



Spartans

Gardez snowball fight

Spartan and Paktya PRT Soldiers blow off steam when the snow flies
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Community

School beats

Soldiers of the 9th Army Band bring music appreciation to Anchorage area schools
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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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U.S. Air Force photo/Maj. Joseph Coslett



U.S. Air Force photo/Luke Waack

673d Air Base Wing earns Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett
JBER Public Affairs

During the course of activating the wing and consolidating Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson into Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, various units of 673d Air Base Wing earned high honors.

Most recently, the 673d ABW was selected as a recipient of the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for exceptionally meritorious service during the period of Oct. 1, 2010 to Sept. 30, 2011.

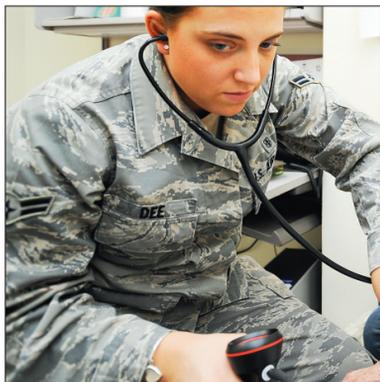
During this period, the 673d ABW and JBER achieved full operational capability as one of 12 joint bases in the Department of Defense. The wing executed more than 3,000 action items realigning Air Force and Army installation support functions, and transferring more than 1,100 Department of the Army civilian employees into the Department of the Air Force.

Additionally, the wing facilitated the move of the 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard, and 1,400 Guard Airmen at JBER. This successfully completed congressionally mandated Base Realignment and Closure Commission directives.

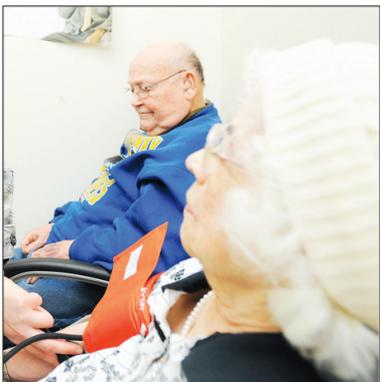
The wing also participated in joint recovery operations for two fatal aircraft mishaps, including operations in extreme arctic conditions, and deployed 60 Airmen and more than 13 tons of equipment to Japan in support of Operation Tomodachi – Japanese for “friendship” – following a devastating earthquake

See AFOUA, Page A-3

TRUST AND TEAMWORK



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Matt Coleman-Foster



U.S. Air Force photo/Steve White

Alaska Army National Guard deploys combat medics to Afghanistan

By Army Staff Sgt. Karima Turner
134th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMPATTERBURY, Ind. — Six Alaska Army National Guard combat medics are deploying with B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment to provide care to Soldiers conducting security forces missions in Afghanistan.

With one combat medic for every 20 Soldiers, it's crucial the medics are safe while out on missions so if something happens, they can quickly render aid to the wounded. The medics are split between three platoons.

Each combat medic team, which is composed of a senior and junior medic, has been trained on all the tactics, techniques and procedures an infantryman is required to know.

“As an infantry combat medic, you're first and foremost an infantry guy,” said Cpl. Jacob LaMonaco, B Company combat medic, of Anchorage. “You're a trigger puller, and when one of your guys goes down, that's when you become a medic. You generally hang out in the back behind security where you can be kept safe because you're a vital asset to the mission.”

In preparation for this mission, the combat medics devised unique training methods to hone their medical skills.

“As medics we're always looking for ways to further our own training, to get better at what we do,” LaMonaco said. “But you can only go so far. You can only do the same actions and the same assessments so many times and after a while, it helps to throw a curve ball into it.”

The curveball LaMonaco is referring to is an innovative sensory deprivation training the medics have implemented in order to force themselves to focus on the task at hand, caring for a patient.

“We will blindfold ourselves, turn on an iPod, have someone lie down and conduct a patient assessment on them,” said Spc. Kenneth Sparks, B Company combat medic, of Anchorage. “It forces us to strictly focus



Cpl. Jacob LaMonaco, from Anchorage, a combat medic of B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, undergoes combat medical training to hone his skills Feb. 15 at Camp Atterbury, Ind. Using sensory deprivation, LaMonaco renders aid to Pfc. Douglas Garn, of North Pole, who is simulating a casualty. LaMonaco successfully evaluated, rendered aid and called in a nine-line report to request a medical evacuation. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Karima Turner)

on what's at hand, whether it's a gunshot wound, the patient's respiration or even something as simple as a patient needing to communicate with us. Through this training we are able to learn to ignore distractions and only focus on the patient.”

Another type of training the combat medics of B Company have initiated is what they

call blind sticks – blindfolding themselves and using touch only to successfully place intravenous lines – to enable them to practice difficult situations that they may encounter.

“You have to do everything that you normally do, but now you can't see and you can't hear,” LaMonaco said. “It makes the job of doing it in real life that much easier.”

Sparks said all of the combat medics are enthusiastic about the mission and the opportunity to use their skills to help Soldiers if needed.

“We're all very excited about this deployment,” he said. “We all know how each other works, and if something happens, we'll band together to accomplish the mission.”

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We're ready

Airmen, Soldiers, civilians and contractors at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson extend a warm welcome to members of Pacific Air Forces Inspector General.

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Innovation an integral part of military culture

Commentary by Lt. Col. Marty Easter
Air Force News Service

As a long-time member of the Air Force space community, I'm a little wary of any traditions that carry a strong aviation flavor. But after a few years away from Air Force Space Command bases, there is one pilot tradition I've seen that continues to amuse me... Mustache March.

I suspect some of you have never heard of Mustache March, but possibly many of you reading this are already familiar with the tradition. It is also possible that a few of you are already on your way to an impressive mustache of your own. Whatever group you may fall into, Mustache March has some lessons for us all.

As the youngest of the nation's military services, the Air Force inherited many of its customs, courtesies and traditions from the Army. However, Mustache March is uniquely an Air Force creation.

The concept is to grow a mustache during the month of March. With enough people, it can even become a competition. Most attribute the origins of the tradition to Robin Olds who retired as a brigadier general from the Air Force.

Olds entered the Army Air Corps late in WWII, scoring his first kill in August 1944. By the end of the war, at the age of 22, Olds had a total of 13 aerial victories, had been promoted to major and was a squadron commander.

But what Olds is best known for is his time as a wing commander in Vietnam. It was during this time that he grew the waxed handlebar mustache which spawned today's Mustache March.

At the time Airmen were not allowed to grow any type of mustache. Olds wore it as a way to express his individuality.

In the Air Force we do many things to be the same: we wear a uniform, receive similar training and share a common lingo of acronyms and expressions. We do these things because they build a team and without teamwork, our mission will suffer and fail, but who we are as individuals should also



Air Force Col. Robin Olds, commander of the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing, preflights his F-4C Phantom fighter somewhere in Southeast Asia. Olds shot down four enemy MiG aircraft in aerial combat over North Vietnam and devised an innovative way to lure enemy MiG-21 Fishbed fighters into a straight dogfight. (U.S. Air Force file photo)

strengthen the team. Not every member of a band plays the same notes or the same instruments but when you put them together the right way, the results are amazing.

The ability to foster independent thought within the framework of a team is the key to innovation. While Olds' mustache was an expression of his individuality, he used it to

strengthen his entire team. The element of personal flair combined with a strong mission focus and aggressive approach earned him historical recognition as the most effective wing commander of the Vietnam War.

Olds led "Operation Bolo," which effectively lured enemy MiGs into an ambush

by making them think they were attacking bombers, not F-4 Phantom fighters looking for an air-to-air fight.

Olds and his team found an innovative way to gain an advantage over the enemy while complying with the stringent rules of engagement. Our ability to innovate has always been an asset to the Air Force and nation, but as we move toward a smaller Air Force innovation becomes even more critical.

There is no wrong time to rethink how we approach problems. There is also no wrong scale. From strategic doctrine to better methods to counting nails in supply, innovation is a force multiplier. As individuals we owe it to the team to find better ways of doing business.

When you think of a new approach, share it with a peer, a supervisor or the Air Force's Innovative Development Through Employee Awareness Program, just don't let the opportunity to improve pass.

After his tour as wing commander, Olds reported in to then Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John McConnell. McConnell pointed at the mustache and directed, "Take it off." Olds simply replied "Yes, sir." and complied.

As military professionals, we balance the push for innovation and compliance with existing guidance. Even though Olds selectively violated the rules, I believe ignoring guidance we don't agree with is the wrong answer for today's Airmen. Instead I recommend we follow the example he set with "Operation Bolo." Comply with guidance, but seek new and even potentially unorthodox ways to complete the mission. We must also be willing to invest the time and effort needed to improve Air Force instructions, policies and checklists wherever we have the opportunity to work smarter.

Today, mustaches are allowed in the Air Force. So even if you haven't started growing your mustache yet, maybe today is the day you take a look in the mirror and ask yourself how you would look with some extra hair on your lip...or maybe it would be better just to bring a spirit of innovation to your work center.

Fiscal year 2013 Army re-enlistment window opens with restrictions

By Rob McIlvaine
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — With 10 years of war winding down, the focus is now, more than ever, on retention of quality Soldiers.

Beginning March 1, if a Soldier's estimated termination of service is between Oct. 1, 2012 and Sept. 30, 2013, he or she can re-enlist between now and Sept 30 of this year.

Accompanying this opportunity to continue in the Army, new policies allow brigade commanders to make a life-altering decision without sending a recommendation up to the commander of Human Resources Command.

"The Army instituted additional reasons for a mandatory bar to re-enlistment," added Jim Bragg, chief of the Retention and Reclassification Branch at Human Resources Command.

"We're just reminding commanders that they have tools out there to identify sub-standard Soldiers and have the responsibility to give them a road map for success to stay in the Army," Bragg said. "Commanders should deny retention to those who fail to demonstrate potential for continued service. The Army wants commanders to identify Soldiers who deserve the privilege of serving."

"For instance," Bragg said, "if a Soldier's (expiration of term of service) is 10 months from now and the commander says, 'You do not show potential for future service,' all leaders must ensure they outline a plan of action for that Soldier to overcome his/her shortcomings."

"Just as we trust the brigade commanders to take these Soldiers to war and execute, we can trust them to make the right decision for the Army," Bragg said.

On Feb. 2, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond T. Odierno and Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh signed a memo that specifically spells out these changes.

"Over the next few years, our Army will reduce its end strength and shape the force for future requirements. As we begin this



Paratroopers from the 725th Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) re-enlist during the unit's last deployment at Forward Operating Base Sharana in the Paktika Province. Army brigade commanders are being granted greater power to deny re-enlistments. (U.S. Army photo/Sp. Andrya Hill)

deliberate process, it is imperative we retain those Soldiers with the greatest potential for future service — ones truly deserving to remain a part of our Army team," the memorandum details. "To help us get to our desired end strength," the three Army leaders said, "we will fundamentally change the active-component retention program. This will provide our brigade-level commanders the flexibility and agility needed to retain those who best meet the needs of our Army.

"Tough decisions are ahead," they said. "Some fully qualified Soldiers will be denied re-enlistment. Commanders must carefully assess their Soldiers and ensure

only (the) best are retained to meet the needs of (the) Army."

"Brigade commanders," Bragg said, "have always been able to ensure they re-enlist quality by using their flagging actions by saying, for instance, 'OK, you're overweight, you can't re-enlist until you meet the weight standards,' adding that this is the first time in recent history where brigade commanders have had the authority to deny re-enlistment to Soldiers who are fully qualified to re-enlist.

"Now, if the Soldier meets all the quality standards that we say they have to — (such as) pass the PT test, retention control points, meet height-weight standards, and

all the other things a Soldier is supposed to do — if that commander still feels the Soldier is not deemed to have the potential to serve after completing a quality review of the 'Whole Soldier,' then they can deny retention," Bragg said.

Commanders have received specific implementation guidance from the Army G-1, addressing Soldiers in over-strength, balanced and shortage military occupational specialties.

In addition, guidance has instructed commanders to use the "Whole Soldier" concept when determining their best.

This determination includes attributes, competencies, leadership

potential, adherence to standards, duty performance, and evaluations that demonstrate ability to serve in any MOS.

Under this guidance, some Soldiers will be required to reclassify from over-strength career fields to under-strength, or balanced ones, to meet Army requirements.

It is imperative commanders and command sergeants majors ensure Soldiers receive performance counseling, officials said, as this will be one of the key tools of determining retention.

In this directive, specific retention policy changes are:

1. Brigade/O-6 level commanders and above have the authority to deny re-enlistment to those Soldiers not deemed best qualified. (Previously only the HRC commander had this authority)

2. Increased retention standards for staff sergeant and above who have not executed an indefinite re-enlistment contract. Soldiers with the following are not eligible to re-enlist without an exception to policy from HRC:

- Relief-for-cause NCO Evaluation Report
- "No" listed in Part IV of an NCOER
- Senior rating of "4" or "5" in Part V of NCOER
- Department of the Army Form 1059 indicating failure of Non-Commissioned Officer Education System

3. Addition of mandatory reasons to initiate a bar to re-enlistment:

- Loss of Primary Military Occupational Specialties qualifications due to fault of the Soldier
- Denied Command List Integration for promotion by unit commander
- Drug/Alcohol incident within current enlistment
- Two or more field-grade Article 15s during current enlistment
- Absent without leave more than 96 hours during current enlistment

For more information on Army retention policies and procedures, Soldiers should contact their unit career counselor for policy and processing guidance.

**Alaskan Command/
11th Air Force
Commanding General**
Lt. Gen. Stephen Hoog (USAF)

**U.S. Army Alaska
Commanding General**
Maj. Gen. Raymond P. Palumbo (USA)

**Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/
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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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Task Force Spartan paratroopers wage epic snow fight at Gardez

By Spc. Ken Scar
Army News Service

PAKTYA PROVINCE, Afghanistan — Cold rounds of solidified H2O were flying within the walls of Forward Operating Base Gardez, Feb. 20.

Paratroopers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Spartan, planned and executed a complex winter snowball ambush on members of the Paktya Provincial Reconstruction Team as they were exiting their working quarters at lunch time.

Escalation of force was immediately implemented, with quick reaction teams joining the fight from what seemed to be every nook and cranny of the FOB.

At the height of the conflict, more than 50 Soldiers were receiving or returning fire. Multiple fighting positions were established and then quickly overrun.

There were many moments during the battle between Task Force Gold Geronimo and Paktya PRT Soldiers, when it was difficult, if not impossible, to determine friendly forces from foe, and in fact eyewitnesses claimed to have seen multiple incidents of turncoat activity.

The fighting raged for more than 45 minutes before the majority of warriors on both sides of the battlefield retreated to the dining facility to carbo-load and hydrate.

As is so often the case in today's modern warfield, victory was claimed by both sides.

No casualties were reported, and all snow balls were expended.



ABOVE: Air Force Capt. Tyler Johnson, from San Antonio, who is a lead engineer for the Paktya Provincial Reconstruction Team, Task Force Spartan, flings a snowball during an snowball fight with paratroopers of the 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment (Airborne), on Forward Operating Base Gardez, Feb. 20.

TOP: Army first lieutenants Mathew Mraz, from Pocatello, Idaho, and Omar Williams, from Yonkers, N.Y., who are with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3-509th Inf., bring fresh ammunition to the fight. (U.S. Army photos/Spc. Ken Scar)

AFOUA

From Page A-1

and tsunami.

Honored with various awards throughout this period, the wing received an "outstanding" rating during the Combat Air Forces Logistics Compliance Assessment Program inspection.

The wing also successfully deployed an Army Airborne Brigade Combat Team and more than 3,000 paratroopers, 660 combat vehicles and two million pounds of combat support equipment.

"We are truly honored and humbled by this award which validates the hard work, dedication and commitment of the thousands of Airmen, Soldiers, civilians and contractors in the 673d Air Base Wing who build JBER, alongside our mission partners," said Col. Robert Evans, JBER and 673d ABW commander. "We've come a long way since our activation, building a foundation of trust and teamwork in the process."

Airmen assigned to the wing during this award period are authorized to wear the AFOUA ribbon or add one additional cluster to their ribbon.

The wing also earned the highest rating on a North American Aerospace Defense Command Region Alert Force Evaluation. The Logistics Readiness Group earned an "outstanding" on the Logistics Compliance Assessment Program. The 673d Civil Engineer Squadron won for the Best Fire Department in the Air Force for 2010 and 2011 with an average of 1,800 responses annually.

Among the more recent awards include an "outstanding" from the Health Services Inspection by the Air Force Inspector General. The IG's office acts as an ombudsman for investigating allegations of favoritism, sexual harassment and reprisal. The office also inspects units for compliance and efficiency.

The 673d Medical Group earned a score of 95 out of 100 during the inspection, the highest score for a hospital in five years at the time.

"It's due to the enthusiasm of the staff to deliver excellent patient care," said Air Force Col. Thomas Harrell, 673d Medical Group commander and a native of Land O'

Lakes, Fla. "It's very satisfying to have the score reflect the level of effort that I know our staff puts into delivering health care; it's a reflection of the value we place on people."

Additional recent honors went to the 673d Civil Engineer Squadron, earning the Commander-in-Chief's Annual Award for Installation Excellence in 2010. They won the 673d Air Base Wing, Special Act/Service Award – F22 Crash Restoration in 2011.

More recently, they won the Air Force Gen. Thomas D. White Environmental Restoration Individual/Team Award and runner-up for the Pacific Air Forces Gen. Thomas D. White Environmental Restoration Installation Award.

"The team worked really hard, and it was important to understand what the mission was and how we're an integral part of the bigger wing mission," said Gary Fink, chief of the restoration section. "A lot of times Environmental is thought of as throwing up road blocks and that's not how we approach things. We look for solutions."

The Environmental Restoration Award rewards excellence for the development, management and transferability of environmental programs that increase environmental quality, enhance the mission, and help make the military sustainable.

The award honors individuals, teams and installations for their outstanding achievements to conserve and sustain the natural and cultural resources entrusted to the Department of Defense.

"I'm most proud with the merger of the prior Army restoration into the Air Force restoration program," Air Force Col. Russell Hula, 673d Civil Engineer Group commander and native of Fremont, Neb. "We've got a lot of great teams at this joint base now, but I've always felt that our environmental program, particularly our restoration program, was one of the major points."

"This recognition is far more than an Air Force award, it recognizes a joint team fully committed to our collective mission and all those we support and enable," Evans continued. "I am proud to serve with this incredible team. They truly are arctic tough, mission ready and family strong."



ABOVE: The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award was recently awarded to the 673d Air Base Wing. A batch update will be done by the Military Personnel Flight. (Courtesy graphic)

LEFT: Air Force Staff Sgt. Clarence Kelley and Senior Airman Kianay Vaughn demonstrate one use of the trauma room in the hospital Dec. 8, 2011. The emergency room has many capabilities to serve patients from scraped knees to trauma stabilization. The 673d Medical Group scored 95 out of 100 points during a recent Health Services Inspection. Kelley, of Chattanooga, Tenn., is a paramedic and Vaughn, from Alliance, Neb., is a medical technician, both with the 673d Medical Operations Squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Cynthia Spalding)

TOP: A member of the 773rd Logistics Readiness Squadron watches as Soldiers of the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division load a Boeing 737 as they prepare to leave for a deployment to Afghanistan Nov. 28, 2011. During the period of Nov. 28 through mid-December, the 773rd LRS helped deploy more than 3,500 Soldiers as part of their mission to support U.S. Army Alaska units stationed at JBER. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Christopher Gross)

Briefs and Announcements

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.

Giant Voice testing

Giant Voice mass notification system testing occurs every Wednesday at noon.

If the announcement is difficult to hear or understand, please call 552-3000.

If the announcement is difficult to hear or understand in any base housing area, please contact JBER at [Facebook.com/JBERAK](https://www.facebook.com/JBERAK).

STAP termination

Due to Air Force reductions in funding and manpower, the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Education Center will no longer provide administrative support of the Air Force Aid Society's Spouse Tuition Assistance Program for JBER spouses after July.

In response, the Air Force Aid Society has looked at possible solutions to keep STAP operational. However, the software development costs and the time necessary to develop and implement a solution for the following academic

year were not feasible.

Therefore, in an effort to maintain some support of spouses for the 2012-2013 academic year, the society has decided to discontinue STAP at the conclusion of the program year, which ends July 31, and to immediately expand eligibility requirements of the Gen. Henry H. Arnold Education Grant Program to include spouses at overseas locations.

The Arnold Grant Program is limited to full-time undergraduates only, though awards are generally higher than STAP.

Deadline for application to the Arnold Grant Program is March 31 for academic year 2012-2013. To access the application, visit <http://tiny.cc/agjhf>.

Call the Education Center at 384-0970 for more information.

Bargain Shop

The Bargain Shop will be open Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is located at 8515 Saville Ave.

Stop by to shop, volunteer or drop off donations.

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.

Otter Lake fishing

The sport fishery on Otter Lake has been liberalized to allow harvest of 10 rainbow trout per day, 10 in possession, effective until Oct. 1.

There continues to be no bag, possession or size limits for northern pike.

Additionally, the legal gear for ice fishing on Otter Lake is increased to five lines with up to two hooks per line as long as both hooks are attached to the same single piece of bait.

For more information call 267-2153.

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.

Quartermaster Laundry

The Quartermaster Laundry, located at 726 Quartermaster Road, cleans TA-50 gear for free and is open Monday to Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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.

Coast Guard commandant details Arctic security issues

By Karen Parrish
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — At a recent conference, a Defense Department participant said the Arctic doesn't represent a security threat for at least the next decade, Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Robert Papp Jr. said last week.

"The Coast Guard has ... a much wider aperture," he added.

Papp told the Pentagon Channel and American Forces Press Service the Arctic has economic, energy and environmental implications for national security.

Coast Guard missions there are increasing because Shell Oil Co. has permits to drill in Alaska's Chukchi and Beaufort seas beginning this summer, he said.

Shell will move 33 ships and 500 people to Alaska's North Slope, and will helicopter some 250 people a week to drilling platforms, the admiral said. That activity has the potential to increase Coast Guard workloads in pollution and environmental response, as well as in search and rescue, he noted.

The Coast Guard will have to station responders in the North Slope, which it hasn't done throughout its 150-year presence in Alaska, Papp said. Since 1867, he added, Coast Guard cutters have been based in southern Alaska to protect fisheries and marine mammals, give medical assistance to native populations and rescue whalers.

The North Slope is new territory for the Coast Guard, with most of the service's Alaska infrastructure some 800 miles away.

"We'll take one of our brand-new national security cutters ... as the Shell fleet proceeds up there to start their activities," the admiral said.

That cutter will serve as a movable operations center, with worldwide communications, a two-helicopter flight deck and three boats that can launch boarding teams, Papp said.

"For the last four years, we've actually been deploying forces up there on a temporary basis to experiment with our equipment (and) see what works up there," the commandant said. "We will learn lessons ... as drilling starts up there, but right now, I'm pretty confident we'll be able to cover it."

Climate trends also indicate new missions for the Coast Guard, as former "hard



The Coast Guard Cutter Healy breaks ice for the Russian tanker Renda near Nome Jan. 13. Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Robert Papp Jr. said Coast Guard missions will increase north of the Arctic Circle after Shell Oil Co. secured permits drill in Alaska's Chukchi and Beaufort seas. The Renda delivered fuel oil to Nome after barges couldn't make the trip due to foul weather, underscoring the challenges of operating in the Arctic environment. (U.S. Coast Guard photo/Petty Officer 2nd Class Charly Hengen)

water" ice zones become "soft water" operation areas. The admiral said during one of his early assignments near the Bering Sea, some 36 years ago, a particular location was completely iced in. Two years ago, on a visit to the same place, he said, "there was no ice to be seen."

In Alaska, fish stock and human activity is moving north as ice recedes, Papp said. But the extreme cold still poses equipment and other challenges for Coast Guard operations, as the Coast Guard's North Slope experiments proved.

Papp identified two challenges Arctic

operations pose: the environment and the infrastructure. With no deep-water ports, inlets for piers or asphalt ramps for boat trailers, "we had to come up with different operating procedures," he said. And then there's the fact aviation fuel turns to jelly in extreme cold.

"You don't want that to happen when you're flying at 500 feet," the commandant noted. "We never had heaters for our fuel tanks, because we didn't need to. So these are little lessons that we learned ... that will help us to improve our operations."

Turning to infrastructure, Papp said the

Coast Guard has good command-and-control capabilities linking mariners and shore-based stations throughout U.S. coastal areas. The North Slope is an exception, and when it comes to piers for ships, barracks for service members and hangars for aircraft, Papp added, "there's none of that infrastructure up there."

Ships can provide a bridging strategy for North Slope operations, but long-term operations will require investing in shore-based facilities, Papp said.

"I'm going to identify the needs, and I'm going to talk about them," he added.

DoD works to ease troop transition to credentialed jobs

By Elaine Sanchez
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department is working to break down credentialing barriers for service members and veterans preparing to enter the civilian workforce, a DOD official said last week.

“The goal ... is to help our veterans, and especially our transitioning veterans ... get employed,” Ed Kringer, director of state liaison and educational opportunity for the Pentagon’s office of military community and policy, told an audience gathered for the National Credentialing Summit at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce here.

Speaking on a panel, Kringer described the interagency effort under way to ensure credentialing agencies recognize service members’ extensive training, education and experience.

Many occupations require state licensure, he noted, which affects both service members and their spouses. However, many troops run up against challenges with this, he added, as licensing and credentialing requirements vary from state to state and many credentialing boards are unaware of how military training and education equate to civilian training.

“What we want is for states to make it simpler, and they can do that through regulations and through passing legislation ... to make it simpler for service members to take education, training and experience and make it applicable for a license,” Kringer said.

Officials are asking state licensure boards to accept military training and experience if they meet the state’s requirements, he said. He lauded Washington state for what he called its simple, but effective legislation. The state has directed boards to waive training if a military member already has training that’s comparable to the state’s requirement.

“That’s what we want – that transferability of training and experience toward requirements for a state license,” Kringer said.

In some cases, the military helps its troops obtain credentials while still serving, he noted. Some military health care professionals, for example, obtain licenses while in service so they can work part time.

But that license may not apply once the military member separates from service and moves to another state.

“We want that state to have an expedited enforcement policy so that member’s current, valid license is more easily transferred,” Kringer said.

Others come into the military with a license, then separate from service and stay in the same state where they obtained their license, but may no longer meet requirements. A solution would be for states to give



Airman 1st Class Derek Johnson, 3rd Maintenance Squadron, grinds down a weld on a piece of air-ground equipment. The Department of Defense is working to streamline credentialing of skilled troops who are entering the civilian labor force. (Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Jack Sanders)

these service members an opportunity to continue working with a temporary license while they complete the additional requirements, he said.

Kringer acknowledged states’ concerns about the impact of swifter and easier credentialing.

“They ask, ‘Are you telling us to lower our standards (or) take unqualified people into our profession?’ The answer is a profound no. We don’t want unqualified people out there, but we don’t want service members to have to repeat what they have,” he said.

Kringer said he’s aware that service members’ training and experience may not always equate to civilian requirements, but even some percentage is better than none. Troops may meet only 50 percent of the requirements, he noted, but then “we’ll show them and help them get the other 50 percent. We don’t want any military member to have to start at ground zero.”

Officials started working with the states on these issues and possible solutions last year, Kringer said.

“Last year, we had six states that either adopted all or significant parts of the legislation,” he said. “This year, we have sponsors identified and in some cases legislation already dropped in 23 states. This is something that is actively moving.”

Along with their state efforts, officials also are working with national credentialing agencies, noted fellow panelist Marion Cain, DoD’s associate director for training readiness and strategy. “About 60 percent of employers don’t understand what military

training and education experience (means), how that really relates to their job,” he said. The same is true with national credentialing agencies, he added.

Officials need to ascertain what these agencies are looking for, what information they need and how military training can be matched up with civilian training to facilitate credentialing, Cain explained.

As they ask states and agencies to do their part to help, military officials must step up as well, Kringer said. DoD needs to do a better job at making military training understandable to civilian credentialing agencies, he acknowledged. Most agencies are accustomed to assessing training, he explained, but aren’t well equipped to assess military training.

“The language isn’t the same,” he noted. “We’ve been tasked to do that better. If we’re going to ask them to do something, we need to step up to the plate.”

Military transcripts, for example, need to contain standardized information to ensure they’re meaningful to credentialing agencies, Kringer explained. Toward this end, officials are gathering transcripts to compare what’s in them already and what needs to change.

Three states – Maryland, Washington and Illinois – have agreed to evaluate these transcripts and see how DOD can make them more meaningful to a credentialing agency, he said. They’re also asking credentialing agencies and academic institutions to review these transcripts.

Once that assessment is complete, DoD will report its findings to the services to initi-

ate changes, Kringer said, noting this should be completed within the next month or so.

Kringer also cited the need for more Veterans Affairs Department-approved licensing and certification agencies. Veterans can be reimbursed through VA for the cost of taking approved licensing and credentialing tests. However, veterans often aren’t aware of which agencies are VA-approved, and they don’t have a central repository of agencies they can access. Compounding the issue, many agencies will wait until a military member asks to take the test before asking VA for approval.

“We want to provide veterans more options of agencies approved by the VA so veterans can use their VA benefits,” Kringer said.

Officials also are looking to expand the services’ apprenticeship programs, Cain noted. In these programs, service members in technical trades, such as machinists or lathe operators, are assigned a program of instruction involving class and task completion. Once requirements are fulfilled, the Labor Department issues the service member a certificate.

“This is a huge advantage when getting out and looking to get hired by one of the trade unions,” he said.

The Army and Air Force, however, don’t have apprenticeship programs, Cain noted. Officials are exploring the idea of expanding other services’ programs – which encompass 123 trades and about 58,000 service members – to the Army and Air Force.

“We’re working very closely with our partners at the Department of Labor to make this happen,” he said. “I think we’re going to make a lot of progress here.”

Officials also are in the process of assessing the services’ credentialing programs. Some programs have mapped military occupation codes and credentials to civilian jobs and credentials, Kringer said. But others aren’t as current, he acknowledged. The goal is to develop a common standard for all service members, and then determine what it will take to bring all of the services up to that standard, he explained, so service members “have access to the same kind and level and quality ... of information.”

Officials have identified the top 10 largest military occupations from each service, and have “cross-walked” these to 17 civilian occupations, he said. They’ll examine the training for each of these 40 occupations, comparing what’s required for credentials and for licenses, so they can determine any gaps.

Kringer said people should begin to see the positive results of these interagency efforts in the coming months. The goal is more than just about credentialing, he noted. “It’s about employment,” he said.



When it's time it's time

Adjusting to a culture of
constant changes
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It's the Rondy!

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COMMUNITY

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Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson

March 2, 2012



Soldiers bring beats to local schools

By Army Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead
U.S. Army Alaska Public Affairs

Members of U.S. Army Alaska's 9th Army Band shared their skills and talent with Anchorage-area children Feb. 21 through 24 as part of national Music In Our Schools Month.

Local schools hosted the Fort Wainwright-based band for a series of concerts and musical clinics.

The band performed for about 1,650 Anchorage-area students during the week.

The concerts were geared toward elementary students, to give them an opportunity to see and enjoy the professional musical style and training of the 9th Army Band, while the clinics and workshops gave high school and middle school students a chance to interact and share musical talent with the band.



Lori Doyle, a substitute teacher at Ursa Major Elementary School on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, plays the triangle as a surprise guest performer with members of the 9th Army Band during U.S. Army Alaska's observance of Music in Our Schools month. (U.S. Army photo/Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead)

"It's really fun to get in there with some of the kids," Spc. Daniel Loeschen, a trumpet player for the 9th Army Band said. "They all really seem to enjoy it and I have a blast doing it."

The concerts featured some patriotic musical selections and provided some comic relief when one of the teachers or faculty was selected to be a surprise musical guest during the show.

During the performance at Ursa Major Elementary School on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Lori Doyle, a substitute teacher, was selected and given a silver triangle to play.

"We provide our 'victim' with some warning," said Sgt. 1st Class Heather Harmon, a bassoon player with the 9th Army

Band. "They know they're being brought up and asked to do something beforehand, but they don't know what exactly until we present them with the triangle."

The guest performer is presented with their instrument and some sheet music and is instructed to follow along and play their few notes at the appropriate time in an exaggerated movement of hand gestures and comical rustling before the musical selection begins.

As is expected, the guest quickly falls short of his or her requirements and is instead prompted by Harmon via a hand signal when to strike and sound the triangle.

All of this is done to the delight of the young children who laugh and cheer as the scene progresses.

At the Ursa Major concert, the triangle presentation drew laughs from all ages when one of the children cried out, "That's a cowbell!"

In addition to instrumental performances, the Soldiers also displayed vocal talents.

Sgt. Crystal Downs, a flute player and vocalist took to the floor several times during the performances to sing selected jazz and ragtime selections for the students in addition to her talents with the flute.

"I really like singing for the kids," said Downs.

Earlier that same morning, members of the 9th Army Band hosted a workshop with students at East Anchorage High School, performing alongside the students as they practiced and shared rehearsal techniques.

Prepare early: new rules for pets traveling to the EU

By Chris McCann
JBER Public Affairs

New rules on bringing pets into the European Union can have a major impact on service members and families moving abroad, starting immediately.

The EU is tightening restrictions on the importation of animals, which means service members traveling abroad need to bear some things in mind.

Dogs, cats and ferrets are required to have a microchip which is ISO-standard 11784 or 11785.

If an animal's microchip is not in compliance, the person bringing the animal must provide an appropriate microchip reader, said Army Capt. Reid Katagihara, chief of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson veterinary service branch.

"The biggest thing is that the animal's rabies vaccine has to be up to date," Katagihara said.

Even if the pet is fully vaccinated, if the rabies vaccine was given before the microchip was implanted, it is not valid.

The vaccine is not counted as valid until 21 days after it is administered – meaning service or family members who are planning to make a permanent change-of-station move need to allow at least that much time before arriving in their new country.

Invalid documentation or microchipping can be cause for EU authorities to confiscate and euthanize the animal, Katagihara said.

"Contact your veterinarian immediately when you get PCS orders to another country," Katagihara emphasized. "Countries have different requirements, and you might need about eight months to prepare for a PCS to Japan."

Several kinds of microchips

Make travel with your pet easier this PCS:

- Visit your vet early
- Allow at least 21 days after vaccines
- Check microchips
- Get health certificates last
- Check with the JBER veterinary clinic
- Make sure pet carriers meet standards



are in use, Katagihara said, and many are not compliant with the EU standard.

Humane society and shelter chips are often not compliant – and a reader can be very expensive, usually more than \$100 and sometimes up to \$600.

Vaccination records are just some of the information stored on the chips, and while all pets on JBER-R are required to have a chip, that policy isn't yet standard on JBER-E, which Katagihara

said can complicate the issue.

For those going to Finland, Iceland, Malta and the United Kingdom, a health certificate is valid for up to five days – meaning it needs to be done almost last before leaving.

For the rest of Europe, certificates are valid for 10 days.

"There's definitely a lot of complications involved," Katagihara said. "It can ruin a lot of people's plans. But it's part of our job as Soldiers and Airmen – we

do get stationed overseas."

Numerous changes to EU policy have occurred recently; there are new bilingual health certificates which veterinarians must use.

Fortunately, many health certificates must be endorsed by a Department of Agriculture veterinarian, who is up-to-date on changes.

Any accredited veterinarian will have the proper certificates as well, so a visit to the JBER veterinary service is not required.

"Definitely, the doctors know

about the changes," Katagihara said.

However, if someone brings hard-copy PCS orders to the JBER clinic with their pet, the health exam fee is waived.

Vaccines and certificates still require a small fee.

For more information on the new USDA requirements, visit www.aphis.usda.gov/regulations/vs/iregs/animals/.

To contact the JBER veterinary clinic, call 384-2865.

Keep your words short and sweet – you may have to eat them

Commentary by Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) R. Scott Savell
673d ABW

An eighth-century Irish proverb says, “A person should not speak evil of, or harshly reproach another, nor should he put anyone to the blush. Never should he violently rebuke anyone or carry on a conversation with a boorish person, and his speech at all times should be noted for his lack of boastfulness.”

Words are the primary way we communicate to each other. Each time we open our mouths to speak to someone, whether to an individual or a group, we convey our thoughts, feelings, emotions, intentions and attitudes.

We do this not only by what we say but also in how we say it.

Words are a powerful force. It’s no wonder James, the half-brother of Jesus, wrote, “The tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire” (James 3:5).

I will be the first to admit my speech is not always gracious.

This would include speech in my head before it ever reaches my tongue. It is a constant struggle. As a Christian chaplain, I believe this struggle is part of the “good fight of faith” Paul wrote about in 1 Timothy 6:12.

Furthermore, I believe it is the primary reason the Bible repeatedly reminds us of

the importance of holding the tongue before speaking.

Psalm 39:1 reads, “I will guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue. I will guard my mouth as with a muzzle while the wicked are in my presence.”

I am often reminded of this ongoing struggle when life rubs me the wrong way. My first reaction is usually speech in my head – and sometimes on my tongue – that is neither gracious nor edifying.

Such a reaction, although natural, is probably not the best route to take.

So what is the best route to take? How should we respond when life throws curveballs our way?

The apostle Paul wrote, “Conduct your-

selves with wisdom. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person” (Colossians 4:5-6).

Elsewhere he wrote, “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear” (Ephesians 4:29).

That’s good advice for us all. Military or civilian – whether you consider yourself spiritual or not – make it your aim to always let your speech be edifying and God-honoring.

In other words, always seek to be a blessing by what you say.

Coping with a culture of change that isn’t going to change

Commentary by Air Force 2nd Lt. David Liapis
Air Force News Service

You have likely heard someone say, “the only thing constant is change” or something similar, especially in recent months.

This quote and its variations are attributed to Heraclitus of Ephesus, a Greek philosopher who lived

from 535 to 475 B.C.

This familiar saying, as tired and overused as it is, is still relevant 2,500 years after it was uttered, and for good reason.

Life in the Air Force is marked by change. From the day you arrived at Basic Military Training, Officer Training School, the Air Force Academy or whichever accessioning program you may have used, you were well aware that things had changed ... drastically.

The evolution from civilian to Airman required massive change – the way you ate, slept, dressed, communicated, folded shirts, rolled socks, studied and viewed yourself and others.

It’s almost permanent change of station season again.

Change is even in the name of this life-altering aspect of the Air Force. There’s no way to avoid it.

Even if you don’t PCS for a number of years,

other Airmen you work with and for will.

So if you’re holding your breath waiting for the day everything settles down and for the dust to clear, you might just find yourself unconscious on the floor. We live in a culture of change.

Air Force news headlines and senior leadership briefings are filled with words and phrases like: budget, uncertainty, realignment, end-strength, lean force, constraints, personnel cutbacks and resilience.

“We are living in a time of great strategic and budgetary uncertainty, but throughout our history the Air Force has demonstrated the flexibility to evolve according to changing needs and requirements,” said Secretary of the Air Force, Michael Donley, in recent speech. “The Air Force must be prepared to keep evolving as we finish today’s fight, and continue our mission to protect America today and in the future.”

So, how are you coping with this culture of constant change?

Some may be tired of hearing the constant beat of the drum of resiliency, but our leadership keeps pounding it for good reason.

We all respond differently

to change. Some embrace it and thrive off of it while others try to avoid it and may become stressed and depressed. No matter what your level of tolerance, resiliency is a critical factor.

Maybe you think all that talk about stress, depression and suicide are for everyone but you. You think, “I’ve got this. I don’t need another brief or down-day to focus on how resilient I am.”

There are a couple of reasons to pay attention. One, you might not be as immune as you think to things you’ll need to bounce back from.

Honest self-assessment is needed for any of the training to work for you. Two, maybe the benefit from all the hours of slideshows will help you identify an issue with your wingman. We need to lookout for our wingmen as well as ourselves.

There is no way to avoid change in the Air Force, especially right now.

The best thing we can do is internalize the message and concepts of Air Force resiliency training and help each other “be the ball” and bounce back from whatever adversities may come.

There’s so much uncertainty about the future, and no one is immune to the effects of change - good and bad.

President John F. Kennedy said, “Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”

Are you adequately preparing today for the uncertainties of the future?



FSS EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

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INTERACT WITH ALASKA ZOO ANIMALS
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6TH ANNUAL INDOOR TRIATHLON
MARCH 3 - 9 A.M.
BUCKNER PHYSICAL FITNESS CENTER
384-1305



FROZEN TUNDRA ICE FISHING TOURNAMENT AT HILLBERG LAKE
MARCH 3 - NOON - 2 P.M. FREE
SIGN-IN AT HILLBERG LODGE



JBER INTRAMURAL SKEET TOURNAMENT BEGINS
MARCH 8 - MAY 18
SKEET & TRAP RANGE - 384-1480



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TO ALL JBER RESIDENTS & PERSONNEL:

ARAMARK is conducting a survey to better understand your dining needs and preferences. By sharing your thoughts, they will gain valuable insight that will help improve your overall dining experience. The survey will take 5 to 8 minutes and your responses are completely confidential. Scan the code or type in the link below to begin the survey:

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SURVEY ENDS MARCH 2

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Community happenings

THROUGH SUNDAY
Fur Rendezvous
 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.

THROUGH MONDAY
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 tbathetheatre.org or call 677-7529.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
Othello, Moor of Venice
 This dance version of Shakespeare's classic explores jealousy, racism and irony while physically expressing the play through movement.
 Alaska Dance Theatre Company takes the stage at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts at 7:30 both nights.
 For information, visit www.alaskadancetheatre.org.

SATURDAY
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.alaskatheatre.com.

MARCH 9
Eye of the Beholder
 The human body becomes a living, breathing, moving canvas in this wearable art show. Create a wearable piece of art that challenges what most people think of as wearable, and vie for \$2,000 in prize money at the Crosspoint Auditorium starting at 8 p.m.
 For information visit www.alaskafiberfestival.org.

MARCH 10
Magic with Eric Gilliam
 Alaska sensation Eric Gilliam will be at the JBER Education and Library Complex from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. to discuss GI Bill benefits, programs, opportunities, and career assessments.
 For information call 263-2787.

MARCH 12
JBER education fair
 Representatives from colleges, ROTC, National Guard and others will be at the JBER Education and Library Complex from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. to discuss GI Bill benefits, programs, opportunities, and career assessments.
 For information call 552-9647.

MARCH 23 THROUGH 25
Pirate Tales
 Anchorage's favorite storytellers and balladeers bring to life the world's favorite pirates – Blackbeard, Calico Jack Rackham, and Captain Hook. With music like the Sloop John B and others, this is a good time for the whole family at the Alaska Pacific University.
 For information call 677-7529.

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 29 THROUGH APRIL 1
The Great Alaska Sportsman Show
 The largest annual sports and outdoors show offers everything for the outdoor enthusiast with demonstrations, clinics, a kids fishing pond, laser rifle range and much more at the Sullivan and Ben

Boeke arenas.
 For information visit greatalaskasportsmanshow.com.

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.

MARCH 31 THROUGH APRIL 1
Asian Cherry Blossom Celebration
 A double-feature of live theater inspired by stories from Japan and China.
 The Chinese Monkey King whisks us away to adventure, and A Thousand Cranes is a lyrical reminder of the desire for peace. The fun starts daily at 2 p.m. at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts.
 For information call 263-2787.

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 13
Arctic Man Classic
 In this extreme race, skiers take a lone descent before grasping their snowmobile partner's tow rope for a climb at 70 to 90 mph.
 A final plummet to the finish line marks the end of the course at Summit Lake.
 Races start at 1 p.m. For information visit www.arcticman.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.

APRIL 20 THROUGH 22
Alyeska Slush Cup
 Celebrate the coming of spring with a last blast of snowy fun at the Alyeska Resort's spring carnival and slush cup. Costumed competitors brave a chillingly cold pond of water on skis at the signature event.
 For information visit www.alyeskaresort.com.

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.

Chapel seeks contractor
 The JBER chapel is accepting bids for the Young Adult Ministry Coordinator contract. Bids, resumes and references will be accepted until March 12. For information or to get a statement of work, call Chaplain (Capt.) Savell at 552-4422.

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 free meals Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.
 For information, call 552-4422.

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.

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.)

For information, call 552-5234, visit www.trainweb.org/msmrre or email bjorgan@alaska.net.

Road Warriors running
 Want to get out and run? All are welcome to train regularly and get involved with monthly running, biking and swimming events with the Road Warriors.
 For more information, check the Road Warriors (Alaska) Facebook page or call 384-7733 or 552-1361.

FSS EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

ORGANIZED TRIPS



HATCHER PASS SNOWSHOE ADVENTURE
MARCH 3 - 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. - \$45
OUTDOOR RECREATION RICHARDSON
384-1475



IDITAROD RACE OFFICIAL START
MARCH 4 IN WILLOW - \$25
OUTDOOR RECREATION RICHARDSON
384-1475



RESURRECTION BAY CRUISE
MARCH 4 OR 7 - \$75.10 ADULT, \$41.80 2-11 YRS
INFORMATION, TICKETS, & TRAVEL
753-2378



WILLOW SNOWMACHINE TRIP
MARCH 10 - 8 A.M. - 5 P.M. - \$150
MUST SIGN-UP AT LEAST ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE
OUTDOOR RECREATION RICHARDSON
384-1475



SNOWMACHINE SAFETY CLASS
MARCH 6 OR 7 TWO CLASSES EACH DAY
NOON - 1:30 P.M. OR 5:30 - 7 P.M. - \$40
OUTDOOR RECREATION RICHARDSON
384-1475



INTRO TO BLACK BEAR HUNTING
MARCH 8 - 6 - 9 P.M. - FREE
JBER ELMENDORF OAP BUILDING 7301
552-4599



RIFLE RELOADING CLASS
MARCH 9 - 5:30 P.M. - \$5
MUST SIGN-UP IN ADVANCE
OUTDOOR RECREATION ELMENDORF
552-2023



SNOWSHOE GEOCACHING CLASS
MARCH 10 - NOON - \$10
MUST SIGN-UP IN ADVANCE
OUTDOOR RECREATION ELMENDORF
552-2023



more jber fun at elmendorf-richardson.com





Fur Rondy

Anchorage's winter bash



Carnival rides are a popular part of Fur Rondy. At the corner of 3rd Avenue and C street, the lights of the rides are spinning and flashing long past sundown near the port. Riders brave chilly temperatures to enjoy the carnival atmosphere.



Hot food from street vendors and restaurants moving operations outdoors keeps Rondy-goers warm. (U.S. Air Force photo/Steven White)

TOP: Members of the 9th Army Band out of Fort Wainwright march near the front of the Fur Rendezvous parade. Military participation in the Rondy events is a long-standing tradition. The 773rd Civil Engineer Squadron from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson created massive blocks of snow for the snow-sculpture contest this year, and the festivities are a draw for service and family members from around the area. **ABOVE:** Dog sledding is an Alaska tradition, and Rondy is a great time to watch mushers in action. The ceremonial start of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race takes place Saturday at 10 a.m. in front of the Anchorage Visitor's Center log cabin on 4th Avenue.

Engineers make Rondy snow sculptures possible

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf
JBER Public Affairs

Snow is more than abundant in Alaska and some people will be happy when it melts, but thanks to the 773rd Civil Engineer Squadron, the snow downtown has been used for something else. The 773rd CES compressed the snow into blocks for a snow sculpting competition as part of Fur Rendezvous in Anchorage. It starts out as a block of snow – but turns into a work of art.

The blocks were made inside a box metal form. That form was placed with a crane and filled with snow from a snow blower placed underneath the A street bridge and across the street from the Comfort Inn on Ship Creek Avenue.

“A metal form, a crane, two front-end loaders, and a snow blower were all used to make the blocks,” said Senior Airman Matthew Posan, 773d Civil Engineer Squadron pavement and construction equipment operator. “We used a crane to place the metal form, the two front-end loaders to place snow for the snow blower, the snow blower filled the metal form, and then the crane lifted the form and the block was complete.”

In all it took a little more than 16 hours to place and fill all 24 blocks.

“I think any way to get involved in something like Fur Rondy would be a positive thing,” said Posan, the Indianapolis native. “Helping out in a big local event like that feels good.”

Robert Service High School is one high school that took part in creating art out of a block of snow.

For Adam Ahonen, a Service High School special education teacher, this is the ninth year he has participated in the snow sculpting competition with his students. The group that worked on the sculpture with Ahonen, were his students and members of



Sam Rardin, son of Robert Service High School teacher Joel Rardin, shapes the the eye of a cougar made in snow during the snow sculpting competition in Anchorage, Alaska, Feb. 25. The snow sculpting contest is part of Fur Rendezvous, celebrating 77 years of this festival. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf)

the Service High Partner's Club.

The Service High Partner's Club is a group that brings students with disabilities and those without together to do community outings.

“(Members of the club) vote on the theme each year and then a student designs it. This year they picked a wolf,” Ahonen said.

In addition to the snow sculpting, the

Partner's Club also does a tailgate party every year.

“It's a pretty special event for us to be part of,” Ahonen said.

The snow sculpting is part of the Fur Rendezvous which is a 10-day celebration in Anchorage, Alaska.

“It's a fun thing to do and cool for the community to come look at all the sculp-

tures,” said Zoe Bailey, a freshman at Robert Service High School.

Fur Rendezvous is a special event that started in 1935 and has been bringing people all over Alaska and the world together.

“The city is so spread out and it's nice when everyone can come together and get involved,” said Joel Rardin, a teacher at Robert Service High School.

Polar Express auto, craft shops offer multitude of money-saving activities

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett
JBER Public Affairs

During the past 15 years or so, Air National Guard Master Sgt. Curtis Graham has gone to the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Polar Express Auto Arts and Crafts Center.

Graham, a native of Eagle River, works for the 176th Maintenance Squadron as a metals technology supervisor and uses the auto section of the facility regularly to work on his own vehicle.

"They are real helpful," he said. "You are never an inconvenience. They are a real user-friendly place."

The Auto Arts and Crafts Center make it their mission to help customers, said Dwayne Daniel, the facility manager and also a native of Eagle River.

"We bend over backwards for customers in general," he said. "We take our mission seriously; it's about helping the military community."

Many auto shops in the lower 48 have outdoor work stations, he said.

"That's not really an option here," Daniel said. "We also don't have to worry about any contaminant leaving our shop and getting into the environment."

"This being Alaska, you need a good indoor facility to work on your vehicle," Graham said. "I always tell guys at my shop that it's a good place to work on your own vehicle."

They could use a bigger facility, he said. "The popularity is there. Word of mouth has gotten around and people pass that information onward."

"We're there to train our customers in how to use the equipment and facility," Daniel said. "With our mission, about 80 percent of

the work is done by our customers."

The specific situation makes the difference.

When Graham works on his vehicle, performing various general tasks such as turning a wrench, Daniel might advise and instruct.

The goal is to provide Graham with the skills so eventually he'd be able to come in and use those skills and the provided tools to do the work he needs done.

Some of the equipment required to do the work gets too technical to handle without additional training.

"If a guy wanted to weld something, we'd do it for him," Daniel said. "Later, we'd educate him so that he would have that skill set."

Providing the skills, equipment and facility can save customers a lot of money.

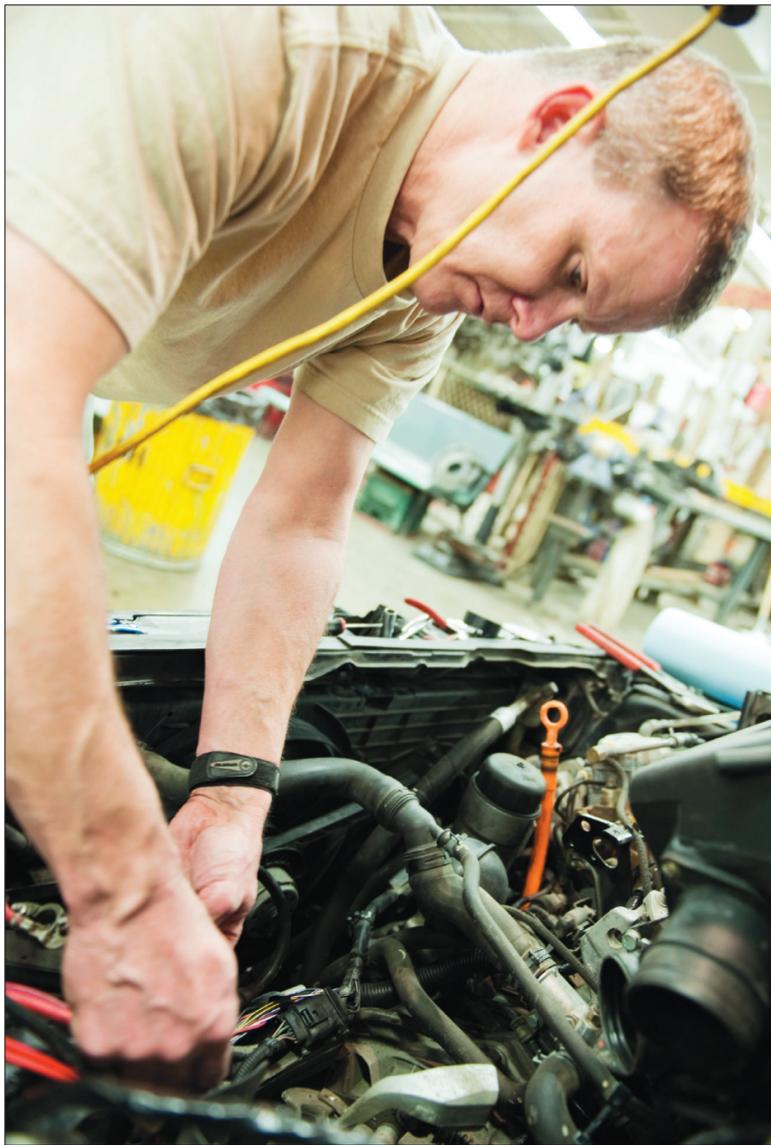
"It's pretty cool to save them money," Daniel said. "If you add it all together, we save our customers almost \$3 million a year."

While they are commonly known for their auto skills section, the self-help facility also contains a picture framing and matting shop, a wood shop, fine arts multi-craft shop, engraving shop, and a three-bay car wash.

"I took the framing class about a month ago," said Navy Capt. Joel Jungemann, Alaskan Command Director for plans, policy and resources.

"They give you some basic framing instructions and after that they turn you loose to go as advanced as you want with those basic skills," Jungemann said. "It's a definite cost saver over taking it off-base – and you get it exactly the way you want it."

The facility will soon grow as the Far North Arts and Crafts Center merges into it.



Air National Guard Master Sgt. Curtis Graham replaces a glow plug harness in his Volkswagen Jetta at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Polar Express Auto Arts and Crafts Center Feb. 25. The Auto Arts and Crafts Center will merge with the Far North Arts and Crafts Center March 18. The Far North Center will officially close March 11. Graham is a metal technology supervisor for the 176th Maintenance Squadron and native of Eagle River, Alaska. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)



The Elmendorf-side facility will officially close March 11 due to budget constraints.

To fill in the gaps and continue providing as much service as

possible, the combined Polar Express Auto Arts and Crafts shop will officially open March 18.

"I love to see a smile on the face of a customer," said Daniel.

"When they finish their work because of the skills they've learned (here) and they have saved all that money, that's the most rewarding thing in this job."

