

## Alaska Air National Guard Airmen rescue injured hiker at Byron Glacier

David Bedard  
176th Wing Public Affairs

Alaska Air National Guardsmen of the 176th Wing rescued an injured hiker Oct. 25, at Byron Glacier, southeast of Anchorage near Portage.

Alaska Air National Guard Capt. Daniel Warren, Alaska Rescue Coordination Center senior controller, said the authorities on scene from Anchorage Fire Department, Girdwood Volunteer Fire Department and Alaska State Troopers contacted the AKRCC to request hoist extraction of the victim.

The AKRCC notified 176th Wing who dispatched a 210th Rescue Squadron HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter carrying 212th Rescue Squadron Pararescuemen.

Airmen of 210th RQS operate the HH-60G, which is the Department of Defense's only dedicated combat search and rescue helicopter. PJs of 212th



The 210th Rescue Squadron provides emergency rescue services for the citizens of Alaska in addition to training for wartime combat search and rescue missions. (Photo by Alejandro Pena)

RQS are highly trained technical rescue specialists with extensive medical training. Both squadrons deploy for high-risk combat and civil search and

rescue missions.

Due to inclement weather at the site, the Pave Hawk landed at the trailhead and disembarked two PJs, who infiltrated

several miles to the hiker. At the point of injury, working with personnel from Girdwood and Anchorage fire departments, PJs further assessed,

stabilized and packaged the hiker onto a litter and then carried her back to the HH-60.

The patient was transported to Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage where she was released to higher medical authorities.

Warren highlighted the importance and effectiveness of interagency cooperation for rescues as the Alaska winter sets in.

"This mission was another reminder of how quickly things can turn for those enjoying our state," he said. "The terrain, weather and circumstance are always serious here. Thankfully, we mitigate this risk with sustained relationships built on symbiosis with and early notification from our in-state partners to effectively respond and assist those in need."

For this rescue, 210th RQS, 212th RQS and AKRCC were awarded one save.

## Fort Greely Fire and Emergency Services complete advanced rescue training

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

U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Greely Fire and Emergency Services certified 33 employees to serve as team members qualified to provide rescue assistance in a confined space rescue environment Oct. 16, after completing a three week, agency mandated, training course given at the Fort Greely Fire Department.

Instructors traveled from the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute at the University of Maryland to teach the course.

The training course satisfied all prerequisite knowledge, skills and objectives to safely execute technical rescue operations in a confined space, above or below ground. The course included identifying, assessing and mitigating confined space hazards and then safely accessing and rescuing trapped victims.

Fort Greely Fire Department Chief Jesse Halterman is proud of his entire team for completing such a strenuous training while still being prepared for real life emergency responses.

"It is imperative that our emergency personnel are qualified to respond to risks on and off post that could possibly include rescue from confined spaces or collapsed infrastructure," said Halterman.



Top: U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Greely Firefighters Colin Winkelman, left, and Mark Zastavskiy respond to a confined space rescue response scenario during a three week, agency mandated, training course provided by the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute at the University of Maryland. (Photo by U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Greely Fire Department)

Right: U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Greely Firefighters Lonnie Triplet, left, and Carter Cole, right, prepare Zachary White, center, for a confined space rescue scenario during a three week, agency mandated, training course provided by the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute at the University of Maryland. (Photo by U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Greely Public Affairs)



### WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Patchy freezing fog then slight chance of snow. High: 12F

Saturday



Chance of snow and patchy freezing fog. High: 12F.

Sunday



Partly sunny. High: 8F.

### IN BRIEF

One of the most exciting parts of Halloween is a good costume. You can create some really great costumes for little cost with a few of these simple suggestions.

Read more on page 5



of chocolate are less significant when in the context of excessive total caloric consumption. This means we should have chocolate, but not too sweet and not too much.

Guidelines are starting to point to a cocoa solids concentration of at least 70 percent in order to maximize the health punch. So if you haven't tried it yet, give yourself, and your heart, a gift of rich dark chocolate this holiday season.

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# The Chaplain’s Corner

## Feeling A Little Under The Weather?

**Chaplain (Maj.) Robert Hearon**  
25ID 1 SBCT Chaplain

As we anticipate the coming winter some are excited while others are dreading it. Others have never experienced a Fort Wainwright winter and are unsure of what exactly to expect. For those who have an aversion to cold weather there is no doubt that winter here will present challenges. I have found that during challenging times it is helpful to remember others who have endured much greater hardships than my own. Doing this allows us to put our own perceived suffering into proper perspective. When we become proficient at this process of recalibrating our mindsets

we will be able to melt the obstacles in our path without allowing them to turn us into a bitter, cold person. Challenges forge our character and build our capacity to withstand even greater challenges if we keep our faith. Our challenges come in many shapes and sizes and what is not a challenge for you may be a frozen tundra for someone else and the opposite is also true. Rather than having a victim mindset we should have a victory mindset. As I reflect on my own challenges I am always encouraged by a story I read years ago in the New York Times about an amazing Soldier. When you are feeling under the weather consider this amazing

story of the warrior, Roy Benavidez. On the morning of May 2, 1968, Mr. Benavidez, a staff sergeant with the Army's Special Forces, the Green Berets, heard the cry "get us out of here" over his unit's radio while at his base in Loc Ninh, South Vietnam. He also heard "so much shooting, it sounded like a popcorn machine." The call for aid came from a 12-man Special Forces team – three Green Berets and nine Montagnard tribesmen – that had been ambushed by North Vietnamese troops at a jungle site a few miles inside Cambodia. Sergeant Benavidez jumped aboard an evacuation helicopter that flew to the scene.

"When I got on that copter, little did I know we were going to spend six hours in hell," he later recalled. After leaping off the helicopter, Sergeant Benavidez was shot in the face, head and right leg, but he ran toward his fellow troops, finding four dead and the others wounded. He dragged survivors aboard the helicopter, but its pilot was killed by enemy fire as he tried to take off, and the helicopter crashed and burned. Sergeant Benavidez got the troops off the helicopter, and over the next six hours, he organized return fire, called in air strikes, administered morphine and recovered classified documents, although he got shot



in the stomach and thigh and hit in the back by grenade fragments. He was bayoneted by a North Vietnamese soldier, whom he killed with a knife. Finally, he shot two enemy soldiers as he dragged the survivors aboard another evacuation helicopter. When he arrived at Loc Ninh, Sergeant Benavidez was unable to move or speak. Just as he was about to be placed into a body

bag, he spit into a doctor's face to signal that he was still alive and was evacuated for surgery in Saigon. Sergeant Benavidez was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in 1968, but a subsequent recommendation from his commanding officer that he receive the Medal of Honor, the military's highest award for valor, could not be approved until a witness confirmed his deeds.

## Fort Wainwright Exchange celebrates Veterans Day with special MILITARY STAR offers

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

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service (Exchange) and MILITARY STAR® card are honoring those who serve and have served this Veterans Day with a slate of special offers at Fort Wainwright and installations worldwide. On Nov. 11, MILITARY STAR cardholders will receive:

- 10 cents off every gallon of fuel purchased at Exchange Expresses, doubling the card's everyday 5-cents-per-gallon discount.
- Double rewards points on online and in-store Exchange purchases, earning four points per \$1 spent (shoppers receive a \$20 rewards card for every 2,000 MILITARY STAR rewards points earned).
- \$10 off Exchange mall concession or kiosk purchases of \$25 or more (coupon required, see store for details)
- 15 percent off food orders at participating Exchange restaurants—5 percent more than the card's everyday 10 percent restaurant discount

Beyond MILITARY STAR card-exclusive offers, Exchange Expresses and participating restaurants will be serving complimentary coffee Nov. 11. Exchange Redbox video rental locations will also offer two movies for the price of one Nov. 6-13 using the promo



code "HEROES1." "Veterans Day is a great time to stop by your Fort Wainwright Exchange," said Fort Wainwright Exchange general manager Gloria Sylvia. "Our team is fully focused

on providing a safe, sanitized and secure environment to honor the service of our Nation's Veterans while offering significant savings for every member of the military community."

## Worship Services on Fort Wainwright

- Good Shepherd Catholic Community**  
Mass: Sundays, 9 a.m., SLC  
Holy Hour Adoration: Thursdays, 6 p.m., SLC  
Catholic Women of the Chapel: Wednesdays, 9 a.m., SLC
- St. George Anglican Parish**  
Holy Communion: Sundays, 11 a.m., SLC  
Mid-Week Holy Communion: Wednesdays, noon, BACH
- Cornerstone Protestant Community**  
Worship Service: Sundays, 11 a.m., NLC  
Protestant Women of the Chapel, Wednesdays, 10 a.m., NLC  
Cornerstone Youth, Sundays, 1 p.m., NLC
- Congregación Protestante Piedra Angular**  
Servicio de adoración: Domingos, 1 p.m., SLC

**Fort Wainwright Religious Support Office, 353-6112**  
Southern Lights Chapel (SLC), 8th St & Neely Rd.  
Northern Lights Chapel (NLC), Lu-zon & Rhineland Avenues

## RESCUE

Continued from page 1

The Fort Greely Fire Department maintains Mutual Aid Agreements with the Missile Defense Agency and communities along the Richardson and Alaska Highway. "The Fort Greely Fire and Emergency Services is a part of Delta Junction, and Delta Junction is a part of Fort Greely," said Halterman. "We not only want to provide emergency rescue assistance on our installation, but for our community partners as well." Taking care of our community is a garrison priority.

"I am proud of our emergency response personnel and the relationships they have developed with our community partners," said Lt. Col. Joel Johnson, garrison commander. Fort Greely serves as the home for the nation's Ground Based Mid-course Defense anti-ballistic missile system and is located about 100 miles southeast of Fairbanks, Alaska. It is also the home of the Cold Regions Test Center. It is named in honor of Major General Adolphus Greely.





# Former college athlete trades football helmet for Army Combat Helmet

**Sgt. 1st Class Brent Powell**  
76th Operational Response Command

Joining the Army is something few people in the world will ever do, and even fewer will have the opportunity to play football for a top ranked Southeastern Conference college team, but one person here has done both and his list of life achievements are far from over.

Army Reserve Spc. Javiere Mitchell, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist and former outside linebacker for the Auburn College football team, assigned to 1st Platoon, 318th Chemical Company, 490th Chemical Battalion, 209th Regional Support Group, 76th Operational Response Command, is proving that his talents and drive are invaluable whether wearing a football jersey or an Army combat uniform.

Mitchell and his unit are currently conducting a wide-variety of CBRN training here, as part of Operation Desert Dragon, a two-week exercise designed to test the unit's specialized capabilities in a variety of scenarios as they prepare for an upcoming deployment.

Mitchell's journey

to Auburn started during his early years in high school where his passion for track and field competition netted him the Alabama State Class 3A long jump title, and third place in the state in the 100-meter dash. It wasn't long before he took his athletic talents to the football field.

"My junior year of high school is where everything kinda came together," he said. "The football coach saw me in the gym one day and asked me if I had ever played football before and I was like 'I haven't', and the next day there I was out on the field playing."

Mitchell played quarterback and tight end on offense and nose guard on defense. "I liked playing quarterback, but I really enjoyed playing tight end. I don't know what it was just being there on the line and being able to get passes and being that extra hand when it was needed was something I really liked."

His passion for the game helped Mitchell propel his team to a 15-0 winning streak during his junior year and 11-3 in his senior year. But despite his enjoyment of the game, he never planned on pursuing



Army Reserve Spc. Javiere Mitchell, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist and former outside linebacker for the Auburn College football team, assigned to 1st Platoon, 318th Chemical Company, 490th Chemical Battalion, 209th Regional Support Group, 76th Operational Response Command, poses for a portrait at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin. Sept. 19. Mitchell and his unit are currently conducting a wide-variety of CBRN training at Fort McCoy, as part of Operation Desert Dragon, a two-week exercise designed to test the unit's specialized capabilities in a variety of scenarios as they prepare for an upcoming deployment. (Sgt. 1st Class Brent C. Powell)

football after high school.

"Initially I never planned on going to college," said Mitchell. "My plan was to be an airborne ranger." But Mitchell's unplanned route to college came in his senior year when several division one colleges started trying to recruit him, and ultimately he accepted a scholarship to Auburn. During his three

years of playing football for Auburn, Mitchell racked up 39 career tackles. He was ranked 12th from the state of Alabama and ranked 82nd nationally at outside linebacker. When Mitchell graduated in 2015 and hung up his jersey for good, his coach Gus Malzahn said, "he did a great job for us the last three years."

After graduation, Mitchell went on to

start a civilian career as a personal trainer and fitness coach putting his degree in kinesiology to use. "The job was great, but there wasn't a lot of money in it, and there was a lot of long hours involved," he said. "The thought of joining the Army was still in the back of my head, and I just decided I have to do this now, or I'm never going to do it."

When a 26-year-old

Mitchell sat down with his recruiter to decide on a career with the Army, he picked an unusual way to make his selection. "I picked CBRN because it had the coolest name," he said with a laugh. "I was looking through pamphlets on job assignments, and when I saw CBRN, I thought that sounds pretty cool."

See HELMET on page 7

*A Call to Action!*

*Celebrating*

**75**

*Years*

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

**HONORING THE PAST,  
SECURING THE FUTURE!**

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS UNVEILED NOV. 11

## UAF Veterans Day Honor Wall

Veterans, military service members, their families and friends are important members of our UAF community. Join us in honoring our veterans and military service members through the UAF Veterans Day Honor Wall.

The Department of Military and Veteran Services is requesting images, captions or stories about you or your veteran or military service member through the UAF Veterans Day Honor Wall photo submission form.

Submissions are open today through Nov. 16. The images will be available for viewing online throughout the year. Join us for the unveiling and Student Veteran Panel on Nov. 11, 1-2 p.m.

[www.uaf.edu/veterans/honor-wall.php](http://www.uaf.edu/veterans/honor-wall.php)

OCTOBER 2020

# ENERGY

ACTION MONTH

## Energy Resilience Gives Us the #PowerToWin



# Fort Wainwright Exchange offers returns on holiday purchases until Jan. 31

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

Military shoppers at Fort Wainwright will have greater flexibility to return gifts as the Army and Air Force Exchange Service is extending its return policy for the holiday season. Under the policy, shoppers have until Jan. 31 to return any items purchased in store or at ShopMyExchange.com from Nov. 1

through Dec. 24. "It's hard to please everyone on your list," said Fort Wainwright general manager Gloria Sylvia. "The Exchange's extended return policy goes the extra mile to make sure everyone gets the perfect gift this year." The extended return policy also applies to honorably discharged veterans who made their purchases at ShopMyExchange.com as well as veterans with service-connected

disabilities shopping in stores. The Exchange's regular return policy allows returns from 15 to 90 days after the purchase with a receipt, depending on the item. If an item's regular return window extends past Jan. 31, that date will be honored. Some exclusions apply. For more information, military shoppers can check with the Fort Wainwright Exchange or call 1-800-527-2345 for online returns.



# Weekly Tips: Halloween

Halloween is probably the most fun holiday of the year. Who doesn't like to dress up in a costume, run around in the dark pretending to be something you are not and consume lots of sweets? This is a perfect opportunity to delight in all things dark and spooky-like, and you don't have to break the bank in order to celebrate in style. One of the most exciting parts of Halloween is a good costume. You can create some really great costumes for little cost with a few of these simple suggestions: Pool your resources by getting together with a bunch of friends, and bring everything in your closet that could possibly be used as part of someone's costume. Your friends might have some pieces that can

inspire your own costume idea, and an item that you bring may complete their ensemble. Search for ideas on Pinterest boards for creating your own Halloween costumes. You'll find plenty of tutorials and tips for making costumes with inexpensive material by looking online. Go thrift shopping for putting together your outfit. These shops sometimes carry wedding gowns, suites and accessories for low prices. If you already have an idea in mind, definitely shop around the thrift stores to find what you need. Turn it into a game for your kids by giving each child an envelope with five or ten dollars inside to find what they need to make their own costume. Ensure you

give them a time limit and let their creative side take over. Don't forget to look for your decorations there too! Buy arts and craft supplies at the dollar store. You can be creative with ready-made treat bags and other decorations that you can repurpose to make wreaths, centerpieces, and other festive decorations. Print your own invitations, spooky bottle labels, gift tags and even headstones. Search the internet for free Halloween printables. You can always add your personal touch prior to attaching them. Search for free activities within your community. If you don't have room in your budget to host a Halloween party for the kids or even to stock up on holiday candy this year,

plan on taking everyone out for some free Halloween fun. Take a look at the events page in your local newspaper, find events on Facebook, check the community calendar and other local resources. Shop at surplus stores. Stores that carry overstock, surplus and slightly damaged or irregular merchandise can offer large selection of holiday-themed merchandise for low prices. Shopping for candy. Whether you are throwing a party or handing out candy to the neighborhood kids, you'll need a wide variety to keep everyone happy. Consider going to the bulk food section and mix and match your favorite individually wrapped candy. Wrapped toffee bites, gum, lollipops and miniature candy bars are

perfect for these events and are usually cheaper in bulk than pre-packaged. Create a new family tradition. Carve out some time for quality time. Consider a harvest-themed cooking day. Try making popcorn balls, caramel apples, or pumpkin bread, or really be creative and put together a scavenger hunt with the winner choosing a family movie for everyone to watch. Take advantage of post-Halloween discounts. It won't help you this year, but stores will be clearing out their costume and decoration shelves the day after Halloween. You can pick up great bargains that you can use next year or even for Thanksgiving decorations. You can use pumpkins for decorating for Thanksgiving.

# Leaders seek feedback on how to improve inclusion in the Army

**Devon Suits**  
Army News Service

Army senior leaders continue to prioritize efforts to advance diversity, equality, and inclusion across the ranks, including a series of national listening sessions and finding ways to better select leaders. In June, Army Secretary Ryan D. McCarthy and Army Chief of Staff Gen. James C. McConville announced "Project Inclusion," the operational arm of the Army People Strategy's five-year plan for DEI. The Army is determined to put systems in place to create a positive work environment and understand the needs of all personnel, said E. Casey Wardynski,

ki, assistant secretary of the Army for manpower and reserve affairs. "Our goal is to bring them together to build a strong common culture that supports the development of cohesive teams" to accomplish the Army's mission, Wardynski said during a media event Thursday. **Listening sessions** To do this, Army leaders have participated in an ongoing series of listening sessions, with the most recent event taking place at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., earlier this month. Each session allows Soldiers and civilians to openly discuss issues that impact readiness

and inclusiveness, said Anselm Beach, the deputy assistant secretary of the Army for equity and inclusion. "Soldiers and civilians need [the opportunity] to invest in these policies," Beach said. "We want to make a full investment and get it as close to 'right,' as possible." Although COVID-19 has kept many leaders from meeting and interacting in person, Army personnel still have shown their willingness to participate in each listening session, he added. Personnel at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, will be able to participate in the next virtual listening session on Sept. 29, G-1 officials said. Army

leaders have also scheduled online or in-person visits to Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, in October; and sessions at Fort Benning, Georgia; and Fort Stewart, Georgia, in November. Sessions in South Korea; Hawaii; and Fort Irwin, California, are being planned for December. Additional sessions are slated to take place at many other Army locations in 2021. "There have been a lot of people who are engaged in these listening sessions," Beach added. "Not only are they sharing their life experiences, but they are also forward-thinking. Their ideas are not focused on what

is going on right now." They are also centered "on where the Army should be heading" in the future. The Army continues to be at the forefront of change as the force shifts the conversation around the construct of DEI, Beach said. "We are moving beyond a [one-dimensional] description about diversity," said Beach, adding that the term "diversity" is more than just a visual representation of the force. "If people feel as though they need to have one of each [person] to ensure there is diversity, that will create tokenism," he added. In turn, the Army looks to leverage "diversity by ensuring that we bring the skills and talents" of all Soldiers and civilians to bear.

regardless of their race, gender, religion, or background, has opportunities to excel -- warranted off their proven and demonstrated talents," Brito said. Some of the changes for officers include the Battalion Commander and Colonels Command Assessment Programs, or BCAP and CCAP respectively, which now ensure the best leaders step into critical leadership roles after going through multiple assessments. The Army has also launched the Talent-Based Branching program, or TBB, a market approach that addresses a cadet's branch preference, Wardynski said. Previously, the Army would review an officer's overall class performance to match their career path to the force's needs. Under TBB, future leaders will now have a choice of branch predetermined by their talents and interest.

## Talent management

Part of the Army People Strategy also includes efforts to improve talent management and processes on how the force acquires, employs, and retains personnel. The Army is developing a 21st-century approach to talent management, starting with the officer corps, said Lt. Gen. Gary Brito, the Army's deputy chief of staff, G-1. Leaders now have the option to evaluate and assign officers based on their knowledge, skills, behaviors, and preferences. It is important to "create an environment where every single Soldier [and civilian],

To bolster diversity and talent across the force, the Army will also engage with science, technology, engineering and math high school students through the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, Wardynski said. "One of the goals of JROTC is to inspire young adults into service," he added. "We are in 10 percent of the high schools in America. We are creating a STEM JROTC curriculum focused initially on cybersecurity and coding, to build interest in those fields."





# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Fort Wainwright Family & MWR

### Weekly Events

October 31 - November 7

2

#### School Support Services

November 2 - 6  
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Youth can bring materials & laptops to attend classes, work on homework, ask for assistance, and more Monday - Friday every week.

Youth Center, Bldg 4109  
Call 361-5437, registration required

4

#### Bowling with B.O.S.S.

Registration deadline: November 4  
6 - 8 p.m.

Join B.O.S.S. for a FREE night of Bowling on November 11! Registration deadline is November 4.

B.O.S.S., Bldg 1045  
Call 353-7468, registration required

4

#### Frontier Fitness

November 4  
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Can you win the Quarantine Olympics? Youth Sports & Fitness is hosting Quarantine Olympics for the month of November! MS Teams is required.

Youth Sports & Fitness, Bldg 3414  
Call 353-7713

5

#### B.O.S.S. Meeting

November 5  
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

B.O.S.S. Installation Meetings are currently open to battalion level representatives at this time. B.O.S.S. meetings are being held at Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Bldg 1044. Limited to 40 participants.

B.O.S.S., Bldg 1045  
Call 353-7468

5

#### Play with the Pros

November 5 - 8  
Normal Business Hours

Play alongside the golf pros in championships from the comfort of our private, indoor Golf Simulators. Your shot could win you a pack of Titleist Pro V1 golf balls!

Chena Bend Clubhouse, Bldg 2092  
Call 353-6223



Drive Thru Glass Park, for a Spooktacular Time this Halloween!  
For more information, go to [wainwright.armymwr.com](https://wainwright.armymwr.com).  
@WainwrightMWR #WainwrightMWR

## Army to discontinue AWG, REF efforts next year

**Devon Suits**  
Army News Service

Army senior leaders announced plans to discontinue both the Asymmetric Warfare Group and Rapid Equipping Force, as the service shifts funding and resources from counter-insurgency operations to large-scale combat across multiple domains.

For more than 14 years, the AWG and REF have provided Soldiers with rapid materiel solutions and operational advisory support to close capability gaps during operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Both organizations fall under U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and are slated to close no later than Sept. 30, 2021.

For the next year, AWG and REF leadership will prioritize a seamless transition of personnel, all while simultaneously moving programs and equip-

ment to other agencies throughout the force, TRADOC officials said.

#### Mission

The REF bridged gaps between tactical-level requirements for materiel solutions and the long-term Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System process across most commodity areas.

Established in 2002 out of Fort Belvoir, Virginia, the REF provided Soldiers with non-standard equipment solutions to support mission demand, said Steven Sliwa, its deputy director.

Later in 2006, the Army established the AWG, headquartered at Fort Meade, Maryland. During operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the AWG provided operational advisory support to develop rapid solutions to enhance Soldier survivability.

At the time, the AWG helped the Army avoid "tactical sur-

prise" and fight back against an emerging improvised explosive device threat throughout the area of responsibility, said Lt. Col. Morgan Southern, the AWG Charlie Squadron commander.

During the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army identified many institutional shortcomings. It was incumbent of both agencies to respond to these capability gaps, which led to the development of new doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities, or DOTMLPFE, throughout the ranks -- specifically for counter-insurgency operations, according to TRADOC officials.

In a targeted effort to streamline the materiel process, the Army granted REF leadership the authority to approve urgent requests, Sliwa said. Soldiers could fill out a "REF 10-liner" -- a 10-question form --

to identify a tactical problem and various characteristics, and request REF to find a solution.

"The goal has always been speed," as the REF worked to equip Soldiers within 180 days of receiving a 10-liner request, Sliwa added.

Similarly, AWG stepped into an operational advisory support role to assist formations across a broad range of missions at the point of need, Southern said.

#### Counter-unmanned aircraft systems

The AWG and REF both focused on a range of Army challenges, working closely with other Army and Defense Department agencies, along with academia and commercial research, development, and technology communities.

Some accomplishments include developing solutions to counter unmanned aircraft systems and preparing

the Army for underground operations.

The growing threat of unmanned aircraft systems, coupled with the speed of innovation of off-the-shelf UAS technology, all supported the need for counter-UAS policy.

"We identified the emerging threat and conducted a variety of global scout activities to help the Army understand ... before it materialized on the battlefield," he said.

The AWG focused on requirements to help fend off an opposing UAS, all while informing commercial solutions to ensure the survivability of Army-owned assets. The Army's counter-UAS response pushed the development of doctrine and helped improve training, Southern added.

The REF also played a role in bolstering the Army's counter-UAS capability, Sliwa said. The agency organized the first counter-UAS

experiment at Yuma Proving Grounds, Arizona.

The result of that experiment led to REF's procurement of the DroneDefender counter-UAS system, Sliwa said. Visually similar to a rifle, the defender system allowed Soldiers to disrupt an adversary's UAS through directed energy.

The Army's counter-UAS response "is a good example of how both organizations worked closely to identify a materiel solution ... because the AWG had a full understanding of how [UASs] would be employed," Sliwa added.

Today, the Army continues to lead a joint effort to align counter-UAS systems by enabling more "plug and play" technological capabilities, as part of the Joint Counter-Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems office.

See AWG on page 7



AWG Continued from page 6

Underground operations

The AWG and REF also helped close a capability gap tied to subterranean operations. Research on underground operations started in Afghanistan, where units encountered increase use of water-management channels, known as a Karez, by enemy forces, Southern said. "The AWG had operational advisors on the ground with companies and platoons in Afghanistan," he added. "When Soldiers started to encounter this challenge, AWG personnel begin to assist them at the point of need." AWG quickly developed techniques, tactics and procedures, and later shifted Army operations in the subterranean environment. The REF also provided a wide range of solutions to maintain operational effectiveness while operating underground. Solutions included compact and secure network communications; personnel tracking; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear interface upgrades; relay nodes; and wireless video capabilities, REF officials said.

Moving on

As the former director of REF, Sliwa said he is incredibly proud of all the hard work the organization did to



Asymmetric Warfare Group members conduct pistol and rifle drills from different firing positions as part of the Operational Advisor Training Course at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia, Sept. 11-13, 2018. The drills conducted were designed to improve accuracy and efficiency under stressful situations while transitioning from a rifle to a pistol. (Photo by Asymmetric Warfare Group)

support the warfighter.

"We believe our best always came after we partnered with other agencies and organizations," he said. "I am excited to see how the Army takes [the REF] on in the future."

Similarly, Southern is

humbled to have served two tours with the AWG. He is a former deputy commander of AWG, troop commander, and officer-in-charge of the operations and research analysis cell, he said.

"I am extremely proud to have served in this unit and

witness all that this unit has done for our Army," Southern said. "AWG's contribution has been tremendous" as it maintained its primary mission -- help others succeed.

To ensure the value of the organization's work

over the past 14 years is not lost, all lessons learned will be maintained by the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center via the Center for Army Lessons Learned, Centers of Excellence, and other TRADOC enterprise stakeholders.

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In 2019 Mitchell completed Army basic training and his nine-week CBRN school at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Mitchell recently volunteered to transfer from his assigned unit to the 318th Chemical Company to help fill a personnel shortage for the company's upcoming deployment. "I think this will be a great opportunity for me to establish a greater and better understanding of how the

overall Army works," he said. "I think it will give me some valuable real-world experience as a Soldier that will help me in my future Army career." Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this is Mitchell's first time being on a field exercise since joining the Army Reserve. "The training has been going good so far, and I'm learning a lot," he said. "I've gotten to work closely with my platoon on vari-




ous missions and I'm getting to see everything come together. It has also given me an opportunity to learn everyone's personalities." Although there are obviously many differences, Mitchell said that football and the military do share a lot of similarities. "They kind of go hand in hand," he said. "You are going to have your different personalities, but you learn the importance of timelines,

how to delegate tasks and figure out exactly what needs to be done and who needs to do it. In both professions you how to have thick skin and just take things with a grain of salt to get the job done, whatever that job is." Mitchell's Army teammates are already taking note of his hard-work and willingness to learn and accomplish the mission. "He is a real good guy," said Army

Reserve Spc. Caleb Hawkins, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist and native of Lynn, Alabama, assigned to the 318th Chem. Co. Hawkins has worked closely with Mitchell for the past several weeks. "He will do anything for anybody. His willingness to learn and help the team out is first and foremost; he jumps right in head first to help."

Staff Sgt. Thomas Emery, a dismounted reconnaissance platoon sergeant assigned to 1st Platoon, 318th Chemical Company also thinks highly of Mitchell's performance and his potential. "Mitchell has only

been in the Army Reserve for a short time, but he acts like a future noncommissioned officer. He has a lot of learning to do, but we are lucky to have him. He is a beast." With the exercise drawing to a close, Mitchell is already looking to the future, and making the Army into a full-time career. "I really want a career that I can look back on some day and be proud of. A career that I can say, 'yeah that was awesome', and just really have fun in the process," he said. "My ultimate goal is to attend Officer Candidate School and transfer into the regular Army so I do this full-time as an officer."



### Notice of Availability for a Draft Environmental Impact Statement Addressing Heat and Electrical Upgrades at Fort Wainwright, Alaska


Comment Period is October 9, 2020, through December 8, 2020

The Department of the Army announces the availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as part of the environmental planning process to address heat and electrical upgrades at Fort Wainwright, Alaska. The Draft EIS evaluates reasonable alternatives, potential environmental impacts, and key issues of concern.


An electronic copy of the Draft EIS is available online at <https://home.army.mil/alaska/index.php/fort-wainwright/NEPA/HEU-EIS>. Copies of the Draft EIS will be available for review at the Noel Wien Library, Fairbanks, AK; Post Library, Fort Wainwright, AK; and Tri-Valley Community Library, Healy, AK if these facilities are open; and upon request.

Comments received during the 60-day comment period on the Draft EIS will be fully considered prior to the identification of the Army's preferred alternative. This preference will be identified when the Final EIS is published.


There are several ways to provide comments during the comment period.




**Email:** [usarmy.wainwright.id-pacific.mbx.heu-eis@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.wainwright.id-pacific.mbx.heu-eis@mail.mil)



**Online Open House:**  
<https://home.army.mil/alaska/index.php/fort-wainwright/NEPA/HEU-EIS>



**Telephone Public Meeting:** Monday, November 9, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Dial toll-free 855-756-7520 and use access code 65742



**Mail:**  
Ms. Laura Sample, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Program Manager  
Attn: IMFW-PWE (Sample)  
1046 Marks Road #4500  
Fort Wainwright, AK 99703-4500

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Grant Sattler, Public Affairs Office IMPC-FWA-PAO (Sattler), 1060 Gaffney Road #5900, Fort Wainwright, AK 99703-5900; telephone: (907) 353-6701; **email:** [alan.g.sattler.civ@mail.mil](mailto:alan.g.sattler.civ@mail.mil).

The U.S. Army complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who may need auxiliary aids, services, and/or special accommodations should contact Grant Sattler or TDD number 711. Requests should be made at least 5 days before the accommodation is needed to make any necessary arrangements.