers. In this particular situation, the individual was able to pull the coordinates from their cell phone and pass them to the Alaska State Troopers.

"The hiker's ability to pull his grid coordinates from his cell phone significantly sped up the rescue process, as the area was heavily vegetated and could have resulted in a much lengthier search time," said Dickman.

The hiker suffered injuries after slipping down a ravine and was unable to walk. He was rescued at approximately 2000-foot elevation on the north side of the mountain, about a mile south of the Old Glenn Hwy.

According to Dickman, the individual was hoisted using a rescue strop—a harness used with helicopter operations—due to heavy vegetation.

The survivor was transported and released to Mat-Su Regional Medical Center for care. The crew returned to base in just over an hour.

The Alaska Rescue Coordination Center would like to remind Alaskans who traverse the wilderness with only cell phones to be familiar with how to find coordinates within their phones.

The AKRCC operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is manned by highly skilled and trained Alaska Air National Guardsmen.

For this mission, the 210th and 212th rescue squadrons, and the AKRCC were awarded one save.



## **ALASKA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD MEDEVACS SOLDIER ON JBER**

By Spc. Mike Risinger  
134th Public Affairs Detachment

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — The Alaska Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, rescued a U.S. Army Alaska Soldier suffering from heat exhaustion at Drop Zone Geronimo here July 29.

At approximately 12:40 p.m., the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center on JBER contacted the 207th AVN.

The rescue took place about a mile from Snow Hawk cabin, located in Arctic Valley. The 207th had dropped the Soldier's platoon off at the same location at approximately 9:30 a.m.

The rescue team, led by Alaska Army National Guard Chief Warrant Officer 3 Paul Jones, flew to the location in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, secured the Soldier and flew them to JBER Hospital, where they were released to medical personnel.

For this mission, the 207th Aviation Regiment and the AK RCC were awarded with one save.

## **ALASKA AIR NATIONAL GUARD RESCUES DISTRESSED HIKER AT MOUNT WILLIWAW**

By Capt. David Bedard  
134th Public Affairs Detachment

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — The Alaska Air National Guard rescued a distressed hiker July 26 at Mount Williwaw east of Anchorage.

Alaska National Guard Master Sgt. Andre Marron, Alaska Rescue Coordination Center controller, said the stranded hiker could not safely ascend or descend and used his mobile phone to contact authorities who contacted the AKRCC. The Alaska State Troopers asked for assistance with a hoist-capable helicopter.

The AK RCC coordinated the departure of two pararescuemen (PJs) of the 212th Rescue Squadron aboard an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter of the 210th Rescue Squadron. The HH-60 crew quickly located the hiker at 5,000 feet above sea level and hoisted the PJ team 30 feet to package the distressed hiker and extract him from the mountain.

The hiker was transported to Alaska Regional Hospital in Anchorage and released to the Alaska State Troopers there.

"The hiker knew exactly who to contact to get help," said Alaska Air National Guard Capt. Daniel Warren, combat rescue officer and AKRCC senior controller. "This rescue effort demonstrates the continuing success of the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center's community outreach and the synergistic relationship between the Alaska State Troopers and the Alaska Air National Guard."

The AK RCC, 210th RQS and 212th RQS were each awarded one save for this mission.

## **ALASKA AIR NATIONAL GUARD RESCUES FOUR DISTRESSED HIKERS AT CROW PASS**

By Spc. Grace Nechanicky  
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — The Alaska Air National Guard rescued four distressed hikers from Crow Pass Trail, which runs between Girdwood and the Eagle River Nature Center, July 20.

The hikers had reached approximately the halfway point and were substantially low on food. They didn't have enough for the journey back or to continue forward. Additionally, one of the hikers was experiencing arthritic knee and ankle pain, causing him to become increasingly concerned.

The situation was reported by two other hikers along the trail who used an inReach satellite communication device to send the GPS location to the Alaska State Troopers. After receiving the distress call, the Troopers requested assistance from the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center, asking for the Air National Guard's help with the mission.

The AK RCC coordinated the departure of two pararescuemen of the 212th Rescue Squadron aboard an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter of the 210th RQS. The aircraft departed JBER shortly after the mission notification, and the hikers at Crow Pass were quickly located.

"They had made a makeshift S.O.S. symbol out of some branches," said Senior Master Sgt. Brandon Stuemke, the pararescue team lead on the mission. "They broke them all off, and in a clear area where there was contrast of dark soil and the green branches, they made the S.O.S."

The helicopter landed in the clearing to evacuate the hikers, who were picked up, transported and released at Alaska Regional Hospital.

Approximately two hours after the leaving base, the Guardsmen returned and the mission was closed.

"In case you go someplace and you get distressed, this is Alaska, and you have to be prepared with a little bit of extra food, water, basic first aid stuff," said Stuemke, "because rescue doesn't get there immediately and it could take a substantial amount of time, especially with poor weather conditions."

Stuemke said the low clouds and light rain during this mission were manageable for the seasoned Alaska Air Guardsmen, but in worse conditions it may have taken longer to locate the individuals, emphasizing his recommendation for ample preparation and gear.

He also recommends having a solid trip plan and return date that is shared with a friend or family member, and a way to contact help if needed, such as an inReach device.

"The land is remote anywhere you step off the trailhead here in the state, so you need to be prepared to take care of yourself while waiting for help," he said.

The AK RCC, 210th RQS and 212th RQS were each awarded four saves for this mission.

## **THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE': THE PARARESCUE UNITS PREPARING FOR WAR ON TOP OF THE WORLD**

By Jeff Wilson and Kellen Wilson  
Popular Mechanics

In the new superpower battle taking place in the Arctic, a small band of American military members maintain an unceasing vigil.

To the downed pilot, wounded soldier, or lost backcountry hiker stranded on the unforgiving tundra of the Arctic, there is no sweeter sound than the methodical "thump...thump...thump..." of the Alaska Air National Guard's (ANG) HH-60G Pave Hawk or the purr of an HC-130J Hercules overhead.

Because that sound means only one thing: PJs are on the way.

The United States Air Force's elite pararescue units, known informally as PJs, are a legendary Combat Search and Rescue special operators who not only have the capabilities to perform advanced life-saving procedures in the field but also the necessary skills to wage war with sister Special Operations Command units.

The Pararescue motto, "That others may live," is developed in a deep training pipeline that spans nearly a year-and-a-half. And it's a motto they take very seriously, even as the Arctic begins to warm up—both in temperature and military movement.

In the wide expanse of Alaska, the ANG's 210th (HH-60Gs), 211th (HC-130Js), and 212th (Pararescue) rescue squadrons—known collectively as the 'triad'—operate around the clock in the harsh Arctic environment.

"Not only do PJs and our aviation brethren have to constantly prepare for the rigors of combat around the world, but we must also be prepared to execute both civilian and military search-and-rescue (SAR) missions here in Alaska year-round," says Master Sergeant Chris Bowerfind, assigned to the 212th rescue squadron at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), Anchorage. "The area we operate in is more than twice the size of Texas, and blanketed in thick forests, mountains, glaciers with hostile wildlife thrown in for fun."

JBER houses Alaskan Command, Alaskan NORAD Region, Eleventh Air Force, the 673d Air Base Wing, the 3rd Wing, and the 176th Wing. The PJs do their best to keep it light when not in action, sharing stories and rail on one another for sport. But at their heart, they are a community that supports one another in and out of action.

Both PJs and pilots from both rescue and combat squadrons train for winter operations in the Arctic Survival Training course, known fittingly as the "Cool School," at Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks. Beginning more than 70 years ago in Nome, Alaska, the course is the premier destination for U.S. military members to learn how to survive in the Arctic.

"Out there, it is a race against the clock," says Master Sergeant Jess Evans. "The second we are out there training with the students, we are game on, trying to get out of there as fast as we can...that wind chill factor just rips through your clothing and takes the heat away from you."

"We also have polar bears walking right by our training site, so we have a bear guard always watching."

AN EXTREME MISSION

Keeping watch over Alaska's large, frozen expanse means understanding what PJs call the "tyranny of distance." When a life-or-death situation unfolds hundreds of miles away, it's that distance that can sometimes spell doom for a SAR mission. But the successful ones are truly special.

Take, for instance, the real life story of the hunters and the bear. In mid-June 2019, a hunter shot a bear from several hundred yards away in the backcountry of Alaska more than 700 miles from Anchorage. But the bear was only wounded, very enraged, and soon attacked the hunting guide, mauling him ferociously. The hunters shot the bear and succeeded in driving it away, but the guide was in critical condition. The hunters immediately called for help and the mission was picked up by the 'triad.'

The Herc took off with two PJs prepared for a static-line parachute jump in order to stabilize the patient, while a Pave Hawk helicopter loaded with two PJs was in transit behind them to pick up the patient in the field where the Herc couldn't land. Armed with 12-gauge shotguns loaded with buckshot (in the event the bear was still roaming nearby), medical rucksacks, and their exhaustive emergency medical training, the PJs took to the sky and parachuted onto the scene. They successfully stabilized the patient before he bled out.

Soon, the PJs loaded the patient into the Pave Hawk, which then flew to meet the HC-130J that had landed at an airstrip nearby. The PJs rushed the patient onto the Hercules for an hour-and-a-half flight back to JBER. Waiting on the tarmac was an Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk, into which the PJs again loaded the patient, and a few minutes later, the patient was at the most advanced hospital in the state.

Through the diligent planning led by the Combat Rescue Officers (CROs) of the 212th Rescue Squadron and the pilots of the 210th and 211th Rescue Squadrons, a multi-hour operation was conducted smoothly over Alaska's unforgiving interior. The patient survived.

#### AN EMERGING THREAT

But the PJs mission has evolved over the decades. As the world continues to warm, many nations—and their militaries—are paying more and more attention to the Arctic. For the PJs, that means a growing need to hone personnel recovery techniques for water rescue in the Arctic Ocean.

This is where Alaska PJs perform a very difficult merge. In their combat missions abroad they are assigned to and work for various commands within the U.S. Air Force, and in the second "home" mission set they are owned by the Governor of Alaska and work for the Alaska National Guard. Serving several commands makes maintaining readiness for both missions a constant struggle.

With much of the ice cap melted, the Arctic is teeming with competitive activity because it's no longer an impenetrable land of glaciers—void of economic or strategic military advantages. In fact, quite the opposite.

The U.S., Russia, and China all recognize that new shipping lanes and natural resources, worth trillions of dollars, are becoming more viable every day in the Arctic. Each nation has its own economic interests and the competition for control in the Arctic is only increasing.

Lt. Gen. Tom Bussiere says simply: "Whoever holds Alaska holds the region, and that impacts the globe," and according to the U.S. Senator of Alaska Dan Sullivan, "we have fallen behind in the race with China and Russia."

Russia is reviving Soviet-era Arctic bases, increasing its fleet of Arctic icebreakers to a whopping 41 vessels (the U.S. has only two though this shortage is getting more attention), and Russian TU-95 "Bear" bombers frequently test F-22A Raptors' readiness near U.S. airspace.

And China has its own plans. Though not an Arctic nation like the U.S. or Russia, China's economic clout gained the nation an observer seat in the Arctic Council under the claims that they are a "near-Arctic state." China is positioning itself to stake a greater claim to the bountiful resources that the Arctic can provide, based on a bold plan they call the "Polar Silk Road." If completed, the plan will create an economic network beneficial to China through the once-frozen ocean.

In response to Russian operations and Chinese advances, the USAF is battling for air superiority in the Arctic with its most valuable—and lethal—assets in Alaska, including the F-22A Raptor and F-35A Joint Strike Fighter. Though the F-22A and F-35A are the two most advanced airframes in the world, their operations take them far from their home bases, requiring the PJs to be on standby in case of an in-flight emergency that downs an aircraft, or worse, a hostile strike by China or Russia while intercepting one of their encroaching aircraft.

"We have an arctic sustainment package which we can deploy in response to a large-scale accident, such as a cruise ship that is damaged, stuck, or sinking in the Arctic Circle," says Combat Rescue Officer John Romspert. "For small scale rescues, we have the ability to deploy Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs) from the back of a C-17 with pararescuemen following shortly behind the drop, geared up with fins, dry suits, and anything else you could need."

Whatever comes their way, Bowerfind, the PJ gang, and Alaska National Guard units are ready to respond if war breaks out on top of the world.

## **ALASKA AIR NATIONAL GUARD'S SECURITY FORCES RETURN HOME FROM DEPLOYMENT**

By Alaska Army National Guard Sgt. Seth LaCount  
Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

Ten Alaska Air National Guardsmen assigned to the 176th Security Forces Squadron returned home from Kandahar, Afghanistan, shortly after midnight this morning at Ted Stevens' Anchorage International Airport.

A total of 12 Air Guardsmen deployed to Kandahar to support Operation Freedom Sentinel, a NATO-led continuation of the Global War on Terrorism. The unit's primary mission was airbase defense. Two of the 12 airmen arrived safely back in Alaska two weeks prior.

"Being back, it hasn't really sunk in yet, but I'm thankful to be home," said Master Sgt. Gary Keller, team leader for the 176th SFS deployed personnel.

The Air Guard security force officers began their journey at Fort Bliss, Texas, last October. There, they underwent sustainment training, or "tier" training, a four-tiered enterprise-wide policy, process and construct that provides training programs designed to prepare Airmen for expeditionary missions outside the confines of the traditional airbase environment. The training allowed the Airmen to gain additional competence and confidence in combat skills that they don't often implement in their normal duties.

The deployment was set to last six months, but due to COVID-19 pandemic precautions, the Airmen were extended an additional two. With a month and a half remaining on the deployment, a no-movement order was initiated that prompted a delay in returning home.

While in Afghanistan for eight months, the Airmen withstood and reacted to multiple rocket barrages, one of which triggered an airfield clearing on the Kandahar Army Airfield, where the unit was stationed. The unit successfully executed the clearing while suffering no casualties or extenuating injuries.

"In our line of work, if nothing escalates, we've had a good day out there," said Maj. James Truesdell, the commander of the 176th SFS, who assisted the unit administratively stateside. "Our goal is to mitigate security breaches and acts of aggression against our NATO forces."

## **MAINTENANCE AIRMEN CRITICAL PART OF ALASKA GUARD AFRICA DE- PLOYMENT**

By David Bedard  
176th Wing Public Affairs

An eagle swallowing a dragonfly whole is rather what it looks like when an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter is loaded into the cargo hold of a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft.

The load operation was a ballet of coordinated precision as 176th Maintenance Group maintainers worked with 210th Rescue Squadron HH-60 and 144th Airlift Squadron C-17 aircrew to meticulously ferry the helicopter into the Globemaster without damaging either aircraft.

The pre-deployment operation was part of a massive effort undertaken by 176th MXG Airmen who are a slice of a combined deployment providing combat search and rescue capabilities to Africa Command with the group having deployed throughout the first week of June.

U.S. Africa Command, with partners, counters transnational threats and malign actors, strengthens security forces, and responds to crises in order to advance U.S. national interests and promote regional security, stability and prosperity.

Airmen of 210th RQS operate the HH-60G Pave Hawk combat search and rescue helicopter.

Deploying with the group of 176th Wing Airmen are combat rescue officers and enlisted pararescue Airmen of the 212th Rescue Squadron who are skilled parachutists, scuba divers and rock climbers responsible for rescuing isolated U.S. and allied military members.

Alaska Air National Guard Lt. Col. Jessica Pisano, 176th Maintenance Squadron commander, said Airmen preparation began late last year, and cargo preparation began in February.

Pisano said the maintenance group leaned forward to get deployment tasks completed ahead of time to ensure they were ready to deploy and to give Airmen extra time with their families in the weeks before departure.

"It's nice to be able to know that time before they go is theirs because all of their requirements are done," Pisano said. "They're not in scramble mode."

Ensuring 176th MXG Airmen hit all of their USAFRICOM requirements was unit deployment manager Master Sgt. Alison Cherry of the 176th MXG.



Because rescue maintainers are counted on at home station to generate HH-60 sorties to support statewide civil search and rescue operations 24/7/365, Cherry said she worked closely with deploying Airmen to schedule their training so as not to interfere with their daily duties.

"For the most part, our maintainers are super thankful since they don't have to worry because I can make their appointment, they are there at the right time, and they can focus on their job," Cherry said.

Much of the training is distance-based while hands-on training includes combat skills like marksmanship and chemical-protection measures, all tailored to operations on the African continent.

"It's really intensive," Cherry said of the training effort. "There are requirements for everyone all the time and then, the minute you add a deployment, a different timeline is applied."

Equally intensive was getting the Pave Hawks prepared to operate in Africa's diverse climates ranging from sandy desert to jungle canopy.

Chief Master Sgt. Eric Chester, 176th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron superintendent, said the aircraft were hand selected partly on the fact they weren't due for any major maintenance inspections or services, ensuring they would be fully available through the deployment.

He said transitioning from a civil to combat search and rescue footing required ensuring all of the combat systems were in top working order.

"We prepared the aircraft by going through every system to ensure they were up and running and fixing them before we go on the road," Chester said.

Once maintainers were satisfied the Pave Hawks would pass the white-glove test, they checked defensive system operations, communications, navigation and all of the myriad systems necessary to make the HH-60 an effective combat search and rescue platform.

"After all of the operational checks are complete, we fold the aircraft, prepare it for shipment, and then we have a joint-inspection team inspect the aircraft," Chester said.

The joint inspection process includes maintainers, C-17 loadmasters and logistics readiness Airmen who specialize in deployment operations. After passing inspection, the aircraft were sequestered to ensure they would stay ready to load.

From the outside, the operation could look like a flying, traveling circus since the HH-60s weren't the only concern. Pisano said they had to prepare ground-support

equipment, basic tools, helicopter-specific tools and “slow-moving vehicles” to support an overseas maintenance operation.

“That’s why we’re bringing such a big package because if we don’t bring it, we don’t have it,” she said.

After the aircraft and Airmen landed in Africa, the process was reversed. Chester said it takes several hours to “regenerate” an aircraft, transforming it like Optimus Prime from a folded, compact package to a flyaway helicopter. The rotor blades were placed back into action and the radio antennas were re-installed along with dozens of other items that have to be put back in place.

With the helicopters in action, the culmination of months of hard work showed how deployed maintenance, logistics and operations Airmen were just the tip of the spear, Pisano said. During the deployment process, deploying Airmen needed health assessments, deployment orders, passports and finance paperwork to be mission-ready.

“The support agencies have been phenomenal throughout the deployment process,” she said.

Looming over the effort was the specter of COVID-19. With cancelled monthly drills and pandemic-mitigation protocols affecting the 176th MXG and supporting agencies, Pisano said their efforts to get out of the gate early ensured they weren’t caught out by the virus.

“If we hadn’t leaned forward the way we did, we would probably still be chasing our tails,” she said.

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## RSD SCHEDULE

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR REGULARLY SCHEDULED DRILL WEEKENDS

#### 2020

September: No drill

October: 3 & 4

November: 7 & 8

December: 5 & 6

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## RSD SHUTTLE SCHEDULE

### RSD ROTATOR PROCESS

Members sign up directly via Facebook, as well as check flight updates. Rotator riders can request access to the Facebook group by searching "AKANG RSD Rotator" and requesting membership.

Friday Pick-up		
South UTA Shuttle		
Location	Arrive	Depart
Elmendorf	CANCELLED	1715
Kodiak	1815	1830
Homer	1910	1920
Kenai	1935	1945
Elmendorf	2000	
	CANCELLED	
North UTA Shuttle		
Location	Arrive	Depart
Elmendorf		1900
Eielson	2000	2015
Elmendorf	2100	
Sunday Return		
South UTA Shuttle		
Location	Arrive	Depart
Elmendorf	CANCELLED	1715
Kenai	1800	1810
Homer	1825	1835
Kodiak	1915	1925
Elmendorf	2030	
North UTA Shuttle		
Location	Arrive	Depart
Eielson		1700
Elmendorf	1800	1815
Eielson	1915	

Log Plans will post events for each flight a week prior to departure. New riders fill out a new rider request form (LGRDX Share Point under the RSD Rotator folder) and send to the Log Plans shop ([176WG.LGRR@us.af.mil](mailto:176WG.LGRR@us.af.mil)) to be filed. Logistics Plans office cell: 947-4395

**PLEASE NOTE: the SOUTH UTA SHUTTLE has been CANCELLED until further notice. The North**

**UTA Shuttle will still be scheduled on a monthly basis.**

**JBER show time is two hours prior to take off at the passenger terminal.**

176OSS CURRENT OPS Number: 551-5208

JBER ATOC: 552-2104 (Call to update gates)

EDF PAX TERM: Fax 552-3996 / Office 552-3781 (Call to update gates)

**Eielson show time is three hours prior to take off at the passenger terminal**

EIL PAX TERM: Fax 377-2287 / Office 377-1250

**RSD Rotator Share Point:** <https://jber.eis.pacaf.af.mil/176WG/176MSG/176LRS/LGRD%20Log%20Plans/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2F176WG%2F176MSG%2F176LRS%2FLGRD%20Log%20Plans%2FUTA%20Rotator&FolderCTID=0x01200074092A9858D1664D86D7BCF8C1287C0A&View=%7BC246B693%2DEB0F%2D4968%2DAEF8%2DD89451AEDCAA%7D>

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## **WEEKEND DINING FACILITY HOURS**

The Iditarod (Elmendorf) Dining Facility will be closed on Saturday August 1, as renovations are to be completed.

On Saturday members will be encouraged to have lunch at the Wilderness in (Bldg. 647 Ft Richardson).

The Wilderness Inn serves "brunch" from 1000-1400 on the weekend.

The Army DFAC will honor the provided ESM roster and not charge DSGs for their meal.

If anyone gets turned away on the Army side please contact MSgt Franz Deters 907-903-5545

If AGRs or officers wish to eat on the Army side, a flat rate of \$5.65 will apply.

On Sunday the Iditarod will be open again for business (normal hours).

There will not be POD support for the flight line over the weekend (located near F-22 hangers)

### **Normal Hours:**

BREAKFAST: 0630-0830

GRAB-N-GO: 0900-1030

LUNCH: 1030-1330

GRAB-N-GO: 1330-1630

DINNER: 1630-1830

MIDNIGHT: 2300-0100

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## GATE HOURS

For latest gate hours, visit <https://www.jber.jb.mil/Units/673abw/673SFS/>

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## POINTS OF INTEREST

### 176th Wing

Website: <http://www.176wg.ang.af.mil/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/176thWing>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/176thwing>

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/176wg/>

DVIDs: <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/176WPA>

SharePoint (requires CAC): <https://cs2.eis.af.mil/sites/12468/Pages/176%20Wing.aspx>

### Alaska National Guard

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/AKNationalGuard>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/alaskanationalguard>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/NationalGuardAlaska>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/AKNationalGuard>

### JBER

Website: <http://www.jber.jb.mil/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/JBERAK>

Newspaper: <http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/397/arctic-warrior>

### Fulltime Job Opportunities:

<http://dmva.alaska.gov/employment.htm>

### HRO – Alaska National Guard:

<http://dmva.alaska.gov/HRO>

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