

ARCTIC WARRIOR



JOINT AIR OPERATIONS JBER troops join forces for 6th Eng. airborne mission

PAO staff report

Sgt. Samantha Owens, 6th Engineer Battalion, surveyed the expansive Alaska landscape covered with a fresh blanket of crystalline snow, resplendent under a cloudless blue sky.

She might have had time to enjoy the stunning view if she wasn't suspended from a T-10 Delta parachute, hurtling toward solid ground at 22 feet every second.

Owens dropped her ruck sack, which hung from her single-point harness. She pulled on her risers, angling the canopy, helping the parachute to act as an air brake.

As she intersected the drop zone, she quickly executed a parachute landing fall — rolling her body to disperse the shock of landing.

Though an airborne operation looks simple enough, it is actually the culmination of weeks, if not months, of planning by the Soldiers who wish to jump and the

Airmen who coordinate for and operate the Air Mobility Command cargo aircraft that eventually fly 1,000 feet over a designated drop zone.

During a Feb. 7 airborne operation when 517th Airlift Squadron C-17 Globemaster III cargo aircraft dropped 6th Eng. personnel and equipment on Malemute Drop Zone, Arctic Warrior reporters documented the process necessary to make for a successful airborne operation at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

In the conference rooms

Though every paratrooper stationed at JBER has a requirement to jump, not every 517th AS air crew has the requirement to support airdrop operations.

"Airdrop qualified crews, 25 percent of the squadron complement, have a semiannual requirement for equipment and person-

See JA/ATT, Page A-3



ABOVE: Paratroopers of 6th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne) descend to Malemute Drop Zone at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson after performing a mass-exit airborne operation. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead)
TOP: Paratroopers of 6th Eng. board a 517th Airlift Squadron C-17 Globemaster III for an airborne operation. (U.S. Air Force photo/Steve White)

Deployed JBER Airman helps with Afghanistan rescue effort

By Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Larlee
438th AEW Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan — Hovering 75 feet above a tricky landing zone in the treacherous snow covered mountains in northern Afghanistan, the entire aircrew of the MI-17 Hip acted as one.

The pilot's view was greatly diminished and he depended heavily on what his crew was seeing out the side doors as the aircraft slowly descended into its parking spot that was only a foot larger than the helicopter he was trying to land.

The snow covered many points, like a rock or tree, which the pilot could use as reference points. He needed the eyes of his crew to ensure he touched down exactly where he needed to.

This was the situation that faced a crew of 438th Air Expeditionary Squadron advisers faced during a humanitarian mission Jan. 24, when they provided life-

See Peplow, Page A-3

DoD leaders: budget request supports adaptable future force

By Karen Parrish
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon's fiscal 2013 budget request follows the defense strategy in shaping an adaptable, rapidly deployable military force with key 21st-century capabilities, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta told Congress Wednesday.

Panetta and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey testified on the request before the House Armed Services Committee, following their testimony yesterday before the Senate's similar body.

Under the request, the Defense Department would spend \$614 billion in fiscal 2013, with a \$525.4 billion base budget and \$88.5 in overseas contingency operations funds to cover war costs.

The secretary noted the request incorporates the Budget Control Act's requirement for a \$487 billion reduction in defense spending during the next 10 years. Meeting that reduction required department and service leaders to make some tough choices and determine acceptable risks, Panetta said.

"There is very little margin for error in this budget," he told the panel.

The Army and Marine Corps will shrink by 72,000 and 20,000 troops, respectively, by 2017, he noted, and all the services will slow or terminate some planned large purchases. Ground vehicles, unmanned aerial systems, ships and aircraft all will be affected, the secretary said.

Meanwhile, Panetta said, the department will invest in space, cy-



Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff answers questions concerning the Defense Department's budget proposal to the House Armed Service Committee Wednesday. (DoD photo/Petty Officer 1st Class Chad J. McNeeley)

berspace and long-range precision strike capabilities and continue to expand special operations forces. Highly capable, flexible combat capabilities are essential to confront and defeat multiple adversaries in light of force structure reductions, he added.

Panetta responded to questions about the F-35 joint strike fighter, which he said will serve to further interoperability between U.S. and other nations' militaries. He assured representatives that, while the department has delayed some planned buys of the aircraft, it's a key program for the United States and partner nations.

"The only way the United States remains the strongest military power in the world is to keep developing new-generation fighters that have the technologies and capabilities that we are going to

need in the future," he said.

Panetta noted keeping a smaller force effective requires a strong National Guard and reserve force that can mobilize quickly, a robust industrial base capable of responding to urgent military equipment needs, and a core of highly trained active-duty troops.

"Far more than any weapon system or technology," the military's strength rests in men and women in uniform, he said. Keeping faith with troops is a guiding principal in the department, Panetta noted.

Budget cuts will not affect family assistance programs, basic benefits or pay, the secretary said, but he acknowledged future adjustments are vital.

"Costs in military pay and benefits have to be on a sustainable course," Panetta said. Personnel

costs have grown by 90 percent over 10 years, he said, and must be controlled in the future "in ways that we believe are fair, transparent and consistent with our fundamental commitment to our people."

Panetta urged the lawmakers to bear in mind the strategic trade-offs that are inherent in any particular budget decision as Congress considers the budget request.

"This is a zero-sum game, and as far as I know, there's no free money around," he added. "And the need to balance competing strategic objectives has to take place in a resource-constrained environment."

Dempsey said the request is a joint budget for a joint force, rather than individual service budgets formed without regard to shared issues.

"It achieves balance among force structure, modernization, pay and benefits," the chairman said. "Changes that aren't informed by that context — the context of jointness — risk upending the balance that I just described and potentially compromising the force."

One concern in shaping the future force, particularly when departing service members will enter a tough job market, is "the pace at which we separate people," Dempsey said.

"We have any number of personnel policies, promotion rates, accession rates. We have evaluation reports, board processes," he said. "(And) to the extent that we can use the existing processes to identify the highest performing personnel, keep them, encourage them, continue to develop them, we'll be in good shape."

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Be prepared

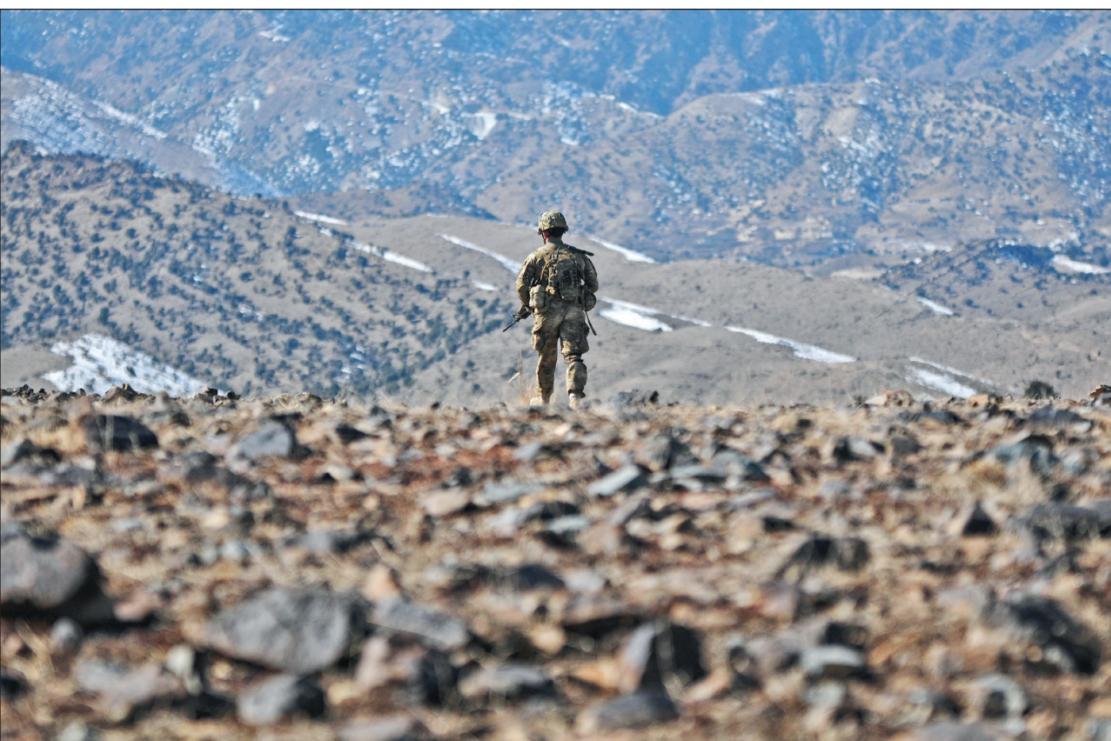
- Ensure troops and civilian employees are up to date on all annual and cyclical training requirements
- Ensure all collateral-duty personnel are identified and placed on orders as required

17

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PARATROOPERS OF 1 GERONIMO ON PATROL



ABOVE: Spc. Bruce Cotton, a paratrooper assigned to 3rd Platoon, Blackfoot Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment, Task Force Blue Geronimo, conducts security checks near the village of Narizah located in the Tani district Feb. 10. Soldiers of 1-501st Inf. deployed to Afghanistan as part of Task Force Spartan.

TOP: Staff Sgt. Jonathan Price, a squad leader assigned to 3rd Platoon, B/1-501st Inf., conducts security checks near the village of Narizah Feb. 10.

LEFT: Sgt. Ryan Gerber, a team leader assigned to 3rd Platoon, B/1-501st Inf., Task Force Blue Geronimo and native of Rohnert Park, Calif., prepares to descend into a valley near the village of Narizah located in the Tani district, Feb. 10. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Jason Epperson)

Vietnam vet awarded Silver Star after 45 years

By Army Staff Sgt. Trish McMurphy
U.S. Army Alaska Public Affairs

FORT WAINWRIGHT — In 1967, the average cost of new house was \$14,250, the average income was \$7,300 a year and gas was 33 cents a gallon.

The Green Bay Packers and Kansas City Chiefs played the first Super Bowl. The Berlin Wall, dividing West Germany from the Communist east, stood tall and long.

Last, but not least, 475,000 U.S. troops were fighting in Vietnam.

Recently, U.S. Army Alaska Commander, Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo recognized the heroism of one of those Soldiers Feb. 4 at Fort Wainwright, awarding Dr. Paul Taylor of Fairbanks a long-overdue Silver Star for his heroism in battle.

An officer in Taylor's unit had recommended him for the award in 1967, but was medically evacuated and the paperwork was lost in the shuffle.

Taylor's former commander resubmitted the award recently, and learned it would require approval from a member of Congress, because so many years had elapsed.

After Taylor's friends and family appealed to Alaska Sen. Mark Begich, the senator's office contacted military officials and learned Taylor would finally receive the Silver Star.

Begich attended the ceremony and presented Taylor with a U.S. flag and a Congressional coin.

Taylor was no ordinary Soldier, Palumbo noted in his remarks.

"In 1967, Dr. Paul Taylor was buck



U.S. Army Alaska Commanding General Maj. Gen. Raymond P. Palumbo awards the Silver Star to Vietnam veteran Dr. Paul Taylor of Fairbanks in a Feb. 4 ceremony at Fort Wainwright. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Trish McMurphy)

Sergeant Paul Taylor," Palumbo said. "He was part of a relatively new group of elite Soldiers trained in something called unconventional warfare."

Palumbo read from a statement written 45 years ago by Taylor's former executive officer.

"As the 2nd Company Reconnaissance Platoon leader, Sergeant Taylor held one of the most difficult and demanding positions a young man could hold," Palumbo read.

"Sergeant Taylor's bravery and leadership are legendary among Chinese mercenaries from an ethnic minority, known as Nungs.

"All U.S. members of the recon platoon were volunteers ... even though the draft was going on, this unit was (all) volunteers, because of the danger," Palumbo continued.

"On Sergeant Taylor's last operation, he was needed to temporarily take command of 2nd Company and lead it against a battalion

of Viet Cong, reinforced with their own weapons company.

"During a four-hour period, Sergeant Taylor's company made contact with the enemy six times; and each time, because of their aggressive actions, routed the numerically superior Viet Cong forces from their positions," Palumbo concluded.

Taylor was seriously wounded in the fight, but continued to lead his element until contact with the enemy had broken off.

Palumbo described Taylor as "the real deal; an honest to goodness American hero."

"You might say you were just doing your job," Palumbo said, "but I think I can speak on behalf of all (attending the ceremony), that your actions were, without question, heroic and it's only right and proper to recognize and to celebrate that fact."

One of Taylor's former officers described the significance of Taylor's role during the Vietnam War.

"I met Paul 45 years ago when he joined the team," retired Army Col. Tom Myerchin said. "He was the youngest member of our team."

"The Mike Force (Mobile Strike Force) only took volunteers," he said. "You had to be a three-time volunteer: a parachutist, Green Beret and finally a Mike Forcer, and there were only five Mike Forces in the country and they were the core tactical strategic reserve for all the camps.

"Paul is one of our most cherished members and he gets my hearty congratulations and the congratulations of whole team for the presentation he is getting today," Myerchin said.

ARCTIC WARRIOR

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JA/ATT

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nel drops,” said Joseph Buli, 3rd Wing joint airdrop/air transportability training (JA/ATT) coordinator.

Planning complex airborne operations is a joint effort and stresses the need for a joint atmosphere.

“We were doing JBBER before joint basing was even implemented,” Buli said.

First, Army battalions submit airdrop requests to their respective brigade and then the brigade reviews the request and forwards them to the U.S. Army Alaska G-3 Air Office. The G-3 Air Office then posts the request to the Pacific Air Force’s JA/ATT website.

C-17 Globemaster III and C-130 Hercules planners from either the 3rd Wing or the 176th Wing can go on that website and select missions that match available dates and are deemed valuable for their training. Then the PACAF JA/ATT manager validates the mission and assigns it a mission number.

The 3rd OSS then creates the mission in the Global Decision Support System and conducts a joint coordination conference one week prior to the mission and finalizes specifics of the mission – for example, the point of contact, the unit being dropped, parachutes utilized, equipment being dropped, drop zone control and the timeline for the mission.

These missions do not happen quickly.

“The latest a drop can really be scheduled is about six weeks from the requested date,” said Army Capt. Jeffery Swanson, 6th Eng. air operations and training officer.

“There has only been one mission that was scheduled within a week and that was last year because weather decisions caused about a 70 percent scratch rate and almost our entire battalion of paratroopers would have lost our currency in jump training,” he said.

However, USARAK Air Operations and the Air Force worked together to make an alternate date and they were able to conduct the airborne mission.

“There is no better rapport than between an air drop wing and an Army component,” Buli said.

Once all the planning pieces are in place and resources secured, the only thing that will stand in the way of a jump is weather.

“There may be a few problems with transportation requests or personnel mistakes, but nothing that would compromise the safety or training value of the mission,” Swanson said.

Airmen of the 3rd OSS distribute the completed JCC to all parties who have any contact with the airdrop. The day prior to the mission, the airdrop aircrew mission plans the mission.

“The key to a successful airborne mission is planning,” Swanson said.

On the flight deck

For the men and women of the 517th Airlift Squadron, flight planning can be the difference between mission success and failure; even life or death.

It all begins when they receive a tasking from the 3rd Operations Group.

Planning for something with so many moving parts can take time. It takes almost two full days to plan a complex airborne mission.

“Mission planning is the most important aspect of flying a mission, be it a training sortie or an operational tasking,” said Air Force Capt. Jessica Regni, C-17A evaluator aircraft commander. “For local training sorties like this one, mission planning is two-fold: to prepare for the sortie objective and to prepare for a simulated combat mission objective, mirroring a mission we’re likely to fly operationally.”

The mission is to drop 80 Soldiers along with heavy equipment from low altitudes on Malemute Drop Zone mirroring that of a



ABOVE: Sgt. Samantha Owens, 6th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne), prepares to jump from a 517th Airlift Squadron C-17 Globemaster III over Malemute Drop Zone, Feb. 7. RIGHT: Air Force captains Zach Coburn, front, and Allin Oberlin preform pre-flight checks before a heavy equipment and personnel air drop, Feb. 7. Coburn and Oberlin are C-17 pilots with the 517th AS. (U.S. Air Force photos/Tech Sgt. Brian Ferguson)



combat airdrop in Afghanistan.

“To prepare to fly to the objective, crews will mission plan the objective area, route, applicable tactical considerations, intelligence, contingencies and administration. Extensive mission planning is the only way we can safely and successfully execute a given mission or objective,” Regni said.

To get the most out of the day, the mission needs to meet the training needs of the Army while maximizing the training for the crew. It is planned from park to landing.

To start, the heavy equipment bundles are loaded and the planes take off. The crew does a dry run before the actual drop.

As they approach the drop zone the rear door of the C-17 opens. A few minutes later a drogue chute pulls the pallet out of the aircraft and the main chute opens. The crew turns back to JBBER to pick up the jumpers.

Regni said during the flight, the crew trained to execute “combat” two-ship airdrops in mountainous terrain. They also trained to fly in formation during low levels, arrivals, departures, threat maneuvers and airdrops.

As the jumpers load the plane, some look happy and some serious – however, everyone seems nervous. The airborne unit will jump from 1,000 feet with approximately 135 pounds of equipment. There is no room for error.

The word comes down from the flight deck, “Five minutes until the jump.”

Everyone stands and hooks up to the static line. The yellow light comes on and as they wait at the door, all they can do is hope everything works out. The green light comes on and the first jumper exits the aircraft. Everyone else just follows the Soldier in front.

The mission is over and they head back to JBBER to park and go over the day’s mission.

“These are valuable lessons learned on techniques and procedures to successfully execute a two-ship formation airdrop through various phases of flight,” Regni said. “It was very successful. The crew, especially the new co-pilots and new aircraft commander, learned what areas of planning they did well on, and which areas they need to focus more on next time to better aid mission success.”

At the drop zone

On a brisk clear day with deep snow

blanketing JBBER’s Malemute Drop Zone, a team of specialized military professionals set up a patch of land for a special purpose.

They are a collection of medics, engineers, mechanics and infantry Soldiers from several different units based at JBBER, but they all had one goal – to ensure the success of an airborne mission.

Regardless of a Soldier’s military occupational specialty, being a paratrooper requires the same set of safety standards and drop zone precautions.

The person in charge of everything on the ground is called the drop zone safety officer. It’s his job to ensure the area is secure and ready to receive jumpers no later than one hour before the first plane flies over.

Sgt. 1st Class Donshay Morning, a member of the 84th Engineer Support Company and a seasoned jumpmaster for his unit, closely observed the actions of his DZSO in training, Staff Sgt. Tony Kellogg, a paratrooper from the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment.

Being shadowed by a current and qualified jumpmaster with regular experience as a DZSO is a requirement for all jumpmasters before they can assume DZSO duties on their own.

While Morning was in charge overall, Kellogg went through all the motions of responsibility with Morning making only suggestions and minor on-the-spot corrections based on his professional experience.

“I just recently got my star,” Kellogg said, in reference to his current level of proficiency as a jumpmaster. “My battalion wants me to learn how to pull duties as a DZSO on my own now, so here I am.”

The first drop of the day was heavy equipment. Two 517th AS C-17s came streaking across the DZ and the lead aircraft released its cargo directly over the impact area. With a dynamic exit and descent, the bundle of gear safely struck no more than 50 meters from its intended area of impact, well within the required standard.

With the heavy cargo on the ground, the C-17s turned and began their 10-minute circular motion to re-approach the DZ for the following passes that dropped troops.

The DZSO team sprang into action. Loading up into a mix of Humvees and small unit support vehicles, medics and jumpmasters moved onto the DZ for the

personnel drop.

Morning and Kellogg quickly moved to the impact area for the equipment and removed the raised angle marker, so they could set it up at the new location for the jumpers to land.

The RAM is a brightly colored fabric panel used during computer-authorized release-point airborne missions. It allows the pilots to visually confirm their intended DZ from the air as well as their flight heading, based on the direction the triangular RAM is pointing.

With the RAM in its new location and medical personnel staged across the DZ, members of the DZSO team began constant checks with all other drop zone personnel and carefully monitored the wind conditions.

Winds higher than 13 knots will cause them to order a no-drop for that pass of aircraft, the DZSO team could choose to wait for lower winds through additional passes of the aircraft called “race tracks.”

According to Army airborne standards, any winds higher than 21 knots will demand the jump is canceled for the day.

Kellogg watched closely as the weak winds on the ground strained to register on his sensitive hand-held monitor device.

“One knot,” Kellogg radioed to the pilot. In moments a voice over the radio responded.

“Roger, we are two minutes out,” the pilot answered.

With that reply, Kellogg ordered road guard teams to close the roads leading to the drop zone to ensure that no stray vehicles came onto the DZ during the jump.

The two C-17s soon came into view, flying in a staggered trail formation to maximize their ability to exit all of the jumpers in as few passes as possible.

The pilots and DZSO exchanged wind readings once more at the 30-second mark and shortly thereafter, the jumpers began to leap from the aircraft.

The jumpers exited in a staggered series from both troop doors behind the wings and before the tail section of the C-17s. The series of staggered exits is called the mass-exit technique and allows for a small gap between jumpers to help prevent mid-air collisions.

The DZSO team carefully watched and counted each jumper as their T-10 Delta parachutes opened and carried the jumpers to the ground.

They watched for both the accurate count of jumpers exiting and landing and looked for any signs of parachute malfunctions or hazardous situations on the ground and in the air.

Any mid-air collisions, entanglements or failures of the parachute equipment would have caused an immediate response from the DZSO team, medics and the attending malfunctions NCO – a qualified jumpmaster and parachute rigger who can respond quickly to a mishap.

The malfunctions NCO saw little action on this day.

After two successful passes, the C-17s had unloaded all of their jumpers and moved away from the drop zone. With the last of the jumpers landing safely in the deep snow of Malamute Drop Zone, the DZSO team began to break down the marking equipment and moved back to the assembly area.

Once all personnel and equipment were thoroughly accounted for, units headed back to their headquarters on JBBER. Later, they conducted detailed after-action reviews to identify any needed improvements and make any changes on future jumps.

“This was just a great day to jump,” Morning said. “Easy money, soft landing. Just a lousy walk back in all this snow.”

(With reporting by Tech. Sgt. Brian Ferguson and Air Force Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf, both of JBBER Public Affairs; and Army Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead, USARAK Public Affairs. Winstead is a qualified jumpmaster and possesses expert knowledge of airborne operations. For more photos, visit www.jber.af.mil)

Peplow

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providing support to 31 Afghan avalanche victims.

Air Force Lt. Col. John Conmy, 438th Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron commander and a participant in the mission, said only a crew that worked in perfect harmony would have been able to make the landing.

“Without the guys in the back, we could not do it as there was no way to ensure our tail was clear,” said Conmy, a native of Buffalo, N.Y. “Because the pilots could not see the landing zone, they had to rely 100 percent on the aircrew to tell them where it was.”

Senior Master Sgt. Todd Peplow, an aerial gunner and adviser for the 438th AEAS, has experienced numerous rescue missions in his career. He said the aircrew’s ability to work together is integral to successful missions.

“We need to have a close personal relationship between the pilots and the rest of the aircrew,” said the native of Anchorage and an Alaska Air National Guardsman of 176th Wing at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. “We have to talk them through it, when you are in a hover, because they can’t see below or behind the helicopter. Everybody’s input is valuable, they may be seeing something that nobody else can see.”



Senior Master Sgt. Todd Peplow, an aerial gunner and adviser for the 438th Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron, deployed from 176th Wing, prepares the cargo area of a Mi-17 Hip helicopter during a humanitarian mission Jan. 24. (Air Force photo/Master Sgt. Shane A. Cuomo)

The sergeant said, though everybody shares what they see, the decision about what to do is still made by one person.

“Ultimately the pilot has to make the final decision,” Peplow said. “But he is making that decision with the best information.”

Air Force Staff Sgt. Jonathan Hill, a flight engineer and adviser for the 438th AEAS, said the air-

crew has to use the same terminology and they have to choose their words carefully when they share what they are seeing.

“You want to give them a full picture but you don’t want to be too elaborate,” he said. “You have to be very clear and concise.”

Hill, a native of League City, Texas, said he really enjoys being part of such a tight-knit team.

Conmy said the forming of a great team is not an accident and is done in part with a program called Crew Resource Management. The program focuses on interpersonal communication, leadership and decision making in the cockpit. He said these tools are vital for an aircrew.

The landing zone in the mountains put all of those skills to the

test the colonel said.

The pilot passed over the area a few times to scout the location and allow the aircrew to form a strategy for the landing. The landing zone was a third of the size of the minimum area used in training sorties. The landing zone had been shoveled out by the villagers, but the perimeter of it was formed by five-foot high snow banks.

The pilot had to land the helicopter diagonally in the rectangular landing zone. He performed his descent slowly to mitigate the amount of snow blowing and to give his aircrew plenty of time to alert him if something looked wrong. When the helicopter came to rest, there was only two feet of clearance between the tail rotor and snow bank.

The aircrew had to repeat the procedure later in the day because they could not fit all of the 31 victims onto one flight.

Conmy said he was very proud of the work his aircrew accomplished and it all came down to the great communication skills the Air Force has instilled in them.

“I don’t think anyone in the world does it better,” said Conmy. “It is that type of crew coordination that allows us, the U.S. military, to do the amazing things we do.”

(Editor’s note: This article’s writer, Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Larlee, is home stationed at JBBER with the 673d Air Base Wing)

Briefs and Announcements

Correction

An incorrect phone number for one of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson tax centers was published in last week's briefs. The corrected brief is below.

Tax centers open

Volunteers at both Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson tax centers are trained to prepare 1040 EZ and 1040 tax returns and will do so until April 17.

The JBER-Elmendorf Tax Center is in Building 8124 and is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Wednesday from 8 a.m. to noon.

The JBER-Richardson Tax Center is in Building 600, Room A305, and is open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and Friday, and 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday. Walk-in service is available.

Appointments can be made by calling 551-1175 for JBER-E; for JBER-R call 384-1040.

Volunteering for the Iditarod?

The 2012 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race will set off from downtown Anchorage, March 3, beginning at 10 a.m.

Are you (or someone you know) volunteering as part of the Last Great Race? If so, JBER Public Affairs would like to talk to you.

Please email us at jber.pateam@elmendorf.af.mil or call the Arctic Warrior editor at 552-8918.

New hospital wing

The 673d Medical Group opened the new Lynx Wing Monday.

The wing houses the Traumatic Brain Injury Center, Mental Health, Neurology and Pain Management Clinics.

For more information, call 580-6602.

Utility allowance changes

The utility allowance has been adjusted for all Phase I (Sunflower – those units on Fairchild Ave., Dallas, Silver Run and Chugach housing areas) metered housing units to reflect decreases or increases in electricity and natural gas rates Aurora pays.

Aurora will continue to read utility meters monthly and provide a statement reflecting actual consumption, quarterly allowance amount and the resulting balance of customer accounts.

As is currently the case, when the credit balance of accounts exceed \$250, Aurora will issue a refund check.

If an account reflects a debit balance in excess of \$250, customers are required to make payment to Aurora in the amount of the account balance.

In addition, each account is annually reconciled and adjusted to zero at the end June.

This means during July, customers will either be refunded any accumulated credit or invoiced for any amount owed, regardless of the dollar amount.

For any questions regarding the Utility Program or further information, please contact the Aurora Utility Staff at 375-0508 or Aurora Housing Office at 753-1023.

Snowmachine orientation

Snowmachine orientation is

required for all personnel intending on riding the Elmendorf side of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

The orientation is hosted every Thursday at 5 p.m. at Building 7210.

For more information, call 552-2023.

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 longterm use.

Delivery and pick-up 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 Drive to schedule 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.

U-Fix-It Store

The U-Fix-it Store is located in Building 706 and is open to all Aurora Military Housing tenants.

Assorted items for maintaining your home may be issued from the U-Fix-It Store.

The items available are subject to change and limits and some may have a cost.

There are also American flag kits, and fire extinguishers available. U-Fix-It work includes all

home maintenance activities.

Its purpose is to allow the occupant to make minor improvements and repairs to their home and cut down on the amount of service orders at maintenance.

This allows tenants to do work in their homes themselves, thus improving the appearance of the interior as well as the exterior of the home.

There are two stores located on base. The JBER-Elmendorf location is 6350 Arctic Warrior Drive and it is open 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. (closed for lunch noon to 1 p.m.).

The JBER-Richardson location is Building 706 1st St., open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

A window blind cleaning machine is currently located at the JBER-Elmendorf location.

A "reservation required to use" policy is in place with the priority going to military members PCS-ing. For more information, call 375-5540.

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 an 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.

Home buyer's seminar

The 673d Civil Engineer Squadron Capital Asset Management Office offers a first-time home buyer's seminar two times each month through the Volunteer Realtor Program.

The seminar covers home loan prequalification, negotiations, offer acceptance, inspection, title search, available types of loans, and the closure process as well as many other aspects of interest to a prospective home owner.

If interested in becoming a home owner and wish to attend, please call 552-4439 to be included on the sign-up sheet.

Military publications

Visit the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Public Affairs Office, 10480 22nd Ave., Suite 123, for copies of the following official military publications: the JBER Installation Guide and Phonebook (limited supply), Air Force Priorities poster series (large and small sizes), and Airman Magazine.

City of Anchorage maps are also available.

Call 552-8918 for information.





Mortarmen of Task Force Denali achieve pinpoint accuracy with precision-guided munitions

ABOVE: Spc. Joshua Barrios, from Long Beach, Calif., and Pfc. Aaron Wilson, from Moreno Valley, Calif., both with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron (Airborne), 40th Cavalry Regiment, set the aim of their 120-mm mortar system Feb. 8, at Camp Clark, Afghanistan. The HHT mortar teams were testing their systems to use new precision-guided munitions.

RIGHT: Barrios and Wilson fire their 81-mm mortar system at Camp Clark Feb. 8.

FAR RIGHT: Wilson prepares 120-mm mortar ammunition to fire Feb. 8 at Camp Clark. (U.S. Army photos/Spc. Ken Scar)



JBER Air Force basketball playoffs



www.jber.af.mil/news

COMMUNITY

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Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson

February 17, 2012

New JBER Fisher House hosts first guests

By Staff Sgt. Cynthia Spalding
JBER Public Affairs

Senior Airman Joshua Crawford and his wife, Rachael, were the first guests to stay at the Alaska Fisher House on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson until they were finally able to take their newborn girl, Devi, back home to Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks, Feb. 2.

While in Fairbanks, the Crawford family was informed they needed to be transferred to Anchorage for further medical needs. Providence Hospital, located in Anchorage, is the only level-3 neonatal intensive care unit in Alaska and is the regional referral center for the state.

After one day in the hospital, Rachael was discharged and they needed a place to go until her scheduled Caesarian section the following day.

Joshua, who works with cyber transport systems for the 354th Communications Squadron based at Eielson, was in contact with his first sergeant who informed him about a recently-opened Fisher House on JBER.

"We found out about this new thing (the Fisher House) and that it was open," Joshua said. "We were introduced and have been staying there ever since. It was a great peace of mind before having her go in for a c-section."

Without the Fisher House, finding a hotel, paying for it and needing a kitchen to cook food are just a few things that would be added to the list of stressors for a family dealing with a short-notice medical emergency.

Rachael said having the baby has been more stressful than they ever expected. The Fisher House provided the perfect solution to some of those stresses.

"Because the Crawford family has come to Anchorage for medical care, and they live outside a 50-mile radius of JBER, they can stay at the Fisher House," Jeff Temple, Fisher House manager said.

"Staying at the Fisher House has helped a lot. It's a calmer, nicer environment and we don't have to worry about all the other guests that stay at hotels," Rachael said. "It would have been so much more stressful. It's more like sitting in a home."

The Fisher House offers a variety of options that aren't always found in hotels – such as fully-furnished kitchen with pots and pans, a living room area, a large family dining room and several donated items, such as canned goods, are available for guests to use.

There are often volunteers and guests cooking together in a com-



Senior Airman Joshua Crawford, his wife Rachael, and their newborn, Devi, sit inside the Alaska Fisher House Feb. 1 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. They were the first guests to stay at House since its opening Dec. 22. Joshua Crawford is a member of the 354th Communications Squadron, Eielson Air Force Base. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Cynthia Spalding)

mon kitchen and socializing with each other.

"The concept for the house is that everyone kind of cares for each other," said Temple. "It is a compassionate care facility."

"It has everything we need," Rachael said. "We picked up some groceries for cooking and it has a lot of space for babies."

"It can be traumatic and expensive for a young enlisted man and his wife to have their first baby with complications," Temple said. "This was last-minute news for them that there might be something wrong. When you're stationed up here, families are not always able to come up for support, especially at the last minute."

"We knew about another family staying in Anchorage for similar medical reasons, but they were staying at another place downtown," Joshua said. "We told them about the Fisher House and they've since found that it's so much nicer, with fewer people, and it's a smaller, cleaner environment."

Service members and veterans from all over the state come from many remote locations where there are only a

handful of people.

Even if only for an appointment, being able to stay at the house can take that piece of worry away so that they can focus on other things.

The Crawfords were able to stay at the Fisher House for the four weeks their newborn was in the hospital.

On their third wedding anniversary, Feb. 1, they were able to take baby Devi back with them to the Fisher

House and let her adjust to a home-like setting before they departed for Fairbanks the next day.

"Even the baby seems to be feeling like she's at home too," Joshua said. "She started acting like a normal baby, keeping us up all night, the normal baby stuff."

The Fisher House has offered the opportunity for us to have a more normal first month with our baby."

For now the Crawfords, originally from Michigan, are now back in Fairbanks.

"It's been kind of a blur with every emotion you can think of," Rachel said. "She was a month early. It's just not what I expected to go through."

"I tried to picture the idea of being pregnant, of it being the first and doing all this for the first time, and now it's just a big relief to finally be going home and the baby

agrees."

The couple explained it will hardly be a transition for them and the baby to move from the Fisher House to their own.

"We were able to purchase a child's playpen during our stay and put it up as we cooked dinner and watched TV in the living room," Joshua said. "You could never do that in a hotel, or in billeting. It was like a normal scenario."

With more surgeries still to come, the Crawfords plan to come back to the Fisher House in the future.

"It's inevitable that we will have to come back down," Rachael said. "We have to come back to the Fisher House, we loved it. There's nowhere else like it."

Since the first guests have stayed in the Fisher House, only a few minor changes have been made.

Things such as information books in rooms, an addition of a small child's play area and signage around the house to help explain house rules will be some of the new additions to the house.

The Fisher House is now open. For more information or a place to stay while family is being cared for, visit the website at www.akfisherhouse.org, email jeffery.temple@elmendorf.af.mil, or call the house directly at 222-1673.



Guard general mashes his way to 'top brass' trophy

By Sgt. Michelle Brown
134th Public Affairs Detachment

The crisp winter air covered the glistening trail as an Alaska National Guardsman raced to the finish line during the "Top Brass" Charity Sled Dog Race held at Tozier Track Saturday.

Army Maj. Gen. Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, along with five senior leaders representing all the branches of the U.S. military, participated in a three-mile dog sled race to determine who would be named the "top brass."

Katkus went head-to-head with Coast Guard Capt. Jason Fosdick, Sector Anchorage commander, Army Col. William Miller, U.S. Army Alaska chief of staff, Capt. Joel Jungemann, senior naval officer for the U.S. Navy Alaska, Maj. Lee Johnson, Inspector Instructor for the U.S. Marine Reserve, Alaska, and Chief Master Sgt. Michael Warner, 11th Air Force command chief.

Each racer was assigned a three-dog team and musher from last year's "Top Dog" Charity Sled Dog Race to serve as a mentor.

"This was excellent and really fun," Katkus said. "About 100 yards into the trail you don't hear anything except the dogs breathing and the sounds of the sled runners



Army Col. William Miller, U.S. Army Alaska Chief of Staff, races to the finish line during the "Top Brass" Charity Sled Dog Race held at Tozier Track in Anchorage Saturday. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)

going down the trail."

Katkus and his team of athletes won the race with a course time of 9:28, nearly a minute ahead of his competitors.

He credited the win to his superior teammates named Cooper, Eeyore and Lizzy.

"This was my first time mushing, but I had a team of veteran dogs in front of me, keeping me on the sled," he said. "I followed the advice I was given to just hang on to the sled and the dogs will do the work for you."

In addition to the race, ExxonMobil made a \$20,000 contribution to the Wounded Warrior Project, a program designed to honor and empower wounded warriors by raising awareness, helping injured service members and providing them a variety of services.

The "Top Brass" Charity Dog Sled Race was held as part of the 39th annual ExxonMobil Open. The race has been an Alaska tradition since 1973.

Aaron Stryk, ExxonMobil public and

government affairs advisor, said the race is designed to pay tribute to the official sport of Alaska, while highlighting the invaluable institutions that give so much to the community.

The race sponsors hope to show appreciation to our wounded warriors who have already given so much for their country.

"Thank you for all you do in service to Alaska and our country," Stryk said. "I hope this can be our way of saying thank you."

Lincoln's birthday puts faith, state in the spotlight

By Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Matthew Clouse
673d ABW Chaplain

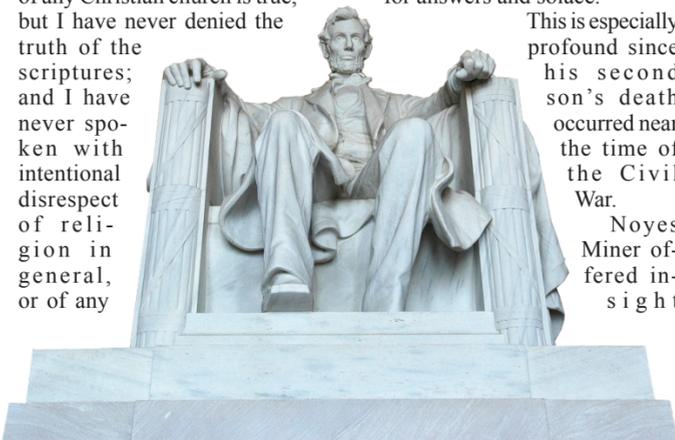
On February 12, the United States recognized President Abraham Lincoln's birthday. This national holiday is not a religious holiday, but his public efforts were an expression of his religious beliefs. President Lincoln was raised in an evangelical home and knew the Bible, but seldom entered the church doors. It was during the summer of 1846 that President Lincoln was pressed to defend his lack of attachment to a particular faith or denomination. The burgeoning Second Great (Christian) Awakening of the time compelled politicians to publicly declare their faith affiliations, though presently one's personal faith does not carry quite the same voting weight. One of Lincoln's second-term

opponents was a popular Methodist political circuit rider with ample support, Peter Cartwright. He attempted to defame President Lincoln, charging that he "was an open scoffer at Christianity." After being elected to his second presidential term, Lincoln issued a presidential handbill declaring, "That I am not a member of any Christian church is true, but I have never denied the truth of the scriptures; and I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general, or of any

denomination of Christians in particular." Still, his lack of denominational affiliation didn't sit well with vocal evangelicals. As a nation we will likely never know the depth of Lincoln's faith. It is suspected that when he suffered the death of his sons, Lincoln realized his need to depend on God for answers and solace. This is especially profound since his second son's death occurred near the time of the Civil War. Noyes Miner offered insight

when he recalled Lincoln's private words to him a few days after the battle of Shiloh. "You know I am not a man of a very hopeful temperament," said Lincoln. "But believing, as I do, that our cause is just, and relying on God for help I firmly believe we shall conquer in the end; but the struggle will be protracted and severe, involving a great loss both of property and life...." "I am sometimes astonished at the part I am playing in this terrible drama.... But ... it has pleased Almighty God to put me in my present position, and looking up to him for divine guidance, I must work out my destiny as best I can." From this conversation, Miner and other evangelicals analyzed Lincoln's faith and concluded that "If Mr. Lincoln was not a Christian he was acting like one; that he was looking to God for help in time of need; and that, believing in the efficacy of prayer, it was

his custom to read the Bible and pray himself." The purpose of this narrative on Lincoln's personal faith is not to argue his religious sincerity. My intent is to highlight an appropriate example of balancing faith convictions and religious tolerance. Ideologically and doctrinally, the differing religions will never fully agree in kind nor practice. Lincoln's faith modeling seems as pertinent today as in his day: devout and actively living out his faith, yet tolerant and supportive of differing others. Though not specifically articulated, Lincoln's faith values were evident in his speech, attitude, and decision-making. Today we are a strong nation that supports religious freedoms. Lincoln seemed to wholeheartedly maintain that all men and women are free to embrace their faith of choice. We are wise to do the same.



Overcoming pride to prevent suicide

Commentary by Capt. Scott Taylor
Air Force News Service

I am struck by the increasing numbers of suicides in the Air Force every year. There are more agencies and programs than I can count to assist anyone thinking of hurting themselves, and we receive training on positive behaviors. So why is this still a problem? As long as people see asking for help as a weakness, positive change cannot occur. As long as there is a stigma attached to getting help, people will continue to shoulder their burdens alone and continue on this path. I learned this lesson the hard way. When I was younger, my father was very sick. He had a malignant brain tumor that should have killed him. Instead, he had a stroke in the exact spot where the tumor was, which saved his life, but paralyzed him and put him in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. I spent all of my time at the hospital. I wallowed in self-pity and watched my father suddenly unable to take care of himself. I learned how to take care of my father at a very young age and, along with my mother, committed myself to his care. I withdrew from all of my friends at school, who frankly did not know what to talk to me about. I was

depressed and withdrew from the normal aspects of growing up. The situation eventually escalated to my former friends making fun of my father, calling him a vegetable, which resulted in my getting into fights in school. All of the warning signs were there. My behavior changed. I was isolated. I was quick to fight and I was not myself. I thought seriously every day for a long time about ending my life. The only thing that stopped me was what it would do to my father, whom I was extremely close to. I was very close to ending things on several occasions. Relatives, teachers and counselors saw what was going on and tried to stop what was happening, but their efforts were futile. I chose not to act because of my father. I knew if I hurt myself, it would kill him. Years later, as I reflect back on that dark time, it frightens me to know how close I was to ending my life. As I grew older, I developed a wonderful support structure in place amongst my network of friends. My father passed away 11 years after his stroke while I was in college. Two years later at the end of my first year of law school, very unexpectedly, my mother was diagnosed with cancer and passed away within a month. Once again, I was forced to deal with personal trauma. This time, my friends refused to cast me aside or to allow me to wallow in loneliness and depression. I credit them with getting me through law school. I tried to quit several times, and fortunately every attempt was thwarted by the registrar being out of the office or a friend noticing and physically removing me from the building. They were

true wingmen for me and I can never repay them for being there for me during some of the darkest days of my life. While these were tough times, I never seriously considered committing suicide in law school. I struggled, but I got through and graduated law school on time. I succeeded because my support structure gave me the resiliency I needed to survive. It is what kept me sane. It is what kept me going. Examining these two difficult times in my life, I was seriously contemplating suicide in one, and never considered it during law school. Why did I react differently in these two situations, even though both represented difficult times? I believe the answer is because I knew what I was going through the second time around was too big for me to do alone. The difference was I did not believe that it made me a weak person to ask for or accept help, which is significant because I have a stubborn streak a mile wide. I learned a valuable lesson from my earlier dark days: It really is okay to accept help. As I reflect on the first experience, pride is what almost killed me more than anything else. When my father was sick, I felt it was me against the world. I would overhear my mother talking with friends and family about what a rough time I was having in school and dealing with my father's illness. That only stiffened my resolve that I was tough, that I could hack it alone, and that I was okay. I refused to acknowledge or admit that I needed help from anyone. To ask for help was to admit that I was too weak to deal with

the problem on my own. As someone who has made a career of helping clients in need, I can testify there are a lot of people out there with huge hearts who want nothing more than to help those around them. When I help someone, I repay a bit of the kindness that has been shown to me. There are people in our lives who will bend over backward for us if only we say we need help and are willing to accept it. No two people go through trauma the same way. There is no correct way to experience grief, separation, anxiety, trouble at work, stress from a deployment or whatever problem you are going through. Needing help to get through law school after I lost my parents did not make me a weak person. Needing help made me a normal person. One of the reasons pride stopped me from accepting help when I was younger is that I would see patients in worse shape than my father at the hospital. I would see kids my age seemingly deal with it in stride. I would hear about kids in worse situations than me overcoming adversity and rising above it all. My pride wouldn't let me ask for help if they could do it with no problems. What I have learned is the people who seem to be in the same or worse situation than me are in just as much pain, but they are just hiding it. Swallow your pride, and don't try to shoulder that burden alone. Whatever you are going through, someone else has gone through before and needed help as well. Don't swat away the hand extended to you. No one does it all alone.

673 FSS

Customer

Appreciation Week

February 16

Stop by the 673 FSS Marketing Booth at "The Exchange" for a FREE "Traveling Map". Bring Your "Traveling Map" to Participating 673 FSS Locations During Customer Appreciation Week for a Chance to Win a "Traveling Basket" Full of Goodies.

February 17 - 23

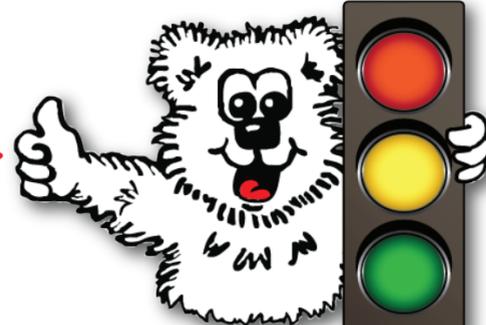
PRIZES

\$2012 FSS

\$673 FSS

\$290

Enter to win Gift Cards



Stop & Go

You Don't Have to be New to JBER to See What We Do

See What's Free For You

Check us out on Facebook @ [facebook.com/JBER673FSS](https://www.facebook.com/JBER673FSS)

to Win Northern Lights Coupon Books, Tote Bags, Mugs, and MORE





Community happenings

SATURDAY
Masters of the Fiddle
 Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy are celebrated fiddlers and bring their French, Cajun, Celtic and Bluegrass stylings to the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts starting at 7:30 p.m.
 For information email meese@anchorage.net.

SATURDAY THROUGH FEB. 26
The Anchorage Opera presents Macbeth
 Shakespeare's classic tale of the doomed Scots general Macbeth set to grand operatic music by Giuseppe Verdi comes to the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. Catch a show at 8 p.m. Saturday, 7 p.m. Wednesday, 8 p.m. Feb. 24 or 4 p.m. Feb. 26.
 For information call 263-2787.

SUNDAY
29th Annual Iron Dog
 Two-man teams top speeds of more than 100 miles per hour in the world's toughest snowmobile race over 2,000 miles from Big Lake to Nome to Fairbanks. The race kicks off at a time to be determined.
 For information email meese@anchorage.net.

WEDNESDAY
National Prayer Breakfast
 The JBER prayer breakfast features burritos at 8 a.m. at the Arctic Warrior Events Center. Air Force Deputy Chief of Chaplains Brig. Gen. Howard Stendahl will speak.
 For information call 552-4422.

FEB. 24
Black History Month
 JBER celebrates African-American/Black History Month from 2 to 3 p.m. at the Arctic Warrior Events Center. Sen. Bettye Davis of the 27th Alaska State Legislature will speak.
 For information call 552-2056.

Fur Rendezvous kicks off
 Celebrating winter like nowhere else, Alaska's largest and oldest winter festival features tons of fun events. All around Anchorage are events like outhouse races, snowshoe softball and the Running of the Reindeer.
 For information, call 274-1177.

FEB. 24 AND 25
New Shanghai Circus
 China's most celebrated acro-

batic company brings the exotic wonders of China to Anchorage. Showcasing dramatic interpretations of ancient dances, these performances at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts start at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 24 and 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Feb. 25.
 For information, call 263-2787.

FEB. 24 THROUGH MARCH 5
The Three Little Pigs
 The Alaska Pacific University Theater hosts this physical comedy extravaganza retelling of the well-known story.
 The child-friendly show starts at 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and Saturdays and Sundays at 3 p.m.
 For information, visit tbatheatre.org or call 677-7529.

FEB. 25 THROUGH MARCH 2
The Hobbit
 The Alaska Center for the Performing Arts brings the work of J.R.R. Tolkien to the stage with this suspenseful, fast-paced journey through Middle Earth.
 The show starts at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Fridays and 7 p.m. Saturdays.
 For information, visit www.alaskatheatreofyouth.org or call 338-4901.

FEB. 25
Winter North Face Vertical Challenge
 Skiers and snowboarders compete to see who can do the most laps on the longest continuous double-black-diamond ski run in North America at the Alyeska Resort.
 For information visit www.alyeskaresort.com.

Silent Auction for troops
 The Fort Richardson Spouses' Club hosts a support-the-troops silent auction at the Alaska Native Heritage Center from 6:30 p.m. until 9 p.m.
 For information visit frsc.shutterfly.com.

MARCH 3
Iditarod ceremonial start
 World-class mushers and their dog teams mush toward the Bering Sea coast in the Last Great Race.
 The 1,150 miles of race start on Fourth Avenue in downtown Anchorage at 10 a.m. as the Fur Rondy draws to a close.
 For information visit www.iditarod.com.

Rage City Rollergirls
 Roller derby action lights up the Dena'ina Center at 7 p.m. as Rage City faces off against their long-standing nemesis, the Fairbanks Rollergirls.
 For information visit www.ragecityrollergirls.org.

Disney's Aladdin, Jr.
 Visit the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts and walk into Agrabah. All your favorites from the Disney classic are here, including Aladdin, Jasmine, and the Genie, starting at 2 and 7 p.m.
 For information call 263-2787 or visit www.alaskatheatreofyouth.org.

MARCH 24
NSAA Ski Train to Curry
 Eating, polka music, and skiing make the Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage's trip to Curry. Ski, visit historic Curry, or snowshoe from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 For information visit www.anchoragenordicski.com or email meese@anchorage.net.

MARCH 30
State Geography Bee
 The Alaska State Geography Bee takes place at the Egan Center as youth from around the state pit their geographic wits against each other.
 For information, call 263-2800.

MARCH 31
Lily Tomlin
 The incomparable Tomlin brings many classic characters to life in this one-woman show.
 One of America's foremost comedienne, Tomlin may be best known for her roles on Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In. She appears at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts.
 For information email meese@anchorage.net.

APRIL 3
Carolina Chocolate Drops
 The 2011 Grammy-winning group for traditional folk music, the Carolina Chocolate Drops bring black string-band and jug-band music of the 1920s and 1930s with a joyful vengeance.
 Dirt-floor dance electricity starts at 7 p.m. at the Wendy Williamson Auditorium.
 For information email meese@anchorage.net.

APRIL 6
Rage City Rollergirls
 Anchorage's own roller-derby girls battle it out at the Dena'ina Center. As usual, wheels roll from 7 to 10 p.m.
 For information visit www.ragecityrollergirls.com.

APRIL 14
Anchorage Symphony season finale
 This bittersweet performance of Brahms' Double Concerto features superstar cellist Zuill Bailey as well as Sitka Music Festival founder and violinist Paul Rosenthal. Celebrate the last of the season at 8 p.m. at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts.
 For information visit www.anchoragesymphony.org.

ONGOING
Sing-a-long at the zoo
 Pre-school aged kids can explore the world of animals through music with musician Annie Reeves. Children can sing along with the guitar, or play with the musical instruments for kids.
 Sing-a-longs are held at 10:30 a.m. Mondays at the coffee shop greenhouse.
 For information email klarson@alaskazoo.org.

Wired Cafe for Airmen
 The Wired Cafe is located at 7076 Fighter Dr., between Polaris and Yukla dormitories. The cafe has wireless Internet and programs throughout the week for single Airmen living in the dorms. There are also free home-cooked meals Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m.
 For information, call 552-4422.

Scholarship opportunities
 The Richardson Spouses' Club is currently accepting scholarship applications for 2012. The scholarship program is open to all eligible JBER military and retiree dependents, and can be used toward undergraduate studies. Deadline is Feb. 29. For information, visit frsc.shutterfly.com.

The Elmendorf Officers' Spouses' Organization is currently accepting scholarship applications from high school seniors who are dependents of active duty or retired service members. Application deadline is Feb. 27; for information or an applica-

Chapel services

Catholic Mass
Sunday
 9 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel
 10:30 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1

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 through Friday
 Before/after 11:40 Mass – Soldiers' Chapel

Protestant Sunday Services
Joint Liturgical Service
 9 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 2
Traditional Service
 9 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1
Contemporary Protestant Service
 11 a.m. – Soldiers' Chapel
Gospel Service
 Noon – Elmendorf Chapel 1
Contemporary Protestant Service
 5 p.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 1

Buddhist
Soka Gakkai Goshu
 7 p.m., first Friday of the month – Chapel Center (10427 Kuter Ave.)

tion, visit www.elmendorfoso.com, or visit a guidance counselor.

Model railroading
 The Military Society of Model Railroad Engineers meets at 7 p.m. Tuesdays and 1 p.m. Saturdays in basement Room 35 of Matanuska Hall, 7153 Fighter Drive. Anyone interested in model railroading is invited. For information, call 552-5234, visit www.trainweb.org/msmrrre or email bjorgan@alaska.net.

673 FSS Customer Appreciation Activities

ALL WEEK (During Open Hours)

- FAR NORTH ARTS & CRAFTS/AUTO HOBBY**
- Free First Hour Auto Hobby Center Stall Rental
- Free First Hour Wash Rack Stall Rental
- Free Ceramic Sitting Fee
- 10% off All Oil Changes Auto Hobby Service Department
- 10% off All Far North Frame Shop Custom Framing

JBER RICHARDSON OUTDOOR RECREATION CENTER

- 2 for 1 Rental at Dyea Ski Center for Snowboards, Downhill & Cross-Country Skis or Inner Tubes.
- Free 2 sets Cross-Country Skis or Snowshoes with Otter Lake Cabin Rental
- Free 50 minute Tubing Session with Purchase of One Regular Price Session
- \$25 OFF Hatcher Pass Snowshoe Trip when Signed Up and PAID During Customer Appreciation Week.

POLAR BOWL BOWLING CENTER

- Enter to win a Free Birthday Party for 6

POLAR EXPRESS ARTS & CRAFTS/AUTO HOBBY

- Free Safety Class (Call for Class Times)
- Free Introduction to Framing Class (Call for Class Times)
- Free Auto Hobby Facility Tour
- Free Choice of One Hour Bay Time and Instruction of Tire/Mount & Balancing or 30 Minute Intro to Welding with Hands on Experience

THE PARADISE CAFE AND FAIRWAYS

- Free Medium Size Drink and Chips with the Purchase of a Sandwich. February 20-23 • 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

FEBRUARY 21 - 23

- JBER RICHARDSON OUTDOOR RECREATION CENTER**
- Half off Snow Machine Training Class (reg. \$40)
- Receive \$40 Credit Towards Snow Machine Rental or Trip. Call 384-1475 for Times.

FEBRUARY 21

- JBER ELMENDORF FITNESS CENTER**
- Free Healthy Snacks • 11 a.m. Until Gone

FEBRUARY 22

- POLAR BOWL BOWLING CENTER**
- Free Bowling 4 - 9 p.m. Shoes Included

FEBRUARY 23

- INFORMATION, TICKETS & TRAVEL (ITT)****
- Free Bear & Raven Theater Tickets (95 tickets)
- Free Drawing for Luggage Set
- JBER ELMENDORF FITNESS CENTER • 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.**
- Free Mini Health Fair, Bone Marrow Registry, Eye Clinic, Nutrition, Safety & More

FEBRUARY 17

- HILLBERG SKI AREA***
- Free Noon - 2 p.m. Tubing Session for First 100 Customers
- 50% off 6 - 8 p.m. Tubing Session

INFORMATION, TICKETS & TRAVEL (ITT)**

- Free Alaska Aces Tickets Give Away (125 Tickets)

JBER ELMENDORF OUTDOOR RECREATION CENTER***

- Rent One Pair of Cross-Country Skis Get One FREE

FEBRUARY 18

- FAR NORTH ARTS & CRAFTS CENTER**
- Free Kids Pick & Paint All Day

WARRIOR ZONE OPEN HOUSE • Noon - 6 p.m.

- Free Pool, Darts, Foosball & Table Tennis
- Tournaments with 6 or More Players, \$25 Gift Cards Awarded to Winner
- New 1080P Projector Available for Electronic Gaming
- Free CD/DVD Cleaning for Games Participants

FEBRUARY 19

- ARCTIC OASIS OPEN HOUSE • Noon - 6 p.m.**
- Free Foosball, Pool, Table Tennis & 24 ft Rock Climbing Wall all Day
- Free 18-Hole Mini Golf for First 100 Customers

JBER ELMENDORF OUTDOOR RECREATION CENTER***

- Rent One Pair of Cross-Country Skis Get One Free



* Hillberg Ski Area Limit 1 Per Person. Must be Present to Receive Ticket. First Come First Served.
 ** ITT: Limit 4 Per Household. ITT not Responsible for Lost/Stolen Tickets. Must be Present to Receive Tickets. First Come First Served.
 *** JBER Elmendorf Outdoor Recreation Center: Cross-Country Ski Rentals Must be Returned by February 19.

GOVERNMENT LIQUIDATION

NOW SELLING JBER NON-APPROPRIATED FUND PROPERTY ONLINE.
 GOOD USED RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT SUCH AS LODGING FURNITURE,
 BOATS, GOLF CARTS, AND MORE:

GOVLIQUIDATION.COM

773rd CES RISES ABOVE



Corey Ballew, 773rd Civil Engineer Squadron, drives for a basket in the championship game Monday night at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Fitness Center. Ballew and his CES teammates defeated the 3rd Maintenance Squadron team, 66-59. **BELOW:** Kenneth Brandon drives against the 3rd MXS defense in the third place game Monday night at the JBER-E Fitness Center. (U.S. Air Force photos/John Pennell)



Engineers beat out maintenance in championship

By John Pennell
JBER Public Affairs

Engineer Airmen from the 773rd Civil Engineer Squadron forged an early lead, and then held on to outlast the 3rd Maintenance Squadron, 66-59, in the championship game of JBER-Elmendorf's intramural basketball championship Monday night at the Fitness center.

Corey Ballew controlled the opening tipoff for CES, and the team quickly built a 7-point lead at 10-3 before the maintainers caught their breath and started their first run to get back in the game.

Hampton Miller's 3-pointer tied the game at 10 with 14:27 left in the half and the teams began

exchanging baskets, with neither able to build a sizeable lead.

CES went into halftime with a five-point edge at 30-25, but MXS stormed back with Miller connecting for eight points in rapid fashion to take the lead at 33-30. Once again the teams began a process of pushing ahead, then falling back, with CES earning their points in the paint and MXS hitting jump shots from outside.

CES's Brian Hughes driving basket with 5:06 to play turned into a 3-point play when he hit an accompanying free throw to push his team ahead, 56-51. Darren Nichols responded with a basket for MXS, but Hughes came right back with a 3-point shot from outside the arc to expand the CES lead to 59-53.

Nichols rallied his team again, hitting a basket and a 3-point shot to pull MXS within 2 points with 1:29 to play, but the maintainers would get no closer.

Arnold Cochran's dunk with 45 seconds to play expanded the CES edge to 63-59 and when Miller and Nichols both were hit with technical fouls and ejected from the game with 6.3 seconds to play, Hughes hit on three of four free throws to give CES the final 66-59 win and the championship.

Hughes' 22-point effort for CES led all scorers. Cochran, with 14, Ballew with 10 and Tyler Ford with 10 all also cracked double-figures for CES.

Miller's 20 points led MXS scoring, with Nichols contributing 13 points – all in the second half.



ABOVE: Hampton Miller, 3rd MXS, puts up a shot against 773rd CES defender Corey Ballew in the championship game Monday night at the JBER-E Fitness Center. Miller and his MXS teammates fought hard, but lost to the CES team, 66-59. **RIGHT:** Arnold Cochran, 773rd CES, weaves his way through the 3rd Maintenance Squadron defense in the championship game Monday night at the JBER-E Fitness Center. (U.S. Air Force photo/John Pennell)

Births

JAN. 24

A son, Henry Allen Lines, was born 21 inches long and weighing 8 pounds at 8:05 a.m. to Taryn Ann Lines and Airman 1st Class Christopher Thomas Lines of the 381st Intelligence Squadron.

A daughter, Adrianna Jaelynn Olson, was born 20.25 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 5 ounces at 7:05 p.m. to Natasha Marie Olson and Senior Airman Ryan Jacob Olson of the 773rd Civil Engineer Squadron.

A daughter, Alice Evelyn Redfern, was born 19 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 14 ounces at 10:05 p.m. to Elizabeth Kate Redfern and Army Staff Sgt. Robert Henry Redfern of the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment.

JAN. 26

A son, Hikam Daniel Woodruff, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 9 pounds, 4 ounces at 7:59 a.m. to Misti Jane Woodruff and Air Force Staff Sgt. Joseph Vernon Woodruff of the 673d Air Base Wing Judge Advocate Office.

A son, Joshua Thomas Lawson Jr. was born 21.75 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 12 ounces at

11:46 p.m. to Amanda Lawson and Pvt. Joshua Lawson of the 95th Chemical Company.

JAN. 27

A daughter, Lanessa Ann Mays, was born 21.75 inches long and weighing 9 pounds at 5 a.m. to Vanessa Ann Mays and Spc. Basil Lajohn Mays of the 4th Quartermaster Detachment.

A son, Jose Ramon Saucedo Jr., was born 21.75 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 5 ounces at 5:58 a.m. to Airman 1st Class Jessica Ann Saucedo of the 673d Logistics Readiness Squadron and Jose Ramon Saucedo.

JAN. 28

A son, Coy Carter Dragoo-Watkins, was born 19.75 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 11 ounces at 12:29 p.m. to Britany Renae Watkins and Senior Airman Blane Carter Watkins of the 703rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

A daughter, Zaida Makenzi Hill, was born 21 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 6 ounces at 2:57 p.m. to Madison Daine Hill and Pfc. Zeraan Jonathan Wesley Hill of Company C, 307th Expeditionary Signal Battalion.

JAN. 29

A son, Volaun Makarri Williams, was born 19 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 2 ounces at 2:21 a.m. to Senior Airman Faustina Phuong Williams of the 3rd Mission Operations Group and Senior Airman Damouris Volaun Williams of the 3rd Aircraft Maintenance Group.

JAN. 30

A son, Jay'lin Tay'zon Clausell, was born weighing 7 pounds 4 ounces at 7:32 a.m. to Spc. Frances Tiffany Clausell of the 725th Brigade Support Battalion.

JAN. 31

A daughter, Claire Elizabeth Postula, was born 20.75 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 12 ounces at 2:16 a.m. to Deidre Leigh Postula and Air Force Staff Sgt. Andrew Gabriel Postula of the 3rd Munitions Squadron.

FEB. 1

A son, Bryce Wayne Dismuke, was born 19 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 8 ounces at 2:32 a.m. to Sydney Elise-lola Dismuke and Airman 1st Class Dermonte Wayne Dismuke of the 673d Civil Engineer Squadron.

FEB. 3

A son, Ryker Lynn Elordi, was born 21.3 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 10 ounces at 11:38 p.m. to Carrie Marie Elordi and Senior Airman Joshua Chad Elordi of the 3rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

A daughter, Sophia Genevieve Meade, was born 19.5 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces at 1:29 p.m. to Sarah Marie Meade and Sgt. Mathew Wayne Meade of the 95th Chemical Company.

FEB. 4

A son, Isaac Ruxas Quimby, was born 19.75 inches long and weighing 6 pounds, 3 ounces at 2:04 p.m. to Airman 1st Class Breana Lee Quimby of the 773rd Civil Engineer Squadron and Jacob Andrew Quimby.

FEB. 5

A daughter, Emma Mae Crosby, was born 20.5 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 3 ounces at 2:28 p.m. to LeAnne Marie Crosby and Airman 1st Class Shane Robert Crosby of the 773rd Civil Engineer Squadron.

FEB. 7

A son, Simon Henry Dalglish, was born 21.5 inches long and

weighing 9 pounds, 11 ounces at 7:43 a.m. to Jennifer Leigh Dalglish and Air Force Capt. Adam Heath Dalglish of the 673d Medical Support Group.

A daughter, Arianna Kelera Green, was born 19 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 2 ounces at 2:44 a.m. to Spc. Katherine Ellen Green and Sgt. Tom Green, both of the 425th Brigade Special Troops Battalion.

A daughter, Liliana Eileen Villa, was born 20 inches long and weighing 7 pounds, 11 ounces at 11:19 p.m. to Michelle Villa and Senior Airman Ruben Villa of the 3rd Maintenance Group.

FEB. 8

A son, Charles Joseph Doherty, was born 22 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 15 ounces at 1:18 a.m. to Danielle Lee Doherty and Airman 1st Class Ryan Joseph Doherty of the 673d Security Forces Squadron.

FEB. 9

A daughter, Emmalin Ann Carter, was born 21.5 inches long and weighing 8 pounds, 7 ounces at 5:09 a.m. to Katie Carter and Airman 1st Class Kyle Carter of the 673d Security Forces Squadron.

New DoD campaign targets troop, family health improvements

By Elaine Sanchez
American Forces Press Service

The Defense Department has launched a “groundbreaking” obesity and nutrition awareness campaign aimed at improving the health and well-being of troops, retirees and families across the services.

Dr. Jonathan Woodson, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs and TRICARE Management Activity director, joined First Lady Michelle Obama at Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., to unveil the campaign, which involves improving nutrition standards militarywide.

“The Department of Defense is making a groundbreaking commitment to the health of our troops and their families,” the first lady said in a news release today. “And in doing so, they’re not just sending a powerful message throughout the military community, they’re sending a message to our entire country.”

The campaign, developed by the Military Health System, will rally all services to encourage people to make better nutritional choices and to take an active role in health, Woodson said.

“America has a growing problem,” he

said, noting the pun is intended. “We have an issue of increasing obesity within the civilian population, (and) a history of poor nutritional choices, both in the civilian and military populations, that’s affecting readiness.”

Nearly 30 percent of potential military candidates ages 17 to 24 can’t qualify for the military because they’re overweight, Woodson noted, and the military discharges about 1,200 entry-level candidates annually for inability to meet fitness and weight standards.

“This is really a national security issue if we’ve got a population of youth that could serve in the military, but can’t serve because of weight standards,” he said.

The Military Health System’s campaign will call on the services and the Pentagon’s office of military community and family policy to help with updating menu standards at military dining facilities, assessing the nutritional environment of military facilities, and ensuring healthier foods are available in dining facilities, DoD schools and other places where troops, retirees and their families purchase food on bases, such as vending machines and snack bars.

As the campaign unfolds, high-starch and sugary treats will have to step aside as an abundance of fresh fruits, vegetables and

lean proteins move onto installations.

“Our intent is to look at opportunities to improve what’s on the menu, and therefore, the choices,” Woodson said.

The DoD hasn’t updated its nutritional menu standards in nearly 20 years, he noted. “It’s time to take a comprehensive look,” he said. “We know so much more about good nutrition and how to prevent disease.”

Military children will be an important focus of this campaign, Woodson said, noting the importance of developing healthy habits at an early age.

It’s about making good choices, he said. A vending machine filled with soft drinks and sweets is an attractive draw for children.

But if that vending machine now contains apples, bananas and other healthy items, he added, children will make different choices.

“It’s about facilitating good decisions and creating environments in which they’ll succeed,” he explained.

Today’s children are tomorrow’s service members and leaders, Woodson said. “What we do, how we teach them, the environments we put them in, will predict how successful they will be later in life,” he added.

The campaign also will focus efforts on military retirees, who will receive enhanced

obesity-related counseling and nutritional information, Woodson explained.

The Defense Department spends about \$1.4 billion a year on health-related problems related to obesity, he noted, including diabetes, heart disease and osteoarthritis.

“Obesity is a preventable problem which, if combated, can help prevent disease and ease the burden on our overall Military Health System,” Woodson said in the release.

This new, comprehensive initiative is not just about health care providers, but also is about partnerships, Woodson noted – individuals, installation commanders, military and civilian communities, family programs, schools and parents working together to build healthier populations.

“There’s a role everyone can play,” he said. “It’s about catalyzing the movement and synergizing the efforts and the leadership to focus on health.”

“When our service members make healthy eating a priority in their lives, the rest of us are more likely to make it a priority in our lives,” the first lady said.

“Simply put,” she added, “this is America’s entire military once again stepping forward to lead by example.”

