

ARCTIC WARRIOR



Soldiers from 1st Squadron (Airborne), 40th Cavalry Regiment, and Airmen from 3rd Air Support Operations Squadron maneuver jointly during a react to indirect fire scenario on Molybdenum Ridge in Alaska's Donnelly Training Area June 20, 2011. Airmen of 3rd ASOS deployed with Soldiers of 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, to the Afghanistan provinces of Paktika, Paktya and Khowst. (U.S. Army photo/SpC. Reese Von Rogatz)

Airmen of 3rd ASOS integral part of Task Force Spartan

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf
JBER Public Affairs

It was the middle of the afternoon on a hot day in Afghanistan. Soldiers were on patrol when they took small arms fire from multiple directions.

After the smoke cleared and no casualties were reported, the ground force commander decided to dismount and engage the hostiles while the gunners in the turret provided covering fire. He took into consideration the fire came from multiple directions and decided to use a weapon he brought with him – his radio. He called the Joint Terminal Attack Controller over and asked him what support is in the area.

The JTAC informed him there was an A-10 Thunderbolt II in the air and suggested they use that asset before chasing after hostiles. The commander told the JTAC to have the pilot take out the hostiles and provide air surveillance while the ground team continued the mission.

This fictional, but realistic, scenario is an example of what a JTAC and radio operator, maintainer and driver (ROMAD)

could face in a combat zone. The 3rd Air Support Operations Squadron here on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson works hand-in-hand with the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, to provide Air Force support to the brigade's combat mission.

"Our job downrange is to provide close air support for the Army scheme of maneuver," said Senior Airman Ethan Brown, 3rd ASOS ROMAD, a native of Pinedale, Wyo.

JTACs and ROMADs are liaisons between the ground forces and the aircraft in the area of operations. Ground commanders have an advantage when they have a tactical air controller party with them. JTACs and ROMADs are proficient with their equipment and are always ready to give answers to the ground commander and relay any relevant information to the aircraft supporting the unit on the ground.

A TAC team is made up of one ROMAD and one JTAC and deployments with them are slightly different than what a normal Air Force deployment looks like.

See 3rd ASOS, Page A-3



Airman 1st Class Hugo Espinoza, 3rd Air Support Operations Squadron radio operator, maintainer and driver, a native of Miami, Fla., operates a pocket laser range finder during training on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Jan. 26. The 3rd ASOS works hand-in-hand with the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf)

Air Force structure changes to affect JBER, Eielson Air Force Base

Public Affairs staff report

Air Force officials announced proposed force structure changes Feb. 3, which will move an active-duty F-16 Fighting Falcon fighter-equipped aggressor squadron from Eielson Air Force Base to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, while retiring four Alaska Air National Guard C-130H Hercules cargo aircraft at JBER – both actions scheduled for fiscal year 2013.

The actions are part of a greater Air Force effort to save \$8.7 billion during the next five years through infrastructure consolidation and the retirement of 286 aircraft throughout the Air Force, including 227 in FY 2013.

According to the Air Force strategic guidance, a total of 19 F-16s currently assigned to the 18th Aggressor Squadron at Eielson Air Force Base will make the move to JBER. The 18th AS replicates threat fighter aircraft during training exercises with Air Force, joint and allied aircrews.

JBER's four C-130s scheduled for retirement belong to the Alaska Air National Guard's 144th Airlift Squadron. The action reflects Air Force plans to retire the fleet's oldest C-130H aircraft. The scheduled retirement will also end the 144th AS association with 3rd Wing's 537th Airlift Squadron, an active-duty unit.

According to Secretary of the



F-16 Fighting Falcon Aggressors of the 18th Aggressor Squadron taxi on the flight line at Eielson Air Force Base. The squadron is scheduled to move to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in fiscal 2013, while the Alaska Air National Guard will lose four C-130H cargo aircraft at JBER. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Christopher Boitz)

Air Force Michael Donley, the Air Force is working to shape the force to best support the Defense Department's new strategic guidance.

"We've had to adjust our force structure based on our strategic objectives and to balance capability and capacity with constrained budgets," Donley said. "We must have the right tools and enough of them to credibly deter potential adversaries and to deliver on our objectives."

The new strategic guidance requires the joint force to maintain capability of prosecuting one large-scale, combined-arms campaign, with sufficient combat power to

simultaneously spoil the efforts of a second adversary. The Air Force's approach to support the new guidance is to retire fighter, air mobility, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platforms that are beyond those needed to meet the capacity requirements of the guidance.

"Where possible, we attempted to retire all aircraft of a specific type, allowing us to also divest the unique training and logistic support structure of that aircraft," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz. "When that was not possible, we worked to retire the oldest aircraft first, and redistributed air-

craft into effective and economical units, eliminating other units when that was most efficient. Where we retained older aircraft, we are taking steps to ensure that they will remain viable into the future."

Schwartz also emphasized the Air Force will avoid a hollow force by protecting readiness at all force levels, and strengthen integration of the total force team of active duty, Guard and Reserve Airmen.

"To ensure an agile and ready force, we made a conscious choice not to maintain more force structure than we could afford to properly train and equip," Schwartz said. "We've taken this approach to preserve the capabilities the nation requires of its Air Force."

For fiscal years 2014 to 2017, the Air Force plans to reduce 50 or more aircraft from its inventory, continue to reshape the missions between the total force, and increase Reserve component participation in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance as well as cyber missions.

In individual and joint news releases during the last week, Alaska's congressional delegation stated their opposition to the move of the F-16s as well as the retirement of the C-130s.

(With reporting from Ann Stefanek, Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs; and Mitch Gettle, Air Force Public Affairs Agency.)

FET team trains for tough mission

By Army Staff Sgt. Jason Epperson
TF Spartan Public Affairs

KHOWST PROVINCE, Afghanistan — "To boldly go where no man has gone before" could be a mission statement for a group of paratroopers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, Task Force Spartan.

Twenty-five female Soldiers from the Alaska-based brigade are assigned to Female Engagement Teams, with the mission to interact with women and children in Khowst and Paktya provinces in Afghanistan.

The country's cultural norms restrict most direct communication between men and women, making the FETs an important part of building connections with the local population.

"We can interact with 50 percent of the population that the males cannot even look at, so we have that access," Task Force

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Paratroopers of 725th BSB sustain Spartan Brigade in Afghanistan

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

The paratroopers of the 725th Brigade Support Battalion in Afghanistan are keeping the Soldiers of the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division supplied while facing critical deadlines, harsh terrain and hostile territory, said 725th BSB Commander, Lt. Col. Brad Hinson.

Hinson highlighted the unit's mission and praised his Soldiers' accomplishments in a telephone interview from Afghanistan Feb. 1.

The 725th BSB is serving along with the rest of the 4-25th ABCT on what is planned to be a 10-month deployment.

"We distribute all classes of supplies and resources to every location within the area of operation of our brigade," Hinson said. "We cover an area just over 19,000 square miles with various terrain that is often inhospitable and required various delivery methods. This is in addition to the other contributions we provide, like regular maintenance capabilities for brigade vehicles and equipment as well as advanced medical services such as a field trauma team, X-ray capabilities and a TBI (traumatic brain injury) clinic."

Among the accomplishments of the 725th BSB, he noted, is the dependable resupply of fuel to forward operation bases in the brigade's area of operation.

An average FOB can consume as much as 55 gallons of fuel daily. That requires regular travel across rugged terrain that can take as long as 10 to 14 hours via armed resupply patrols on local unimproved roads.

The 725th BSB also sustains several of the brigade's more remote FOBs by air.

"We currently operate up to five contracted rotary-wing aircraft for personnel and supply distribution in addition to our access to military aircraft within our area of operation," Hinson said. "They routinely fly around 50,000 pounds of equipment and around 150 personnel daily."

In addition to the services and reliable supply lines that the battalion sustains, the Soldiers of the 725th also provide some



Sgt. Joshua Stevens, a parachute rigger with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 725th Brigade Support Battalion, prepares to hook up a sling load to a contracted helicopter at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Jan. 3. (U.S. Army photo/Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael Morris)

services to the locals as needed.

"We have been known to provide medical support to the local civilians when we can," said 725th BSB Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Morrison. "It is rare for us to turn away a civilian that approaches us for medical assistance, especially children or injuries that threaten life, limb or eyesight. Any community contributions that we provide in that area can only have positive lasting effects down the road for us."

"New Soldiers in the 725th BSB are quickly taught what is expected of them as well as the commander's motto for the unit.

"No mission fails due to logistics," Hinson said. "We will not let that happen during our time here and we stress that to all our Soldiers from the moment they arrive to the unit."

The unit, which deployed in November, prepared for its deployment with several training missions in areas like the Donnelly Training Area, which closely simulated the rugged and mountainous terrain of Afghanistan in the winter. The unit also took part

in the brigade training mission at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La., the Army's primary pre-deployment training facility.

"The training at JRTC was really the culminating event for the year prior to our deployment," Morrison said. "It allowed us to closely work with the entire brigade in realistic missions that mirrored what we were expecting to accomplish later during the deployment."

"But there are just some things that can't be replicated," Morrison continued. "That's why it is so important for us to stay ready for all possibilities on the ground."

The unpredictable weather, rugged mountains and enemy presence ensure the members of the 725th BSB remain on high alert, keep situational awareness and the ability to adapt to any situation. They have the capability and training to air-drop their needed supplies via military aircraft at a moment's notice and the tactical training to defend their convoys as they ensure timely distribution.

As many as five other battalions, including infantry, artillery and other service and support units, depend on logistics support from the 725th BSB.

"We like to show off our front-line guys, but the fact of the matter is we couldn't move an inch without (the 725th BSB) pushing out their supplies to us," Capt. Chase Spears, 4-25th public affairs officer said.

'Graduate-level logistics'

The paratroopers assigned to the 725th BSB constantly operate graduate-level logistics and mission planning, according to Morrison.

Their daily operations require five days of planning that includes contingency operations and backup plans to ensure the successful delivery of supplies and services.

Constant route recon and enemy movement history are considered for every operation from the lowest level up to the final approval at brigade headquarters.

No unnecessary risks or delays are ever accepted when developing the plan to conduct their operations, according to Morrison.

"Our Soldiers have been working hard to ensure our missions succeed, we are extremely proud of both the monumental effort they have put forth and the results they produce," Morrison said. "We are looking forward to getting them some much needed R-and-R so they can get a break and spend some with their families back home. They deserve it."

Hinson stressed that, despite the common assumption that logistics personnel assigned to a unit like the 725th BSB are safe and constantly behind the wire, his Soldiers are routinely out in the fight and are often shoulder to shoulder with the infantry Soldiers on the ground, especially on resupply convoys and medical distribution missions.

"I am extremely proud of everything the Soldiers of my unit do," Hinson said. "They do what they do better than anybody else. We train them right from the day they step foot in Alaska because we want them to stay safe and we want to see them back home to their families when our time is done here."

SERE instructors teach Airmen to survive, escape

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett
JBBER Public Affairs

There are only approximately 400 Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape specialists in the Air Force, and two of them reside at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Greg Avey and Tech. Sgt. Reid Beveridge are SERE specialists and belong to JBBER's 3rd Operations Support Squadron's Weapons and Tactics Flight.

They are responsible for ensuring all pilots and aircrew receive their required training for combat survival, water survival, emergency parachuting and conduct after capture.

"In the event there is an aircraft malfunction over enemy territory, if it's possible, they'll return to home base, or the other option is to ditch over water due to the capabilities of the Navy," Avey said. "Sometimes the situation doesn't allow either of those and they crash in the enemy's back yard."

All pilots have to rely on is the equipment in their aircraft, he said.

This particular survival course is required every three years for Airmen assigned to the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron.

When these specific Airmen initially went through this course, it was 17 days long. They spent a week in the woods



Air Force Staff Sgt. Greg Avey sets off a red-smoke signal after starting a fire using snow-covered branches and twigs from the surrounding trees during his Survive and Evade class on Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson Jan. 26. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barnett)

learning different survival and evasion techniques.

When they attend the refresher course, training consists of a day in the classroom

and in the woods and another day of water survival training which is also required every three years.

During the morning hours the crew was

instructed on how to survive and evade if they were to become isolated in a combat situation. They were also briefed on pre-deployment preparations and preparation for a long-term evasion.

Later on that morning they learned the basics of personnel recovery and emergency planning. The refresher class also covered the basics of land navigation using a map, compass and Global Positioning System.

By noon the class was out in the wilderness where they had to use snow-covered tree branches, pieces of bark and twigs to make a fire. They also applied their knowledge to practice concealing themselves individually and in groups, and used their navigational equipment and skills to find their way to their rescue point.

"It's very important training; the survivor is always going to be the weakest link an evasion scenario," said Air Force Maj. Danny Lewis, 962nd AAC. "It's important to be familiar with technology that we don't use on a daily basis."

The training Avey provides could be the difference between being rescued and captured.

"Now your mission is to survive, evade, resist and escape," Avey said. "This refresher training takes lesson learned from people going through current operations and applies that new information."

DoD now prorating imminent danger pay

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

Service members now will receive imminent danger pay only for days they actually spend in hazardous areas, Pentagon officials said here today.

The change, which took effect yesterday, was included in the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, which President Barack Obama signed into law Dec. 31.

"Members will see the prorated amount in their Feb. 15 pay records," Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. John Kirby said.

The act called for DOD to pay service members imminent danger pay only for the time they spend in areas that qualify for the pay. In

the past, service members received \$225 per month if they spent any time that month in an area where the pay was authorized. "This is a more targeted way of handling that pay," Kirby said.

Now, service members will receive \$7.50 a day for days spent in these areas. Personnel who travel to the designated areas for periods less than 30 days should keep track of the number of days they are in the area to verify that they are paid for the correct number of days, officials said.

The military services are working to waive or remit debts for members who may have been overpaid for January, officials said. The services can waive this "when there is no indication of fraud,



Courtesy graphic

fault, misrepresentation, or when members were unaware they were overpaid," Pentagon spokeswoman Eileen Lainez said.

Proration is based on a 30-day month, which translates into a rate of \$7.50 per day. It does not matter if the month is 28 or 31 days

long, officials explained; if service members serve in affected areas for the complete month, they will receive the full rate of \$225 per month.

The Defense Department defines imminent danger pay areas as places where members are subject to the threat of physical harm or imminent danger because of civil insurrection, civil war, terrorism or wartime conditions.

Service members who come under fire, regardless of location, will receive the full monthly hostile-fire pay amount of \$225.

Service members will receive notification of the change via emails, on the MyPay system, on social media sites and via the chain of command.

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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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Active-duty Airmen of C-130-equipped 537th Airlift Squadron settle in at JBER

TOTAL FORCE HERCULES

By Tech. Sgt. Brian Ferguson
JBER Public Affairs

As the C-130H Hercules descended, the seemingly never-ending cloud cover broke at 1,200 feet. The dirt and snow runway came into view and the aircraft touched down soon after.

The rear door opened and a blast of cold air entered the bay. The temperature was approximately 20 degrees below zero and seemed to cut right through clothing. It was time to unload.

The mission to Tin City, Alaska, was in support of the radar site there, providing supplies to the individual working at the site. It was performed with an all active-duty crew — a new C-130 squadron on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

“These site visits are our life-blood,” said Vance Spaulding, Tin City radar site station chief and mechanic. “The sites cannot operate without the supplies we get on these missions.”

The 537th Airlift Squadron was reactivated on JBER in April of 2011. It had been in more than 40 years since its deactivation in the early 1970s at Phu Cat Air Base, South Vietnam. At that time, it was the 537th Tactical Airlift Squadron and they flew the C-7 Caribou.

Now the 537th AS shares the C-130 mission on JBER with the 144th Airlift Squadron, part of the Alaska Air National Guard.

“Our association with the 144th hasn’t been without hurdles,” said Tech. Sgt. Joshua Walker, instructor loadmaster. “However, they have welcomed us and are happy to have the help we provide on a daily basis. We are both learning much about how each

3rd ASOS

From Page A-1

“When we deploy, we don’t deploy as individuals,” Brown said. “It will be a group of (tactical air control party Airmen) that will go with our aligned Army unit.”

The 3rd ASOS is one squadron that doesn’t follow the normal rules of Air Expeditionary Force. AEF puts career fields into bands that determine how often someone is eligible to deploy. Being in an AEF temporary band is not set in stone and someone can still deploy outside their window depending on what is needed and what the Air Force has.

The 3rd ASOS is an Army enabler which means they deploy with the Army but the Air Force still has the say of if and when they go. This is the first time the 3rd ASOS will be

FET

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Spartan Female Engagement Team Officer-in-Charge 1st Lt. Jennifer Simmons said. “We can also get that information a woman is willing to share with another woman. On (one team’s) first mission, their battle space owner said in a situation report that the most significant information came from the FET.”

Because the FETs often patrol with infantry units, physical fitness is a priority, according to Simmons.

“The terrain can be a factor,” Simmons said. “They may or may not go up hills or just long distances in general. You never know what type of situation you’re going to get in, so you need to be able to climb a wall with your full kit. (Since) we are attached to line units we

do not want to place ourselves or our comrades in a position where we are the weaker link because of physical fitness.”

Simmons said it’s tough having two-woman teams per platoon spread out between both provinces.

“It’s harder to get everyone here for training and keeping an eye on everyone to make sure they’re being used properly or if there are issues that need to be addressed,” Simmons said.

Staff Sgt. Chanice Morgan, a special electronic devices repairer assigned to C Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment, Task Force Blue Geronimo, is attached to the FET.

“I went through a month of training at (Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La.) and (Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson),” Morgan said. “That kind of



ABOVE: Tin City, Alaska, radar site employees look on as a C-130H Hercules is unloaded during a site mission performed by the 537th Airlift Squadron. **TOP:** Staff Sgt. Ryan Lilly and Tech. Sgt. Brian Davis pre-flight a C-130H Hercules before takeoff from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Lilly and Davis are assigned to the 537th Airlift Squadron here. (U.S. Air Force photos/Tech Sgt. Brian Ferguson)

other’s organizations operate. We are also working on altering our operations to mirror each others as close as possible.”

The 537th AS shares 12 C-130’s with the 144th AS, and works side-by-side to support JBER.

“We are completely interchangeable on the aircraft. There are no restrictions on who flies on what missions,” Walker said. “When we first stood the squadron up, there was talk about limiting certain missions to the guard or active duty. However, this has been rectified. The mission is exactly the same. That is why such an association works so well. Both units get to benefit from what the other has to offer without any change in the mission.”

Site missions, such as this one, are re-supply operations to long range radar

locations in Alaska. These sites were set up in the 1950s to aid in detecting aircraft crossing the North Pole. The North Warning System consists of 15 long-range radars and 39 short-range radars. The system forms a 2,983 mile long and 199 mile wide “tripwire” stretching from Alaska, through Canada, to Southern Labrador. Today, the 537th AS and 144th AS supply critical infrastructure to keep the sites operational.

“We depend on these missions for supplies,” Spaulding said. “There are no roads, so trucks can’t get here to deliver goods. If it comes here, it comes by plane or barge.”

Tin City is located at Cape Prince of Wales, which is the westernmost point of the mainland Americas. It is less than 100 miles from Russia.

the Air Force, we have to make that seamless transition when we go to the Army side and work with them,” Brown said.

They don’t have to meet only Air Force standards either. As part of the integration into the 4-25th ABCT, the JTACs and ROMADs also have to meet all the Army standards. Becoming Airborne is one of those tasks that the JTACs and ROMADs have to obtain and keep current just like their Army paratrooper counterparts.

The JTACs and ROMADs aren’t randomly running around with the Army or even the brigade; they get attached to a very specific group of Soldiers and that’s who they work with.

The 3rd ASOS isn’t made up of just JTACs and ROMADs. They have personnel attached to them to assist in matters ranging from deployment to finances. They have a support staff including commander’s support staff, supply and vehicle control personnel.

The C-130s carry government equipment, supplies, emergency equipment and food to the sites. Missions occur every three weeks, depending on the weather.

Spaulding said they look forward to deliveries, especially the fresh fruit and vegetables.

“We live out here, and depend on our supply,” he said. “We have never been in a situation where we needed to use emergency rations, and I have been here 11 years.”

The 537th AS also supports worldwide air land, air drop and aeromedical evacuation missions. Most recently, missions have taken them to South Korea, Japan and throughout the state of Alaska.

“Due to the nature of tactical airlift, our aircraft can be found in any theater throughout the world,” said Lt. Col. Robert Wanner, 537th AS chief navigator. “We routinely fly to remote Alaskan radar sites in adverse weather to support the mission.”

Wanner said their goal is to continue developing programs and processes during the next several months to ensure the 537th AS meets full operational capability by January of 2013.

Although the flight to Tin City consisted of an all active-duty crew, the 537th AS routinely makes the site visits with their ANG counterparts.

Walker said he can’t speak on how the ANG members perceive them, but the active-duty Airmen here see the ANG as a fountain of knowledge.

“There is so much that we can learn from these guys,” he said. “Many of our guard counterparts have been flying for well over twenty years. They have more experience flying here in Alaska than we will ever get on active duty.”

The 3rd ASOS also has a detachment at Fort Wainwright they are responsible for. Detachment 1 from Fort Wainwright partners with the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, and is also currently deployed to Afghanistan.

JTACs and ROMADs are truly “purple” when it comes to the joint aspect of Army and Air Force. Without them, that ground commander wouldn’t have the air support and the scenario could have gone differently.

After the strafing run from the A-10 Thunderbolt II and the smoke cleared, the ground unit found itself safe and all threats neutralized. The ground commander told everyone to mount back up and continue the mission. The JTAC told the pilot to keep surveillance while they head back to the forward operating base. The convoy reached the FOB with no incident and the JTAC cleared the A-10 Thunderbolt II to return to base. Mission accomplished.



Pfc. Leslie McDowell and Pfc. Demeatia Mills, both of Task Force Blue Geronimo, demonstrate escaping techniques if captured at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Jan. 21. (U.S. Army photo/Master Sgt. Christina Truesdale)

prepared us. It gave us the basic idea of what we’d be doing.”

Though she said the training taught her the basics of the culture,

seeing day-to-day life in Afghanistan was an eye-opening experience for the Cincinnati native.

“The culture is so different than

ours. (I’ve seen) big animals in the house like cows and chickens running around,” Morgan said. “It’s just different.”

Spc. Shawnte Rollins, a field artillery surveyor assigned to B Company, Task Force Blue Geronimo is also a FET member.

She said some of the Afghan women genuinely appreciate the opportunity to speak to the FET Soldiers.

“Sometimes we have to ask politely to leave,” Rollins said. “They just don’t want us to leave. A lot of times we will talk about their health and their family.”

“I love my job,” the Elkhart, Ind., native said. “When I first went through the training I wasn’t sure how it was going to work with me, (because) I never worked with women like this before. I love the FET team. I believe it’s a good idea for the Army to keep it going.”

SNOW PATROL

Paratroopers of
Task Force Gold
Geronimo patrol
Paktya province



ABOVE: Spc. Robert Irwin, an infantryman with Dog Company, Task Force Gold Geronimo, conducts a security patrol in the Paktya province Jan. 30. TF Gold Geronimo is part of the Spartan Brigade.

TOP: Sgt. Bryan Hauser, an infantry squad leader from Tamworth, N.H., assigned to 2nd Platoon, Dog Company, Task Force Gold Geronimo, conducts a security patrol in the Paktya province, Jan. 30.

LEFT: Pfc. Nick Badis, an infantryman from Highland, Calif., assigned to Dog Company, Task Force Gold Geronimo reinforces a building at Combat Outpost Zormat to protect Soldiers in the event of indirect fire Jan. 30. (U.S. Army photos/ Staff Sgt. Jason Epperson)

Briefs and Announcements

Disposition of personal effects

Army Capt. Brett Haker, 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, is authorized to make disposition of personal effects of Sgt. Shane L. Guszregan, 1-207th Avn., as stated in Army Regulation 638-2.

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of the deceased should contact Haker at 428-6326.

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 552-3912 or 552-7321 for JBER-E; for JBER-R call 384-1040.

New hospital wing

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

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

For more information, call 580-6602.



Donations needed

U.S. Army Alaska and the Make-A-Wish Foundation will be helping to make a Dallas youth's dreams come true by making him a Soldier for a Day on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. The family is in need of clothing to be properly prepared for the cold weather and the family's participation in the ceremonial start of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race March 3.

Donations of new or gently used snow boots, snow jackets, snow pants, hats, gloves, face-masks and goggles are being collected by the U.S. Army Alaska Public Affairs Office through Feb. 24 for two boys and the sponsored youth's mother and father.

Needed sizes for the two youth are boys medium (8-10) for clothing and boy's size 1 and boys size 2 for snow boots. The sizes needed for the parents are mens extra large (38-42) clothing, mens size 9 snow boots, womens size 12 clothing and womens size 8 snow boots.

Anyone interested in providing the needed items should call 384-2019 or email mary.m.rall.civ@mail.mil no later than Feb. 24.

Utility allowance changes

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

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

customer accounts.

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

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

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

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

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

Snowmachine orientation

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

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

For more information, call 552-2023.

Furnishings management

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

The FMO also has appliances for Airmen residing off base, for longterm use.

Delivery and pick-up is provided for 90-day loaner furniture and appliances. The FMO also has longterm furniture for ranks E-1 through E-5.

These items are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The

service member is responsible for transporting these furnishings. Airmen should take a copy of PCS orders to the Government Housing Office at 6346 Arctic Warrior Drive to schedule delivery. Call 552-2740 for any questions regarding the FMO program. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Soldiers can call 384-0092 for the JBER-Richardson FMO.

U-Fix-It Store reopened

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 ma-

chine is currently located at the JBER-Elmendorf location.

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

Rental Partnership

The Rental Partnership Program is available to all eligible active-duty members and consists of two options. The first option, RPP Plus, includes utilities and sometimes cable costs providing an easier budget with a set rental payment year round.

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

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

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

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

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

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.



DOUBLE RESCUE

Air Station Kodiak Coast Guardsmen rescue 11 from 2 fishing vessels

Air Station Kodiak personnel unload a patient Jan. 25 from a MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter. Jayhawk crews, supported by HC-130 Hercules crews, rescued 11 fishermen from two different vessels. (Photo courtesy of Coast Guard District 17)

Coast Guard District 17
News release

Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter crews rescued 11 fishermen from two different vessels near Kodiak Jan. 25.

Communication Station Kodiak watchstanders received a call from the 58-foot fishing vessel Kimberly, home ported in Juneau, stating the vessel had run aground in Portage Bay and needed assistance at about 8 p.m. Tuesday.

An Air Station Kodiak Jayhawk crew launched at about 9:30 p.m. and arrived on scene within an hour. Foul weather, including

sustained 60-knot winds with gusts up to 90 knots and 16-foot seas, prevented the aircrew from rescuing the personnel at that time. The Jayhawk crew returned to Kodiak to refuel and a Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules airplane crew and a second Jayhawk crew were launched to assist the crew of the Kimberly.

As aircrews were returning to assist the Kimberly, Coast Guard Sector Anchorage watchstanders received a mayday call at 6:30 a.m. from the fishing vessel Heritage south of Kodiak with seven people aboard. The second Jayhawk crew was redirected to assist the 68-foot Heritage. Air Station Kodiak launched a third helicopter crew to assist the Kimberly.

The third helicopter crew arrived at the Kimberly's location, safely hoisted all four crewmembers and arrived at Air Station Kodiak at 10:30 a.m.

The second Jayhawk crew continued to the Heritage's location, arriving at approximately 7 a.m., and began rescuing survivors.

Two crewmembers were safely hoisted from the water and the crew from the good Samaritan vessel crew, the fishing vessel Tuxedni, rescued the other five crewmembers from a life raft at 7:40 a.m.

The second Jayhawk crew returned to Kodiak with the two rescued Heritage crewmembers at 9 a.m. and the Tuxedni took the passengers to Lazy Bay.

The crews of both vessels were wearing survival suits and are reported to be in good or fair condition.

"As medical personnel for the Coast Guard, it's very important for fishing vessels to take survival gear with them when they go out," said Petty officer 2nd Class Jose Varela-Santos, a flight corpsman with Air Station Kodiak. "The waters in Alaska are dangerous and treacherous and can kill you quickly. Thankfully, these crews had gear and were able to put it on in time."

Marine Safety Detachment Kodiak personnel are investigating the cause of the Kimberly grounding and the Heritage sinking.

Army, Air Force bowlers
knock down frames,
Page B-4

Working dog struts
skills in Anchorage,
Page B-6

www.jber.af.mil/news

COMMUNITY

Volume 3, No. 6

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson

February 10, 2012

Singles get more opportunities on JBER

By Chris McCann
JBER Public Affairs

As the military has moved toward joint basing to cut costs and increase interoperability, there have been some headaches and growing pains as personnel learn to adjust.

There have also been some real triumphs. One of those on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson has been the BOSS program.

Originally "Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers," it started in 1989 as a forum for barracks-dwelling Soldiers to improve quality of life for their fellow troops. Over time, it evolved into a program of recreation and community service as well.

When Fort Richardson and Elmendorf Air Force Base merged, BOSS opened up to Airmen as well, and in October 2011, as many installations went joint, it formally became Better Opportunities for Single Service members on joint bases.

Since the merger on JBER, BOSS has attracted even more Airmen than Soldiers, said installation BOSS President Sgt. Tim Kacillas.

Vice-president Tech. Sgt. Carina Rodgers, who serves as the unaccompanied housing flight chief, works with both Soldiers and Airmen.

"We do a lot in the dorms," she said. "We have three college classes at a time taught at night in the dorms, so people can go to school without even leaving."

They also host Friday-night meals at which wing leadership and chaplains mingle with the enlisted troops, Rodgers said.

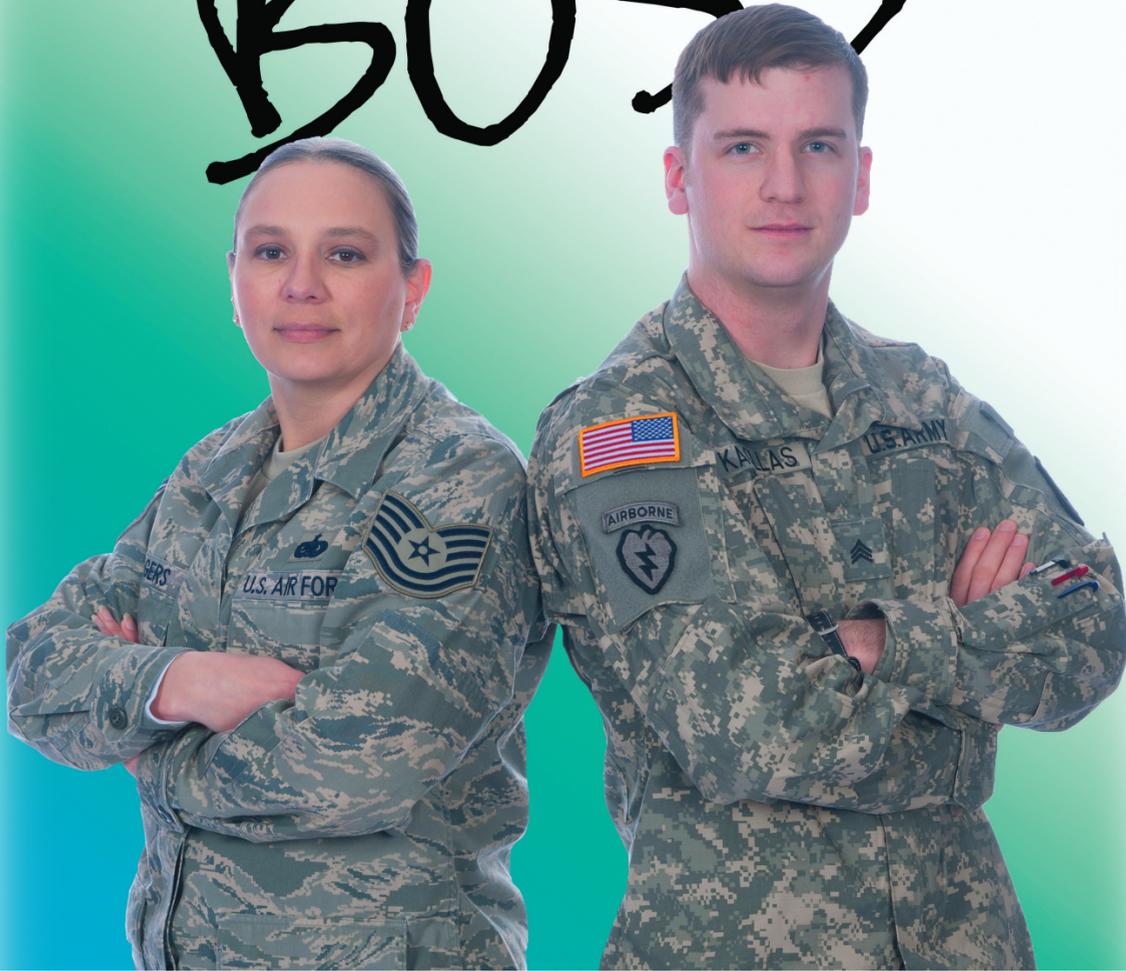
The BOSS program has three pillars – recreation, community service and quality of life, Kacillas said. Service members often go into the community and help feed the homeless.

"Once a month, we cook about 50 pounds of spaghetti and feed people," Rodgers said. They arrange to serve the meals on days when the local soup kitchen is closed.

Kacillas got involved with BOSS when he returned from a deployment with the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division.

"I started participating in events, and became a unit representative," he said. Before the installations merged, he was vice-president of the organization. After re-

BOSS



Tech. Sgt. Carina Rodgers and Sgt. Tim Kacillas, vice-president and president of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's Better Opportunities For Single Service members organization, have been leading the program since before JBER existed as a joint base. BOSS is based on three pillars – recreation, community service, and quality of life for the enlisted troops. The organization hosts many events on and off JBER, such as hikes, snowmachine trips, and feeding the homeless. (U.S. Air Force photo illustration/Chris McCann)

enlisting, he was made president.

Rodgers got involved with the program because of her job – as the unaccompanied housing manager, she was a natural fit.

BOSS is funded under Army regulations, but the Air Force doesn't address such a program, Kacillas said. Airmen were eager to get involved when the opportunity was presented, and now the ratio is approximately 60 percent Air Force and 40 percent Army.

One of the biggest challenges for both sides of the installation is distance, Rodgers said. Although it's one base, the barracks area on the Richardson side is separated from the Elmendorf-side dorms by about five miles.

"Lots of people don't have cars, but it's still one club," Kacillas said. "We borrow 15-passenger or 9-passenger vans, and people car-pool. There's always some form of transportation, people can call us for rides."

The merger has been fantastic, Kacillas said.

"It's a beautiful thing. It brings cohesion," he said. "Soldiers and Airmen get the best of both worlds, and participation in events has doubled."

"It used to be kind of taboo to go to the

(Arctic Chill on) Richardson, or to eat in the dining facility," Rodgers said. "Now it's not, with both working together. People visit the other side."

The number of events possible has also increased, Kacillas said. And when the Army side doesn't have an event going on, he publicizes events on the Air Force side. Rodgers does the same when there's not an event on the Elmendorf side.

On Thursday, BOSS hosted a luncheon for unaccompanied females on JBER, focusing on sexual assault awareness. Representatives from the Anchorage Police Department, the Office of Special Investigations and a self-defense trainer spoke about preventing assault.

The organization is planning a similar event geared for males in March.

Drug and alcohol abuse awareness is another push for the program; they often host events that allow service members to wear "beer goggles" that simulate blurred and distorted vision from drinking too much, and give attendees the opportunity to try navigating a slalom course on a tricycle.

Between 20 and 30 service members attend each meeting, Kacillas said; each

unit on JBER sends a representative. When there's an event, though, attendance can top 200.

"It depends on if we're piggy-backing," Kacillas said. Often BOSS teams up with Outdoor Recreation to offer special trips or classes, like riding ATVs or snowmachines. Attendance can then be limited by the number of machines, so it's on a first-come, first-served basis.

"A busy Soldier is a happy Soldier," Kacillas said. "We keep people active so there's no cabin fever."

Events are generally alcohol-free, although occasionally they're hosted at places on JBER where alcohol is permitted.

"We encourage safe, responsible drinking," Rodgers said. "We might have a couple of beers at the Arctic Chill, and ensure everyone has a ride home."

BOSS leadership is also open to suggestions as to what service members want, Rodgers said.

"We ask 'What is it you want to do?' If it's not provided, what can we do to provide it. We want to be a venue for what they want to do and make everyone feel embedded in the base. Soldiers and Airmen are valuable, and their opinions are valued. Some people ski, some people just want to work out. Some people like playing video games. So

we arrange ski trips and things at the gym and there are at least two gaming tournaments a month."

The program is "by singles, for singles," Kacillas said. Although neither he nor Rodgers are now single, they are committed to continuing the program. It has been a happy journey, they both said.

"It's given me more respect for the other services," Kacillas said. "The Airmen always come through on volunteer work, always."

Singles, geographical bachelors and single parents are all welcome, he said.

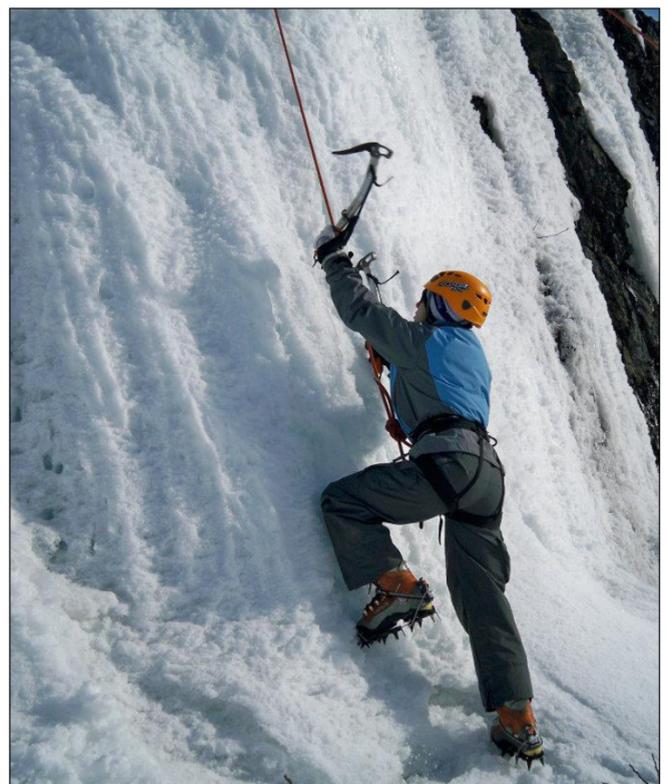
There is even some participation from the Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard personnel who work on JBER, and they expect that participation to grow.

"I love this program," Rodgers said. "I'm so glad I joined. I wish the Air Force had something like this when I was coming up. This is how we build better leaders – let the junior enlisted know we care about recreation, community service and quality of life issues. And in turn, they're better Soldiers and Airmen for us."

"We start from the junior service members and build up."



RIGHT: Ice climbing is a fun and challenging sport that some members of Better Opportunities for Single Service members take advantage of during Alaskan winters. (Photo courtesy of JBER BOSS)
ABOVE: Service members perform as "Burning Alice" at a BOSS-sponsored battle of the bands. BOSS gives single and unaccompanied service members opportunities to serve the community and improve overall quality of life as well as recreational outlets like skiing, video game tournaments, and more. (U.S. Army photo/Percy Jones)



National Prayer Breakfast brings service members together for strength

Commentary by Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Matthew Clouse
673d Air Base Wing chaplain

In 1953, President Dwight D. Eisenhower and members of the Senate and House of Representatives established the Presidential Prayer Breakfast on the first Thursday of February.

From its inception, the National Prayer Event has been celebrated annually in Washington by the president, congressional members, local business leaders, student leaders and international dignitaries.

Since the 1980s, the event has been held at the Washington Hilton on Connecticut Avenue.

The National Prayer Event is not intended to focus on one particular religion – main speakers have varied over the years and come from Jewish, Muslim and Christian traditions.

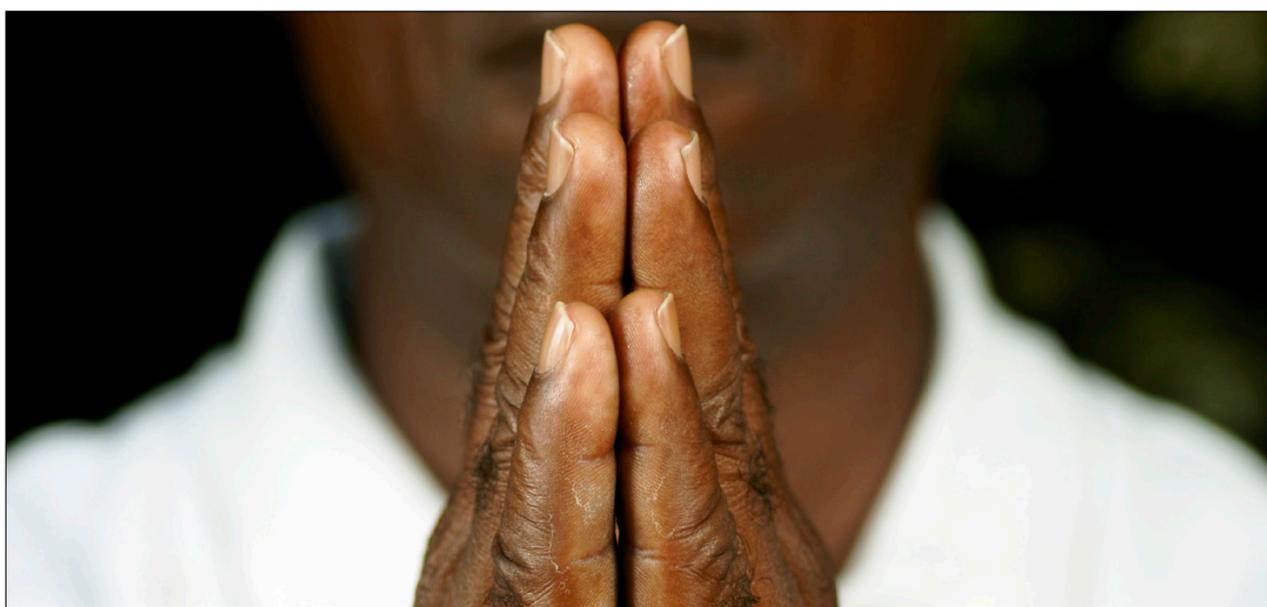
Instead, it is a time for key leaders to join in support and prayer for the nation, as well as for national decision makers who carry heavy burdens.

Though originally begun as a prayer breakfast, the National Prayer Event now includes breakfasts, lunches and dinners hosted in nearly 200 countries.

The U.S. military has regularly participated in this international prayer tradition.

Though our missions and scheduling do not always allow the event to occur on the historical event date, we maintain this prayer tradition during the same calendar year.

We assemble as service members, intentionally looking beyond our own capabilities and towards the transcendent for guidance and blessing.



File photo

In such dynamic times as the present, this event continues to be a testament to our continued reliance on the transcendent to help order our steps as a nation.

Chaplain Corps members from the Army and Air Force, active-duty, Reserve and National Guard, proudly join together to lead our community in voluntary prayer.

The Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson 2012 National Prayer Breakfast will be hosted Feb. 22 at 8 a.m. in the Arctic Warrior Event Center's Susitna Room.

Breakfast burritos will be provided starting at 8 a.m., followed by the prayer program at 8:30.

Donations will be accepted for our volunteer cooks' organizations, the Top 3 and Rising 6.

This year's main speaker, Chaplain (Brig. Gen.) Howard D. Stendahl, joins us from the United States Air Force Chief of Chaplains' Pentagon Office.

As the Deputy Chief of Chaplains, Stendahl assists the chief of chaplains in establishing guidance on all matters pertaining to religious and moral welfare for Air Force personnel and their dependents.

The chief and deputy chief are responsible for maintaining a trained, equipped and professional Chaplain Corps of more

than 2,200 chaplains and chaplain assistants from both active and Reserve components.

As a member of the Armed Forces Chaplains' Board, Stendahl and other members advise the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on religious, ethical and quality-of-life concerns.

Stendahl entered the Air Force in 1985 from the civilian pastorate.

Chaplain Stendahl will speak on "resilience in the community of faith."

So mark your calendars and plan to participate in this proud tradition of faith and prayer. For information, contact the Chapel Center at 552 4422.

Story of three 'immortal' chaplains reminds us of the importance of faith

Commentary by Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Todd Dickman
673d Air Base Wing Chaplain

In 1988, the United States Congress unanimously acted to establish Feb. 3 each year as "Four Chaplains Day."

At 1 a.m. Feb. 3, 1943, a convoy of three ships and three escorting Coast Guard cutters passed through "torpedo alley" some 100 miles off the coast of Greenland.

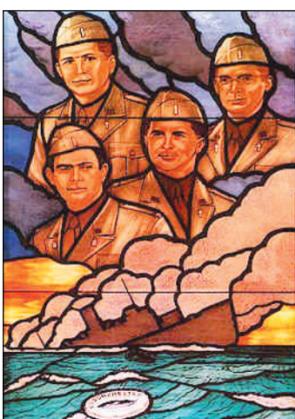
The German submarine U-223 fired three torpedoes, one of which hit the midsection of the Dorchester, a U.S. Army troop ship with more than 900 men on board.

Ammonia and oil were everywhere in the fast-sinking vessel and upon the freezing sea.

The four chaplains on board,

Father John Washington (Catholic), Reverend Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed), Rev. George Fox (Methodist), and Rabbi Alexander Goode (Jewish), were among the first on deck, calming the men and handing out life jackets.

When there were no more life jackets remaining, they took off their own and placed them on waiting Soldiers without regard to faith or race.



Courtesy graphic

ing, praying. I could also hear the chaplains preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept

me going." Approximately 18 minutes after the explosion, the ship went down.

As Soldiers rushed to lifeboats, the four chaplains spread out, comforting the wounded and directing others to safety.

One survivor, Pvt. William Bednar, later said, "I could hear men crying, pleading,

me going."

Another survivor, John Ladd, said of the chaplains' self-sacrifice, "It was the finest thing I have seen, or hope to see, this side of heaven."

The four chaplains were later honored by the United States Congress and by several Presidents.

They were recognized for their selfless acts of courage, compassion and faith.

According to the first sergeant on the ship, "They were always together, they carried their faith together."

They demonstrated throughout the voyage and in their last moments true interfaith compassion in their relationship with the men and with each other.

I obviously never had the privilege of meeting these four chap-

lains, but I can offer a guess as to what it was that enabled them to handle themselves with such decorum and to offer themselves for the good of the men on that ship.

Faith. B.C. Forbes, who founded Forbes magazine, said, "The person who has faith has an inward reservoir of courage, hope, confidence, calmness and assuring trust that all will come out well – even though to the world it may appear to come out most badly."

Our hope, as Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson chaplains, is that you have faith that empowers you to live and die well.

If you don't have that kind of faith, we hope you will allow us the privilege of assisting you in developing it.

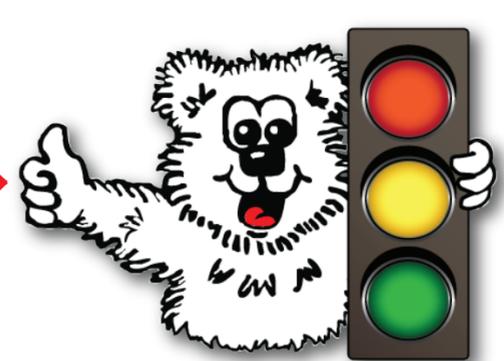
Peace be with you.

673 FSS

Customer

Appreciation Week

February 17 - 23



Stop
&
Go

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

See What's Free For You



February 16

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

PRIZES

\$2012 FSS

Enter to win

\$673 FSS Gift Cards

\$290



Check us out on Facebook @ [facebook.com/JBER673FSS](https://www.facebook.com/JBER673FSS) to Win Northern Lights Coupon Books, Tote Bags, Mugs, and MORE

Community happenings

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
The Music of Queen
 The Anchorage Symphony Orchestra will rock you with this tribute to the music of Queen. Featuring the ASO and rock musicians as well as a 50-voice chorus, this show takes place at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. For information call 274-8668 or visit anchoragesymphony.com.

FRIDAY THROUGH FEB. 18
The Blue Bear
 Based on the book by Lynn Schooler, this performance is about finding and losing a close friend. Schooler grows to trust again as he creates this portrayal of a remarkable friendship. The show plays at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, Thursday through Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 4 p.m. For information call 263-ARTS.

SUNDAY
Black History family day
 The Anchorage Museum hosts this cultural day, which includes a performance by The Greater Friendship Baptist Church choir and other African-themed activities from 2 to 4 p.m. For information email shenning@anchoragemuseum.com.

TUESDAY
Valentines luncheon
 The Richardson Spouses' Club hosts "Loving Yourself From the Inside Out" from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Naval Operations Center at the corner of D St. and Otter Lake. For information visit frsc.shutterfly.com.

WEDNESDAY
Alaska fight championship
 Who needs UFC when there's the Alaska Fighting Championship? Alaskan fighters – some of whom go on to large-market venues – battle it out at Sullivan Arena starting at 7:30 p.m. For information email sarah@alaskafighting.com or call 351-8184.

THURSDAY
Couples Communication
 Family Advocacy hosts this one-hour session at 10 a.m. at the JBER-R Starbucks to help couples – dating or married – learn

to communicate more effectively. For information on this or any other programs offered by Family Advocacy, call 580-5858.

FEB. 17
Mardi Gras spouses party
 The Elmendorf Officers' Spouses' Organization hosts a Mardi Gras party at the Arctic Warrior Events Center from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Celebrate with food, fun and a silent auction. For information call 297-9623 or email pamperedjen@yahoo.com.

FEB. 18
Masters of the Fiddle
 Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy are celebrated fiddlers and bring their French, Cajun, Celtic and Bluegrass stylings to the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts starting at 7:30 p.m. For information email meese@anchorage.net.

FEB. 18 THROUGH 26
The Anchorage Opera presents Macbeth
 Shakespeare's classic tale of the doomed Scots general Macbeth set to grand operatic music by Giuseppe Verdi comes to the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. Catch a show at 8 p.m. Feb. 18, 7 p.m. Feb. 22, 8 p.m. Feb. 24 or 4 p.m. Feb. 26. For information call 263-2787.

FEB. 19
29th Annual Iron Dog
 Two-man teams top speeds of more than 100 miles per hour in the world's toughest snowmobile race over 2,000 miles from Big Lake to Nome to Fairbanks. The race kicks off at a time to be determined. For information email meese@anchorage.net.

FEB. 22
National Prayer Breakfast
 The JBER prayer breakfast will feature burritos at 8 a.m. at the Arctic Warrior Events Center. Air Force Deputy Chief of Chaplains Brig. Gen. Howard Stendahl will speak. For information call 552-4422.

FEB. 24
Fur Rendezvous kicks off
 Celebrating winter like nowhere else, Alaska's largest and oldest winter festival features tons

of fun events. All around Anchorage are events like outhouse races, snowshoe softball and the Running of the Reindeer. For information, call 274-1177.

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

FEB. 25
Silent Auction for troops
 The Fort Richardson Spouses' Club hosts a support-the-troops silent auction at the Alaska Native Heritage Center from 6:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. For information visit frsc.shutterfly.com.

MARCH 3
Iditarod ceremonial start
 World-class mushers and their dog teams mush toward the Bering Sea coast in the Last Great Race. 1,150 miles of race starts in downtown Anchorage at 10 a.m. 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.

MARCH 10
SPiN music festival
 Anchorage's electronic music festival brings light, sound, and themed stage design to the party. Add Matt Darey, StoneBridge, Matt Aubrey and Holevar, and it's a recipe for a great festival at the Egan Center from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. For information email alex@vainlive.com.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapel services

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

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

Confession
Sunday
 4:30 p.m. – Soldiers' Chapel
Monday through Friday
 Before/after 11:40 Mass – Soldiers' Chapel

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

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

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

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

673 FSS Customer Appreciation Activities

ALL WEEK (During Open Hours)

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

JBER RICHARDSON OUTDOOR RECREATION CENTER

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

POLAR BOWL BOWLING CENTER

- Enter to win a Free Birthday Party for 6

POLAR EXPRESS ARTS & CRAFTS/AUTO HOBBY

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

THE PARADISE CAFE AND FAIRWAYS

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

FEBRUARY 21 - 23

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

FEBRUARY 21

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

FEBRUARY 22

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

FEBRUARY 23

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

FEBRUARY 17

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

INFORMATION, TICKETS & TRAVEL (ITT)**

- Free Alaska Aces Tickets Give Away (125 Tickets)

JBER ELMENDORF OUTDOOR RECREATION CENTER***

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

FEBRUARY 18

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

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

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

FEBRUARY 19

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

JBER ELMENDORF OUTDOOR RECREATION CENTER***

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

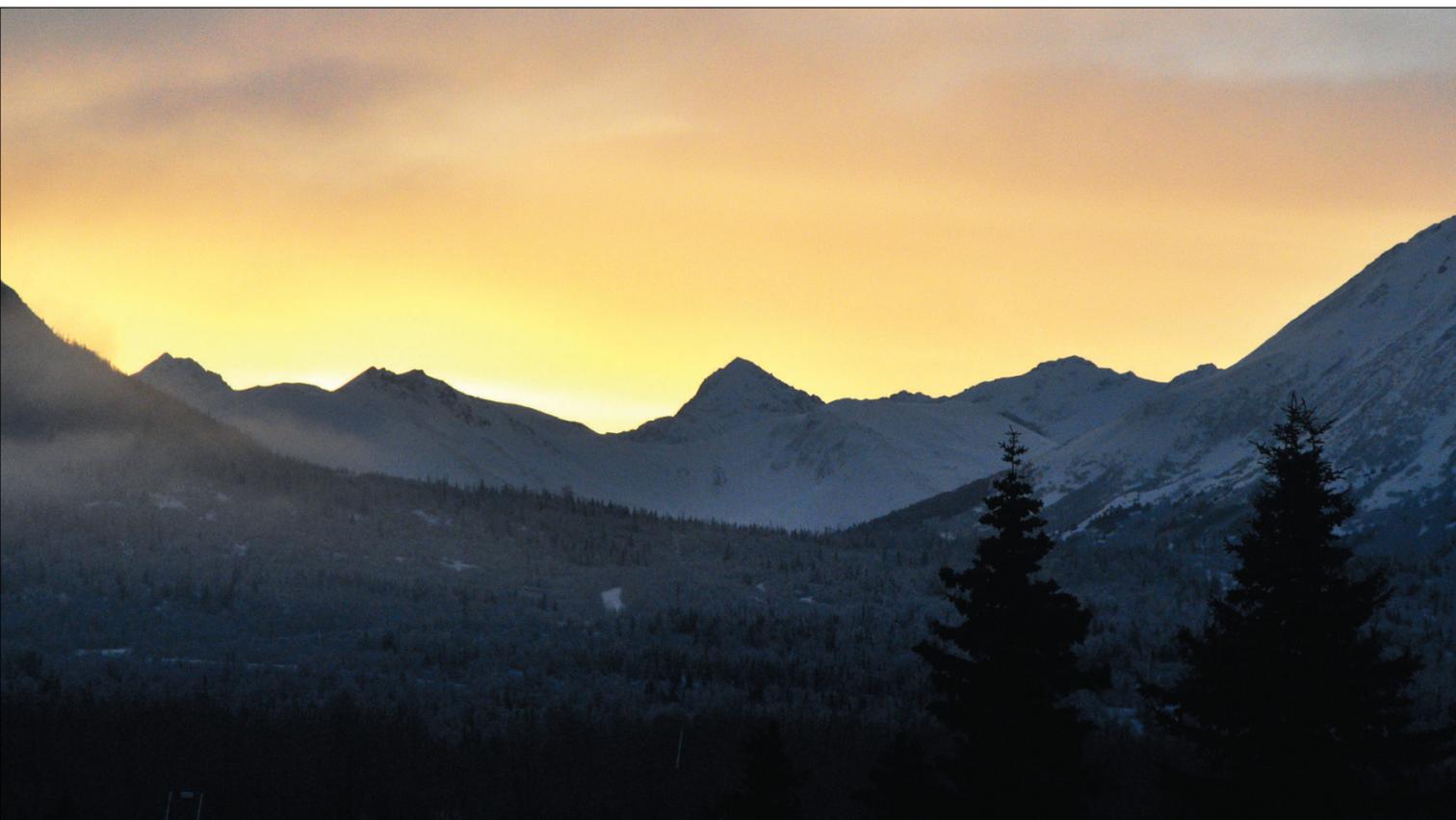


* Hillberg Ski Area Limit 1 Per Person. Must be Present to Receive Ticket. First Come First Served.
 ** ITT: Limit 4 Per Household. ITT not Responsible for Lost/Stolen Tickets. Must be Present to Receive Tickets. First Come First Served.
 *** JBER Elmendorf Outdoor Recreation Center: Cross-Country Ski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

GOVERNMENT LIQUIDATION

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

GOVLIQUIDATION.COM



The sun rises over the Chugach Mountains as seen from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. The sun is rising earlier every day, with days lengthening about six minutes per day. In the evenings alone, we're gaining about 15 minutes per week of daylight. There is so much to do in Alaska that there's no reason to sit in the house waiting for spring – the skiing, ice fishing, snowshoeing and snow-machining are too good to pass up. (U.S. Air Force photo/John Pennell)

Here comes the sun – 42 more minutes a week

Commentary by John Pennell
JBER PAO

Have you noticed it yet? The sun is back and getting stronger every day.

Today's official length of sunlight for Anchorage is a hearty 8 hours, 34 minutes and 52 seconds. Sunrise was at 8:57 a.m. and the sun will set at 5:32 p.m.

Big deal? Oh, heck yes.

That's more than two and a half hours more daylight than this time last month, and we're gaining daylight at a rate of nearly six minutes a day.

That's six minutes a day of easier and safer commuting. That's 42 minutes a week more time to enjoy Alaska's beautiful outdoors and beat back the winter blues.

By the end of the month we'll be basking in more than 10 hours of daylight each day. By St. Patrick's Day we'll have more than 12 hours of sunshine. By April 1, the daylight will stream to us for more than 13 hours. (No fooling.)

By Memorial Day (celebrated May 28 this year) there will be 18 and a half hours of glorious sunlight to begin celebrating the summer season.

This may seem like a headlong rush toward spring, but don't get your hopes up too far; there's still a lot of winter left. (I like to tell friends in the Lower 48 that our spring is just around the corner...and down the hall...and around another corner...and behind a locked door.)

So what do Alaskans do between now and May? Get out.

Some choose this time of year to "go outside." That's an Alaska colloquialism for flying to Hawaii or Mexico or California or anywhere it's warm and they don't know what snow looks like. This is a fun, but expensive option depending on whether you take your spouse and/or kids with you.

If you want to fly more cheaply and have a flexible schedule, you may want to check out the 732nd Air Mobility Squadron's Air



Even beginners can learn to cross-country ski on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Skiing is a good way to enjoy the lengthening days. (Photo by David Bedard/JBER PAO)

Mobility Command passenger terminal and look into space-available travel arrangements. You can get flight information any time by calling 552-4616.

Flights leave almost daily for locations

including California, Japan and even North Dakota.

The rest of us find ways to get out of the office during the day to soak up the sorely missed sunlight.

Maybe it's something as simple as walking across the street to your next meeting instead of driving. Maybe it's standing outside and thinking encouraging thoughts while you watch your co-workers shovel snow off the sidewalk. It all counts.

Weekends evolve from lounging spud-style on the couch and watching TV, into ever-longer excursions outside the house.

Maybe this weekend it's just a quick run to the warehouse store to look for screws and bolts.

Next weekend it could be a trip with friends to go ice fishing, skiing, snowshoeing or for a ride on the snow machine. Heck, even a moderate walk with a four-legged companion is a good option as long as you keep a wary eye out for moose.

Now is a great time to check in with Outdoor Recreation and see what they have to offer to while away the long, sunny winter days that will be coming up.

Just remember, if you're heading into the back country for the day, you should always let somebody know where you're going, what you plan to do, and when you plan to be back.

Avalanche danger increases this time of year as longer sunlight and fluctuating temperatures combine with the season's heavy snowfall to set the stage for potential tragedy.

Check in with the Alaska Avalanche Information Center at www.alaskasnow.org for bulletins, snow observations, weather and education before you head into danger areas.

The Chugach National Forest Avalanche Information Center www.cnfaic.org offers daily updates and advisories for areas inside the Chugach National Forest. Avalanche danger information can also be found at the Anchorage National Weather Service Forecast Office website at <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/avalanche>.

So if it still seems that winter isn't ending, just remember, it is – one snowstorm at a time. Enjoy these months between needing a full-spectrum lamp and needing blackout shades.

Soldiers, Airmen throw free frames at annual Bowl-a-Thon

By Airman 1st Class Ty-Rico Lea
JBER Public Affairs

The Anchorage Chamber of Commerce hosted its 14th Annual Bowl-a-Thon at the Center Bowl in Anchorage during Military Appreciation Week for the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson community.

The Bowl-a-Thon lasted from 2:30 to 7 p.m.

More than \$20,000 is raised at the event annually to fund the Military Appreciation Picnics, which take place on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson each year. Volunteers consisted of An-

chorage Chamber of Commerce members, employees and service members from all branches of the armed forces.

"The Bowl-a-Thon is a fundraising event created by the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce to help fund various future events, such as the joint barbecue that we have in the summer for the military members and their families on JBER," said George Vakalis.

Vakalis also serves on the board of directors and chairman of the military committee of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce.

Vakalis was at the event to personally thank all of the military

members who attended that day.

"The Anchorage Chamber of Commerce has 120 businesses that donated to the event," Vakalis said. Such businesses were the University of Phoenix, United States Air Force Reserve and Armed Services YMCA of Alaska.

"Many other organizations purchased lanes for our military members to bowl free and military members were more than welcome to fill those slots," Vakalis said.

Service members such as Sgt. Leandre Weaver, a native of La Porte, Texas, who serves with the 545th Military Police company, Air

Force Staff Sgt. Andrew McIntosh, a native of Boulder City, Nev., who serves with the 673d Civil Engineer Squadron, and Senior Airman David Gonzalez, a native of Bogotá, Colombia, who serves with the 673d Aerospace Medicine Squadron, came out to join the fundraiser.

"I'm happy to attend these events, especially those that support the military community," Weaver said after finishing his first game.

Participants were allowed to bowl a total of three free games.

"If they keep sponsoring these types of things, I'll keep coming,"

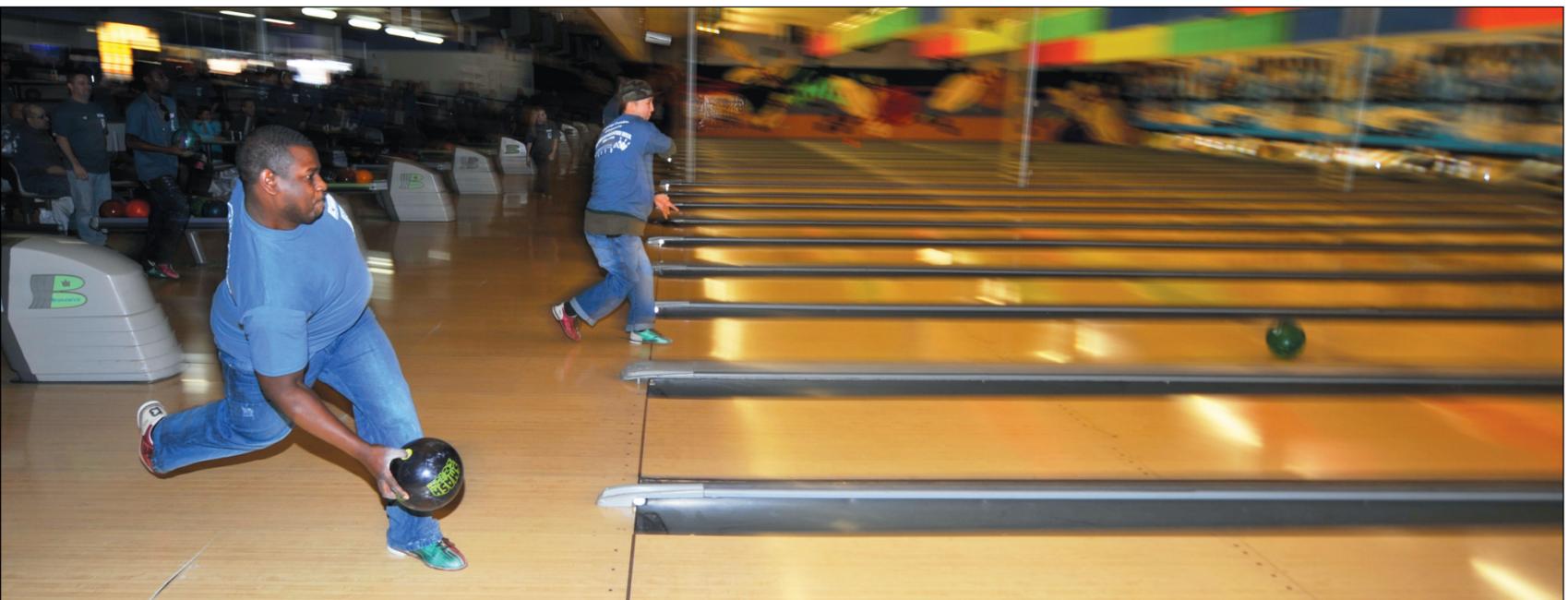
Weaver said. This was his second time participating in the Bowl-a-Thon.

Only a few lanes down from Weaver was McIntosh, bowling despite being in an arm cast after recently injuring himself in a snowboarding accident.

"This is my third time participating in this event," McIntosh said.

He explained that Airmen from his squadron felt the desire to come out and join the occasion.

"The way these Bowl-a-Thons are every year, I expect a lot more people to show up for the next one," said Weaver.



Army Sergeant Leandre Weaver of the 545th Military Police Company, and a native of La Porte, Texas, (left) bowls at this year's annual Bowl-A-Thon at the Center Bowl in Anchorage Feb. 4. The Anchorage Chamber of Commerce sponsors events like this in appreciation to military services. (U.S. Air Force photo/ Airman 1st Class Ty-Rico Lea)

Keep your family's home front safe during deployment

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

During deployments, military families are usually more worried about their service members in harm's way than they are for themselves.

However, civilian family members should take care to make sure that they are not needlessly advertising themselves as easy targets to those who would take advantage of them in a vulnerable time.

Some of the things military families might think of as simply showing support for their loved ones can also be some of the ways they can inadvertently make themselves vulnerable, said Army 1st Lt. Michelle Rizzo, of the 793rd Military Police Battalion at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

"There is a ton of personal information that people willingly post onto social media sites like Facebook," Rizzo said. "Things like where people are going, daily routines, where their kids go to school and where their spouses are deployed to are all too frequently posted online when they normally wouldn't offer up that information in a conversation."

While people may add others to their page in a "friend" status, that doesn't always mean they really know the people to whom they are granting access, Rizzo said.

Safety officials on base say you should be mindful of what you decide to post on personal social media sites and refrain from mentioning anything you wouldn't want a total stranger to know.

Avoid questions that could indicate you are currently away from your spouse for an extended period of time, as it may make you more of an appealing target for robberies or other crimes.

Carefully monitor your children if they are allowed access to the Internet – especially younger children, as they tend to be more trusting than adults, and may unknowingly give information best

kept private.

Money matters

Another issue that can take families by surprise during a deployment is finance.

With the addition of extra money and the possibility of someone new assuming control for the paying of all bills there is the chance for some serious financial turmoil, according to Richard Bowman, director of the Defense Military Pay Office at JBER.

"While not the only issue that families may face, irresponsible use and mismanagement of the Eagle Cash Card (a reloadable debit card which allows deployed Soldiers immediate access for their funds in remote locations) is definitely one of the biggest issues that can quickly damage financial stability during a deployment," Bowman said.

Lack of communication about purchases back home and overseas can quickly lead to an overdraft, either from the personal bank of the service member's family, or from the bank that backs the Eagle Cash Card.

Both situations may involve several expensive fees and temporarily deactivate the service member's card while deployed.

"Enough overdrafts and unpaid charges to the card will result in the Soldier's pay being directly deducted to cover the costs," Bowman said.

The easiest way to prevent this is by simply balancing your checkbook and making sure you keep enough money in your account to cover your expenses.

For a deployed Soldier, the Eagle Cash Card can be used to withdraw up to \$350 within a 24-hour period.

Communication with deployed family members before making large or large-than-normal purchases can help coordinate funds so that any deployment withdraws by the Soldier are covered, according to Bowman.

While deployments are stressful enough by nature, maintaining situational awareness while your loved one is away can help make the time apart easier to manage and keep stress at lower levels.

Family Readiness Groups are great sources of information for additional ways to safeguard yourself and your families. FRGs are just one of the many different methods the Army reaches out to assist families, Rizzo said.



Dog day afternoon

Air Force Staff Sgt. Beaun Clegg from the Military Working Dog section of the 673d Security Forces Squadron portrays an uncooperative individual in a working dog demonstration at the Alaska Mill and Feed warehouse Feb. 6. Staff Sgt. John Whisman, also from the 673d SFS, releases Palli to subdue the "stubborn person" as community members from around Anchorage look on. (U.S. Air Force photo/Johnathon Green)

