

**Into harm's way**  
JBER NCO helps  
measure radioactivity  
after Japan disaster  
**Page A-9**



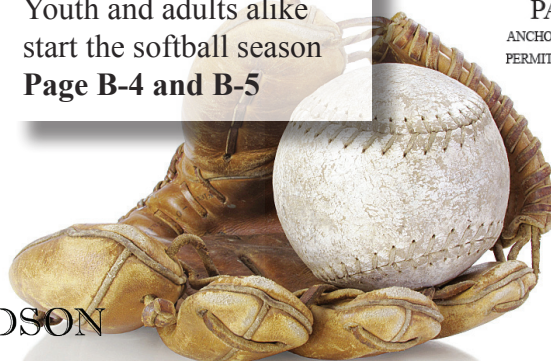
**Volume 2, No. 20**

# ARCTIC WARRIOR

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON

[www.jber.af.mil/news](http://www.jber.af.mil/news)

**Diamond derby**  
Youth and adults alike  
start the softball season  
**Page B-4 and B-5**



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**May 20, 2011**

## *3 Stryker Brigade Soldiers killed in Afghanistan*



**Spc. Bradley L. Melton**



**Pvt. Cheizray Pressley**



**Pvt. Lamarol J. Tucker**

USARAK news release

The names of the three Fort Wainwright Soldiers who died in Afghanistan Monday were announced today by the Department of Defense.

Spc. Bradley Louis Melton, Pvt. Cheizray Pressley and Pvt. Lamarol Jerome Tucker were killed during an attack on their mounted patrol by insurgents using an improvised explosive device. The three combat engineers were assigned to the 73rd Engineer Company, Brigade Troops Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Wainwright.

Melton, 29, of Rolla, Mo., joined the Army in October 2000, served at Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., before arriving in Alaska in May 2008.

Pressley, 21, of North Charleston, S.C., joined the Army in September 2010 and served at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., before coming to Alaska in January 2011.

Tucker, 26, of Gainesville, Fla., entered the Army in January 2009 and served at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., before arriving at Fort Wainwright in April 2009.

The attack took place in the city of Spin Ghbarga, in Zabul Province, Afghanistan, Monday afternoon.

The 4,000-Soldier brigade began deploying to Afghanistan in mid-April for a one-year tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The next of kin have been notified.

## **We've spotted the enemy**

# Send in the choppers

## *'1 Geronimo' Soldiers mount air assault training mission*

By Senior Airman  
Christopher Gross  
JBER Public Affairs

The objective was clear, the enemy had been identified and the platoon was ordered to conduct an air assault in hopes of taking control over the opposing force.

A few miles out, the Soldiers of the 3rd Platoon, Comanche Company 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry Regiment (Airborne), knew what was expected of them. Groups of 10 or so swarmed into four UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and in no time were on their way to confront the enemy.

After weaving in and out through several miles of centuries-old carved out mountains, the four choppers landed simultaneously, approximately four kilometers away from the target, allowing Soldiers to storm out of the helicopters and hit the ground. After the choppers had cleared the perimeter, the squads secured the area.

It didn't take long for the sounds of indirect fire to ring out all around the paratroopers, but this didn't faze the platoon. They knew they had to begin their journey of trekking through small tree-like

See **Air Assault**, Page A-3



**ABOVE:** Sgt. 1st Class Kyle Silvernale, a platoon sergeant of C Company, 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry Regiment (Airborne), yells out commands to his troops while on an air assault, May 12.

**LEFT:** A UH-60 Black Hawk from 1st Battalion 52nd Aviation Regiment, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade, Fort Wainwright, flies over the Chugach Range carrying C/1-501st Soldiers. (Photos by Senior Airman Christopher Gross/ JBER PA)

## JBER team rounded up for RODEO action



**C-17 Globemaster III load master Senior Airman Jeff Purvis, 517th Airlift Squadron, guides a Halvorsen loader into C-17's cargo bay during a practice load for the Air Mobility Command RODEO 2011. (Photo by Steve White/JBER PA)**

## *Firebirds prepare to compete with other Air Mobility Command Airmen*

By Senior Airman Christopher Gross  
JBER Public Affairs

The Airmen have been rounded up and they've been preparing themselves for this year's Air Mobility Command RODEO, which is set to take place from July 23 to 29 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

Twenty-nine members make up Team Alaska, consisting of several different teams, including aerial port, aircraft maintenance, security forces, contingency response and a few more.

Each team was chosen differently, some having competitions within their own sections to narrow down the individuals that will be participating in this year's RODEO.

The RODEO was first introduced in 1962 and is a biannual event. Its purpose is to improve the skills of air mobility professionals.

"The idea behind RODEO is to foster an environment to increase professionalism as well as standardization," said Capt. Brian Muto, Team Alaska team chief. "It provides us an opportunity to do something that brings everyone together as a team and the competition really brings out the best in individuals."

Muto added that aside from the competition the hospitality is great, because it allows units from all over country and the world to congregate in one single location and share their tactics, techniques and

See **RODEO**, Page A-3

## *Antiterrorism awareness*

### Tip of the week: Traveling with luggage

- Use plain baggage.
- Avoid military looking bags such as duffle bags.
- Remove all military patches, logos, and decals from your baggage and briefcase.
- Ensure that baggage tags do not show your rank, address or organization.
- Comply with the 3-1-1 policy. (liquids 3.4 ounce bottle or less; 1 quart sized clear plastic zip lock bag placed in one carry on bag.
- Never leave your luggage unattended.

### Inside this week's Arctic Warrior:

**Page A-2, Commentary:**  
Army captain, wife speak about living day to day with PTSD

**Page A-3, Air Force announces controls of civilian hiring**

**Page A-4, Pararescuemen return from Afghanistan**

**Page A-10, Briefs**

**Page B-1, JBER explosive ordnance disposal Airmen destroy sea mine**



# Stigma of seeking help diminishing

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

Efforts to take the stigma out of seeking help when it's needed and build resiliency within the force appear to be paying off, the commander of a brigade that's seen heavy action in Afghanistan told American Forces Press Service.

Army Col. Sean M. Jenkins, commander of the 101st Airborne Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team, reported promising signs Soldiers are heeding the message being sent from Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates on down that seeking mental, physical or spiritual care is a sign of strength, not weakness.

"We are making progress in moving to a point where there is not a stigma, and there shouldn't be," Jenkins said. "Every unit is different, and every squad and team is different. But I think we've come to a point where the stigma is diminishing."

Jenkins' brigade, the last to deploy to Afghanistan as part of the 30,000-troop surge there, has taken heavy casualties since arriving last summer in the remote Paktika province that borders Pakistan. Fifteen "Currahee Brigade" Soldiers have been killed, with scores more wounded and more than 40 Soldiers flown out of the theater for advanced medical care.

In addition, two Soldiers attempted suicide, and Jenkins said he's been surprised at how many have met with the brigade chaplain, psychologist or physical therapist for emotional, spiritual, mental health or physical help.

"I am glad the help is there, and I certainly want every Currahee to say it is accessible, and to say, 'I don't think I will be looked at differently if I seek it,'" Jenkins said. "That is the hurdle, but I think we have gotten better at that."

The brigade began building resiliency skills long before arriving in Afghanistan, he said. The program emphasizes mental as well as physical resilience for Soldiers and their families.

That training continues in the combat theater, where the brigade hosts a three-day, semi-monthly course that reinforces the principles of mental, physical and spiritual health, and sessions covering everything from physical health and nutrition to proper sleep methods and how to deal with stress. Attendees are encouraged to take what

they learn and apply it, not only to themselves, but also to their peers and subordinates.

"It's a constant process," Jensen said of resiliency-building efforts that will continue throughout the deployment and after redeployment to Fort Campbell, Ky.

Resiliency focuses heavily on junior leaders taking care of their Soldiers and Soldiers looking out for each other, he said. "It's a team effort," he said. "But it is really interaction with leaders – junior leaders, team leaders, squad leaders. There is so much on their shoulders."

Jenkins called junior leaders and noncommissioned officers his front line of defense in recognizing Soldiers in need of help.

That, he said, requires knowing each Soldier – his or her family situation, likes, dislikes and challenges.

"That is what you have to know, because then you can pick up when they are not acting right or something is bothering them. The challenge is to know your people," he said. "And that is all part of leadership: How do you help them through that situation?"

The death of a unit member, or even enemy contact when everyone survives intact, can trigger issues. So after every "event," Jenkins requires his Soldiers to pause and evaluate what happened and how they feel about it.

"This is about sitting down and talking with them," he said. "It's talking with them as a unit, then as a smaller unit, then as individuals."

When a unit loses a Soldier, Jenkins sends in his mental- and spiritual-health team to provide immediate support and, as part of the memorial process, temporarily pulls that unit from combat operations.

Jenkins' approach appears to be working as the brigade nears the final months of what Jenkins called an "incredibly successful deployment."

"This is a unit that had just five months notice to deploy, that was not on any patch chart, and where roughly 60 percent deployed to Afghanistan the last time just 17 months prior," Jenkins said.

"But they are doing a phenomenal job, and it all falls back on the leaders," he said. "They make some incredible decisions in trying to do and accomplish the right thing. They just do it, day-in and day-out, and they do it well. It's just remarkable."

# Editorial & Opinion



Marine Staff Sgt. Hector Medina, left, Army Staff Sgt. Tristan Mizer, seated, and retired Army Capt. Adrian Veseth-Nelson – all wounded warriors – try out the driving simulator at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence, Bethesda, Md., June 23, 2010. Veseth-Nelson now works to break the stigma of seeking treatment for PTSD. (Photo by Linsey Pizzulo/National Intrepid Center of Excellence)

# Soul searching Army captain shares experiences with PTSD

*This blog entry and the one below were posted to [www.dcoe.health.mil](http://www.dcoe.health.mil) to tell the story of a Soldier and his wife as they discussed their struggle to deal with his post-traumatic stress disorder.*

Posted by Robyn Mincher  
[www.dcoe.health.mil](http://www.dcoe.health.mil)

Army Capt. Adrian Veseth-Nelson was 24 years old when he received the Bronze Star Medal for valor for his efforts which stopped a group of insurgents in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"After securing a convoy which was ambushed, my guys got hit by a drive-by shooting. My wing man spotted the shooters in a black sedan. They parked on the side of a school yard and started shooting machine guns. We had to do something," Veseth-Nelson said. "We chased them onto a crowded entrance to a highway at 65 miles per hour, and I told my driver to ram them. It was out of a movie."

A survivor, who they pulled out of the wreckage of the insurgent's vehicle, threw a grenade at them. Fortunately, it didn't detonate; it was the only one of the 15 grenades later found in the car without a fuse. Veseth-Nelson's unit was safe, and the sole surviving insurgent was taken away by police.

Once he returned to the states, Veseth-Nelson was considered a home-town hero – respected by family, friends and fans. Celebrations were in abundance, but for Veseth-Nelson, the indulgence

didn't end.

"I was easily drinking two six-packs a day and sometimes would come to work with alcohol on my breath," he said. "Just like everyone else, I was happy that I was alive. I didn't know the line between that and self-medicating."

What Veseth-Nelson didn't know was that he was self-medicating to cope with symptoms related to PTSD.

He developed symptoms like disturbed sleep, fluctuating weight, extreme road rage and general anger.

"My first response to any threat was to fight. I even flashed my gun at my colleague," he said. "My boss pulled me aside and said I needed to change things. He knew the Adrian who he used to see wasn't the one he was seeing right now."

Veseth-Nelson took a proactive approach to treatment; he sought out a psychologist on the installation.

"My psychologist saw my PTSD for what it was," he said. "She recommended the Specialized Care Program."

The Specialized Care Program, run by Deployment Health Clinical Center, a component center of the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury, is a three-week multidisciplinary treatment program for service members and veterans coping with deployment-related stress and PTSD.

# Spouse talks about PTSD from her point of view

Posted by Diana Veseth-Nelson  
[www.dcoe.health.mil](http://www.dcoe.health.mil)

My husband's PTSD manifested itself in different ways.

I remember Fourth of July at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., when we were all standing outside listening to the band, enjoying the picnic and listening to fireworks.

The fireworks bothered Adrian because they sounded so much like gunfire. It made other Soldiers upset too, and we all went inside.

I thought it was ironic because the celebration was supposed to be for the American Soldiers; they couldn't even enjoy it.

He'd see a can on the side of the road and swerve, thinking it was an improvised explosive device. When he'd go out to dinner with other Soldiers, I'd say it looked like a "The Last Supper" painting because they'd all sit there with their backs against the wall.

If a room became too busy, he'd want to leave. He'd suddenly

become unfriendly or unapproachable.

At first, I confused his behavior with depression, or I thought maybe he was just tired. I also couldn't help but think it had to do with me; I'm only human.

I was fortunate Adrian was willing to get help once he got back. Once he was diagnosed, I knew we'd know better how to deal with his symptoms.

I educated myself on PTSD; I went to his group therapist and reached out to the Real Warriors Campaign for information. But the most important thing I did was listen to Adrian.

After he took part in the Deployment Health Clinical Center program, I could tell there was a stark improvement in his ability to manage his PTSD symptoms. The program taught him different ways to manage the symptoms.

I never thought he would be into activities like yoga or acupuncture – now he's a convert!

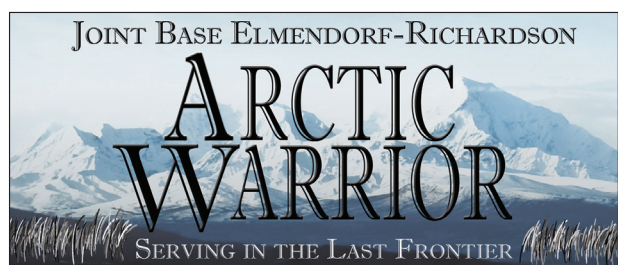
The program combines group therapy and one-on-one sessions that give participants tools to address psychological health concerns.

"I was immersed in an environment where people really care. Yet you had to be active in participating and be vocal because you only get out of it what you put into it," Veseth-Nelson said. "It's an amazing program that brought me back to my true self. It changed my life."

While Veseth-Nelson has retired from the Army, he, along with his wife Diana, are active in the military community, giving speeches and holding seminars about their own experiences while encouraging service members, veterans and families to reach out for help if needed.

"After some soul-searching, I realized that even though I couldn't be the combat leader that I was, it doesn't mean I can't help my country," he said. "What I am doing now is helping people with PTSD as an extension of that service. I use my position as an officer and a war veteran to break the stigma wherever I possibly can."

**Editor's note:** Visit DHCC's Specialized Care Program for more information. Also, if you have questions related to psychological health or traumatic brain injury, you can contact the DCoE Outreach Center 24/7 at (866) 966-1020 or e-mail [resources@dcoeoutreach.org](mailto:resources@dcoeoutreach.org) to connect to a health resource consultant.



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**Sgt. Kevin Sturgill of C Company, 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry Regiment (Airborne), watches over a captured enemy, May 12. The Soldiers took part in air assault training where UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters operated by 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, Fort Wainwright, took them into a section of Alaska's Chugach Range and they were tasked with engaging an opposing force. The mountainous terrain made ordinary infantry tasks more difficult to accomplish. (Photos by Senior Airman Christopher Gross/JBER PA)**



**ABOVE: Left to right, Sgt. Kyle Sturgill, Pvt. Trevor Freeman and Sgt. John Lamontagne all of C/1-501st provide security while on an air assault in Alaska's Chugach Range, May 12. The unit will encounter mountainous terrain during a deployment to Afghanistan. LEFT: Spc. Colin Stallings of the C/1-501st, patrols through Alaska's Chugach Range as three UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters fly above him, May 12. The 1-52nd helicopters deployed from Fort Wainwright to support the training mission. The Black Hawks are equipped with specially fabricated skis to help the aircraft stay afloat on muskeg.**

## RODEO

From Page A-1

procedures which in turn strengthening our U.S Air Force.

Muto said he expects about the same participation in this year's RODEO as in the one they previously participated in two years ago.

During the 2009 AMC RODEO, approximately 60 aircraft from more than 20 countries participated. A total of 10 different types of aircraft made up the nearly 60 that participated, including the C-17 Globemaster III – which Team Alaska used in 2009 and will be using again this year – the C-5 Galaxy, three variations of the C-130 Hercules and several others.

The captain said he feels confident his team will fare well in the competition.

"I plan to train the team to the best of their abilities. I really think we're going to dominate the competition," he said.

He said his team is the best of the best from their units and they seem highly motivated.

Muto also said there were lots of lessons learned from their last RODEO and they've taken those points and put them into their integrated training plan in hopes of executing them this year.

Almost 15 other countries were on hand to observe the event in 2009 to include,

Algeria, Brazil, Jordan and Greece to name a few. According to Muto, before a unit can participate they have to attend at least one prior RODEO to learn the ins and outs to ensure when they do participate they can compete to the best of their ability.

Feeling good about his team, Master Sgt. Augustine Circello, one of the coaches for Team Alaska said, "I think we've got a solid team and a solid game plan for success."

This is year will be Circello's second time coaching and when the team arrives at JBLM, Circello will be an in transit visibility umpire, ensuring cargo and passenger manifest are created correctly.

Circello also said he has seen some strong dedication from his team, often putting in eight hours worth of training per day, he added his team is doing everything it can to plan smart and utilize all the assets they have available.

He said more than anything, he wants his team to take away the importance of team camaraderie and secondarily networking as well as learning what other units are doing so they can in turn increase their capabilities.

Circello sounded excited to be going to Washington.

"This is the cream of the crop; it's the top crews and top teams from all around the world," he said. "It's a chance to show off their capabilities, it's a premiere competition.

"We look forward to the challenges ahead of us," Circello said.



**Tech. Sgt. Chris Boles, 773 Logistics Readiness Squadron, signals during practice load for the Air Mobility Command RODEO 2011. (Photo by Steve White/JBER PA)**

## Air Force officials announce civilian hiring controls

Air Force News Service  
News release

Air Force leaders announced that hiring controls were instituted May 12 to reduce projected growth of the civilian workforce.

The Air Force-wide efforts to stem the civilian personnel growth are a result of Secretary of Defense Robert Gate's efficiency initiatives to maintain civilian manning at fiscal 2010 levels.

Hiring controls will allow Air Force officials to take a targeted approach to meet the mandated manning levels.

Effective immediately, one person will be hired for every two new vacancies in areas affected by hiring controls.

This doesn't apply to current hiring actions when a job selection has already been made; however, all other hiring actions may only be filled at a 1:2 ratio as new vacancies occur.

"As our nation and the Air Force face significant budgetary challenges, tools such as hiring controls help us manage hiring and posture ourselves for the future," said Paige Hinkle-Bowles, the deputy director of force management policy.

Hiring controls will enable a more focused approach to hiring, giving higher priority to strategic mission areas

such as the nuclear enterprise, the acquisition workforce, and test and evaluation.

"Civilian hiring controls will be used as a bridging mechanism as the Air Force develops strategic plans for the future to ensure civilian authorizations are in the right place to meet mission priorities," said Lt. Gen. Darrell Jones, the deputy chief of staff of Air Force manpower, personnel and services.

Air Force officials will continue to monitor and assess hiring controls throughout the summer and will provide additional hiring guidance

and prioritization details as the overall plan develops.

"The Air Force recognizes the invaluable contributions of our civilian workforce, but also recognizes the fiscal constraints under which all the services are operating. We will do our best to balance mission needs while taking care to minimize the effect on the civilian workforce," Jones said.

For more information about hiring controls, individuals may contact their base civilian personnel office or visit the restricted-access Air Force personnel services website at <https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/home>. For information about other personnel issues, call the Total Force Service Center at (800) 525-0102.



## Air assault

From Page A-1

brush and snow, and begin their climb to their objective, which would be more than 1,000 meters in elevation.

Their mission was to keep a sharp eye, and to clear and occupy the terrain ahead in order to allow freedom of maneuver for follow-on forces.

After spotting the opposing force, the platoon set up fire support off in the distance as another fire team made their way along the mountain side, keeping their cover, planning to raid the area beneath them.

It didn't take long until the team was in position a couple hundred yards out, watching the enemy over a ridge they were using for cover.

The platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Kyle Silvernale, gave the go-ahead to engage the enemy. The troops raged down the mountainside and spread out to cover all avenues of approach, ensuring they had their objective point covered.

They arrived at the foot of the objective hill, where their enemies awaited at the top. Smoke grenades were thrown and a white heavy smoke filled the air, obscuring the Soldiers and allowing them to go in and capture or "kill" the opposing force if the force posed a threat.

Once the area was under the platoon's control, tactical site exploitation and questioning were conducted. Troops searched for clues about the enemy which could be used to aid future missions, and to gain knowledge of other fighters in the area.

After the assault was executed, the four Black Hawks were called back in to extract the Soldiers from the site and return to home station.

The training, which took place May 12 on JBER training grounds in Alaska's Chugach Range, is a vital part of the unit's task list because it can become very useful in the battalion's next deployment according to Army Capt. Tyler Rund, the company commander.

Silvernale, who was recently awarded the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device for actions he performed on July 13, 2008, while deployed to Afghanistan, said "(this training) is very important to unit readiness. It allows the Soldiers to have a good idea of what to expect during a real-world air assault.

"Being able to conduct a mission in a no threat environment allows us as leaders to identify possible problems and correct our deficiencies with no loss of American lives."

The platoon sergeant also said he felt his troops "executed the mission flawlessly" and he's proud of them all, because the hard work they put in during team and squad live-fire exercises paid off once they hit the objective.

According to Silvernale, the training was excellent but challenging because there are so many moving parts to an air assault. He said you have to be on top of your game, and expect the unexpected because once you hit the ground anything can happen.

Army Staff Sgt. Richard Johnson, a 3rd Platoon squad leader, agreed with Silvernale. "This training was an eye-opener for some of our newer Soldiers, to see how fire, maneuver and communication are affected while conducting operations in mountainous terrain," he said.

According to Rund, the next stop for the company will be the Donnelly Training Area in June to continue some realistic training which will aid them in their fight in Afghanistan.





## Flight of Angels

**ABOVE:** Air Force Master Sgt. Matt Schrader smiles after being greeted by his wife, Vicki, and daughter, Erika, Saturday after he returned home from a deployment to Afghanistan. Schrader has been deployed with the Alaska Air National Guard’s 212th Rescue Squadron, the Guardian Angels, since Dec. 26.

**LEFT:** Air Force Maj. Jesse Peterson holds his daughter, Cadence, in his arms while sharing a laugh with Air Force 1st Lt. Aaron Hunter after returning home from Afghanistan Saturday. Thirteen Alaska Air National Guardsmen, including 11 from the 212th Rescue Squadron returned from a deployment to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, where they provided combat search and rescue capabilities in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Photos by Maj. Guy Hayes/Alaska National Guard Public Affairs)

# Army working to streamline disability evaluation system

By Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Army leaders told lawmakers May 11 the service is revamping its disability evaluation system because the current process is inefficient.

“The disability evaluation system is complex, disjointed, hard to understand, and takes way too long – and that’s the good news,” said Thomas R. Lamont, the assistant secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. “It is highly inefficient, and truly does impact our readiness. We have got to get a grip on this and we are making every effort to do that.”

Both Lamont and Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, deputy chief of staff, G-1, appeared May 11, 2011, before the Senate Armed Services subcommittee on personnel. Bostick explained how the Army is working to fix the disability evaluation system.

“We are working very close with OSD (Office of the Secretary of Defense) to figure how we can streamline it,” Bostick said of the Army’s old system. “As you know we

have worked closely with the VA on the Integrated Disability Evaluation System, so instead of doing two physicals we now do one physical.”

The Army worked with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop the Integrated Disability Evaluation System, or IDES, which is expected to streamline the disability evaluation process. The Army hopes to expand the program by the end of September.

It’s expected the IDES program will help all current and future Soldiers and service members by delivering enhanced case management, a single comprehensive disability examination, a single-sourced disability rating, increased transparency, and faster disability processing.

Lamont also responded to lawmaker’s concerns about the number of civilian contractors employed by the Army. He said the number was about 200,000, and told legislators the Army requires its military organizations to know of which of their contractor positions can be converted to

government-employee jobs.

“Each Army military organization is required to maintain an inventory of all their functions to assess whether those functions are inherently governmental, closely associated or not at all,” he said. “From that we determine then which positions can be converted to internal, full-time employees, as we look at our total force policy.”

Also of concern was the relatively low number of recruitment-age Americans that are actually qualified to join the Army.

Bostick said the Army considers that less than three out of 10 are fully qualified to serve in the military. He cited education, aptitude and medical reasons for the low eligibility rate.

“They are not qualified for several reasons,” Bostick said. “But it is education and aptitude – they don’t have a high school diploma or they don’t score high enough on the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery). Medical reasons which include all sorts of things from asthma, eyesight, hearing, bad knees and lately some of

the types of psychological drugs they may have had to take for ADD and that sort of thing. And finally conduct, or misconduct – misdemeanors and felonies of that sort.”

Weight and education are two of the biggest reasons that disqualify civilian youth from enlisting – something he said the Army can be helped with.

“I think weight and education are two areas that the country needs to go after,” he said. “But education is something the country needs to help us with.”

The general also responded to questions about how Soldiers who have separated, especially those in the 20- to 30-year age group, might find employment outside the Army. Bostick said that both those who have served and those who have not served are having a difficult time finding work in the private sector.

He called for assistance by waiving civilian requirements for certification in some jobs to allow former Soldiers who have the training, but not the civilian certification, to begin work.







Classified



Classified



# Gates to troops: U.S. must sustain force excellence

By Cheryl Pellerin  
American Forces Press Service

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates spoke with Marines and Soldiers and watched them train May 12 at two East Coast military bases, thanking them for their service, and — 48 days away from his June 30 retirement — saying goodbye.

“I want to thank you for your service, for your sacrifices, for taking care of your buddies, for your victories in Anbar and Helmand and so many other places,” Gates said during a town hall with about 1,100 Marines.

Gates took questions from these Marines at Lejeune, and from Soldiers at the U.S. Army Training Center at Fort Jackson, S.C.

Topics were diverse but questions which arose most often among the troops involved the future of the military services and Defense Department budget cuts.

“Four times in the last century, after wars, we have unilaterally disarmed ourselves and then have had to discover all over again that the world isn’t a friendly place,” Gates said.

At the end of the Cold War, the secretary said, “People talked about the ‘end of history’ like everybody was going to live together in peace and harmony.”

Terrorism, problems with Iran and North Korea, China’s military program, the conflict in Libya and upheaval across the Middle East show “that the world is a very unstable place and will be so for a long time into the future,” he said.

Where the next hot spot will develop is impossible to say, he added, “but there’s no doubt in my mind about one thing, and that is you will be needed and you will be deployed.”

The United States will always need its military capability to protect its interests and security, Gates said.

“One of the things I feel strongest about,” he added, is that the



**Army Sgt. Johnny Hoyos, with the Zabul Provincial Reconstruction Team security force, provides security above the prisoner courtyard as members of the Zabul PRT and Soldiers with the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, visit the Zabul Provincial Prison in Qalat, Zabul province, Afghanistan, May 11. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said despite impending defense cutback, U.S. troops will be called upon to deploy overseas. (Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Brian Ferguson)**

nation does not repeat mistakes made during budget cuts in the 1970s and 1990s which “hollowed out the force.”

Such damage, he said, comes from sustaining force structure while reducing manpower, flight-training hours, tank miles, steaming days for ships and money for exercises and training.

“That’s how you hollow out a military,” he said.

“You have the same number of brigades or regiments but you don’t have the people to staff them and you don’t have the money to train and keep the people who are doing the job at a level of excellence that is required.”

Gates said across-the-board cuts represent managerial cowardice.

“What I intend to do is try and

shape this going forward, before I get out of here,” he said, so the president and Congress understand the hard choices which need to be made.

Over the next 10 to 12 years, Gates said his approach would include continuing the efficiencies effort begun in the Defense Department last summer and cutting marginal capabilities and missions.

A third piece — the hardest to implement, he said — involves “forcing decision makers to look at our strategy and our capabilities and (decide) where they are prepared to take risk in meeting future challenges.”

As an example, he cited the Quadrennial Defense Review, in which “there are a bunch of scenarios of all the different things we should be prepared to take on

in the years to come,” Gates said.

One scenario which has been included in the review over the years, he said, “is our ability to fight two major regional conflicts at the same time — let’s say, just hypothetically, Iran and North Korea. And we built the force to be able to do that.”

If the nation decides it is unnecessary to have that capability because the odds of getting into simultaneous conflicts are so low, Gates said, “what are the implications for force structure of that?”

Such a decision poses a risk, the secretary said. “The risk is that we’re wrong. And the enemy always has a vote.”

Gates added, “My hope is to tee this up for (defense secretary nominee) Leon Panetta and for the president in a way so that they can

make conscious choices and decisions with the advice of the chiefs (of staff) and the combatant commanders in terms of how we move forward on the kinds of reductions they’re calling for.”

The key, he said, “is sustaining the excellence of the force that we have.”

This is as good as the military of the United States has ever been, Gates said.

“Whatever we do, we cannot let that quality diminish, from the quality of the people that we have and the ability to take care of them, to the money to take care of the training and keeping the standard of excellence where it is,” he said.

“You are the best the nation has to offer,” Gates told the troops, “and it has been the greatest honor of my life to serve with you.”



# Briefs and Announcements

## Disposition of personal effects

Army 1st Lt. Stephen Felicichia, 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, is authorized to make disposition of personal effects of Spc. Michael J. Carrier, 2-377th PFAR, as stated in Army Regulation 638-2.

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of the deceased should contact Felicichia at 384-9744.

## Disposition of personal effects

Air Force Maj. Justin Binder, 3rd Operations Support Squadron, is authorized to make disposition of the personal effects of Air Force Maj. David L. Brodeur, 11th Air Force, as stated in Air Force Instruction 34-244.

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of the deceased should contact Binder at 552-9393.

## Road closures

Construction fence installation in the Moose Crossing neighborhoods has begun with road closures expected Monday.

Roads affected by the closures include Bengal Way, Goodwin Avenue and Campos Avenue.

For more information, call (868-1911.



## Recruiting announcement

The Asymmetric Warfare Group hosts a recruiting brief in the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division conference room (Building 56), at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. both days June 1 and 2.

The AWG provides observation, analysis, training and advisory support to Army and Joint Force unit's in order to enhance their capabilities to predict, mitigate, counter, and defeat asymmetric threats and methods.

For more information, call (301) 768-6159 or e-mail [awg.recruiter@us.army.mil](mailto:awg.recruiter@us.army.mil).

## Housing construction

Aurora Military Housing is ready to begin constructing new homes in Moose Haven and Kodiak neighborhoods.

Moose Crossing will see construction activity for approximately 16 months beginning this summer to construct new junior and senior noncommissioned officer homes.

In Kodiak, the construction of new field-grade and company-grade officer homes will take approximately nine months.

In Moose Haven, the contractors will construct new pay grade E-9 and senior NCO homes with a time line of approximately 10

months.

All neighborhoods mentioned will have some road closures and the installation of security fencing completed prior to the construction of the new units.

Residents of Kodiak and Moose Haven neighborhoods received notices delivered directly to their homes providing information on the work activity.

Because of the short summer season in Alaska, construction hours are often longer than normal.

Activity is expected Monday through Friday from 7 a.m.–8 p.m. and Saturday/Sunday from 9 a.m.–8 p.m.

Working past 6:30 p.m. on Sundays is not currently planned, but maintaining the construction schedule or emergency concerns may require this work period in the future.

The current target date for award and the final transition from the government to the project owner is July 1.

Aurora asks for patience during this time as this undertaking is a significant effort.

Please be aware and respectful of the construction zones and activities, ensuring families remain safe during this period.

For further information, questions and concerns please e-mail [jber.richardson.hp@elmendorf.af.mil](mailto:jber.richardson.hp@elmendorf.af.mil) or see information posted on the JBER website at [www.jber.af.mil](http://www.jber.af.mil).

The project points of contact are Melody Marsh at 552-4295; privatization lead, Tim Griffith at 552-0626; privatization contracted project manager, Rich Watson at 384-0133; housing operations manager, Genevieve Holubik at 552-2554; design review lead, and Aurora Housing at 753-1023.

## Army Birthday Ball

Former Chief of Staff of the Army, retired Gen. Gordon Sullivan, will speak at the Army Birthday Ball which is hosted at the Hotel Captain Cook, 6 p.m.–midnight, June 17.

Military uniform for the ball is dress mess, dress blues, Army Service Uniform or Class A uniform with black bow tie.

Civilian dress is tuxedo or business suit and ball gowns.

See unit points of contact for ticket prices, child care information and other details.

## Joint training

673d Air Base Wing hosts training primarily for Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson civilians intended to orient former Army civilians to the Air Force, and career Air Force civilians to the Army.

Training is at the Professional Military Education Center located off 11th Street.

For Air Force 301 training (former Army civilians), training will be 8:30-11 a.m. daily Monday, as well as June 8, 14 and 15.

For Army 301 training (career Air Force), training will be 1:30–3:30 p.m. daily May 23, as well as June 8, 14 and 15.

There are 160 seats available for each session. Reserve a seat at [william.ferguson.1@elmendorf.af.mil](mailto:william.ferguson.1@elmendorf.af.mil), or call 552-8898.

## Prescribed burns

In cooperation with Bureau of Land Management's Alaska Fire Service, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson will initiate several prescribed burns on JBER training ranges through May 30.

The burns will take place when weather and adequate smoke dispersal conditions are favorable for burning.

The target areas to be burned are the JBER Small Arms Complex, the Multi-Purpose Training Range, the Infantry Platoon Battle Course, Malamute Drop Zone and the Infantry Squad Battle Course.

The primary objectives of the prescribed burns are to decrease surface fuels, primarily dead grass, in the training ranges.

During the burns, firefighting personnel, fire vehicles and other equipment will be within the immediate area.

Smoke from the burns will be visible in the Anchorage area but is expected to dissipate quickly.

For more information, contact JBER Public Affairs at 522-8986 or the BLM Alaska Service Dispatch in Fairbanks at (907) 356-5554.

## Summer jobs

Temporary jobs for students are available this summer at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Positions will be available in several JBER organizations.

Interested candidates should view announcements at [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov) to find out more about these opportunities and the job application process.

Announcements have a cut off date of June 1.

Application packages must include: a resume with references; transcripts (official college or high school); letter from high school counselor or college registrar stating you are currently enrolled and date you will be returning to school; and a completed Optional Form 306 (available at [www.opm.gov/forms](http://www.opm.gov/forms)). If candidates have an acceptance letter to a college, provide that as well.

To apply, candidates may carry application packages to the JBER Civilian Personnel Office in the People Center, 8517 20th Street, Ste 200, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Mailed applications must be addressed to 600 Richardson Drive, Suite 359, JBER AK 99505-4800 postmarked prior to

each closing period.

Candidates that are selected for employment must be able to provide a birth certificate or unexpired passport as proof of citizenship, however, those documents should not be submitted with the application.

For more information, contact the JBER Civilian Personnel Office customer service number at 552-3572.

## Retirement ceremony

U.S. Army Alaska hosts a retirement ceremony to honor career Soldiers, 10 a.m., June 3, at the JBER-Richardson Theater.

## Runway closure

Airfield Operations is closing Runway 06/24 (the long east-west) runway until June 2 for repair work.

This closure will cause a significant increase in aircraft operations on Runway 16/34 (the north-south runway adjacent to Arctic Warrior Drive).

This closure will force heavy aircraft to use Runway 34 for departures and will require a more frequent use of the Arctic Warrior traffic lights to stop traffic south of the runway.

## Find housing

Visit the Automated Housing Referral Network at [www.ahrn.com](http://www.ahrn.com) to find housing before packing up.

Sponsored by the Department of Defense, the website listings include available community rentals, military housing, shared rentals, temporary lodging and military for sale by owner listings.

Listings include property descriptions, pictures, maps, links to local schools, and contact information.

Service members who would like to rent their homes, sell their homes, or are looking for another service member as a roommate in their current homes, may post an ad free of charge on the site.

For more information, call 552-4439.

## Furnishings management

The Furnishings Management Office offers 90-day loaner furniture for Airmen arriving at or leaving JBER-Elmendorf.

The FMO also has appliances for Airmen residing off base, for long-term use. Delivery and pickup is provided for 90-day loaner furniture and appliances. The FMO also has longterm furniture for ranks E-1 through E-5.

These items are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The service member is responsible for transporting these furnishings. Airmen should take a copy of PCS orders to the Government Housing Office at 6346 Arctic Warrior Dr. to schedule furniture delivery.

Call 552-2740 for any questions regarding the FMO program. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Soldiers can call 384-0092 for the JBER-Richardson FMO.

## Employee assistance

The Employee Assistance Program is a confidential, voluntary, and at no cost to the employee. The screening and referral service is provided to supervisors, civilian employees, their spouse, retired military and disabled veterans.

For the supervisor, the EAP provides expert consultation and training for organizational leadership, (e.g. management, supervisors, and union stewards) regarding the problematic or troubled employee, enhancing the work environment and improving employee performance.

For the employee and all other eligible clients, the EAP provides confidential problem identification and assessment services. For cases where referrals are required, case monitoring and follow-up is provided.

The EAP also conducts training for civilian employees on topics such as drug free workplace, workplace violence, customer relations and other tailored training that contributes to the overall welfare of the civilian workforce.

For more information contact George Mongar at 384-0863 or in person at Building 658, 1st floor on 5th Street, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

## Rental Partnership

The Rental Partnership Program is available to all eligible active-duty members and consists of two options.

The first option, RPP Plus, includes utilities and sometimes cable costs providing a easier budget with a set rental payment year round.

The other option, RPP 5 percent Below Market, saves the member five percent off the rental fee that other tenants pay however utilities are paid for by the tenant.

Both options are made available with no deposits or fees to the member with the exclusion of pet fees as it may apply.

This program is designed to provide active-duty military personnel, enlisted and officers, accompanied and unaccompanied with affordable off-base housing.

An allotment must be executed under either option of the RPP for the rental payments which is made directly to the landlord resulting in a more trouble free transactions.

See RPP officials at the Capital Asset Management Office, Building 6346, Arctic Warrior Dr., or call at 552-4328 or 552-4374 for further information and assistance regarding this program.









**1st Stryker Brigade combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, stationed out of Fort Wainwright, is now a member of the International Security Assistance Forces in Zabul, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, 2011.**

# Arctic wolves assume mission

## *Alaska Stryker battalion relieves Germany-based unit*

By Spe. Thomas Duval  
1-25th SBCT Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LAGMAN, Afghanistan — Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Wainwright, opened a new chapter in the battalion’s history during a transfer-of-authority ceremony hosted May 8 at Forward Operating Base Apache, Zabul province, Afghanistan.

After a brief invocation, Army Lt. Col. Jeff Stewart, commander of Task Force Legion, participated in the time honored tradition of unfurling the unit’s colors, signaling the formal transfer of authority for this sector of the 1-25th area of operations, to 1-24th Infantry and bringing to an end the deployment of the Germany-based 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

During the ceremony, Army Col. James Blackburn, the 75th commander of the 2nd Cavalry

Regiment, praised the success of 2/2 SCR and expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the Cougar soldiers and their tireless efforts during the regiment’s 12-month deployment.

“The full-spectrum force of the Cougars did it all ... whether it was killing and capturing the enemy or putting a pencil in a school child’s hand,” said Blackburn. “Thank you.”

“What you see in front of you is the epitome of full-spectrum warriors we expect on the counterinsurgency battlefield,” said Blackburn, referring to the formation of soldiers who stood with pride and with smiles emblazoned on their faces as testimonies to their accomplishments as they were recognized.

Although much of Blackburn’s speech focused on the accomplishments of 2/2 SCR he admitted that a heavy presence of International Security Assistance Forces is still needed throughout Zabul province, but said he is confident the 1-24th soldiers are up to the challenge.

Zabul Provincial Governor Mohammad Ashraf Naseri, and many other key leaders have worked side-by-side with 2/2 SCR, including Maj. Gen. Jamaludin, commander of the Afghan National Army 2nd Brigade, 205th Corps, who was in attendance for the ceremony to honor and say farewell to Lt. Col. Omar Jones, 2/2 SCR commander and his soldiers and welcome their new partners of TF Legion.

Stewart, who addressed the crowd entirely in Pashtu, the primary language of southern Afghanistan and spoke of the possible challenges ahead for him and his “Deuce-Four” Soldiers. Stewart’s speech was met with warm applause from the large crowd as he spoke of the future partnership between the 1-24th, the Afghan National Police, and the ANA.

Stewart said he is happy for the opportunity to work beside the ANA and ANP and he is looking forward to the continued relationship between ISAF and the Afghan forces.

# JBER Airman measures radiation after Japan disaster

By Air Force  
2nd Lt. Matthew Chism  
JBER Public Affairs

The sergeant’s view from the coastline was nothing less than awe inspiring. Evidence of the wave’s violence was the only disruption of the serenity.

He thought of his family and remembered his daughter loves to collect seashells. “I’ll pick her up five,” he said, nodding to himself. Dragging his boots through the dense sand, he found his slightly veiled treasures. The thin, tattered strap from his atmosphere detector tore into his neck and reminded him where he was, why he was there.

He passed the five discarded shells to the radiation technician he had transported into the evacuation zone. An undecipherable mix of hope and desperation set upon him. The specialist’s eyes slowly found his, nothing needed to be said.

“I couldn’t take one shell back, they all were bad,” he said.

This was one snapshot of the experiences Tech. Sgt. Martine Robinson, 673d Logistics Readiness Squadron, relayed from his recent deployment to Yokota Air Base, Japan.

Robinson worked as a team lead vehicle operator with a team of five others as base support in “Operation Tomodachi.” Translating to “Operation Friend,” the

effort is the joint armed forces assistance operation for disaster relief in Japan.

“You don’t really get to know people until you deploy together,” he said. “You have a mission to accomplish, you’re away from home, away from family and all you have is each other. I am thankful that I had a good team that went over there and did an excellent job and took care of each other.”

That unity became priceless as their deployment continued.

“(Our) role got interesting when we received a tasking dealing with the folks who go out and do the radiation measurements; which happened to be a civilian team from the department of energy.”

The team went as close as 40 miles to the damaged nuclear plant.

“The first time was probably the hardest time,” Robinson said. “Because you don’t know what to expect, and you’re thinking to yourself did I make the wrong decision, is this going to be safe.

“You’re not comfortable, but at the same time you feel like it’s a worthy cause,” he explained.

Robinson said they were each given a dosimeter, a device which is worn by personnel who might be exposed to radiation, to ensure they were not being exposed to unsafe levels.

“It was a risk, but I felt like it was one of those things I had

to do,” Robinson said. “I could have said ‘No,’ but I wanted to say ‘Yes.’”

Robinson mentioned his team was given the opportunity to volunteer for the assignment. He said he didn’t decide immediately. He tentatively put his name on the list and, after about 15 minutes, he finalized his decision.

“I thought to myself, I can sit here until something kicks off on

base or I can go ahead and jump out there and try to make a difference,” he said

His internal desire to be progressive stems from the reason he decided to remain in the Air Force.

“I’m a military person, I like the structure, and I like to wear the uniform,” he said. “I like that I have my career in my own hands. I like that my next stripe has more

to do with me than anyone else. I love that system.”

“This deployment to Japan was special,” said Robinson, who also supported the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. “My advice for any junior Airman is to be aggressive towards their career. Come up with a plan as far as where you want to go, how far you want to go, and what it’s going to take to get there. Once you develop a plan stick to the plan.”

At Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Robinson is the Vehicle Operations Control Center Support supervisor, and handles the management of manpower within the Logistics Readiness Squadron.

In his free time, he said he has other priorities.

“I am a family man; I love to spend time with my family,” he said.

His commitment to family and service is what gave Robinson the greatest joy at the end of the mission.

The readings collected from their mission were sent to the Department of Defense. The information aided in determining a safe time for the displaced military families to return to their homes.

“I didn’t plan to be a part of anything that big, it just happened,” he said. “I am really proud of what I was able to accomplish along with everyone that was there.”



**Tech. Sgt. Martine Robinson, 673d Logistics Readiness Squadron, reflects on his participation in Operation Tomodachi. (Photo by Air Force 2nd Lt. Matthew Chism/JBER PA)**







# ISAF commander says Afghan transition on track

Master Sgt. Michael O'Connor  
ISAF Headquarters Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan — The International Security Assistance Force commander said the combined team approach has paid off, and while this progress is fragile and reversible, they look forward to building on those successes and supporting the Afghans as they build sustainable stability.

“ISAF is on track in completing the transition to full Afghan responsibility for security by the end of 2014,” said Lt. Gen. David M. Rodriguez, commander, ISAF Joint Command, during a May 16, 2011, press conference at ISAF Headquarters.

Rodriguez said in his opening statement that ISAF has accomplished a great deal and continues to expand its gains, maintain its momentum and look at the future challenges it will face.

Since late 2009, the combined effort of Afghan and coalition forces have destroyed much of the insurgents’ support bases, weakened the enemies’ effectiveness, grown the Afghan security forces by 94,000 and helped build the Afghan security forces confidence and competence to lead operations and protect their own population.

In a recent ISAF senior noncommissioned officer visit to a NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan location in the greater Kabul area, Roshan Safi, sergeant major of the Afghan National Army, expressed deep gratitude for all that ISAF and NATO has done thus far for his country and preparing his soldiers to carry the torch for the Afghan government and its people.

Rodriguez and Maj. Gen. Michael G. Krause, deputy chief of staff plans at International Joint Command; and Alisa Stack, senior government and development Advisor to International Joint Command, who also spoke during the press conference, said some of the transition has already occurred.

While there have been many successes thus far, it’s important to assess the ongoing progress of programs for lessons learned in order to keep the 2014 transition on track, said Rodriguez, Krause and Stack.

“We’ve learned many lessons from doing this transition over the years, and one of the most important ones is the fact that we will

just thin out slowly based on their capability built,” said Rodriguez. “So the things that take them longer to develop are the things we’ll continue to help them with.”

“We think we have a good plan for that and while it will require a lot of judgment on those junior leaders at every level, we believe we have a plan to transition slowly and maintain the same level of security for the Afghan people,” he said.

The improvements in security over the past year and particularly over the last few months will enable ISAF and Afghan National Security Forces to consolidate those gains and continue taking the fight to the enemy in the coming months, said Krause.

“We know and understand more security will enable more Afghans to return to normality and we will continue to work with them and the ANSF to deliver it,” Krause said. “In a recent poll, 59 percent said they thought the country was moving in the right direction.”

Over the next year, ISAF officials said they will turn their attention to training en-

gineers, medical professionals, logisticians, intel analysts and other specialists in the Army and police, as well as continuing to develop strong Afghan leaders.

“Good Afghan leadership is key to this process,” said Stack. “The Afghan government is taking steps to improve leadership throughout the country.”

Two years ago, the Afghans took the strategic decision to put the infantry units out there first to get the number of boots on the ground so they could get better ratios with coalition forces out there, said Rodriguez. The surge is about 40,000 coalition forces to 90,000 Afghan National Security Forces.

“Right now we’re catching up with building the support structures and logistics support to be able to handle that,” Rodriguez said. “And based on the plans and where they need to be, we believe we’ll be able to get the majority of the logistics support structure working as well as their ability to logistically sustain themselves by 2014.”

“We have found terrific partners in the Afghan people,” he said. “Each and every day, Afghan and coalition security forces work, learn and fight shoulder-to-shoulder to protect their people and help create a stable Afghanistan.”



## JBER’s top Army volunteer

Spc. Rachel Skalisky, 793rd Military Police Battalion, receives military volunteer of the year from Army Maj. Gen. Raymond P. Palumbo, U.S. Army Alaska commanding general, and Command Sgt. Maj. David O. Turnbull, USARAK command sergeant major, at the Army volunteer awards ceremony hosted at JBER-Richardson Theater, Wednesday. Civilian, youth and family volunteers of the year were also recognized at the ceremony. (Photo by Steve White/JBER PA)









## Running with rucks

Troops run a 5K cross-country run in combat gear

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# ARCTIC WARRIOR COMMUNITY

[www.jber.af.mil/news](http://www.jber.af.mil/news)



## Play ball!

JBER youth, adult softball seasons get underway

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May 20, 2011

By Chris McCann  
JBER Public Affairs

When hiking in the Alaska panhandle, people are told to prepare for bears, mosquitoes and bad weather. World War II-era explosives usually aren't on the list of hazards.

But last week, some hikers north of Sitka came upon something which appeared to be a sea mine, badly rusted and washed up on the shore.

They called the authorities, and not long after, pilots from the Coast Guard had an Air Force explosive ordnance disposal team on the ground to remove the problem.

Senior Airman Jason Miller, a native of Whidbey Island, Wash., and an EOD technician with the 673d Civil Engineer Squadron on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, went out with his team chief, Air Force Staff Sgt. Shawn Briggs, to get what information they could from the object and then make it safe.

The Airmen took a C-12 Huron to Sitka, where they met up with members of the Coast Guard, including HH-60 Jayhawk pilot Lt. Jeffrey Barela.

Then they traveled up the coast about 130 kilometers to the suspected mine.

"It's really not an everyday thing," Miller said. "Especially for Air Force EOD – usually anything marine like that is handled by the Navy EOD. But because of the remote location and the fact that

it was on land, it was easier for us to do it. Of course, if it was something we weren't comfortable with as far as safety, some Navy EOD people would've come up here."

Once the Airmen saw the object, they had a good idea what

it was.

"We have a similar one as a display outside our building on JBER," Miller said. "So when we saw it, we pretty much knew what it was. We still did some research, but we knew it was something we

could handle."

Their equipment was limited due to the fact that they were traveling by helicopter, Miller explained. Everything they took had to fit into backpacks, including the explosives they carried in to dispose of the mine.

EOD technicians carry twice as much as they need, in case the object isn't completely destroyed by the first explosion. They also carried cameras, GPS gear, and tools for measuring the object as well as small brushes to clear off rust while checking for stamped marks or other evidence.

Barela, a native of Tucson, Ariz., said he enjoyed the mission.

"We had decent weather, and were able to land on the beach about 300 meters north of the mine, so one of the technicians could go look at it, then we let the other people off," he said.

"We get all the information we can from things," Miller said. "In this case, there wasn't much. Usually those kinds of things had stenciled marks, and it was long since eroded away."

Primarily, Miller said, they examined the object to determine how to render it safe. This included using a portable X-ray unit which fit into a backpack to see the explosives inside. After they'd learned as much as they could about it, they were ready to blow it in place. Briggs, a native of Hoschton, Ga., placed the explosives.

"We touch it as little as possible," Miller said. "We weren't moving it around, we just put the explosives around it." The X-raying allowed them to see where the explosive material inside was, so they could place the plastic explosive to destroy it as close as possible.

Miller measured and cut a fuse that would take about 15 minutes to burn, and the technicians got back on the helicopter.

Barela flew about 2,500 meters away, over the ocean, and they watched the detonation.

"It only took them about 30 minutes to get the explosives on the object," Barela said.

"It really wasn't what we expected," Miller said of the explosion. They aren't sure if the smaller-than-expected explosion was due to the age of the device, or if it didn't have much of a charge, or if being submerged so long degraded the material inside. They went back and the technicians checked the site, but all that remained were very small fragments.

"The Coast Guard was awesome to work with," Miller said. "They were very helpful; anything we needed, they provided. I'd never worked with the Coast Guard before."

Although they are seldom seen, Miller said, the JBER EOD technicians have been busy recently.

"This isn't the only thing we've done lately," he said "This was just one of many calls; we had a suspected improvised explosive device and suspected plastic explosives that we took care of. We've done four off-base responses lately, and unexploded ordnance on JBER – it's been busy."

"It was a great day," Barela said. "It was an uneventful flight, and the technicians hadn't been on an HH-60 before. It was my own first time working with EOD, and it was really neat to see."



LEFT: Senior Airman Jason Miller, an explosive ordnance disposal technician from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, counts "ticks" of fuse cord – each tick indicates a certain amount of burn time – to set off a detonation to destroy a World War II-era mine on the beach north of Sitka, Alaska recently. ABOVE: Air Force Staff Sgt. Shawn Briggs, EOD team chief, measures the rusted mine to gather information to pass along to other EOD technicians as well as to ensure the team uses the right amount of explosives to destroy it completely. Once the mine was destroyed, there were only small fragments. "One high tide, and there won't be a trace left," Miller said. (Courtesy photo)



## Above and beyond

Bronze-level awardees, who volunteered 100 to 249 hours in a year, receive certificates at the volunteer recognition ceremony at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson theater, May 17th.

The ceremony honored all the Air Force volunteers on JBER.

The 87 people recognized saved the installation more than \$400,000 through their time and efforts.

Both service members and civilians spent time working at the Airman's Attic thrift store, assisting Airmen Against Drunk Driving, helping youth through the Military Youth Academy and Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and many other organizations. (Photo by Johnathon Green/JBER PA)



# Asian-Pacific Heritage Month holds meaning

Commentary by Tech. Sgt. Mitchell Mercadal  
65th Air Base Wing

LAJES FIELD, Azores — Every Asian-Pacific American has a story to tell of his or her journey to the U.S. — and most are quite incredible.

My story began with my father in 1954 when he was recruited by the Navy to become a supply cook on the Philippine island of Mindanao.

One day, his friend broke the news the Americans were in town

looking for applicants who wanted to join the Navy.

At first, my father was reluctant, because

it seemed too good to be true, especially for a poor Filipino like him.

Coming from a very humble, poor and hard-working family, my dad learned to strive hard at an early age.

He woke up at the break of dawn to do his chores, walked barefoot three miles back and forth to school, and traded fruits and vegetables for a piece of paper or pencil. If he couldn't trade, he used banana or taro leaves to write on, and he would dry the ink in the heat of the sun to read it legibly by the end of the day.

Talk about a hard-knock life. To this day, it still baffles me to imagine those things.

With God's blessings, my dad became proficient in speaking and writing Cebuano, Tagalog, two other Filipino dialects, Spanish and English. He eventually passed the U.S. Navy entrance exam. My father served honorably for 20 years, retiring as a petty officer first class.

But shortly before his retirement in 1975, he made the biggest decision of his life ... he became a U.S. citizen, which made and my family and me Asian-Pacific

Americans.

I was born in the Philippines a couple years after my dad retired. When I was a kid, I bluntly asked, "So, why are we American citizens? We weren't born there, and we don't look like them."

He looked at me and said, "My son, I didn't exactly know what I signed up for when I joined the Navy. All I knew was to work hard and not complain."

"I spent years at sea and a lot of times in the Vietnam War side-by-side our fellow Americans. I've also left your mother, brothers and sisters for 16 years in the Philippines, while I was serving this country and fighting for its freedom."

"I sacrificed a lot, and I believe I deserve to be an American citizen," he continued. The United States has done a lot of good things for us. If it wasn't for them, you'd be plowing the fields right now with me using a carabao (water buffalo), so be thankful to God and be proud that you are a Filipino-American."

Last year, I visited my father in the Philippines after my one-year tour in Korea. His body showed signs of age, and I told him, "Dad, without you, we wouldn't be in the states. I wouldn't be an Airman right now, as I dreamed since I was 12. Thank you."

Then, I stood straight up and rendered a salute. To my surprise, while he was sitting in his wheelchair, he looked up at me and returned a salute, without saying anything.

"Diversity, leadership, empowerment and beyond" is this year's theme for Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month, and I think my father's great story encompasses this theme.

For my family and me, it feels great to be American, and it's worth dying for.

**Without you, I wouldn't be an Airman.**



## Growing together

Orion Elementary School students Dominic Reeve (left) and Gabriel Santos (right) help plant a new spruce tree at the school in honor of Arbor Day. Alaska State Forester Stephen Nickel and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Forester Tal Robinson educated the children about the tree's place in nature as well as part of the event. (Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeremy Larlee/JBER PA)

## 673d Force Support Squadron JBER-Richardson Events



**DON'T BE LIKE THIS GUY.**

**BE LIKE THIS GUY.**



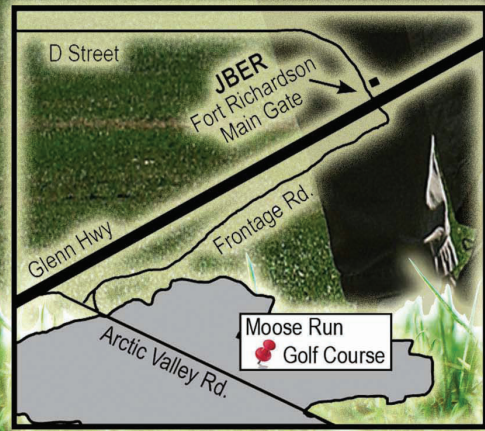
**Hill & Creek Courses at  
MOOSE RUN GOLF COURSE  
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**OPEN HOUSE!**

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Call  
384 - 7619 or  
384 - 9006  
for more  
information.



**Otter Lake  
Park & Boat  
Rental Open  
For Season...**

**May 26!**

For more  
information,  
call 384-6245.





# Community happenings

**FRIDAY**  
**As I Lay Dying, Unearth**  
 San Diego metal band As I Lay Dying teams up with Unearth at the Egan Center at 7:30 p.m.  
 For information, visit [www.asilaydying.com](http://www.asilaydying.com).

**SATURDAY**  
**First JBER Bicycle Race**  
 The first JBER Bicycle Race will start at 8 a.m. at the Elmendorf Fitness Center.  
 The 17-mile race is open to all JBER employees, military retirees and family members.  
 For information, call 552-3504 or stop by the Fitness Center, Building 9510 on 22nd Street.

**Model Railroad Day**  
 The Military Society of Model Railroad Engineers presents Model Train Day from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. in Basement Room 35 of Matanuska Hall, 7153 Fighter Drive.  
 The MSMRRE also meets at 7 p.m. Tuesdays with work sessions at 1 p.m. Saturdays in Matanuska Hall.  
 Anyone interested in model railroading is invited.  
 For more information, call 552-5234 or 952-4353, visit [www.trainweb.org/msmrre](http://www.trainweb.org/msmrre) or e-mail [bjjorgan@alaska.net](mailto:bjjorgan@alaska.net).

**USCG free boat inspections**  
 Boaters wanting to know more about their vessel's condition before launching can bring the boat by for a check by the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Checks will cover systems and safety gear.  
 The checks are voluntary and there are no penalties for not passing. Boats will be checked from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. at Peters Creek American Legion. For information, call 384-2891.

**Alaska Assistance Dogs Paintball Tournament**  
 The Alaska Assistance Dogs Charity Paintball Tournament kicks off at noon at the 907 Paintball field at Klatt and Timberlane Drive.  
 Registration includes full-day rental for paintball marker, air, protective gear and T-shirt.  
 Proceeds benefit Alaska Assistance Dogs.  
 For information call 250-7252 or e-mail [april@alaskaassistance-dogs.org](mailto:april@alaskaassistance-dogs.org).

**JUNE 2-JUNE 12**  
**Renaissance Fair**  
 Renaissance enthusiasts from around Alaska gather for a festival with feasting, drinking, fighting and circuses.  
 Vendors will offer crafts and renaissance wares at Tozier Memorial Track from noon until 8 p.m. daily; for information call 868-8012 or visit [www.3barons.org](http://www.3barons.org).

**JUNE 4**  
**Barenaked Ladies concert**  
 Grammy-nominated Canadian alt-rock band the Barenaked Ladies perform in the Chilkoot Charlie's parking lot. Best known for their hit singles "One Week" and "If I Had A Million Dollars," the band plays one night only in Anchorage.  
 For tickets or information visit [www.koots.com](http://www.koots.com) or call 230-9592.

**JUNE 4-JUNE 15**  
**Festival of Flowers**  
 Educational seminars, flower sales and auctions, live music, art, face-painting and more with a carnival atmosphere in downtown Anchorage. Admission is free. From noon until 6 p.m. in the town square.  
 For information, call 279-5650 or visit [www.anchoragedowntown.org](http://www.anchoragedowntown.org).

**JUNE 11-JUNE 12**  
**GCI Alaska 3-on-3 hoops**  
 Up to 600 basketball teams in 17 divisions from elementary school through college battle it out at the Sullivan Arena for top honors; games are held all day both days.  
 For information, visit [www.alaskahoopfest.com](http://www.alaskahoopfest.com).

**JUNE 17**  
**Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America dinner**  
 The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America will host their Inspiration Dinner at Dena'ina Center, time to be announced.  
 The LLS provides support to those with blood cancers and related diseases.  
 For information, visit [www.lls.org](http://www.lls.org) or call Kathy at 914-821-8924 for information about the Inspiration Dinner.

**ONGOING**  
**Spenard Farmers' Market**  
 Local items and Alaska-grown,

-caught, -baked and -made items are available under the windmill in Spenard. Everything from fresh oysters, organic bread, garden starts, kettle corn and reindeer sausage is available, including live music, every Saturday from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.  
 For information, call 563-6273 or e-mail [spenardfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:spenardfarmersmarket@gmail.com).

**Farmers' Market**  
 Non-profit, famer-directed market at 15th and Cordova, offering fruits, vegetables, herbs, flowers, plants, and animal products available. Offerings and vendors vary seasonally; open Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. through Oct. 15.  
 For information, e-mail [info@anchoragefarmersmarket.org](mailto:info@anchoragefarmersmarket.org).

**Market and Festival**  
 Local farmers and artisans sell their goods Saturdays and Sundays in a festival atmosphere. Enjoy free lively entertainment and great food while browsing more than 300 booths.  
 Market days run through Sept. 11 - Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. at the Third Ave. and E Street parking lot.  
 For information, call 272-5634 or visit [www.anchoragemarkets.com](http://www.anchoragemarkets.com).

**Ice age titans**  
 The Anchorage Museum presents "Mammoths and Mastodons: Titans of the Ice Age." Developed by the Field Museum of Chicago, this exhibit includes life-size replica creatures, skeletons, skulls and tusks; and includes ancient art contemporary to the extinct giants.  
 For more information, call 929-9200, or visit [www.anchagemuseum.org](http://www.anchagemuseum.org).

**Wired Cafe for Airmen**  
 The Wired Cafe is located at 7076 Fighter Dr., between Polaris and Yukla dormitories.  
 The cafe was built to serve Airmen who live in the dormitories with a home-away-from-home atmosphere.  
 The cafe has wireless Internet and programs throughout the week. There are also free home-cooked meals Thursdays, with dinner served at 6:30 p.m.  
 For information, call 552-4422.

**Family Advocacy support programs available**  
 The New Parent Support Program hosts several activities for families with young children up to age 3.  
 Family Advocacy also offers anger management classes, classes for new fathers and nursing mothers, as well as other programs for service and family members. "Dads 101" and "Home Improvement" are also featured.  
 For more information, call Family Advocacy at 580-5858.

**Planetarium shows**  
 Through 3-D graphics, surround sound and a dome screen, the Anchorage Museum's planetarium offers a fascinating way to learn about astronomy, the solar system and more.  
 For more information, call 929-9200, or visit [www.anchagemuseum.org](http://www.anchagemuseum.org).

**Anchorage baseball**  
 From June 5 through Aug. 3, the Mulcahy Stadium hosts the Anchorage Bucs and the Anchorage Glacier Pilots baseball.  
 Outstanding collegiate players from around the world join forces to create the Alaska Baseball League, and many future major-league players have competed with the teams. Schedules are available on the website.  
 For information, visit [www.anchoragebucs.com](http://www.anchoragebucs.com) or [www.glacierpilots.com](http://www.glacierpilots.com), or call 561-BUCS.

**Museum unravels the "History of Basketry"**  
 The Anchorage Museum presents "Unraveling the History of Basketry," exhibiting baskets from Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Yup'ik baskets and outlining the history, methods and regional styles of Alaska native basketry.  
 For more information, call 929-9200, or visit [www.anchagemuseum.org](http://www.anchagemuseum.org).

**Potter Marsh bird walk**  
 The Alaska Department of Fish and Game hosts a daily walk along the Potter Marsh boardwalk to learn about the area's wildlife, waterfowl and other creatures. This family-friendly event is for everyone from beginning birders to experts.

## Chapel services

### Catholic Mass

#### Sunday

9 a.m. - Soldiers' Chapel  
 10:30 a.m. - Elmendorf Chapel 1  
 5 p.m. - Soldiers' Chapel

#### Monday through Friday

11:40 a.m. - Soldiers' Chapel  
**Monday, Wednesday and Friday**  
 11:30 a.m. - Elmendorf Chapel Center  
**Thursday**  
 11:30 a.m. - Hospital Chapel

### Confession

#### Sunday

4:30 p.m. - Soldiers' Chapel  
**Monday though Friday**  
 Before/after 11:40 Mass - Soldiers' Chapel

### Protestant Sunday

#### Services

**Joint Liturgical Service**  
 9 a.m. - Elmendorf Chapel 2  
**Celebration Service**  
 9 a.m. - Elmendorf Chapel 1  
**Collective Protestant Service**  
 11 a.m. - Soldiers' Chapel  
**Gospel Service**  
 Noon - Elmendorf Chapel 1  
**Contemporary Protestant Service**  
 5 p.m. - Elmendorf Chapel 1

Visitors should dress for rain, wind or shine and meet at the boardwalk entrance at Mile Post 117 on the Seward Highway.  
 For information, call 267-2281.

### Museum hours change

The Anchorage Museum has begun its summer schedule. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily through September 11.

Summer tours begin Monday at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. daily. No reservations are necessary for daily tours, and normal ticket prices apply.

For information, visit [www.anchagemuseum.org](http://www.anchagemuseum.org) or call 929-9200.



## Experience Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson



### Drift Away Fishing May 28 - 29

Drift Away offers guided fishing trips on the beautiful Kenai Peninsula. You will be taken along the shores of the Kasilof River to target the early run of King Salmon. Alaska fishing license is required for all participants.

### \$320 Overnight per person

- 8 hours fishing, breakfast and lunch included
- Maximum 10 - 12 people, four per boat.
- Includes tackle, bait & lures
- Transportation provided
- Refunds will NOT be given if you cancel less than 30 days prior to departure



### Sprucewood Lodge



**Outdoor Adventure Program**  
 For more information and reservations  
**552-4599**



**Mad Science Party**  
**Saturday**  
**Noon - 2 p.m.**  
 Come and join us for Fun with Hands-On Science!  
**FREE!**  
**Arctic Oasis Community Center**  
**552-8529**



Join us at  
**Arctic Oasis Community Center**  
 May 27 • 6 p.m.  
**Free Movie showing**  
**Free Popcorn**

Check out our classes and activities for the summer available at Arctic Oasis Community Center 552-8529  
 • Belly Dancing  
 • Zumba • Tang Soo Do  
 • American Kenpo  
**Coming soon**  
 • Drivers Training



### Summer Food Program at JBER Elmendorf-Richardson

Joint Base Elmendorf/Richardson is participating in the Summer Food Program for Children beginning May 20, 2011. Breakfast and Lunch meals will be free of charge to all children 18 years of age and younger.

#### Meals will be served at the three different locations:

- **Illa School Age Program (Bldg. 337, Hoonah Ave/JBER Richardson)**  
 Breakfast: 7:45 - 8:45 a.m. Lunch: 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- **Ketchikan School Age Program (Bldg. 7163 11th St/JBER Elmendorf)**  
 Breakfast: 8 - 9 a.m. Lunch: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- **Kennicott Youth Center (Bldg. 6104 Carswell Ave/ JBER Elmendorf):** Lunch: Noon - 1 p.m.

**For more information and times of meals call: Sue Long (384-2283)**

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### JBER BIKE RIDE • SATURDAY

Join us at the JBER Elmendorf Fitness Center for a 17 mile bike ride. Shirts will be given away to the first 40 that sign up and race. Prizes ! Race starts at 8 a.m.



For more information call  
**JBER Elmendorf Fitness Center**  
**552-5353**

# Get out and enjoy spring in Alaska!



# 5K Cross-country - with a ruck



**ABOVE:** Soldiers assigned to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson run in the year's first 5K Combat Cross-Country Run. The troops ran around Otter Lake carrying 35-pound rucksacks. The winner, Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Lothspeich, completed the course in just 27 minutes and five seconds.

**RIGHT:** Pfc. Matthew Simms, a native of Marcellus, N.Y., and a combat engineer with A Company, 425 Brigade Special Troops Battalion, relaxes at the end of the run. The event was the first in a series. The combat cross-country runs are open to all service members. The required uniform includes combat boots and a rucksack weighing at least 35 pounds. For more information on the events, which will be held in different locations around JBER, call 384-1304 or 384-1312. (Photos by Steve White/JBER PA)

## Retool - or rebuild?

Commentary by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeremy Larlee  
JBER Public Affairs

The two teams who faced off in last year's NBA finals got unceremoniously blown out in the second round of this year's playoffs.

The older age of the players and team chemistry problems are commonly referred to as the downfall of the Boston Celtics and Los Angeles Lakers.

This off season will be interesting for both clubs.

Do they totally rip apart their rosters and rebuild a team from scratch? Or do they try to add a few new players and hope that is enough to get back to the NBA finals?

A few new faces may help the Lakers. After an up-and-down season they struggled through the playoffs. In their last game they totally gave in.

Their mounting chemistry problems came to a boil and they openly bickered as they were getting blown out by the Dallas Mavericks.

Andrew Bynum and Lamar Odom lost their cool and were ejected for unnecessary flagrant fouls.

The Celtics especially are having an increasing problem with the rising ages of

their players. The majority of their players are well on the northern side of 30-years-old.

They had a great start to their season but injuries and fatigue settled in as the season progressed. At the end, they just had nothing left in their tank.

After holding a lead for the majority of game five against the Miami Heat they fell apart in the last quarter.

The younger legs of the Heat players helped them run off 14 straight points to end the game and send the Celtics into the off season.

In the military we don't often have a choice of who we work with. We do have some control over the programs we run in our work center.

A major obstacle for many of us are facing is having to do our job while facing a

declining amount of funding and personnel.

Trying to maintain our output may work in the short term, but eventually this will burn out our people and cause much more serious problems down the road.

It makes for some very difficult decisions. Cutting the fat out can be a painful decision. Some popular programs may have to bite the dust.

There may also be some short-term difficulties dealing with the changes.

It requires us all to think hard about our organization's mission and what we need to provide to the military team.

Unlike professional sports, a failure by us doesn't mean we go into an offseason and get to try again next year.

We are working towards something much more important.



## Play Ball!

**ABOVE:** Nathan Itle, B Company, 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, controls first base against Matthew Bannon of A Company, 3rd Battalion (Airborne) 509th Infantry Regiment, during a preseason tournament at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Terrez Washington and Lance Witcher, both of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, keep center field covered.

**BELOW:** Rodney Wagoner, B Company, 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, swings for the fences. (Photos by Steve White/JBER PA)





# JBER youth centers relish benefits of jointness

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeremy Larlee  
JBER Public Affairs

One of the clear winners in the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson merger has been the programs hosted by the base youth centers. Chris Kitt, JBER director of youth programs, said the Air Force and Army used the same Defense Department regulations for youth programs, which helped make for a smooth merger. He said there were still some growing pains from the merger.

“Getting people to understand that we

host the same programs on both sides has been a challenge,” he said. “Instead of an ‘us and them’ mentality it is now a ‘we’ mentality.”

Kitt said the bigger pool of children has boosted the profile of many programs.

“In most cases instead of having two small events, we can have one big event,” he said. “It helps streamline planning and makes for a better event.”

Paul Caron, Kennecott Youth Center sports director, has especially enjoyed the merger. He said it has helped him build bet-

ter sports teams.

“Combining has allowed us to have more teams that are better balanced,” he said. “In the past, teams on either side of the base may have been stronger in a given year.”

Caron said he is really noticing during this Little League baseball season. He is looking forward to competing against other districts during the all-stars tournament.

The fact that he has more children to choose from has not escaped the notice of people from the other districts.

“We were jokingly called the ‘new bully

on the block’ during our meeting this year,” he said. “We have been building up our baseball and softball programs for the last few years. We had some success last year. But I feel like we are going to have an even better year this year.”

Caron said eliminating the thought process that the Air Force and Army have to do things differently has at times been a hurdle for his sports program.

“Breaking down the ‘us and them’ mentality has been difficult,” he said. “We specifically try our best to build the teams with a mix of Air Force and Army coaches and players.”

Caron said one of the main issues has been transportation. He said he does his best to equally spread that burden to parents on both sides of the base.

For example, baseball is being hosted on the Elmendorf side, but volleyball was held on the Richardson side.

He said he tries to use all of the venues available to him.

The additional venues are a strength of the merger for the youth sports program, said Caron. He said it gives him a lot of flexibility in planning.

If a certain facility is closed for renovations or an event, he now has many backups to choose from to ensure the sports seasons run smoothly.

Kitt said that the programs such as 4-H and Boys and Girls Club had a joint theme even before the merger.

“It goes beyond just Air Force and Army for us,” he said. “We have had Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and National Guard children in our programs. We have been thinking jointly for years.”



**LEFT:** Issac Mitchell, catcher for Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson’s Rockies Youth Softball Team, looks to the outfield.  
**ABOVE:** Tech. Sgt. Nolan Busby of the 3d Equipment Maintenance Squadron and his son, Kory, do some batting practice at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson baseball fields.  
**BELOW:** Pese Natandi takes her turn at the bat during a JBER youth softball game May 15. (Photos by Steve White/JBER PA)





# Servicewomen in Iraq donate ‘Locks of Love’ to children who have lost hair

By Sgt. Joseph Vine  
USF-I Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq — Troops on Victory Base Complex participated in Operation Shear Love, in which they donated their hair to Locks of Love, May 8.

Locks of Love is a non-profit organization that provides hair pieces to children with medical hair loss.

This is the first Locks of Love donation drive that has occurred in Iraq, said Tech. Sgt. Amber Hotzfeld, an intelligence analyst, Joint Interrogation and Debriefing Detachment-Iraq, and one of the organizers of the event who donated 11 inches of

hair.

All of the troops, who each donated a minimum of 10 inches of hair for a total of almost eight feet, did so with their hearts going out to the children who need the hair more than they do.

According to Locks of Love, the program meets a need that goes beyond superficial beauty.

They provide a service that can help children rebuild their self esteem and regain normalcy in their lives.

“My friend’s daughter was diagnosed with a Stage-two Wilms Tumor a year ago,” said Hotzfeld. “She had her left kidney and a 10-cm tumor removed, and

(she) went through 18 weeks of chemotherapy. She’s doing great now and is cancer-free. I wanted to do this in her honor for being such a brave girl.”

“I thought that this was a perfect way to support cancer research,” said Spc. Teri Stadther, a badging specialist with Alpha Troop, 2-116 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, who donated 10 inches of hair.

“I hope that my hair will help a child find a bit of joy and comfort in knowing that others are supporting and cheering for them. I plan on doing it again in the future,” she said.

“This the first time I’ve

done anything like this,” said Spc. Nicole Apontequiles, an administrative clerk, deputy commanding general of operations command action group, United States Forces-Iraq, who donated 15 inches of hair. “I was thinking about it for a long time, but didn’t have the opportunity until now.”

Hotzfeld said that due to logistics and the drawdown of forces, this is the only Operation Shear Love in which she will be able to organize and participate.

“Your hair means so much more to the kid who doesn’t have hair than (it does) to you,” she said.

“This is a beauti-

ful cause,” said Staff Sgt. Amaryllis Rivera, a unit supply sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 325th Military Intelligence, who donated 13 inches of hair. “I really wish more people were willing to participate.”

“I would encourage everybody to find a foundation that they care for – something that pulls at their heart – and jump in with both feet,” said Stadther.

“It will bring you such pride knowing that for somebody else, your little act of kindness will bring them great joy. Plus, it’s just hair, and you can grow yours back.”



## Security forces requests assistance

673d Security Forces

673d Security Forces Investigations is looking for anyone who may have any information pertaining to an incident that took place on April 26 at about 11:15 p.m. on Arctic Warrior Drive on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

A witness to the incident was driving a small, white, four-door vehicle traveling west.

The person in the vehicle may have seen what took place, and may have distracted the suspect by honking their horn.

The victim reported this gave just enough time to speed away from the area.

If you have any information about this incident, please contact Security Forces Investigations o the JBER-Richardson side at 384-0834, 384-0836 or the Security Forces Law Enforcement desk (JBER-Elmendorf side) at 552-4444, 552-3421 or 384-0823.



Staff Sgt. Amaryllis Rivera, a unit supply sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 325th Military Intelligence, gets her hair cut during Operation Shear Love, at Camp Victory, Iraq, May 8. The event donated all the hair to Locks of Love, a non-profit organization that creates wigs for children with medical hair loss. (Photo by Sgt. Joseph Vine/USF-I Public Affairs)



# At the movies

For recorded show and movie times, call 428-1200 or visit the Army and Air Force Exchange Services website at [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com). Movies are subject to change without notice. Admission: Adults \$4, children \$2. Information provided courtesy of AAFES.

## Now playing



### HOP

**Rated:** PG  
**Playing:** Friday at 7 p.m.  
**Run time:** 105 minutes  
**Starring:** Russell Brand, James Marsden, Elizabeth Perkins

E.B., the Easter Bunny’s teenage son, heads to Hollywood, determined to become a drummer in a rock ‘n’ roll band. In LA, he’s taken in by Fred after the out-of-work slacker hits E.B. with his car.

## Now playing



### DIARY OF A WIMPY KID

**Rated:** PG  
**Playing:** Saturday at 7 p.m.  
**Run time:** 95 minutes  
**Starring:** Zachary Gordon, Devon Bostick, Robert Capron

In this sequel to 2010’s surprise hit, Greg Heffley is back in an all-new family comedy based on the book. As he begins seventh grade, Greg and his older brother – and chief tormentor – Rodrick must deal with their parents’ misguided attempts to have them bond.

## Parenting program provides assistance

Military Child Education Coalition

The Military Child Education Coalition Parent-to-Parent initiative has now trained over 100,000 parents around the nation and overseas. These record events were conducted by the MCEC Parent-to-Parent teams at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson when they presented MCEC workshops

during the month of May 2011. “This is a great milestone for this peer-to-peer training program,” said Dr. Mary Keller, MCEC president and chief executive officer. “Parents talking to parents makes this a wonderfully effective program, and we are so proud of the great work our teams do.” The Parent-to-Parent program had its roots in 2002 as the MCEC began to develop a series of research-based workshops and tools designed for parents. These workshops were delivered by trained parent instructors who reached out to their peers. In 2006, the MCEC expanded this program, which had earned the name Parent-to-Parent, making

the MCEC workshop available to parents in 24 Army communities worldwide through a partnership with the U.S. Army. In 2009, the Department of Defense, recognizing the potential of the Parent-to-Parent program, asked the MCEC to further expand the scope of training to include National Guard and Reserve Families. Workshops for all parents include “Staying Connected to your Child’s Education During Deployments” and “School Transitions: What Every Parent Should Know.” Workshops for parents of young children cover topics such as kindergarten preparation and reading skills, and early literacy workshops covering topics involv-

ing math, science and literacy. For elementary school parents, MCEC Parent-to-Parent offers “Parent Involvement: Your Child’s Key to Academic Success,” homework help, test-taking skills, and more. Middle and high school students and their parents can take advantage of workshops covering topics about the importance of having a four-to-six-year plan in middle and high school, college admissions, applications and financial aid. Over the past eight years, Parent-to-Parent has grown in capacity as the MCEC’s trained cadre reaches out to provide relevant information, tools, and supports, conducting workshops at installa-

tions around the world. The trainers are military spouses who live and work in their local communities, providing workshops to organizations such as school parent-teacher associations and organizations, Family Support Groups, and Child and Youth School Services. Workshops are open to any parent, regardless of military service affiliation. For more information about attending a Parent-to-Parent workshop or becoming involved in this program, visit the Military Child Education Website at [www.militarychild.org](http://www.militarychild.org), or contact Judy Glennon at [judy.glennon@militarychild.org](mailto:judy.glennon@militarychild.org).



# Adventure programs give troops a real rush

By Andrea Sutherland  
Fort Carson Public Affairs

FORT CARSON, Colo. — After his first and second deployments, 1st Lt. Jon Morgan, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, was left to transition to the home front by himself.

That unit, at another duty station, didn't provide the level of reintegration services that he experienced at Fort Carson, he said.

Like many Soldiers and servicemembers, Morgan said he struggled adapting to the slower pace home life offered.

"One minute you're on a plane, the next you're off and with your family," he said. "A lot of us were sitting around figuring out if we were all going through the same thing."

Morgan discovered solace in fly fishing, traveling the rivers around New York and Tennessee.

Many servicemembers, however, found different ways to chase the "adrenaline rush" of combat.

"In 2005 there was a recognition that there were an alarming number of accidents that were killing Soldiers," said John O'Sullivan, program manager for Army-wide outdoor recreation and Warrior Adventure Quest.

"We realized Soldiers were looking for the high adrenaline they had in combat," he said.

There was a challenge put out to all the armed forces and recreation professionals to help alleviate the problem. We said, 'If they want adrenaline, let's give it to them.'"

O'Sullivan partnered with Morale Welfare and Recreation in 2007 to create the Warrior Adventure Quest program, which introduces redeployed Soldiers to high-adrenaline activities like whitewater rafting, paintball and challenge and high ropes courses.

In April, O'Sullivan traveled to Fort Carson to help facilitate Warrior Adventure Quest activities with Soldiers from 3rd Bri-

gade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

Col. Jim Rainey, commander of 3rd BCT, said he had his Soldiers participate in the Warrior Adventure Quest program as part of their reintegration strategy.

"When combined with the other elements of our two-week intensive, comprehensive Soldier fitness based program, (Warrior Adventure Quest is) a powerful way to get Soldiers involved and interacting with one another," Rainey said.

"It's important for our Soldiers to have healthy outlets. (Warrior Adventure Quest) exposes our young men and women to activities they may not have otherwise experienced, and demonstrates healthy and positive ways to get an adrenaline rush."

"This is getting all of us together to have fun," said Morgan, who recently returned from his third deployment and participated in a Warrior Adventure Quest paintball session. "It allows us to see where our strengths and weaknesses are."

Soldiers from 3rd BCT also climbed rock walls, skied and zip lined.

"I love to party," said Sgt. Robert Smith, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd BCT, 4th Inf. Div., who zip-lined at an April 28 Warrior Adventure Quest event. "Zip lining, it's something different than what I usually do. There are a lot of things you can do to get yourself out of the barracks."

O'Sullivan said the goal of Warrior Adventure Quest was not just to give Soldiers

an adrenaline rush.

"In order to take part in any high-adrenaline activity, it requires thinking," O'Sullivan said. "These activities force them to think, and we hope that carries over into other areas of life."

Since 2009, Warrior Adventure Quest coordinators have measured the success of the program with pre- and post-action surveys that measured Soldiers' attitudes toward the Army and Morale Welfare and Recreation.

"It is working," said O'Sullivan, adding that more than 60,000 Soldiers have participated in the program since 2007.

"This is absolutely beneficial from a behavioral health standpoint," said Carl Smith, branch chief of the combat and operational stress control branch in the Department of Behavioral Sciences at the Army Medical Department at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Smith joined O'Sullivan to observe the Warrior Adventure Quest activities at Fort Carson.

"After deployments, Soldiers have what the experts call a 'new normal,'" he said. "Needs drive behavior. If you have a need for more adrenaline, you better find ways to fulfill that need rather than going down to the local pub and getting into bar fights."

Despite the accolades from mental health professionals, O'Sullivan said many higher-ups in the military do not see adrenaline activities as beneficial for troops.

"We do have commanders who don't buy into it and their Soldiers suffer," O'Sullivan

said. "We've asked ourselves, 'Are we just feeding the beast or are we addressing the problem?'"

O'Sullivan said the important difference between Warrior Adventure Quest activities and adventure sports is the discussion that takes place afterward.

"None of this works unless you talk about it," he said.

"By creating a discussion and talking about it, you start processing it. A lot of problems these guys have (result in Soldiers) shutting down. We're hoping these (activities) help break down communication barriers," O'Sullivan said.

Troops from 3rd BCT said the activities are helping their transition.

"This builds teamwork," said 1st Sgt. Edgar McGaughey, Company E, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

"We're trying to make sure that we're adapting to civilian life after deployment. This lets us bond in a more relaxed setting," he said.

O'Sullivan said he hopes the program will continue to grow and more commanders will request the program for their Soldiers.

O'Sullivan also hopes Warrior Adventure Quest activities will become part of the Army's pre-deployment training.

"We're not here for ourselves," he said. "This is all about the Soldier."

For information about the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Outdoor Adventure Program, call 552-4599.

**Competitive paintball games are just one of the opportunities afforded by the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Outdoor Adventure Program.**

**The program, which is becoming military-wide, provides adrenaline-tinged but safe excursions and activities for Soldiers and Airmen to keep the "rush" of combat without endangering themselves. The JBER program also offers supplies like sea kayaks satellite phones and electric bear fences for those who want to get off the beaten path. (File photo)**

