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Beyond the Medicine: Patient travel

Brandy Ostanik-Thornton
Medical Department Activity
– Alaska Public Affairs

Interior Alaska is a great location for viewing the northern lights, observing wildlife and hiking in pristine forests, it is not however, the ideal location to be when looking for specialty medical care. Like civilians living in the Fairbanks area, many TRICARE beneficiaries assigned to Fort Wainwright find themselves referred to other cities or states in order to receive medical care not readily available in the Fairbanks area.

In order to aid these TRICARE Prime beneficiaries, Medical Department Activity – Alaska provides the services of a patient travel office.

The patient travel office, just one piece of the Patient Administration Division, works with providers, the MEDDAC-AK referral office, resource management and SATO Travel to arrange travel for approximately 1,700 patients each year.

According to Sarah McWhirter, MEDDAC-AK

Medical Department Activity – Alaska travel specialists, Pfc. Ashanti Morris and Sarah McWhirter, work together to arrange medical travel for a patient needing specialty care not available in the local area. The patient travel office, just one piece of the Patient Administration Division, works with providers, the MEDDAC-AK referral office, resource management and SATO Travel to arrange travel for approximately 1,700 patients each year.

transportation assistant, the patient travel office tries to make the experience of traveling out of town for medical care less stressful for patients.

“Some of our people travel periodically and have the process down but those traveling for the first time, especially those going with a child who is sick, can feel very overwhelmed by having to travel for an appointment,” said McWhirter.

“Our office works to arrange flights to and from the appointment as well as lodging and rental car if necessary. We want to make it as easy for patients as possible so they can concentrate on their family and their medical appointment.”

Staff members work to make the travel experience as comfortable as possible for patients but they are bound to the Joint Travel Regulation on the exact

benefits a patient can utilize on any given medical trip.

The most common travel benefit questions center around staying overnight for appointments in Anchorage and non-medical attendants said McWhirter.

There are some situations, such as the patient being a child or those going under sedation, in which the patient automatically receives a non-medical attendant said McWhirter. However, there are other reasons that do not provide for that benefit, such as the patient speaking a foreign language, not having a driver’s license or just not wanting to go alone.

“We work with patients to help meet their needs, but we must also assure we are good stewards of the government dollars we are given. The Joint Travel Regulation guides us to ensure we do just that.”



While the travel office exists to make medical travel easier for patients, there are steps patients can take to make the process run

more smoothly. “All active duty are supposed to have a DTS

See TRAVEL on page 4

Diverse in talent, united in mission: 120 years of service

Brandy Ostanik
Medical Department Activity – Alaska Public Affairs

“I want you take your hand, place it over your heart and feel that beat,” said Army nurse and U.S. Army Medical Department recruiter, Maj. Jodi Stoafer. That, my friend, is called purpose, compassion and dedication to one of the most prestigious professions known to humankind. Nursing.”

Stoafer spoke virtually Feb. 2 from Kansas City, Missouri to Medical Department Activity – Alaska staff members during a celebration of the Army Nurse Corps’ 120th anniversary. Officially founded in 1901 with the purpose of caring for soldiers on the battlefield and at home, the Army Nurse Corps has used their diverse talents in their united mission to provide selfless service and quality care to Soldiers, family members and other beneficiaries for over a century.

Keeping COVID-19 mitigation strategies in mind, the virtual event, which included MEDDAC-AK staff members from Fort Wainwright, Fort Greely and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson centered around the theme, “Diverse in Talent, Unified in Mission.”



Army nurse and Army medical recruiter, Maj. Jodi Stoafer (on screen) virtually greets guests during the Medical Department Activity-Alaska celebration of the 120th Army Nurse Corps Anniversary at Bassett Army Community Hospital on Feb. 2.

Stoafer urged those in attendance to think back to life a year ago and how different it was.

“We were traveling; might have even been PCSing. Life was moving quickly, maybe even chaotic,” said Stoafer. “Until the world stopped. The airborne virus, a pandemic taking over our land and our way of living. For the first time in history we were ordered to stay home.”

However, not everyone could stay home.

“Hospitals were at capacity, nurses were working long, hard

hours with very little rest,” said Stoafer. “Nurses and those on the front line worked tirelessly with no end in sight. The year of the front-line worker was upon us. The world thanked us. Our heroes were the ones in scrubs and masks. Our battle scars were the imprinted rings of N-95 masks around our faces. This is the year we are going to tell our children and grandchildren about.”

Stoafer spoke of the mission of Army nurses and the many roles they play in healthcare, especially during

a pandemic.

“The mission to care for the sick and dying never let up in this crazy time,” said Stoafer. “The mission continued. Nurses, I know you are tired, pulled in many directions and the struggle is real, my message for you today, on the day we celebrate the Army Nurse Corps, is the message that you matter, the diversity that you brought to the fight is the uniting mission.”

For more information on the Army Nurse Corps, go to <http://armynursecorps.amedd.army.mil/>.

ASAP Advice: Drinking safely in the Last Frontier

Tamia Thompson
U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Fort Wainwright Army Substance Abuse Program

Drinking alcohol when it is cold outside may seem like a harmless and innocent activity, but research suggests that consuming alcohol in colder climates could result in a variety of detrimental outcomes. In places that have extreme cold weather, such as Alaska, it is crucial that you are responsible and prepared if you find yourself in this situation.

Alcohol acts as a vasodilator, which means it has the ability to dilate your blood vessels and surge your blood flow. This increase in blood flow beneath the skin is what causes you to feel a warm sensation while drinking alcohol.

However, despite the temporary warmth that you may experience, you are actually at a greater risk for cold injuries, hypothermia and even death. This is because the blood that protects your most vital organs such as the heart, lungs and brain are being redirected to the surface of your skin. This process leaves your body’s core susceptible to Alaska’s distinctive cold and harsh climate.

Although the outcomes of consuming alcohol in cold weather can be definite, there are some ways you might be able to overcome them. According to the Cleveland Clinic, there are a few cold weather safety tips that could potentially save your life and the lives of others:

- Tip 1: Wear warm clothing and dress in layers so you can take a layer or two off and put them back on as needed. Staying warm in the cold climate is key to help prevent frostbite and hypothermia.

- Tip 2: Eat fatty or high-carb food prior to drinking alcohol. This is extremely helpful as the fat in the food will coat the lining of the stomach and help slow the absorption of alcohol in the blood.

- Tip 3: Do not drink beverages that are too cold, particularly ones with ice. Drinking beverages with ice will actually constrict your blood vessels and can cause body temperature complications, which

See ADVICE on page 2

WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Partly sunny. High: -8F.

Saturday



Mostly sunny. High: -8F.

Sunday



Mostly sunny. High: -7F.

IN BRIEF

An Army veteran who served in the Pacific theater in World War II was finally recognized for his courage in a ceremony on Jan. 4.

“Courage means to me that when the time came, that you were called upon to do the right thing, you did it,” said Dan Crowley.

Read more on page 7.

Nutrition Corner: Did you know ...

Vegetables are a crucial component of a nutritious diet. These colorful plants add vitamins, mineral, antioxidants, fiber and vital macronutrients to our plates. Additionally, when we make more of our plate full of vegetables, we reduce our intake of less healthy foods, and lower the amount of total calories, cholesterol, saturated fat and sodium that we get from our meals. Thus, better health!

To top it all off vegetables can be a delicious and aesthetically pleasing part of any dish. Research shows that, while higher intakes of vegetables can

independently reduce risk of chronic disease, over 85 percent of Americans do not meet basic daily recommendations for this food group. Now is the perfect time of year to make sure you're not on the losing side of this statistic; go try some local "Alaska Grown" vegetable options.

For more information about vegetables and nutrition, including appropriate portion sizes, and recommended servings per day based on age/activity level visit: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> and to find out more about local produce or even start your own vegetable garden that

suits the interior Alaska climate check out this guide: <https://www.uaf.edu/files/ces/publications-db/catalog/anr/HGA-00030.pdf>

Featured Food:

Onion! This plant is grown in hundreds of varieties and many different climates around the world. It is versatile, and an asset in a wide range of cuisines. The edible part of a common onion, also called a bulb onion, is actually a collection of fleshy leaves that fold onto each other in an alternating pattern and create the mature onion. Onions can be harvested and stored over long periods, making them

a convenient product in the kitchen. Onions vary in flavor, color and size. They can have sweetness to them, but typically onions are more pungent and used in savory dishes.

Recipe Spotlight:

Vegetable Kabob! The term 'kabob' in English typically refers to a variety of meats and/or vegetables cut into cubes, skewered and cooked on a grill. There are many different styles and cultural adaptations of this cooking method that originated in prehistoric times. The great thing about a 'kabob' is that, if you have a grill and a skewer, really

anything goes.

Preparation:

Gather a variety of your favorite flavorful and colorful vegetables from your garden or the market.

Cut them into one inch by one inch cubes.

Put the cubes into a large metal bowl.

Drizzle a small amount of olive oil and sprinkle with light seasoning; toss until evenly coated.

Arrange the pieces onto the skewer one-by-one, balancing the different ingredients equally among the desired number of skewers.

Grill on medium heat until soft. Serve immediately.

History Snapshot: Chow Line at Ladd Field, May 9, 1945



During World War II Lend Lease operations at Ladd Field, Soviet personnel were provided with much the same facilities and services as their American counterparts. They received ample hangar space, utilizing the entire western half of Hangar 1 while the Cold Weather Test Detachment used the eastern side. They were given warehouse space in one of the many Butler buildings located adjacent to Hangar 1. There, the Soviets stored equipment such as Herman-Nelson heaters used to heat aircraft engines, battery carts and cletracs used for towing aircraft. In the control tower, one of the two controller positions was designated for the Soviets, though the actual operation was done by a Russian-speaking American on their behalf. And the Soviet aviators were always given takeoff priority. The one place where Soviet personnel were not given equal treatment was in the officer's mess. As Cold Weather Test Detachment pilot Randy Acord recalled, "We took the first time that was more convenient to us and then the Russians would have to fit into that. Now that was the only place we ever had an override on the Russians!" (File photo Cultural Resources Program)

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
MEDDAC-AK Website: www.bassett-wainwright.tricare.mil
MHS Patient Portal: <https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/>
Health Net: www.tricare-west.com, 1-844-8676-9378

COVID Vaccination

Medical Department Activity – Alaska is following guidance from the Defense Health Agency for administering the COVID-19 vaccine. As of today, we continue to vaccinate healthcare personnel, first responders and beneficiaries 75 and over. As we open to different populations we will post information to our Facebook page, website and here in the MEDDAC Minute.

Patient Travel Vouchers

Two weeks turn-around time is the expected timeframe for vouchers to be approved for patients traveling for care outside of Fairbanks. For patients who have vouchers outside of this two-week window please contact

the Patient Administration Department at 361-5001.

Wellness Center

The Fort Wainwright Wellness Center is open for appointments. With health assessments, nutrition information, stress management services and physical fitness programs beneficiaries will find tools to take small but important steps to a healthier future. To make an appointment or to inquire about services call 361-2234.

Tobacco Free Campus

As a reminder, MEDDAC-AK facilities are now tobacco free. This includes Bassett Army Community Hospital, Preventive Medicine, Behavioral Health, DENTAC/ASAP, Veterinary Clinic and Kamish. Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, electronic nicotine delivery devices (e.g. e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-cigs, etc.) stem pipes, water pipes, hookahs and smoke free products that are chewed, dipped or sniffed.

Tricare Covers COVID Vaccine

TRICARE will cover the cost of beneficiaries no matter where it is received. While there may be a cost based on your plan for an office visit, the vaccine itself is free. To learn more, www.tricare.mil/COVIDvaccine.

ADVICE Continued from page 1

might make you feel dehydrated.

- Tip 4: Alternate alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. This will help you to consume less alcohol and decrease your risk of cold injuries, hypothermia and dehydration.

- Tip 5: Keep a sober friend with you to ensure that you make responsible decisions. They will be able to keep an eye out for you

and help you stay safe if you are not able to do so independently.

- While the safest tip is to avoid drinking in the cold altogether, adhere to these tips to keep yourself safe. Keep in mind that drinking alcohol in cold weather has the potential for danger, and everything is better in moderation. Be safe. Be smart. Be prepared.

ALASKA POST

The Interior Military News Connection

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The Chaplain's Corner

Did you eat yet?

Chaplain (Capt.)

Michael Hale
1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment Chaplain

Some days we get so focused on what we are doing that we find ourselves forgetting to eat. We only notice this because we can lose focus, get agitated easily, become impatient, and we can only define it as being 'hangry.' Often when I am trying to help myself, others and even my family, I will start with the question, "Did you eat yet?" It is impressive that after being hungry we

can eat a granola bar and shortly after feel semi-normal again. Eating is such a simple thing that we do regularly but may grow tired of its frequency and neglect giving it the proper attention it deserves, especially when it comes to good nutrition.

Just like eating, the same principle applies to taking care of our spiritual hunger. If we desire to experience something different from bitterness, anger, frustration, anxiety, fear and unforgiveness, we need to consider trying to feed ourselves

on the goodness of God. It would be difficult to survive on one physical meal every few days and the same is true when it comes to spiritual food. The spirit is undernourished if we only feed it on the High Holy days that take place throughout the year. In fact, the Bible states in Matthew 4:4, "People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." So, if our bodies need regular food every day to work properly without agitation, wouldn't it make sense that our

spirits need the same?

So, my question to you is, "Did you eat yet?" Have you taken the time today to eat from the table of God? Have you communicated (prayer), read (Bible or Holy Book), sung (worship and praise), listened (encouraging messages), or created in effort to connect with your Creator? You may find the moment you stop to feed your spirit is like the moment you eat a granola bar...you start feeling semi-normal again! In this life we have both a physical self and a spiritual self. To



operate at our optimal potential, it would be advantageous for us

to take routine care of both aspects of our lives.

Weekly Tips: Buying jewelry

Buying jewelry for the loved ones goes beyond Christmas to Valentine's Day to even birthdays, so taking time to save money can make that gift even more satisfying to the giver. The investment in precious metal and stone jewelry can be one that keeps its value over time. Here are some tips to help you.

- Avoid full price retail items. If you are in the market for diamond or real gold jewelry such as rings, visit wholesale diamond brokers near you or on the web. Wholesale jewelry brokers may purchase your old, broken or out of style gold jewelry that can serve as partial payment for your new pieces. Check out independent jewelers over national retailers.

- Consider buying a silver piece. With the high price of gold, consider a sterling silver piece, which is 92.5 percent silver. "Nickel silver" or "German silver" has no real silver at all. If it's got to be gold consider a lower karat quality: 24k is pure gold, but there's also 18k (75 percent) gold, 14k (58 percent) and 10k (42 percent) gold. 18k is often considered the best balance of

color and price. Whatever you purchase, ensure it's clearly tagged with karat weight and look for a tiny tag that reveals the manufacturer.

- Buy a real gem. Precious stones never go out of style, but make sure you get the right one. There are three categories: natural (meaning dug out of the ground), synthetic (made in a laboratory), and imitation (meaning made in China or somewhere else usually made of glass or plastic). Nearly all gems, including natural gems, are enhanced with laboratory techniques, like radiation and diffusion.

- Do research and understand what you want before you buy. Know the Four C's (cut, color, clarity, and carat); until the middle of the twentieth century, there was no agreed-upon standard to which diamonds could be judged. The 4Cs of Diamond Quality is the universal method for assessing the quality of any diamond, anywhere in the world. Ask to see the certification.

- Color – This evaluation of most gem-quality diamonds is based on the absence of color. A chemically pure and struc-

turally perfect diamond has no hue, like a drop of pure water, therefore, higher value.

- Clarity – This involves determining the number, size, relief, nature and positions of these characteristics, as well as how these impact the overall appearance of the stone. While no diamond is perfectly pure, the closer it comes, the higher its value.

- Cut – A diamond's cut grade is about how well a diamond's facets interact with light. Precise artistry and workmanship are required to fashion a stone so its proportions, symmetry and polish deliver the magnificent return of light.

- Carat – Diamond carat weight is the measurement of how much a diamond weighs. All else being equal, diamond price increases with carat weight since larger diamonds are more rare and desirable.

- Negotiating.
- Prepare – Do your research for the going cost for the item you want. The party (either the seller or buyer) with the most knowledge has the advantage. The standard

See TIPS on page 4

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, 6 p.m., NLC
Cornerstone Youth, Sundays, 1 p.m., NLC

Congregación Protestante

Piedra Angular
Servicio de adoración: Domingos, 1 p.m., SLC
Northern Lights Chapel Nov. 22, 2020

Fort Wainwright Religious Support Office, 353-6112

1051 Gaffney, Unit 10
Southern Lights Chapel (SLC), 8th St & Neely Rd.
Northern Lights Chapel (NLC), Luzon & Rhineland Avenues

Next generation of night vision technology tested before equipping warfighters

Mike Shelton

Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate, U.S. Army Operational Test Command

Operational Airborne Soldiers here wrapped up testing new night vision goggles and a laser range finder.

To determine the operational effectiveness and suitability of the Enhanced Night Vision Goggle – Binocular — the Army's next generation of night vision system — and the Small Tactical Optical Rifle Mounted Micro-Laser Range Finder, Soldiers conducted multiple jumps, despite a few setbacks with weather and the Corona Virus.

"This is the end of a long road for these two programs," said Bill Slaven, test officer with the Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate.

"Both programs had suffered impacts to their acquisition time line due to the influences of COVID-19 in the preceding months."

The ENVG-B equips Soldiers with situational awareness by providing not only cutting edge night vision



The Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate strives in equipping warfighters with the safest and most reliable night vision equipment. Here, a member of the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade conducts a night target observation exercise with the Enhanced Night Vision Goggle Binocular after successfully conducting a static line airborne operation on Sicily Drop Zone, Fort Bragg North Carolina. (Photo by Chris O'Leary, Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate, U.S. Army Operational Test Command)

technology, but also providing real-time combat information and navigation assistance.

Staff Sgt. Michael Wagner, an Infantry squad leader from Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 325th Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, hailing from Tampa Florida said, "The new capabilities of the ENVG will make night dismounted navigation much simpler."

The STORM II is a rifle-mounted laser range finder with infrared aiming capabilities.

It is intended to provide Soldiers accurate range-to-target information when employing organic and indirect weapons systems.

STORM II also provides an infrared aiming reticule for the Soldier's primary weapon during limited visibility.

Testing for the STORM II culminated with MFF testing by local Fort Bragg special operations Soldiers to address special operations community requirements when employing the STORM II during and subse-

quent to MFF infiltration.

During this phase of testing, the STORM II was jumped exposed during MFF operations, providing the critical test conditions of rapid altitude change, temperature and atmospheric pressure existing during free-fall jumps.

SPC Jacob O'Brien of Easton, Massachusetts, with Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 325th Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division was one of the STORM II primary operators during all phases of testing.

"I like it!" he said of STORM II. "It's a very durable system that attaches securely to my rifle and maintains its zero."

STORM II testing was delayed due to the influences of tropical weather in November but completed in early December with the final free-fall test trials by Soldiers from the 3rd Special Forces Group.

However, unlike previous tests of this nature conducted during early 2020, unique challenges surfaced due to the ongoing Corona Virus pandem-

ic at Fort Bragg, which brought about a few new procedures.

"The new normal test day now begins with social distancing, temperature checks, medical screening and bubble assignments," said Wayne Lovely, an ABNSOTD Test Officer.

"Consequently, paratroopers are a very hard demographic to socially distance," said Maj. John Phillips, ABNSOTD Deputy of Chief of testing.

"Military aircraft are inherently designed to deliver the maximum amount of Soldiers possible in the least amount of space, and the proximity of a jumpmaster to the

jumper is non-negotiable when inspecting the lifesaving parachute of a Soldier."

"Our goal is to keep the Soldiers participating in testing socially distant and safe during every phase of our operations," said Slaven.

He said upon arrival each morning, participating Soldiers were given temperature checks by ABNSOTD staff and assigned to a specific work bubble for the day.

"This ensured that the operational Soldiers had minimal exposure to support staff and employees not directly involved with their mission," Slaven added.

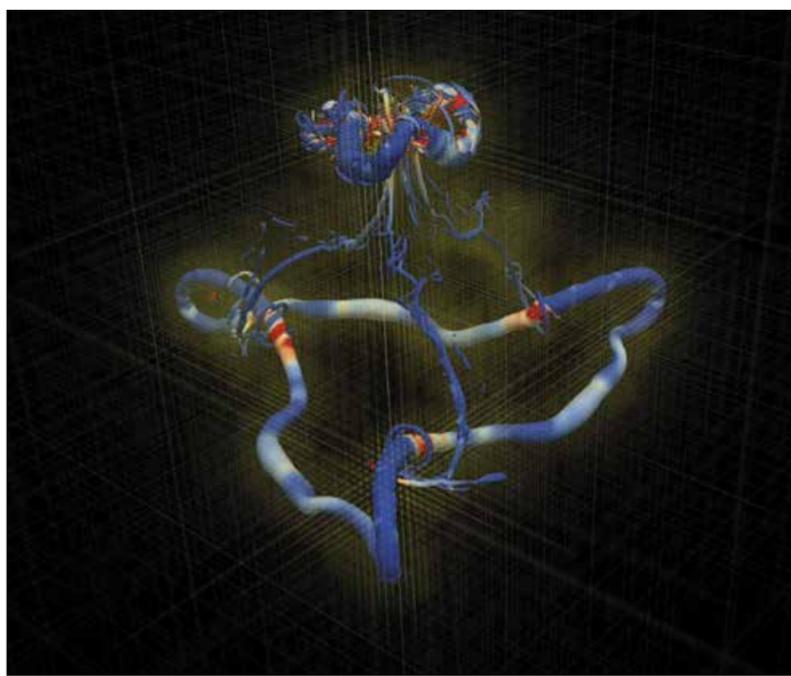
Turbulence model could enhance rotorcraft, munitions performance

U.S. Army DEVCOM
Army Research Laboratory
Public Affairs

Design of Army aerial vehicles and weapon systems relies on the ability to predict aerodynamic behavior, often aided by advanced computer simulations of the flow of air over the body. High-fidelity simulations assist engineers in maximizing how much load a rotorcraft can lift or how far a missile can fly, but these simulations aren't cheap.

The simulations that designers currently use require extensive data processing on supercomputers and capture only a portion of vortex collision events – which can cause significant performance degradation, from loss of lift on a rotor to complete loss of control of a munition. A new turbulence model could change that.

The Army Research Office, an element of the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command, now known as DEVCOM, Army Research Laboratory, funded researchers at Purdue University to advance a turbulence model known as the Coherent-vorticity-Pre-serving Large-Eddy



A new modeling approach allows engineers to simulate an entire vortex collision without needing to do extensive data processing on a supercomputer. (Courtesy Purdue University/Carlo Scalo)

Simulation, known as CvP LES. Published in the *Journal of Fluid Mechanics*, the new methodology simulates the entire process of a vortex collision event up to 100 times faster than current state-of-the-art simulation techniques.

“The thing that’s really clever about Purdue’s approach is that it uses information about the flow physics to decide the best tactic

for computing the flow physics,” said Dr. Matthew Munson, Program Manager for Fluid Dynamics at ARO. “There is enormous potential for this to have a real impact on the design of vehicle platforms and weapons systems that will allow our Soldiers to successfully accomplish their missions.”

The model can be used to simulate vortices over any length of time to best resemble

what happens around an aircraft. For instance, as a rotor blade moves through the air, it generates a complex system of vortices that are encountered by the next blade passage. The interaction between the blade and the vortices can lead to vibration, noise, and degraded aerodynamic performance. Understanding these interactions is the first step to modifying designs to reduce their

impact on the vehicle’s capabilities.

In this study, researchers simulated the collision events of two vortex tubes called trefoil knotted vortices. This interaction shares many common features to the vortices often present in Army applications. Simulating the evolution of the collision requires extremely fine resolution, substantially increasing the computational cost.

The methodology relies on clever techniques that balance cost and accuracy. It is capable of rapidly detecting regions of the flow characterized by fine turbulent scales and then determining, on-the-fly, the appropriate numerical scheme and turbulence model to apply locally. This also allows computational power to be applied only where most needed, achieving a solution with the highest possible fidelity for a given budgeted amount of computational resources.

“When vortices collide, there’s a clash that creates a lot of turbulence,” said Carlo Scalo, a Purdue associate professor of mechanical engineering with a courtesy appointment in aeronautics and

aeronautics. “It’s very hard computationally to simulate because you have an intense localized event that happens between two structures that look pretty innocent and uneventful until they collide.”

Using the Brown supercomputer at Purdue University for mid-size computations and Department of Defense facilities for large-scale computations, the team simulated an entire collision event, fully simulating the thousands of events that take place when these vortices collide.

The team is now working with the Department of Defense to apply the model to large-scale test cases pertaining to Army vehicle and weapons systems.

“If you’re able to accurately simulate the thousands of events in flow like those coming from a helicopter blade, you could engineer much more complex systems,” Scalo said.

The Rosen Center for Advanced Computing at Purdue and the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory Department of Defense Supercomputing Resource Center provided additional support for this research.

TIPS

Continued from page 3

selling price is 2.3 times the wholesale price, according to the Jewelry Information Center, a trade association. In other words, if the price tag says \$500, the jeweler probably paid about \$217.

• Set limits – Know how much you would like to spend. First, take a hard look at your financial situation, and assess how much you can truly afford to spend; second, how much

do you feel comfortable spending. You must find the balance and set that as your limit.

Close the deal – Try saying “Say, oh that’s more than I am looking to

spend.” Then tell the jeweler what your budget is; he may be able to give you the piece you want for your number or direct you to a similar piece that’s in your price range. Finally, offer

to pay with a check or cash. The jeweler may agree to pass along the percentage he would otherwise have been charged by the credit-card company for the transaction.

THE GREEN TO GOLD ACTIVE DUTY OPTION PROGRAM IS A TWO-YEAR PROGRAM THAT PROVIDES ELIGIBLE, ACTIVE DUTY ENLISTED SOLDIERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMPLETE A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE OR A TWO-YEAR GRADUATE DEGREE AND EARN A COMMISSION AS AN ARMY OFFICER.

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 - POST 9/11 GI BILL
 - NORMAL PCS ENTITLEMENTS
 - LEADERSHIP TRAINING
- RESPONSIBILITY AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE
- MENTORSHIP OF THE PMS/APMS
- CAMARADERIE

TRAVEL

Continued from page 1

[Defense Travel System] account,” said McWhirter. “It would help if units ensured their Soldiers had a current account. This is especially true for emergency situations; if they don’t have an account already it definitely puts us behind in the process.”

The process also goes more smoothly when patients have a government travel card account in good standing and the card is turned on.

While most patient travel planning happens during a regular workweek, when an emergency arises, the staff is on stand-by

and ready to assist.

“The Soldiers in our office have an on-call phone so if there is a need for emergency travel at night or on the weekend one of them will come in and take care of the patient’s travel needs,” said McWhirter.

Interactions with patients involve a lot of paperwork and processes, but McWhirter finds the work to be both challenging and rewarding, especially when working with patients who need to travel often for their medical needs.

“Some days can be on the challenging side,” said McWhirter.

“Patients often tell us things that are heart-breaking. I know they are processing through emotions and sometimes they do not have anyone else to talk with, or just need to unload their worries. It is hard not to get involved on a personal level.”

“I try not to take their worries home with me, but I do,” said McWhirter. “I worry about them and hope I am able to make things just a little easier for them.”

For more information on patient travel benefits, go to <https://tricare.mil/primetravel>.

AFC remains future-focused while supporting present challenges

Bailey Olderog
Army Futures Command

In the midst of a global pandemic, U.S. Army Futures Command has stepped into the fray to support the nation's response effort, while forging ahead on Army modernization priorities during 2020.

Just as with the rest of the world, AFC has had to adjust operations this past year, and yet has still found a way to thrive in the challenging environment. From assisting the world's race to assist the sick and help find a vaccine for COVID-19, to leading the Department of Defense effort to modernize the Joint Force at the pace of industry, 2020 has been a year of firsts for the Austin-based command.

AFC entered the Austin tech sphere in 2018 to the lead of the Pentagon's effort to modernize the armed forces at an innovation overmatch. Austin was chosen as the headquarters location due to its highly developed innovation ecosystem across industry and academia.

Army partnerships with these institutions support the synergistic efforts needed to realize massive, force-wide modernization.

"Future battlefields will be incredibly lethal – forcing units to operate widely dispersed, while hyper-activity will accelerate decision cycles and sensor "saturation" will make it impossible to remain unseen", said Gen. John Murray, AFC's commanding general. "The Character of War – not the Nature of War – is changing and the technologies driving it are autonomy, robotics, and artificial intelligence. If these three key technologies are going to work together on a future battlefield, they will have to be underpinned by a network that is reliable, resilient, and adaptive and we must have common standards for our data and data architectures."

The primary driver for the Army's effort to respond to these changes is Project Convergence, a "campaign of learning" designed to create interoperability between all elements of the Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control, to include using new networks and artificial intelligence algorithms to connect sensors and shooters. Central to the project is the concept of innovating to overmatch, not simply to parity, which has led the DOD to look for solutions in the civilian sector.



In 2020, Army Futures Command launched the Army Software Factory designed to build and sustain a Soldier-led software development capability to raise the level of digital proficiency across the Army for future warfare in 2028 and beyond. (Photo by Patrick Enright)

In an effort to move at the speed of need and at scale, AFC is partnering with industry and academia to develop ideas and solutions, and to implement them at the pace required of today's global operating environment. The inaugural year of effort for this project culminated in September, at the Yuma Training Ground, in Arizona, where cross-communications between sensors and soldiers were demonstrated with exceptional success.

Diving into another challenge, AFC launched Software Factory in Austin, the first of its kind within the Army. This effort is based on a partnership model to find solutions to complex problems and the anticipated needs of the future warfighter. The ultimate goal of Software Factory is to teach Soldiers and civilians how to solve Army problems with cloud technology and modern software, creating cutting-edge applications for current and future systems. This initiative is expected to create lasting impacts across the DOD.

"This is the best program I've participated in during my 18 years in the Army," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mercedes Barrera, a soft-

ware developer. "You can effect change in real-time. We were able to make changes for today's problems instead of just talking about the problems and hoping for a change ten years from now."

On the medical front, AFC's Army Medical Research and Development Command, headquartered at Fort Detrick, Maryland, has been on the front-lines in the fight against COVID-19, providing direct support for Operation Warp Speed, the multi-agency U.S. government initiative accelerating the development, manufacture and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics.

MRDC is leading research efforts to prevent, detect, and treat the novel virus through the application of existing field-leading research capabilities, a global research network, and established partnerships with industry and academia to support the whole-of-government response to COVID-19.

Aside from their work on COVID-19, MRDC is the Army's medical materiel developer, responsible for medical research, development, and acquisition. Their expertise in these critical areas helps establish and maintain the

capabilities the Army needs to remain ready and lethal on the battlefield.

AFC's busy year of firsts doesn't stop at there.

As part of the modernization effort of armored vehicles, Optionally Manned Fighting Vehicles are being developed for integration into armored brigade combat teams known as ABCTs. OMFVs are to be deployed as part of a section, platoon, and company of mechanized infantry, garnering not only significant tactical advantage for soldiers, but also providing advanced sensors, lethality, protection, and mobile mission command opportunities.

The Army modernization team also completed Soldier Touchpoint 3 of the Integrated Visual Augmentation System, which will increase the warfighter's battlefield awareness and ability to rapidly identify potential threats and take decisive action.

The secret to AFC's ability to operate on so many disparate levels at such a fast pace can be attributed to the creation of eight Cross Functional Teams. While geographically dispersed, each is focused on achieving different, but interconnected, readiness

priorities of the Army. The teams are: Air and Missile Defense (Fort Sill, Oklahoma); Assured Positioning, Navigation, and Timing (Redstone Army, Huntsville, Alabama); Long Range Precision Fires (Fort Sill, Oklahoma); Future Vertical Lift (Redstone Army, Huntsville, Alabama); Network (Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland); Next Generation Combat Vehicle (Detroit Arsenal, Michigan); Soldier Lethality (Fort Benning, Georgia); Synthetic Training Environment (Orlando, Florida).

Lt. Gen. James Richardson, AFC deputy commanding general, expressed his support and faith in these teams, stating that, "CFTs are critical to our ability to be agile in our innovation efforts. These technologies are so new and require extreme adaptability by those working them. Thanks to CFTs, the Army is able to engage in this process, without letting us get in our own way with our."

All of this combines to achieve the DOD's goal of achieving and ensuring military overmatch in the battles to come. AFC's CFTs are the linchpin for this goal, and in 2020, they more than proved their worth.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Fort Wainwright Family & MWR

Weekly Events

February 20 - 27

20

Snowmachine Safety Course

Registration deadline: February 20
Event Date: February 27, 9 a.m.-Noon & 1- 4 p.m.

Learn to operate a snowmachine to safely adventure Alaska's terrain! *Snowmachine Safety Courses are required to go on guided trips & to checkout snowmachine.

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 1045
Call 361-6349, registration required

22

Volleyball Camp

February 22 - 25
6 - 7 p.m.

Youth 5-18 years old can join Youth Sports for Volleyball Camp! Cost per child: \$35. Face masks and are required.

Youth Sports & Fitness, Bldg 1045 Basement
Call 353-7713, registration required

24

Frontier Fitness (Basketball)

Registration deadline: February 24
Event Date: March 3 - 24, 1 - 2 p.m.

Youth ages 5-18 years old can join Youth Sports and Fitness for March's activity: Basketball! Cost per child: \$25. Face masks are required.

Youth Sports & Fitness, Bldg 1045 Basement
Call 353-7713, registration required

27

White Mountains Snowmachine Trip

Registration deadline: February 27
Event Date: March 6, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Explore the White Mountains by Snowmachine with Outdoor Recreation! *Snowmachine Safety Certification is required before registering for this event.

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 1045
Call 361-6349, registration required

27

B.O.S.S. Snowmachine Trip

Registration deadline: February 27
Event Date: March 7, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

ODR & B.O.S.S. are hosting a 2-in-1 Snowmachine Safety Course and Snowmachine Trip! Cost: \$55

B.O.S.S., Bldg 1045
Call 353-7648, registration required



Snowmachine with Youth Sports & Fitness on February 27. For more information, go to wainwright.armymwr.com.

@WainwrightMWR #WainwrightMWR

Ransomware: A virtual hostage situation

U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command's Major Cybercrime Unit is warning the Army community about an increase in ransomware attacks.

According to Edward LaBarge, director of CID's Major Cybercrime Unit, there was a rise in ransomware cyberattacks in 2020 and the trend is expected to continue this year.

Ransomware is a type of malicious software, or malware, designed to deny a user access to a computer system or computer files until the ransom, typically cryptocurrency, has been paid. Ransomware uses encryption to hold the data hostage and requires a decryption key before a user is granted access.

Similar to other types of malware, ransomware is one of many methods used by cybercriminals to gain data from users and to attempt financial gain. The first recorded ransomware attack was in December 1989 using floppy discs. As ransomware evolved, it moved away from being a tool exclusively used by advanced cybercriminals

and became a service that can be implemented by any cybercriminal willing to purchase the software.

Today, there are many methods used by cybercriminals to trick a user into downloading ransomware. The most common ransomware attack methods to look out for are from socially engineered phishing emails, links in forums or search engines to compromised or copycat websites containing a malicious download, fake social media impersonators, and through software vulnerabilities.

LaBarge said the two most common ways MCU is seeing ransomware executed is by "infecting ones computer through phishing emails or visiting a malicious website via a drive-by download."

A drive-by download occurs when users unknowingly "download" a program without knowledge or by giving consent. LaBarge said users typically see an increase in system resources when a malware attack occurs. For example, an unexplained increase in CPU usage could be malware being loaded onto the computer.

To prevent ransomware from occurring or reoccurring, users should ensure data is backed up regularly, maintain the latest operating system updates, keep anti-virus software installed and up-to-date, and always use caution when opening email links or attachments.

"It is important to always ensure your data is backed up," said LaBarge. "It is recommended that you back up your data monthly. If possible, you should have your backups automated so you don't have to worry about it. Whether it's using the iCloud, Time Machine or the Windows 10 backup feature, having it automated will help ensure your data is protected against tragedy."

He also recommends never paying the ransom. "Paying doesn't guarantee you get your data back and it won't prevent the cybercriminals from hitting you again with another ransom."

Ransomware Victim Recommendations

Isolate the infection - Infected computers should be disconnected from the Internet (unplug the

Ethernet cable or place the computer in airplane

mode) as soon as possible to prevent ransomware from communicating with the attacker or spreading to other computers.

Identify the infection - In most cases, it will be easy to determine if the system has been infected. However, determining how the ransomware was downloaded is not always as obvious. Identifying how the ransomware was downloaded can ensure other users do not make the same mistake.

Report - Ransomware attacks on Army issued computers must be reported to your system administrator or security representative. If a personally owned computer becomes infected, you are strongly encouraged to report the incident to the Internet Crime Complaint Center.

Identify a solution - How data gets recovered on Army issued computers is determined by your unit's system administrator. For personally owned computers, it is recommended to wipe the system and restore it using a clean offline copy. While it may be tempting to pay the ransom, there is no guarantee that your data will not be sold by the attacker.

Furthermore, paying the ransom, making it profitable for the cybercriminals, only encourages future ransomware attacks.

Prevent recurrence - Evaluate how the infection occurred and put measures in place to ensure your system is not open to another infection.

Tips to Avoid Becoming a Ransomware Victim

Education - Stay updated on ransomware trends and the evolving methods used by cybercriminals in ransomware attacks.

Cyber best practices - Avoid opening attachments or clicking on links in suspicious emails. Be mindful of pop-ups on websites and do not allow unsolicited downloads.

Regular updates - Ensure your computer's operating system and antivirus software are updated. As ransomware variants are identified, updates and patches are created and released to prevent infection.

Backups - Maintaining valuable information offline, such as an external hard drive, provides an alternative method of recovering data lost in a ransomware attack.

February 19, 2021

World War II vet, POW who endured 'Hell Ship,' gets CIB, promotion, POW medal

C. Todd Lopez
Defense.gov

An Army veteran who served in the Pacific theater in World War II was finally recognized for his courage in a ceremony on Jan. 4.

"Courage means to me that when the time came, that you were called upon to do the right thing, you did it," said Dan Crowley.

Crowley was awarded a Prisoner of War Medal and an Army Combat Infantryman Badge; he was also promoted to sergeant.

At an Air National Guard hangar in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, Gregory J. Slavonic, who is performing the duties of the Navy undersecretary, presented Crowley with the long-delayed honors and recognition.

"I have to say that to be able to do this today is a rare and humbling opportunity for me as the undersecretary of the Navy — to be able to recognize Dan for his many sacrifices and accomplishments," Slavonic said. "He truly represents members of the greatest generation, who did so much but asked so little from their country. The valor and professionalism demonstrated by you, Dan, has earned you a permanent place in the heart of every American."

A Connecticut native, Crowley joined the Army Air Corps in October 1940 at the age of 18. For his first duty assignment, Crowley was assigned to an aircraft unit on Nichols Field near Manila, the capital of the Philippines. He arrived there in March 1941. At the time, the U.S. was not involved in the world war that had ravaged so many other nations. But after being on station in the Philippines for just nine



Army Sgt. Dan Crowley (ret.) talks with the Honorable Gregory J. Slavonic, currently performing the duties of Under Secretary of the Navy, prior to a ceremony for Crowley where he was officially presented with the rank of sergeant, Prisoner of War Medal, and the Combat Infantry Badge at Bradley Air National Guard Base in Windsor Locks, Connecticut on Jan. 4, 2021. Crowley earned these accolades during his service in the Pacific Theatre of World War II, but was never officially recognized before his separation from the service. (Photo by Timothy Koster, Connecticut National Guard)

months, things changed dramatically.

On Dec. 7, 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The U.S. declared war on Japan the same day. The following day, the Japanese bombed the Philippines, as well, and they eventually made their way to Nichols Field where Crowley was assigned.

Crowley wasn't trained in combat arms, but when the bombs started falling, he and other soldiers had to act.

"Dan and his unit participated in an improvised air defense at this location, welding antiquated [British machine guns] together to form a single, more powerful gun," Slavonic said.

The Japanese raid at Nichols Field destroyed all the hangars, most of the aircraft, and other infrastructure. While Crowley and others worked to defend the airfield against the Japanese attacks, their efforts ultimately proved unsuccessful.

On Dec. 24, 1941 — about 15 days after the Japanese bombed Nichols Field — Crowley and others sailed about 25 miles across Manila Bay to the Bataan Peninsula in the dark of night, leaving their former home abandoned.

"The Japanese controlled the air over the Philippines, [and] completely eliminated the U.S. Far East Air Force as an effective defense of Asia," Slavonic said. "The Philippines now had to rely solely on its ground forces, which at the time had no lines of supply nor escape."

On the Bataan Peninsula, the fighting continued. The soldiers from Nichols Field — including Crowley — became part of the U.S. Army's Provisional Air Corps Infantry Regiment. The regiment was joined in their efforts by the Philippine Scouts.

"[They] worked hand-in-hand to fend off three amphibious landings by the Japanese on the west coast

of Bataan in the Battle of the Points," Slavonic said. "Imagine the courage and determination it required for Dan to stay alive, yet remain engaged in these assaults."

After three and a half months of fighting, it was apparent the Japanese were going to prevail at Bataan. It was then, on April 9, 1942, the American leadership on the peninsula opted to surrender in order to prevent further casualties — something that had never before happened. As part of the surrender, they ordered troops to move south on the peninsula and congregate there in Mariveles.

While the U.S. forces had been ordered to surrender, Crowley wasn't in agreement with his leadership.

"The men did not surrender, either on Bataan or on Corregidor," Crowley said. "They were surrendered by their commanding officers to prevent a massacre, which was threatened by the Japa-

nese commander."

Instead of surrendering, Crowley and others made other plans to escape the clutches of the Japanese.

"Refusing to become prisoners, he and a number of soldiers and sailors hid among the rocks in the breakwater near the shore, and, at nightfall, they made their way through the three miles of shark-infested waters, swimming to Corregidor and clinging to lifeboats or debris from the various ships that were bombed or scuttled," Slavonic said.

On Corregidor island, just off the southern tip of the Bataan Peninsula, Crowley and others were met by a Marine Corps unit — the 4th Marines Regimental Reserves. Crowley and the others who had escaped Bataan fought alongside Marines to keep Corregidor from falling into the hands of the Japanese.

"These Marines fought a dangerous and desperate shore defense until Corregidor fell on May 6, 1942," Slavonic said. "Dan, along with nearly 1,200 other POWs, were held at the 92nd Garage Area on Corregidor, an exposed beach with little water or food and no sanitation."

By the end of the month, Crowley and others were taken by boat from Corregidor to Manila where they were paraded through the city as part of the "March of Shame" on May 25, 1942. Eventually, he was housed as a POW at Camp Cabanatuan.

"To escape the unspeakable conditions of the camp, Dan volunteered to work the airstrip in Palawan Island where he and other laborers were given only hand tools to carve out the runway for the enemy," Slavonic said.

On Palawan Island, Crowley worked for nearly 18 months to build a runway for the Japanese. He was eventually returned to Manila in February 1944, but not everyone who'd gone to Palawan Island was returned.

"[The Japanese]

burned alive a hundred-plus Americans on the island of Palawan," Crowley said. "The Japanese proved their threat of massacre was not an empty threat. They did proceed to murder about 150 Americans by burning [them] alive with gasoline. They forced them to dig a long ditch ... they were forced into it, and then [the Japanese] poured gasoline on them and the guards ... they ignited it with torches. Some men actually survived, so we have eyewitness accounts to it."

Back in Manila, Crowley had escaped that death sentence, but the Japanese had other plans for him. To support the Japanese war effort, he was to mine copper as a slave laborer. In March 1944, the Japanese put him on a boat bound for Japan.

"[Dan survived] a hellish transit that would last for weeks, ultimately arriving in Japan," Slavonic said. "The stories of what transpired on those 'hell ships,' have driven many sailors, as Dan has said, to have all sorts of nightmares and post-traumatic stress disorder. Ultimately, Dan would spend three-and-a-half years as a prisoner of war, enduring the most unspeakable tortures, and witnessing many of his closest friends suffer the most inhumane murders of the war."

On Aug. 6, 1945, the U.S. detonated a nuclear weapon over the city of Hiroshima, Japan. Three days later, the U.S. detonated another weapon over the city of Nagasaki. On Sept. 2, 1944, the Japanese signed documents of surrender aboard the USS Missouri. Just two days later, Crowley was liberated. After spending some time in an American hospital, he was able to return home to his family in Connecticut.

Crowley was honorably discharged from the Army in April 1946; however, Army records show he had been promoted to sergeant in October 1945, but Crowley never learned of that promotion.



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

Comment Period is December 23, 2020 through February 22, 2021

The Department of the Army is issuing this Amended Notice of Availability of the continuing 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.

The comment period originally scheduled to end on December 8, 2020 is being reopened for an additional 60 days ending on February 22, 2021. 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

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

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.