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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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Deploying members of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing shake hands with their commander, Col. Scott Wenke, as they board a C-17 Globemaster III cargo aircraft for Afghanistan Monday. (U.S. Air Force photo/Capt. John Callahan)

CITIZEN AIRMEN DEPLOY TO AFGHANISTAN

Alaska National Guard news release

More than 180 citizen-Airmen of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing have begun deploying for Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The deployment marks the wing's single largest deployment of personnel since 2003. It will be the wing's second large-scale deployment from JBER since the Guard organization relocated here in February 2011 as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process.

The deploying Airmen are primarily maintenance crews from the wing's 176th Maintenance Group and rescue personnel from the wing's three rescue units: HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter pilots and crew from the 210th Rescue Squadron; HC-130 Hercules combat search and rescue aircraft pilots and crew from the 211th RQS; and pararescuemen and combat rescue officers from the 212th RQS.

Together with a handful of Expeditionary Combat Support personnel from other 176th Wing units, the deployers form a highly capable and versatile rescue package.

In Afghanistan, the rescuers will pursue their primary wartime mission of combat search and rescue. This often involves challenging casualty-evacuation missions – that is, flying into "hot" combat zones, frequently under fire, to pull wounded coalition service members to safety and transport them to a treatment facility within one hour. The maintenance crews will support this vital work by keeping the rescuers' planes and helicopters ready for flight at a moment's notice.

"We are very, very proud of our deploying men and women," said the wing's commander, Col. Scott Wenke. "These are highly trained and motivated professionals who will do an outstanding job in support of coalition efforts to help the Afghan people build a better future for their country. I thank them for their service and look forward to their safe return."

Since 1952, the 176th Wing has served Alaskans at home and American interests abroad. It has supported large-scale deployments each year since 2003.

The wing currently has more than 50 civil engineers, security personnel and other expeditionary combat Airmen deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

One of the largest and busiest wings in the Air National Guard, the 176 Wing also provides alert rescue and air defense capabilities in support of the 11th Air Force and Alaska NORAD Region.

Members of the 176th Wing load an HH-60 Pave Hawk search and rescue helicopter onto a C-17 Globemaster III for a four-month deployment to Afghanistan Monday. (U.S. Air Force photo/Master Sgt. Shannon Oleson)

Construction season makes for road closures, detours

By Airman 1st Class
Omari Bernard
JBER Public Affairs

Prepare to be re-routed, detoured, diverted and occasionally stuck in traffic. Construction season has once again come upon JBER.

One upcoming road closure is scheduled to be on 6th Street near Dyea Avenue, June 12. The purpose of road closure is to connect the new storm drain line on 6th Street to help with drainage during spring break-up. Most of the construction will take place on the JBER-Richardson side of the installation.

The construction will also include maintenance work on the multipurpose machine gun range, tactical equipment maintenance facility, Buckner Physical Fitness Center, railhead operations facility, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division headquarters and some of the Army barracks.

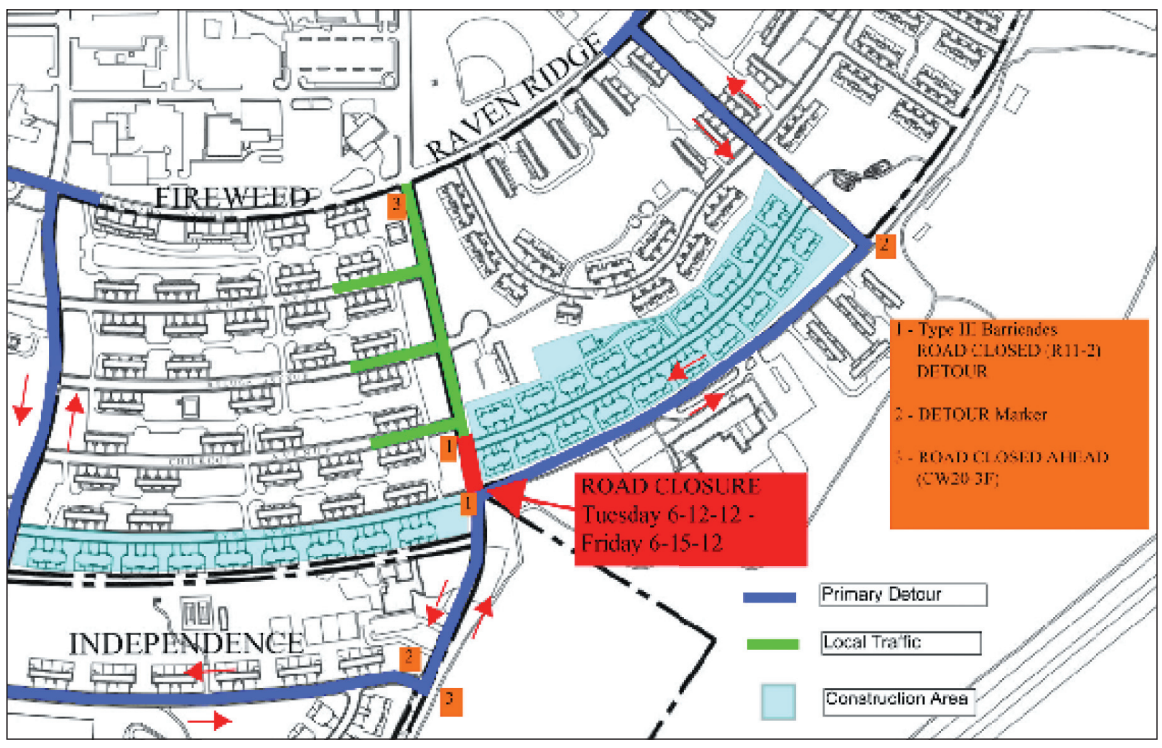
The construction will replace old facilities like the tactical maintenance facility that consumes an inordinate amount of energy and requires a lot of maintenance and repair, said Michael E. Schmidt, a civilian with the 673d Civil Engineering Squadron. This will improve quality of life and ease energy costs from inefficient buildings.

"For every square foot that we build new, we also tear down the equivalent square footage of older facilities," Schmidt said.

Work on the machine gun range, fitness facility and the barracks will improve the quality of life and mission readiness.

"From a single Soldier's perspective, the new barracks that we build provide more quality of life by providing each with their own bedroom versus having to share a room in some of the older barracks that we have now," Schmidt said.

Because there is no detailed detour information currently available, drivers are advised to be aware and have patience.



With the beginning of JBER's summer construction season, road closures can be expected as infrastructure is improved and repaired. One such closure is scheduled to begin June 12 on 6th Street near Dyea Avenue. Work on the machine gun range, Buckner Physical Fitness Center and Soldier barracks are intended to improve quality of life. (Graphic courtesy of Osborne Construction and Aurora Housing)

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Change of command

Air Force Col. Robert Evans relinquishes command of 673d Air Base Wing and JBER to Air Force Col. Brian Duffy 1 p.m. Today at Hangar 5. Read the full story in next week's Arctic Warrior.

673D AIR BASE WING

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Victoria Fraser sings the national anthem at a Memorial Day ceremony Monday in Anchorage, alongside Berkley Ide, commander of the Staff Sgt. Archie Van Winkle Memorial Chapter 288 of the Korean War Veterans Association, and Brig. Gen. Leon "Mike" Bridges, assistant adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. Fraser's brother died in 2005 while serving overseas.

Anchorage remembers heroes

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

Wearing everything from service caps adorned with badges and unit patches from the past and historic uniforms, veterans from as far back as World War II gathered at the Delaney Strip Park in downtown Anchorage Monday for the Memorial Day Remembrance Service.

Many of the elderly gentlemen struggle now to stand on their own strength, but it was their ability to stand for what they believed in that helped make this nation what it is today.

Their contributions to the nation were not lost on the officials who attended the ceremony or the hundreds of guests who took a few moments out of their day to bear witness to a gathering of American war heroes who came to remember their fallen comrades.

The remembrance service began in style with a "Rolling Thunder" procession of motorcycles from the Alaska Veterans Motorcycle Club bearing the American flag, the Alaska state flag and the somber black and white POW/MIA flag.

A joint service color guard then presented the colors at the base of the flagpole and classically trained singer Victoria Frasier, who lost her brother in combat, sang the national anthem.

Guest representatives from the Army and Air Force requested the honored World War II veterans stepped forward for recognition of their service.

U.S. Army Alaska Commanding General Maj. Gen. Michael Garrett and Air Force Brig. Gen. Deborah McManus, Alaska National Guard director of joint staff, post a wreath honoring fallen veterans during the Memorial Day remembrance service May 28 at the Delaney Strip Park in downtown Anchorage. (U.S. Army photos/Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead)

U.S. Army Alaska Commanding General Maj. Gen. Michael Garrett presented "Defender of Freedom" medals to the veterans.

Garrett presented the first medal to William Dudley, a former PT boat crewmember in World War II, who was quick to turn the praise to current service members and their endeavors overseas.

"I just really feel for the boys at war right now," Dudley said. "They have to deal with things we simply didn't have to worry about back in the day."

It was an expression of humility that caused several of the people within earshot to shed tears.

With so many honored veterans present, Garrett was assisted in his task by Alaska Lt. Gov. Mead Treadwell; Air Force Brig. Gen. Deborah McManus, Alaska National Guard director of Joint Staff, Army Brig. Gen. Leon "Mike" Bridges, Assistant Adjutant General of the Alaska National Guard; and retired Army Brig. Gen. Richard M. Blunt.

Representatives from the motorcycle club took the stage to assemble a Soldier's memorial consisting of a rifle, helmet, boots, identification tags and roses in memory of the fallen Soldiers as one of their members softly sang "Amazing Grace."

In his remarks, Blunt pointed out the World War II history of Alaska, where the only land battles fought on American soil in the war took place on the Aleutian Islands of Attu and Kiska.

Garrett and McManus presented a wreath in honor of all veterans, leading a procession of additional groups and service organizations who offered wreaths of their own.

The service closed with a dual bugle rendition of taps and the joint color guard retired the colors for the event.

About 100 WWII veterans attended the ceremony along with their families and friends. Veterans from other wars also came to show their respect for the heroes who preceded them in service.

"Everyone here is a hero." Blunt said.

Be knowledgeable in the fight of fraud, waste and abuse

By Steve Wisniewski
673d ABW deputy inspector general

In these lean days of budget reductions and efficiencies, identifying Fraud Waste and Abuse is a high interest item of military leaders across all services. As manpower and supplies are stretched to the limit, we simply can't afford any misuse of what resources we have.

In our search for FWA, we will not find any $30,000 toilets or $5,000 hammers as in days gone by, but there still may be other misuses of our resources out there. An active FWA program is not only essential for efficient and effective operations; it is also a professional responsibility and a moral imperative for everyone.

The key to prevention, detection and reporting of FWA, is the recognition of conditions that can allow abuses. It is important to remember these conditions often appear as minor administrative or managerial irregularities on the surface, but the "indicators" of these conditions provide the initial warning and drive the need for a closer look.

It is important to know what truly constitutes FWA versus an inefficient practice or an unforeseen negative result of honest actions. The following definitions will assist you in properly identifying FWA when you have discovered some information or a practice that seems inappropriate or wasteful.

Fraud

Fraud is any intentional deception designed to unlawfully deprive the United States of something of value or to secure from the United States for an individual, a benefit, privilege, allowance, or consideration to which he or she is not entitled.

Such practices include, but are not limited to, the offer, payment or acceptance of bribes or gratuities; making false statements; submitting false claims; using false weights or measures; evading or corrupting inspectors or other officials; deceit either by suppressing the truth or misrepresenting material fact; adulterating or substituting materials; falsifying records and books of accounts; arranging for secret profits, kickbacks, or commissions; and conspiring to use any of these devices. The term also includes conflict of interest cases, criminal irregularities, and the unauthorized disclosure of official information relating to procurement and disposal matters.

What do you do if you suspect fraud? Contact Air Force Office of Special Investigation when fraud is suspected. Failure to contact them could jeopardize an investigation.

If AFOSI elects not to pursue an investigation due to the allegation not meeting certain monetary standards or the allegation is not deemed criminal by OSI, contact the Inspector General, Security Forces or the Air Force Audit Agency to analyze the indicators.

Waste

Waste is the extravagant, careless, or needless expenditure of government funds, or the consumption of government property that results from deficient practices, systems, controls or decisions.

The term also includes improper practices not involving prosecutable fraud.

What is the recommended action to take? Consult the IG; conduct an internal or external inspection, commander-directed investigation or Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century continuous process improvement or eight-step problem-solving event.

Abuse

Abuse is the intentional or improper use of government resources that can include the excessive or improper use of one's position, in a manner contrary to its rightful or legally intended use.

Examples include misuse of rank, position or authority, or misuse of Department of Defense resources.

Report potential abuse issues to your squadron Commander, 1st Sgt, FWA Monitor or the IG as appropriate.

Even if what you discover doesn't fit the definitions of FWA, please point out any inefficiency that you find. It's up to each of us to identify and eliminate unnecessary drains on our shrinking resources.

Reporting FWA is accomplished through supervisors, commanders, the IG Complaints Resolution Process via DoD, Air Force, Major Command, base and Squadron FWA monitor Hotline phone numbers, or OSI and Security Forces as appropriate. The Air Force FWA Hotline is (202) 404-5354 or (800) 538-8492 or FAX: (202) 404-5429. The DoD hotline is (800) 424-9098.

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

U.S. Army Alaska
Commanding General
Maj. Gen. Michael X. Garrett (USA)

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/
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Col. Brian P. Duffy (USAF)

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673d Air Base Wing Vice Commander
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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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JBER HONORS THE FALLEN

ABOVE: Hundreds of people paid their respects during a Memorial Day ceremony at the Fort Richardson National Cemetery Monday. The holiday serves as a day of remembrance in honor of those who have died in the nation's wars, an opportunity to pray for the fallen, and a renewed commitment for those currently serving. The weekend also marks the beginning of the 100 Critical Days of Summer.

RIGHT: Members of the Air Force Band of the Pacific perform during a Memorial Day ceremony at the Fort Richardson National Cemetery Monday. (U.S. Air Force photos/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)

Briefs and Announcements

Disposition of effects

Army 1st Lt. Michael Paris, Rear Detachment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) 25th Infantry Division, is authorized to make disposition of personal effects of Sgt. Brian L. Walker, 425th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, as stated in Army Regulation 638-2.

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of the deceased should contact Paris at (907) 230-8712.

Disposition of effects

Army 2nd Lt. James Lewis, Rear Detachment, 425th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, is authorized to make disposition of personal effects of Pfc. Richard L. McNulty III, 425th BSTB, as stated in Army Regulation 638-2.

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of the deceased should contact Lewis at (907) 384-1347.

Disposition of effects

Army 2nd Lt. Ray Vickery, 425th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, is authorized to make disposition of personal effects of Staff Sgt. Thomas K. Fogarty, of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, as stated in Army Regulation 638-2.

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of the deceased should contact Vickery at (828) 429-6496.

Disposition of effects

Air Force Capt. Truth Finck is authorized to make disposition of personal effects of Senior Airman Clinton Reeves, 673d Logistics Readiness Squadron, as stated in Air Force Instruction 34-244.

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of the deceased should contact Finck at 552-1183.

Army Birthday Ball

All ranks are welcomed to this Army ball June 22 at the Hilton starting at 6 p.m. Lt. Gen. Michael Ferriter will speak. For information, contact a unit representative or call 384-2067.

Hospital closures

The 673d Medical Group will close the hospital all day June 21 for an exercise.

Increased runway activity

Expect increased traffic light control activity through Wednesday on Arctic Warrior Drive near the airfield. Runway 06/24 will be under repair, so the shorter runway will have more activity. It's important drivers observe traffic-control lights.

School physicals

The 673d Medical Group is offering physicals for school and sports. Physicals are valid for one year. To schedule an appointment, call 580-2778.

Public Health closures

Public Health closes the first Thursday of the month from 1 to 4:30 p.m. and the third Thursday of the month from noon to 4:30 p.m. every month. For more information, call 580-4014.

MiCare registration

MiCare, the online personal health record and secure messaging application, has been available to patients and medical group staff at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson since December.

More than 2,400 patients have already signed up to take advantage of the ability to communicate with their primary care clinicians online. Registered patients also have access to electronic records, allowing them to view and maintain their health records.

The 673d Medical Group is the first Air Force site to test this system.

Once registered, patients have the ability to participate in the study by completing a short series of surveys during the course of the next year. This provides an opportunity for all active-duty, retired and dependent patients to have an impact on shaping the future of Air Force health services.

To register, visit the Military Treatment Facility, where enrollment specialists are available in each primary care clinic.

All beneficiaries who are enrolled in the family health, pediatrics, flight medicine and internal medicine clinics are eligible to participate. Patients need to show a military identification card and provide information, including name, social security number, birthday and email address.

The enrollment specialist will enter the information and patients will receive an email which contains a link and instructions for completing the process.

Mortgage relief

President Barack Obama announced March 6 steps to provide significant housing relief to thousands of service members and veterans who have faced wrongful foreclosure or been denied a lower interest rate on their mortgages.

Service members and their dependents who believe that their Service Member Civil Relief Act rights have been violated should contact their servicing legal assistance office – 552-3046 at JBER-Elmendorf office, and 284-0371 for the JBER-Richardson office.

Additionally, information and referral services regarding the mortgage relief plan can be obtained at the JBER Military and Family Readiness Center, 552-4943.

Find housing

Visit the Automated Housing Referral Network at *www.ahrn.com* to find housing before packing up.

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

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

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

For more information, call 552-4439.

Motorcycle training

Riders can now start the registration process for the 2012 Contracted Motorcycle Training.

A change from previous years is training is only offered to uniformed service members and Department of Defense civilians who have motorcycle operation listed in their position descriptions.

For information on how to register, call 552-5092.

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.

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.

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*.

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.

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.

For more information call 267-2153.

Youth

A magical homecoming

Airman re-appears at the Arctic Oasis for his son's eighth birthday

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Play

Combat fishing

Seward community takes troops out after the lunkers

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COMMUNITY

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6 Soldiers make their way up North America's highest peak

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

Crowning a vast glacier and surrounded by other peaks of impressive magnitude rises Mount McKinley, also known as Denali (a Koyukon Athabaskan word meaning "The High One").

It stands as the tallest peak in North America and third highest in the world.

The mountain has a history of claiming the lives of unprepared climbers and offers some of the most treacherous terrain and harshest climates on the planet.

It's exactly the kind of challenge a team of U.S. Army Alaska mountaineering experts is looking for.

Six members of the Army's Northern Warfare Training Center cadre landed on the Kahiltna Glacier May 17 to begin a 14- to 20-day climb to the summit.

The NWTC trains Soldiers to fight and win in a variety of unforgiving environments. Its Black Rapids Training Center near Delta Junction offers courses in extreme cold weather operations and military mountaineering.

The NWTC team was shuttled in courtesy of two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter crews from A. Co., 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment out of Fort Wainwright.

Even though this is a mission the U.S. Army hasn't attempted since before the events of 9/11, the climbers are no strangers to mountaineering.

The NWTC instructors specialize in maneuvering on treacherous terrain in arctic conditions and said they're ready for anything the mountain has to throw at them.

The team consists of five active-duty Soldiers and one Army civilian – each fully equipped with a tailored packing list of sustainment supplies and climbing gear.

"We've made sure to plan for everything from weather to altitude sickness," said Maj. Gary McDonald, commandant of the NWTC, based at Black Rapids Training Area. "We'll be moving in rope teams to help mitigate the danger from potentially falling into hidden crevasses and adhering to strict rest/movement plan."

People typically experience altitude sickness at an elevation around 17,000 feet above ground level. Bodily functions begin to operate abnormally due to several factors, chiefly the lessened air pressure and reduced concentration of oxygen at the higher elevations, McDonald explained.

Some of the signs of altitude sickness can include altered mental states, a reduced ability to absorb nutrients, vertigo and decreased awareness along with a general feeling of being unwell, McDonald said.

With so many risk factors, this is no small mission for the members of NWTC.

They have planned meticulously for months to make everything happen safely and for some members of the team, it is the opportunity of a life time.

"I've wanted to climb this thing for the last four years," Sgt. Jacob Collins, an NWTC instructor said. "I attended the mountaineering course back in 2007 as a PFC and I sorta fell in love with it. Ever since then, this mountain has been on my to-do list."

In addition to meeting the personal goals of some of the team members , the climb is providing the members of NWTC the perfect opportunity to hone their skills as they deal with conditions and travel methods most amateur climbers wouldn't consider.

Training Specialist Steven Decker and Instructor Staff Sgt. Brian Bailey, both assignede to the Army's Northern Warfare Training Center, survey the route they will take to the summit of Mount McKinley. Grooming standards, such as shaving, are temporarily suspended, as a clean-shaven face is much more susceptible to damage from frostbite and other extreme conditions they will face on their expected 14- to 20-day climb. TOP: Mount McKinley rises above clouds as the Soldiers prepare for the ascent. (U.S. Army photos/Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead)

"Most of our early movements at the lower elevations will be done at night," Staff Sgt. Brian Bailey said. "Nighttime provides us more protection from the heat and solar radiation reflected off the snow and ice and it also hardens the soft spots, allowing us to cross over them with less risk of falling through and into a crevasse. There'll also be less traffic from other climbers to deal with, as the other climbers tend to travel during the day."

Mount McKinley currently has an estimated 200 additional climbers on it at various levels, according to Denali National Park Service officials.

Steven Decker, a training specialist with NWTC, and the team member with the longest tenure at the NWTC described the climb as a culminating training event using every technique and method taught at the schoolhouse.

"This is a capstone training event, similar to a unit going down to (The National Training Center) or (Joint Readiness Training Center) in the Lower 48." Decker said. "A climb of this magnitude refines critical skills helps establish a greater confidence in the methods we teach."

In addition to his current service as an Army civilian, Decker was previously assigned to NWTC as a Soldier.

McDonald said training in such extreme conditions makes Soldiers more adaptable to any terrain and conditions.

"What we do here makes us better as a fighting force," he said. "Our Army might not always need to fight on terrain as harsh as this, but having the ability and confident members who can make fighting on normal terrain that much easier."

McDonald pointed out the vivid similarities between areas of the Black Rapids Glacier, where NWTC is located, and the mountainous regions of northern Afghanistan.

"There are photos of the mountains of Afghanistan that are completely indistinguishable from the landscape we have available here in Alaska," he said. "The terrain matches, the vegetation matches. The comparison is uncanny. The training benefits of such areas are invaluable and need to be used more than they currently are."

In addition to summiting McKinley, the team has offered to assist in rescue missions conducted by the Denali National Park Service in their immediate area during the climb.

"While making it to the summit is a goal, it's not the only goal we have in climbing the mountain," McDonald said. "The park service has agreed to contact us in the event they receive word of a needed rescue in our immediate area, if that happens we'll render any assistance that we can. While that may render our attempt to summit the mountain unsuccessful, we will do whatever we can to help out in those situations."

The climbing team is currently making its way up Denali.

At the 17,000 ft. camp, the elevation is expected to begin affecting the climbers.

They are expecting the last leg of the climb to be the most strenuous and will have to conserve their resources for the climb down, where most fatalities traditionally occur, as several have recently.

"Just because you make it to the top doesn't mean you're done, you still gotta climb back down," team member Sgt. Tony MacDougall said.

Maj. Gary McDonald, commandant of the U.S. Army Alaska Northern Warfare Training Center inspects his harness and climbing equipment May 17 in preparation for his team climb up Mount McKinley. Additional protective covering for the exposed skin, like the cloth covering shown here is vital as reflected solar radiation from the ice and snow can more than double a person's UV exposure on the glacier.

A magic homecoming

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf
JBER Public Affairs

Turning eight years old can be a big milestone. Add a magician, face painting and plenty of presents, and any 8-year-old boy would be happy.

But for Cole Sandoval, this birthday party at the Arctic Oasis on JBER was going to have a big surprise.

Unbeknownst to Cole, the magician was going to make his dad appear out of thin air. This wouldn't be anything special – except Cole's dad was deployed to Afghanistan.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason Sandoval, 3rd Air Support Operations Squadron joint terminal attack controller and single father of Cole and Trinity, returned from Afghanistan on two weeks of leave, and decided to surprise his two children.

Sandoval said his son didn't know that he was home from Afghanistan, so he got a magician for his eighth birthday party.

"It is only the second birthday party (of his) I have been to, so I am here to surprise my son," Sandoval said.

Some families may have children who don't understand deployment or are confused by why their parents have to leave for a while.

"What I can really say is be straightforward with your kids," Sandoval said.

Sandoval told his children all that he could about his deployment and suggests other parents should too, because children are smarter than we think.

Deploying is something military families are very familiar with and many families come up with different ways to deal with the separation.

"We will send audio recorders back and forth, and I will read a book and then mail the recording back so they can follow along so they can at least hear my voice," Sandoval said.

While deployed, those months can feel long – at home and abroad.

Luckily, there is a support system that many use to make the time go by faster.

"The biggest support is from family," Sandoval said. "My mom and my stepdad are my biggest supporters."

Although the support is there, there are still some challenges that come up during the months of the deployment.

"The challenges would be sometimes the emotional aspect for the kids can get to be overwhelming for them, so I do everything I can to keep them busy to keep their time occupied. I think a lot of free time is the biggest enemy," said Lisa Bogan, Sandoval's mother.

Bogan keeps her son's children active and busy to combat loneliness when a child can dwell on the fact that their dad is away.

"It's when they have those down times that the emotions start creeping and it's OK for those emotions to come out... you just don't want them to be overwhelming the kids all the time," Bogan said.

Cole and Trinity Sandoval greet their father, Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason Sandoval, 3rd Air Support Operations Squadron, at the Arctic Oasis on JBER May 23. Sandoval was on his two-week leave and decided to hire a magician to make him "magically" appear for his son's eighth birthday party. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf)

Everyone seemed in high spirits when the magician revealed Sandoval and the show concluded with kids dancing while Cole and Trinity welcomed their father home.

"For him to be here and be part of this birthday party for his son is really amazing," Bogan said.

Motorcycle safety: take it personally this riding season

By Lisa Daniel
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Col. Dana Morel knows the dangers of motorcycle riding as well as anyone.

A biker herself, Morel was a lieutenant at Mather Air Force Base, Calif., in 1986 when a young Airman she knew with the base honor guard took off speeding one night. Distraught over the end of a romance, he missed a turn and crashed his motorcycle into a telephone pole. He died at the scene.

As traumatic as that was, nothing could prepare Morel for a crash that happened last July that took the life of her good friend and fellow biker, Tyler Cowherd, and left his wife, Carolyn, and a friend who was riding with them permanently disabled.

The Cowherds on one Harley-Davidson motorcycle, and their friend on another, were traveling westbound on a Springfield, Va., road on the evening of July 17 when an eastbound car turned in front of them, causing both bikes to crash into the side of it. The motorcycles could not have stopped in time to avoid the collision, and the driver of the car was charged with failing to yield, according to the police report.

Morel said she has struggled to accept the fatal crash "that was so avoidable." She now speaks out about the need for "caged" drivers – those protected by a car or truck chassis – to be more aware of motorcycles and their vulnerabilities and to slow down and not be distracted drivers.

"I like to think that most motorcyclists are safe (drivers)," Morel said. "But, you're completely vulnerable, completely exposed. When you get in a car, you don't think that much about it."

While motorcycle courses teach about road conditions and situations hazardous to bikers, regular driving classes rarely mention motorcycles, Morel said. Before she gets onto her Harley-Davidson, she added, she has checked out road and weather conditions and shared any potential hazards with other bikers.

"We're always watching out for that," she said.

Morel commutes by Metro bus each day to the Pentagon where she is a deputy division chief in an Air Force acquisitions office. She says she has been dismayed by the various things people do while driving.

"People are so distracted," she said. "I see text messaging (by drivers) every single day when I'm on the bus. They're taking their eyes off the road for things that have absolutely nothing to do with driving."

Morel said she's observed drivers texting, talking, tuning the radio, eating and putting on makeup.

Morel said she is encouraged that the Defense Department promotes Motorcycle Safety Foundation standards, which have stricter requirements than states' motor vehicle departments.

"The MSF is the gold standard," she said. "If you can pass it, you're good to go."

There are many motorcycle clubs, Morel said, that stress safety for their riders and do charitable work for veterans, military families, and community needs. Patriot Guard Riders, American Veterans Motorcycle Riders Association, and Desert Storm Riders are just a few, she said.

Morel has come full circle with motorcycles: her 20-year-old son, who is in a Marine Corps ROTC program, recently told her he is shopping for a motorcycle. At first, Morel was nervous about it.

"But after spending time with him, I realized he is making good choices." she said.

Morel's son convinced her he will be a safe driver, and she said he looks forward to riding with her.

"I don't know if that scares me as much as him going into the Marine Corps, or vice versa," she said. "But a mom is like that about anything with her kids. You're going to be afraid of whatever they do."

Morel said she knows she can't stop him, especially when she also rides. "What I can do is support him in being safe," she said.

Last week, Morel rode her Harley nine hours down to the annual Bike Week at Myrtle Beach, S.C.

When she returned, she learned of another motorcycle tragedy very much like the one that took her friend's life last summer: a 25-year-old volunteer firefighter from Culpepper, Va., died after slamming into a car that had turned in front of him.

FSS EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

FAMILY FUN

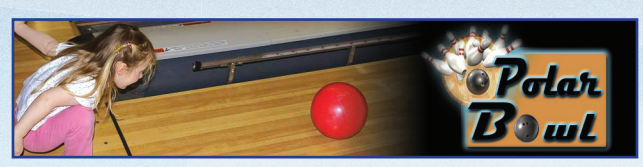
DISCOUNTED AK ZOO TICKETS
18 & OVER · $8, 3 - 17 YRS · $5
INFORMATION, TICKETS & TRAVEL
BLDG. 9497 · 753-2378

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CENTER
SEASON PASS $75
INFORMATION, TICKETS & TRAVEL
BLDG. 9497 · 753-2378

GOT VISITORS?
VISIT ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER .
JUST OUTSIDE MULDOON GATE
ADULTS · $21
7-16 YRS · $14.50
6 AND UNDER FREE
INFORMATION, TICKETS & TRAVEL
BLDG. 9497 · 753-2378

DADS & DUCT TAPE
HANDS ON CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM
JUNE 16 · 1 - 3 P.M.
JBER CONSOLIDATED LIBRARY
BLDG. 7 · 384-1640

CERAMICS
PICK AND PAINT CERAMICS
$10 & UP
POLAR EXPRESS ARTS & CRAFTS CENTER
BLDG. 755 · 384-3717



POLAR BOWL
OPEN BOWLING ON SATURDAYS
JUNE 2,9,16,23, & 30 · 12 - 9 P.M.
X-TREME BOWLING
JUNE 2,9,16,23, & 30 · 9 P.M. - 1 A.M.
BLDG. 7176 · 753-PINS (7467)

MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY PICNIC
JUNE 8 · 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.
BUCKNER PHYSICAL FITNESS CENTER
SPORTS FIELD
BLDG. 690 · 384-1308

FREE MOVIE & POPCORN
JOURNEY 2 · JUNE 8 · 6 P.M.
JUNE 16 · 1 - 3 P.M.
BIG MIRACLE · JUNE 22 · 6 P.M.
ARCTIC OASIS
BLDG. 9497 · 552-8529

ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON

Community happenings

Friday

Festival of Flowers

Kick off the Alaska summer with the Festival of Flowers in downtown Anchorage. Flower sales and auctions, educational seminars, live music, face-painting and stilt-walkers are on tap to bring in the summertime in style.

Spend all day in Town Square park, or visit *www.anchoragedowntown.org* to choose an event.

Friday through Sunday

Commissary case sale

The commissary will be conducting a "mega case lot sale" from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. June 1 and 2 and from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. June 3.

Stock up while the goods are on sale. For information call 580-5577.

Saturday through June 10

Three Barons Ren Faire

The Three Barons invite all to enter their realm for revelry and merriment.

Living chess, circuses, puppets, magic shows and fairy tales make for fun-filled times for the whole family.

Visit June 2, 3, 9 and 10 from noon until 8 p.m. at Tozier Track.

For more information visit *www.3barons.org.*

Thursday through June 18

Slam'n Salm'n Derby

Ship Creek is just feet away from downtown hotels, but the fish can top 40 pounds.

There are many classes and prizes in this annual derby, so you don't need to land the biggest fish to reel in great prizes.

For information, visit *www.shipcreeksalmonderby.com.*

June 8

Military Appreciation picnic and olympics

Paxton Park and Buckner Physical Fitness Center host concurrent military appreciation picnics. Arctic Warrior Olympics will take place at Paxton Park beginning at 8 a.m.

For information call 580-0213 or 552-0503 for the olympics; for picnic information call 551-8739 or 552-7352.

For a schedule of events and Arctic Warrior Olympics registration information, visit *http://tinyurl.com/73e3zkl*

SeaLife Center celebrates

Family events and activities help people discover the sea during World Oceans Day at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward. Activities from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and an after-hours exhibit and art auction until 9:30 p.m.

For more information call 224-6304 or visit *alaskasealife.org.*

June 9

Potter Marsh discovery

Discover Potter Marsh and some of Alaska's wildlife at Anchorage's most popular wildlife viewing area from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This family-friendly event on National Get Outdoors Day includes nature-related games and prizes, birding stations along the boardwalk, captive birds from the Bird Treatment and Learning Center, educational animals from the Alaska Zoo, kid-friendly archery range, fly-fishing practice area, release of a rehabilitated bald eagle and more.

Run for women

Alaska women pound the pavement to raise funds for breast cancer research and awareness, with 1 and 5-mile runs beginning at Sullivan Arena.

Registration and bib pick up is from 6:45 to 8:15 a.m. The 1-mile run begins at 8:30 a.m., and the 5-mile run begins at 8:45 a.m.

Book signing

The JBER Library hosts Steven Levi, an Alaska historian, for a book signing from 1 to 3 p.m.

Levi has written more than 70 books as well as poetry, screenplays and media presentations.

For information, call 384-1799.

June 9 through 13

Astronomy Week

The American Astronomical Society hosts its 220th meeting in Anchorage.

The week-long program features hands-on science, talks by scientists including Nobel Prize in Physics winner Dr. Brian Schmidt, films and much more. Locations vary; for information visit *aas.org.*

June 15

Beach Party day

Enjoy the sun and get crazy with volleyball, frisbee, water guns and a sand-castle contest at Goose Lake Park all day. Bring a beach towel, sunscreen and a picnic lunch.

For information, visit *www.muni.org/parks* or call 343-4130.

June 15 through 17

Juneteenth celebraton

This family-oriented multicultural event offers the opportunity to learn more about historical African-Americans. Live entertainment, free food for children, games and more aim to make this a weekend of unity and celebration.

For more information visit *juneteenthalaska.com.*

June 22

Army Birthday Ball

All ranks are welcomed to this Army ball at the Hilton starting at 6 p.m. Lt. Gen. Michael Ferriter will speak. For information, contact a unit representative or call 384-2067.

June 23

Mayor's Marathon

Join runners and walkers from around the world for the annual half marathon or full marathon, a 5K, and a Youth Cup.

The longest day of summer kicks off at 8 a.m. from Bartlett High School to West High School.

For information, call 786-1325 or visit *mayorsmarathon.com.*

July 4

July 4th Celebration

The citywide celebration of Independence Day features a parade at the Park Strip, a pancake breakfast and tons of activities for the whole family. For information visit *www.anchoragejuly4thcelebration.com.*

July 6 through 8

Girdwood Forest Fair

The fair features Alaska artists, hand-crafted items, exotic foods and entertainment from all over the state. The event kicks off with a parade Saturday at 10 a.m. with parking at the Alyeska Resort daylodge.

July 6 and 7 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and July 8 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. For information, visit *www.girdwoodforestfair.com.*

Ongoing

Volunteers needed

Volunteers are needed to help organize games and activities for children, and to set up and tear down equipment at the Military Appreciation Picnic June 8 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

To volunteer, call 552-3598 or 552-7456.

Volunteers needed

Volunteer referees are needed for the CrossFit Games during the Arctic Warrior Olympics June 8.

If you want to be a referee or participate in the games, call 552-2629.

Sing-along at the zoo

Pre-school aged children 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-alongs are 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 free meals Fridays at 6 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.

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

Motorcycle training

The Basic Rider Course, Basic Rider Course 2 and Military Sport-bike Rider Course are now accepting applications.

All military personnel and those civilians who use motorcycles as a duty requirement need to be certified.

To register, visit *www.militarysafepmv.com* and select Elmendorf-Richardson, or contact the safety office at 552-5092 or 552-6850.

Road Warriors running

Want to get out and run?

Military and civilian alike are welcome to train regularly with the group and get involved with monthly running, biking and swimming events with the Road Warriors.

For information, check the Road Warriors (Alaska) Facebook page or call 384-7733 or 552-1361.

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, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday
11:30 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel Center
Thursday
11:30 a.m. – Hospital Chapel

Confession

Saturday
6 p.m. – Soldiers' Chapel
Monday though Friday
Before/after 11:40 Mass – Soldiers' Chapel

Protestant Sunday Services

Joint Liturgical Service
9 a.m. – Elmendorf Chapel 2
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 Gosho
7 p.m., first Friday of the month – Chapel Center (10427 Kuter Ave.)

FSS EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

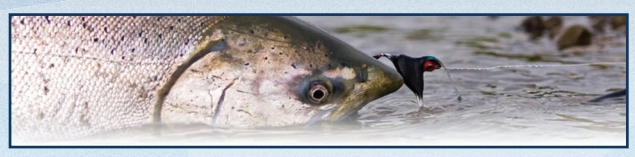
RECREATION

HILLBERG CHALLENGE
4.5 MILE CROSS COUNTRY RUN
JUNE 15 · Race Starts 12 P.M.
SIGN UP 11 A.M. @ HILLBERG SKI AREA
JBER ELMENDORF FITNESS CENTER
BLDG. 9510 · 552-0610

COMBAT X-COUNTRY SERIES MOUNTAIN RUN
JUNE 15 · 1 P.M.
FREE @ ARCTIC VALLEY SKI AREA
BUCKNER PHYSICAL FITNESS CENTER
BLDG 690 · 384-1308

TRIPS

SEWARD JBER RECREATION CAMP
NOW - JUNE 30
50% OFF SUNDAY-THURSDAY RESERVATIONS
AUGUST 11 - 19
SHOW US YOUR SEWARD SILVER SALMON DERBY TICKET AND RECEIVE 25% OFF YOUR STAY
FOR RESERVATIONS 552-5526
OR (907) 224-5425



FISHING LICENSES
AND KING STAMPS FOR SALE
OUTDOOR RECREATION JBER ELMENDORF
BLDG 7301 · 552-2023

ATV SAFETY COURSE
JUNE 12, 19 & 26 · 1 - 5 P.M. · $50
FREE IF YOU HAVE YOUR OWN ATV.
CALL FOR LOCATION
JBER RICHARDSON
OUTDOOR RECREATION
BLDG. 7301 · 384-1475

EAGLE RIVER
WHITEWATER RAFTING
JUNE 6 & 7 · 5 - 8 P.M. · $49
OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAM
BLDG. 7301 · 552-4599

ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON

COMBAT FISHING

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett
JBER Public Affairs

SEWARD — At 4 a.m. on a Thursday, the sun was rising above the mountains as fire trucks lined the streets next to the fishing docks here May 24.

A mother and her daughter carrying signs of welcome positioned themselves behind the trucks and waited eagerly. They didn't have to wait long; soon two shuttle buses arrived, escorted by police cars, carrying two loads of military troops.

Some had returned from deployment; others would soon be deploying. Their mission today: the Annual Armed Services Combat Fishing Tournament.

Some of the troops were experienced anglers. Some had never fished before. All were looking forward to the Alaska experience.

"I wanted to experience one of the things that people are supposed to in Alaska, so when I took the opportunity to come fishing today," said Airman 1st Class Rhonda Anderson, 673d Aerospace Ground Equipment technician. "I have zero experience fishing. Back in the day I used to try to make fishing poles with sticks and yarn but that didn't work."

Several charters volunteered their services; Anderson's charter was called Sea Quest.

"We've been doing this for a full six years, since the tournament started," said Sean Carlin, Sea Quest charter captain. "We happily volunteered for 'Combat Fishing'. It's been a good time; it's the least we can do for what you guys do for our country. You guys go to war so that we can go fishing every day."

The captain first took the group to a spot in hopes of catching fish weighing in at more than 100 pounds.

None were caught, although there were some bites, including one that took the entire rig – evidence of a fish weighing a great deal larger than that.

Some of the more novice fishers took the time to adapt to the situation and equipment.

"I definitely feel like I'm being taken care of here," Anderson said. "It's a lot easier than I thought because I had no idea what I was doing at first. I'm hoping to catch a big one or a billion little ones, as long as I catch something…one would be nice."

She was among the first to get a bite, reeling in a small shark. It was on the restricted fish list along with octopus and skates and had to be released.

The morning went really well, Carlin said.

"It's kind of fun to do the hog-hunting in the morning," he said, "It slows things down and gives everybody a taste of both worlds of the fishing here at Seward. It's definitely slower fishing when you're going for the 100-plus pound fish, but as you can see patience does pay off.

"I mean it's not every day you break a 250-pound filament line right in half within a matter of seconds. Those fish were well over 150 pounds. We got to see what they look like when they bite and they run. Next time we'll get to see what they look like on the hanging rack, hopefully."

Carlin soon decided it was time to get more action, and moved the group to a new location. Soon, fish began filling the boat as everyone began reeling hard. The rigs, including weights, pulled enough on the line to sometimes make it difficult to tell if a fish was at the end of it. More often than not, "Fish up!" was shouted after several minutes of reeling.

LEFT: Air Force Staff Sgt. Casey Love catches a rockfish during the Annual Armed Services Combat Fishing Tournament near Seward. Love is a member of the 773d Civil Engineer Squadron and a native of Yuba City, Calif.

"The afternoon bite was fantastic," Carlin said. "It was slow picking in the beginning but tried and true paid off and we got a nice variety of fish. We ended up with I think six yellow eyes which is always nice for a halibut haul, we got a nice yellow back, we got 30 halibut total; not one shy of the legal limit so that turned out pretty good."

The captain recommended the annual combat fishing trip, or just charter fishing, to experienced fishers and novices alike.

"We normally get a good variety of first timers and fishers of various experiences," he said. "We love taking out first timers because they get so excited throughout the trip. That's easy to please. Some of these guys used to catching a walleye or bass, these smaller halibut at the end of the day triple some of the fish that they catch. How often do you find a fish to pull 220 feet all the way up? It's a nice feel to it. These fish are fires."

Judging took place during a ceremony that evening, where more than $50,000 was given away in cash and prizes, organized by the Armed Forces YMCA.

"The judging is different this year than it has been," he said. "The big fish doesn't win this year; it's going to be mystery fish. They're pulling sizes out of hats and if you had a four and a half pound halibut and they pull that, then you're a winner."

In the past, the captain had seen someone submit a small halibut as a joke. "He ended up winning $1,500 or something like that. So who knows? It's kind of different stakes this year. Anybody can be a winner."

While no one on Sea Quest caught anything weighing near 100 pounds, Carlin said he was pleased he gave the troops a good time.

"There's limited time out there," he said. "We could have caught a 200-plus pound fish today but it does take the better part of the day of salmon carcasses and just waiting. This is more fun with just action, action, action which is what a lot of these guys want to see, that's what they see overseas and they want to see it on the boat.

"Half of these guys are jumping out of airplanes with parachutes and so I'm sure everybody was getting a little bored in the beginning but it was good to see everyone's frowns turn upside down once we got to a mass of halibut."

Coordination to make an event of this magnitude takes collaborated efforts.

"In 1994, I decided to become a charter operator and it's been every summer since," said Jim Lee, Swell Time charter captain and Combat Fishing tournament coordinator. "There are five active committee members, plus several staff of the Armed Services YMCA. A fair amount of the town is involved; definitely the majority of the charters are involved.

"By the second year, we needed more boats and so I joined in and this will be my fifth year participating out of the six years of the tournament," he said. "For the last three years I've had the honor of coordinating the boats for the tournament and this year I actually got to sit on the committee that helped plan the tournament."

Lee puts his time and effort into these events because it feels right to him.

"For me, it just seems like the right thing to do," he said. "I don't know that we can do enough for our enlisted folks. I've always been about supporting the military, I was raised that way. Part of it stems from what I learned in high school about how our Vietnam veterans were treated when they came back home. That, to me, was such a disservice for the guys that were out there protecting our freedom.

"This is a heart-felt way for me to try to make sure that that doesn't happen this time. It's an honor to participate and take our enlisted people fishing, a relaxing day on the water, to enjoy what Alaska has to offer…take their minds off what they are going through or have gone through."

Anderson said she loved the entire experience.

"The view on this trip is absolutely gorgeous," she said. "People should do this; if I get the chance to do this again I definitely will, every time. Seward is beautiful; the trip down here was gorgeous too. I'd like to sight-see some more here. It was so cool how the firefighters saluted us when we came in; I wasn't expecting that."

ABOVE LEFT: Airman 1st Class Rhonda Anderson waits for bites along with several other military troops during the annual Armed Services Combat Fishing Tournament in Seward. Largely organized by the Armed Services YMCA, several fishing charters donated their services for the event, and over $50,000 in cash and prizes were awarded to everyone that participated in fishing. Anderson is a 673d Aerospace Ground Equipment technician and native of Red Bluff, Calif.

LEFT: Military troops collect their halibut and other fish after putting them on display during the annual Armed Services Combat Fishing Tournament held at Seward. Prizes were awarded for random weights drawn from a hat instead of solely for biggest fish. Recently deployed or deploying troops are selected first for the annual daylong trip. (U.S. Air Force photos/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)