

ALASKA POST

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Daily News - Miner

Home of the Arctic Warriors

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Fort Wainwright, Alaska

February 20, 2015

Odierno visits Fort Wainwright

Staff Sgt. Mylinda DuRousseau,
1st SBCT PAO

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno met with leaders from across U.S. Army Alaska, during his first trip to Fort Wainwright, Feb. 10. While visiting, Odierno observed training sites within the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex, discussed USARAK's partnerships and its ability to rapidly deploy across the Pacific, observed training at the Northern Warfare Training Center, spoke to leaders from 11 nations at the inaugural Cold Regions/Military Mountaineering Collaborative Training Event, and shared his vision for training and readiness with USARAK leaders. "This is about you having a unique capability of mountaineering in a harsh environment," Odierno told service members attending the cold regions training event. "It's important we develop these capabilities together. [We]

want to make sure whoever our adversaries are that they understand — no matter where you are or how harsh it is, we can get there." Soldiers assigned to USARAK at the NWTC train units and leaders to fight and operate in the mountainous arctic environment, which USARAK calls home. "Here we encounter some very different leadership challenges," Odierno said. When training in extreme cold weather environments, attention to detail can be the difference between life, death or serious injury. "In these environments, failure to perform correct equipment checks or not packing the correct gear for a mission, can lead to injuries like frostbite." Maj. Gen. Michael Shields, USARAK commanding officer, said the most common cause of frostbite they see in Soldiers is when they don't follow the standard operating procedure of pulling their balaclava mask over their cheek

and nose during marksmanship training. Touching exposed skin to a weapon in sub-zero temperatures can quickly lead to frostbite on the cheek or nose, Shields said. Odierno said attention to detail required in situations like this when operating in Alaska's conditions can help develop young Soldiers and serve them well throughout their career. While USARAK is the Army's northernmost command and its Soldiers are known for being "Arctic Tough," the command also specializes in partnerships and rapid deployment across the Pacific and boasts the Army's premier high-altitude, extreme cold weather capability. U.S. Army Alaska maintains partnerships with Japan, Nepal, Mongolia, Bangladesh, India and Canada. These partnerships are continuously built upon through training exercises including North Wind, a

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Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno watches as a Soldier from 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment demonstrates how to start a fire with dry tinder and no flame. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Mylinda DuRousseau, 1st SBCT PAO)

Money stressors: Saving makes more cents

Teresa White,
Fort Wainwright PAO

Its tax time again. Those expecting a return this year are undoubtedly mulling over the options of what to do with it. It might surprise you to know that 90 percent of Americans plan to pay off or pay down debt, save or invest their return.

"With the average tax return being \$2000 to \$3000, you certainly want to make it stretch and work in your favor," said Monica Teel, accredited financial counselor and Financial Readiness Program manager at Army Community Service. "The first thing to consider is how much money you have in your emergency fund."

Teel says that \$1000 is the minimum, but that you ideally want enough money saved to cover all of your expenses for at least a month.

"Add them up — rent, car payment, alimony, child support, insurance, utilities, cable, internet, phone, credit cards, gas, groceries, etc. for the month. That is the amount that you should have saved in your emergency fund, if not two or three times it," said Teel. "The goal is to avoid debt should you find yourself without a job or in another loss of income situation."

Do not rely on credit cards for your emergencies, warns Teel; it creates a debt cycle and you end up paying more due to interest.

If your emergency fund is adequate, the next step is to tackle debt. "Paying down or paying off any debt is always good, but focusing on your high-interest debt, like your credit cards, is where most people should start as balances can negatively affect your credit score," said Teel.

With your emergency fund as a cushion and your debt under control, it becomes time to think about more long-term saving.

"Hopefully, everyone is already contributing to their TSP. It works like a 401k and reduces the military member's taxable income, which is basically free money. Less money going to taxes means there's more money to go toward retirement savings,"

said Teel. "The other option you might want to consider is opening and contributing to a ROTH or Traditional IRA. Saving for retirement now means peace and financial resiliency down the road. I always tell people, 'what you put away today will be the kind of life you create for yourself tomorrow'. That goes for all saving."

Earmarking the return for future expensive purchases or life events, like PCS-ing, is also an option. "A PCS can have a lot of upfront costs like lodging, restaurants, rental car, gas, a security deposit, etc. I suggest that Soldiers save at least \$3000, more if they have dependents and pets with them



or if they plan to take leave en route to their next duty station. The goal is to remain debt free."

That's the point. Debt is not your friend. Living paycheck to paycheck is not your friend. Debt can actu-

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Army listening sessions in Fairbanks

Staff report,
Fort Wainwright PAO

The public is invited to attend either of two listening sessions taking place on the potential downsizing effects to U.S. Army Alaska personnel at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage and Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks.

The JBER listening session will take place in Anchorage and is scheduled for Feb. 23 at 6 p.m., at the Dena'ina Center.

The Fort Wainwright listening session is scheduled to take place in Fairbanks, Feb. 24 at 5:30 p.m., at the Carlson Center.

During these two

public events, Army representatives will provide an explanation of why the Department of the Army is currently considering this potential downsizing and hear the community's perspective on the impact of reducing Army manpower at JBER and Fort Wainwright.

For more information, a copy of the SPEA and Draft FONSI are available online at <http://aec.army.mil/Services/Support/NEPA/Documents.aspx>.

The final October 2014 publication can be found in the "Programmatic EA" section under Final Finding of No Significant Impact for Army 2020 Supple-

mental Programmatic Environmental Assessment Force Structure Realignment. A hard copy print version can also be found in Fairbanks at the Noel Wien Public Library and the Delta Community Library in Delta Junction. Fort Wainwright specific information begins on page 89 of the publication.

The Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA) updated the January 2013 PEA by assessing the impact of a potential reduction of an additional 70K Soldiers (down to an active component end-strength of 420K). The Army accepted comments from

the public for 60 days and considered them before reaching the decision that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with implementing the proposed action.

The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was published Nov. 14, 2014. Force structure decisions are commensurate to downsizing the Army to an end-strength influenced by Sequestration. Before force structure decisions are made, additional analyses and data gathering will occur, including community listening sessions at each of the 30 installations and military value analysis for each



BCT installation. A direct link to the publication is: <http://aec.army.mil/Portals/3/nepa/Army-2020SPEAFNSI.pdf>

WEEKEND WEATHER



Friday

Increasing clouds. Highs in the mid to upper 20s. East winds



Saturday

Mostly cloudy with a chance of snow. Highs in the mid 30s.



Sunday

Partly cloudy. Highs around 30. Lows around 5

BRIEF

Free archaeology lecture today

The Fort Wainwright Community is invited to a free lecture by University of Alaska Fairbanks Museum of the North archaeologists Josh Reuther and Schott Shirar. They will be speaking about their research on how humans were affected by large volcanic eruptions 2,000 to 4,000 years ago in the Alaska Range and western Alaska. Post archaeologist Julie Esdale will give a short introduction to the talk and the archaeology of Fort Wainwright. The lecture will be held at 6:30 p.m., in the Ballroom of the Last Frontier Community Activity Center located at 1044 Apple St. For more information, call 353-9405.

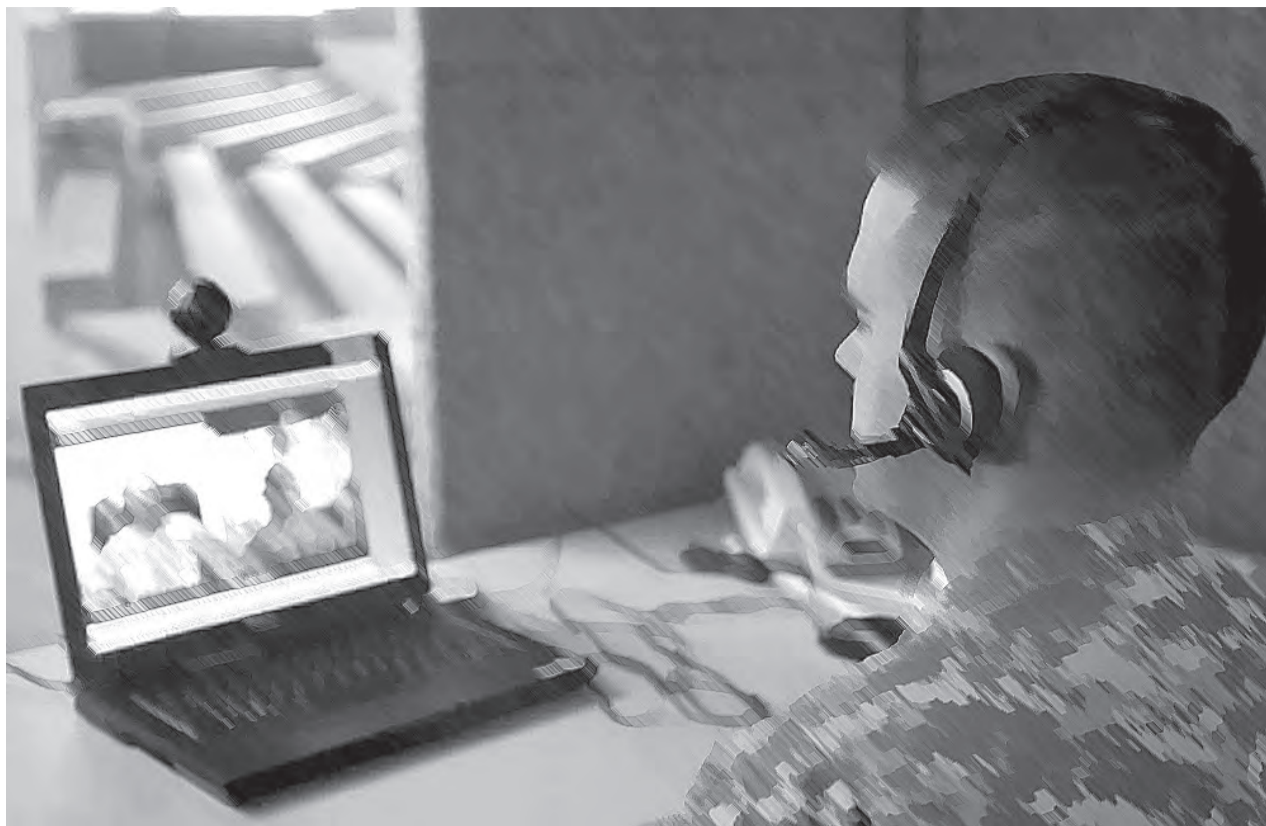
Tele-ASAP: the way ahead for substance abuse

Staff Report,
Fort Wainwright PAO

Nothing changes for the military and federal employees next week when the production, sale and use of marijuana become legal for people over 21 years old in the state of Alaska. Against federal law and the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the drug is still illegal, in any form, on a military installation and for Soldiers in or out of uniform. Fort Wainwright remains vigilant in its security and drug testing to mitigate risks associated with the new state law.

Fort Wainwright's Army Substance Abuse Program, in concert with unit commanders' urinalysis programs, tests Soldiers substantially more than the average Army installation. "Local accessibility to numerous illegal substances contributes to a high rate of abuse and addiction," said Ron Huffman, ASAP Manager.

"The frequent testing, isolated location, extreme climate, separation from extended family and availability of illicit substances has resulted in an elevated number of positive urinalyses," explained Huffman. "Resultant ASAP client pressure requires access to qualified counselors to ensure adequate client care. This need for continuity was the reason for the ASAP Tele-Health initiative, which is a pilot for Army Substance Abuse



Programs with limited counselor resources."

Tele-Health is a program that began in support of deployed Soldiers with behavioral health needs when full-time therapists were required but not available in some areas. The addition of Tele-ASAP to Fort Wainwright's substance abuse program supplements the two, soon-to-be three, full-time counselors on staff.

Huffman said that a concern of Soldier clients was continuity with the same counselor.

"Counselors certainly try to maintain continuity as they comprehend the importance of the relationship and rapport between counselor and client, but they cannot make that guarantee with limited

counseling staff," said Huffman. "Tele-ASAP enhances the capability to maintain client to counselor continuity and access to care."

So, how does it work? The first step after self-referral or being referred is a biopsychosocial assessment by a local ASAP counselor which examines many factors that impact behavior and coping skills.

Client care is based upon the specific needs of the individual and the acuity or seriousness of the abuse, misuse or addiction. High risk clients and clients with multiple issues are provided other helping resources based upon their need.

ASAP counselors carefully triage clients to ensure that Tele-ASAP is appropriate.

The secure video tele-conference facility in the ASAP building provides selected clients a one-on-one counseling experience via web cam with an ASAP counselor or at either JBLM or Fort Carson.

Huffman said the pilot program has been a great success. "It will be utilized with other ASAP units experiencing counselor shortages in the near future," he said. The two Tele-ASAP rooms are currently accommodating six to twelve Soldiers per week. Huffman reports that younger Soldiers and the Soldiers who consider themselves "gamers" adapt especially well to the ease and comfort of the new program.

The overall intent is to sustain mission readiness for all units

at Fort Wainwright. Loss of effectiveness through substance abuse, suicide or related issues, impact not only the units, but immediate and extended families. The way forward is clear.

"Persons who abuse alcohol must make more informed decisions," said Huffman. "Arrange for a designated driver or call a taxi, if you've been drinking. Law enforcement has probable cause for a traffic stop for multiple reasons; snow-obscured license plates or windows, misuse of turn signals or erratic driving often lead to traffic stops and potential driving under the influence charges."

There were 220 substance abuse related fatalities in Alaska in 2014. Alcohol and ille-

gal drug use continues to be a negative influence on military careers and a destroyer of families.

"Knowledge of our peers, colleagues and battle buddies is our most effective tool for early intervention of troubled individuals," said Huffman. "Negative social interactions, financial and family issues are key indicators of potential substance abuse issues. A significant proportion of suicides and domestic abuse are also linked to substance abuse. Be approachable and don't be afraid to ask the tough questions. Be a good listener."

Prescription drug abuse continues to provide challenges with addiction and illegal diversion for recreational use. Accessibility of unused prescription drugs is both a hazard in the home and an opportunity for high-potency pain killers to fall into the wrong hands.

Although flushing unused drugs down the toilet is convenient, a more acceptable means is to deposit unused prescriptions at one of the two Drug Take-Back Day events each year in front of the Fort Wainwright PX. The next scheduled event for Take-Back Day is April 25.

A comprehensive listing of military and local civilian helping resources is available on the following web link: www.usarak.army.mil/crisisassistance/fwa/.

**WARRIOR ZONE
MONTHLY
TABLE TENNIS
TOURNAMENT**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2015
7:00PM

BOSS ICE CLIMBING

MARCH 7TH

COST: \$45

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: 7 MARCH
OPEN TO ALL BOSS SOLDIERS (SINGLE/SINGLE WITH DEPENDANTS/GEORACHELDORS)
TRANSPORTATION INCLUDED AND GEAR INCLUDED. LIMITED SLOTS AVAILABLE.
FOR MORE INFORMATION FIND YOUR BOSS REP OR CONTACT BOSS AT 907.353.7848

MEDDAC Minute

26 Week Health Challenge – Enhance health with sleep, activity and nutrition by taking the Performance Triad 26 Week Challenge. Think about what motivates you to live a healthier lifestyle.

Week 16:
Sleep – Start building a better sleep environment. Minimize disturbances by keeping your bedroom quiet, dark and at a comfortable temperature.

Activity – Keep looking for opportunities for activity in your daily routine. Park further from the entrance, ditch the elevator and take the stairs.

Nutrition – Practice mindful eating. Eat slowly, enjoy your food and stop eating when you are full.

Stay in the Know - For health tips, information on changes to operations, and hospital information, follow us on Twitter @MEDDACAlaska or like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BassettACH>

Blood Pressure Checks – Staff

from the Army Wellness Center will be at the Physical Fitness Center Thursday from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. performing free blood pressure checks and body composition testing.

Water Challenge - The Army Wellness Center is running a 30 Day Water Challenge. Drink 64 oz of water each day for 30 days. Start the challenge anytime during the month of February to complete the challenge and earn prizes from the AWC. To register, stop by the AWC, bldg. 4077.

Pharmacy Options – The Bassett ACH pharmacy offers several different options for easily renewing a prescription:

Online at www.alaska.amedd.army.mil. Click on "pharmacy" and then "prescription refills"

Online at www.tricareonline.com
Call (907) 361-5803

Refills submitted before midnight can be picked up after noon the next business day.

ALASKA POST

Home of the Arctic Warriors

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The ALASKA POST – Home of the Arctic Warriors

Tips on making a house your home

Teresa White,
Fort Wainwright PAO

The military is often a nomadic lifestyle. It can pose quite the home decorating challenge when moving from 800 square feet to 2000 square feet and back again...again and again. Basic wear and tear on household items from living and moving, as well as collecting pieces here and there (e.g. that shrunk or cuckoo clock from Germany) play a part in the challenge, too. So, how do you pull everything together? Whether you just want a comfortable, functional space or interiors worthy of a magazine, here are a few tips:

Know your style

Look through magazines, catalogues, Pinterest and Houzz. Decide which style suits you and your lifestyle best. It's not only a great way to get ideas, but it will also help to keep you on track the next time an accessory or piece of furniture catches your eye. If you have a difficult time settling on a style, remember that you can blend two or more together to create your own look and feel. You could also draw from your home's architecture for inspiration. Though definitely not a requirement, it's always nice when the style flows from the exterior to the interior and back out again.

Budget

Come up with a budget and stick to it. Moving often means needing new items such as curtains, rugs and art that will fit the new space. This makes being smart about your larger furniture items that much more important. At a minimum, you want great living room seating, a dining room table and a supportive mattress; these three rooms are where you'll spend most of your time. You don't want to replace these or any other large items every two to three years. That cost adds up. Don't assume because you move every few years that you shouldn't invest in sturdy, well-constructed items. That old saying, "you get what you pay for," is true in many cases. Yes, you may have to deal with scratches, but buying a stain pen is much cheaper than replacing a flimsy



item that can't handle a move. Don't worry about filling a larger space. A few great quality, good-looking pieces are always more aesthetically pleasing than a room full of poor quality ones.

Room edit

Get rid of the clutter. Don't keep a piece if it doesn't work in the space. Sell it, donate it, consider if it'll work in another room, put it in storage or refinish it. Use storage items like bookcases, baskets, trunks and ottomans sparingly. Too often they become collectors of clutter, of things we don't need. Having these items is obviously helpful in a smaller space, but only incorporate them if they actually have designated storage. Know when to stop accessorizing. Two or three accessories or group of accessories per room is more than enough. Minimizing knick-knacks will make the room look more organized and spacious because there won't be as many items "pulling the eye" or vying for attention.

Main furniture

Start by determining what you need in the space, what you're going to use the space for and how much time you're going to spend in there. A living or family room, for exam-

The accessories that give you the biggest bang for your buck are mirrors, pillows and lamps. A strategically placed mirror can make the room look larger and brighter.

ple, is often one of the most expensive rooms to furnish because it's the centerpiece of the home; it's where family and friends congregate during downtime or a party. You have to think about how many people you need or want seating for, and what you see happening in the room. Does it need to be child- or pet-friendly? Do you need extra room to maneuver for when you have company?

The safest option is to go with neutral, well-made, medium/average-sized furnishings that will work in almost any setting. A loveseat with two antique accent chairs may be too small for a lot of spaces, just as a large sectional may dwarf others.

Neutral is important because you don't want to make your style statement with expensive items. Accessories are for style and personality because they are easier and cheaper to replace if/when you decide to change things up. Just as important, don't sacrifice comfort for aesthetics.

Accessories

The accessories that give you the biggest bang for your buck are mirrors, pillows and lamps. A strategically placed mirror can make the room look larger and brighter. Pillows can add pops of color and lamps create interest by adding another layer of lighting to the room. Don't be afraid to mix old with new (the same is true of your larger furnishings); it adds depth. Be a savvy shopper; shop clearances, flea markets, secondhand stores, antiques and garage sales. Remember that accessories look best in odd numbers, usually three or five (e.g. three candlesticks together or five picture frames). Be careful not to be too theme happy (e.g. ocean, Americana) as it can be overwhelming.

Create a focal point

Every room should have a focal point; it is usually (but doesn't have to be) the first wall you see when you enter a room (it's where your

eyes naturally want to go first). A focal point can be just about anything, like a painted accent wall, a piece of gorgeous art or a seating area. Ideally, nothing should obstruct the view; you don't want anything taking your attention away or blocking you from seeing it. Wall decor should be placed at eye-level no matter how high the walls. Focus your decorating talents and any leftover budget on that wall/space.

Drama and flash

To add a little something extra to a space, pay attention to the smaller details such as the lighting and plumbing fixtures, kitchen hardware (handles) and electrical outlet wall plates. If permitted, consider changing them out for more decorative options. It's amazing how something so small can transform a room.

Paint

The cheapest way to personalize a space is by painting it. Remember to stay fairly neu-

tral (some communities don't allow any other option) because it's easier to cover when it's time to move, and the lighter the color, the more spacious the room will look. If you do opt for and are allowed to paint with a vibrant color, consider only painting an accent/focal point wall. Though painting would certainly be easier to tackle before all of your furnishings arrive, if you're in the middle of redecorating, consider choosing the color and painting last to ensure the right choice.

There are no rules (except those of your community or landlord)

Unless you have the will, time and money to thoroughly decorate each time you relocate, accept that your home may not be perfect. Be comforted by the fact that there really aren't a lot of design rules, just helpful guidelines. If you think something looks beautiful, then that's all that matters. It just has to work for you.

Important reminder: be sure to ask your housing community or landlord about any alterations (e.g. paint, changing fixtures) you'd like to make prior to doing the work. Fines, mistakes and accidents can be costly.

Odierno: Arctic Tough warriors ready to serve

Continued from page 1

two-week bilateral field training and command-post exercise underway in Japan.

USARAK Soldiers also recently returned from climbing

schools in Nepal and India. An NWT Soldier recently attended a training event in Norway that included being submersed in water in sub-zero temperatures to test his ability to recover himself and his gear

and complete the mission. "That's good. You had the willpower," Odierno told him. Battling cold and conquering mountains is what US-ARAK Soldiers are known for, but like every unit in the Army, they must remain

ready to serve the country wherever they are called to. U.S. Army Alaska's forces were simultaneously validating readiness at Fort Irwin's National Training Center and preparing for the largest Arctic Circle airborne

mission since before the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. These "Arctic Tough" warriors continue to stand ready to deploy, engage and destroy the enemy, whether in the Arctic or the desert.

Saving: Plenty of assistance on money issues

Continued from page 1

ally negatively impact your military career. And with the draw-downs to consider, prudence is key. Besides having career, lifestyle and retirement implications, financial stress is directly linked to higher divorce, domestic abuse and suicide rates. The time to act is now.

"In my experience, more often than not, clients have a hard time sacrificing their immediate wants for their long-term needs," said Teel. "I get it. We all struggle with it sometimes. But being responsible with money is not optional. Start by using your tax return wisely."

To save money on filing your taxes, visit the Fort

Wainwright Tax Center on Gaffney Rd., building 1051, suite 9 on the north side of post. Trained tax-preparers stand ready to assist all active-duty, military retirees and Family members with their simple 2014 personal income tax returns. Walk-in hours are Monday to Wednesday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday noon to 7 p.m., and

Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 353-2613. Tip: file sooner rather than later as income tax return fraud is on the rise.

This column is one in a series of financial columns that will be published in the Alaska Post over the next few months. Topics will range from saving to budget and

debt management. Appropriately, Feb. 23 through 28 is Military Saves week. For more saving tips, a chance to get your free credit score and more, go to www.militarysaves.org and Pledge to Save Today.

For free one-on-one financial counseling or financial readiness classes, call Teel at 353-4369.

USARAK hosts international cold region, military mountaineering event

John Pennell,
U.S. Army Alaska PAO

A trip to Alaska tops many people's bucket list, but not many would want to visit in February. Make the destination a location known for brutal sub-zero temperatures and dangerous, mountainous terrain filled with avalanche hazards and most people would surely pass on the opportunity.

Military people aren't like most people.

So when U.S. Army Alaska Commanding General Maj. Gen. Michael Shields decided to host a collaborative event at the Black Rapids Training Site for partner nation militaries who also have to deal with extreme cold weather and mountainous terrain, a line quickly formed to attend.

Black Rapids, an hour south of Delta Junction in Interior Alaska's wilderness, is home to USARAK's Northern Warfare Training Center, the U.S. Army's premiere cold region proponent. It's the logical destination for representatives from the participating nations to get together and talk about winter warfare, with deep snow, sub-zero temperatures and stunning mountain ranges just outside the front door providing the perfect backdrop.

Even as the event kicked off, Soldiers from



Participants for the three-day Cold Regions Military Mountaineering Collaborative Event arrive at the Northern Warfare Training Center's Black Rapids Training Site, Alaska, Feb. 9-12, 2015. The purpose of this event is to strengthen cooperation, share ideas and improve capabilities with our international partners in cold weather and mountainous regions. Military members from 12 nations are participating in this event, including Canada, Australia, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Japan, Mongolia, Nepal and United Kingdom, as well as various units and service components from across the United States. (Photo by Sgt. Sean Callahan, U.S. Army Alaska Public Affairs)

U.S. Army Alaska's Aviation Task Force – freshly returned from deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom – were training in the nearby snowy mountains as part of

Regions Survival Class. The inaugural Cold Regions Military Mountaineering Collaborative Event, Feb. 9 through 12, saw representatives from Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Cana-

da, United Kingdom, Australia, Mongolia, Nepal and Japan, as well as representatives from the United States Army Mountain Warfare School, Jericho, Vermont; and the U.S. Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, Bridgeport, California, gather to focus on doctrine, equipment and operations among the specialized military schools and units.

The attendees met with a goal of establishing an environment of sharing and learning among international military schools and units that conduct specialized training and operations in cold weather and mountainous environments.

"When we received the invitation it was a tremendous opportunity," said Canadian Lt. Col. Francois DuFault. "In the Canadian Defense strategy, the first priority is the north. For Canada to be able to talk with allies and close partners about

the common issues we are facing when we are training and operating in an arctic environment was a tremendous opportunity."

Lt. Col. Mats Forsman, commander of Sweden's Winter Warfare School, touched on the importance of interacting with other military cold weather and mountaineering experts.

"This is a meeting where we can build networks with each other," he explained. "We always have things to learn from each other. We may do things one way, but the Canadians or Americans or Fins may do it another way. We learn something from each other and together we all become better in winter warfare."

For Maj. Nikolai Lundsteen, representing the Kingdom of Denmark Home Guard, the event was more of a one-way exchange of ideas as his country works to build the capa-

bilities from the ground up.

"For us it's important because we know in the future we need to build new capabilities to operate under arctic conditions, especially in Greenland," Lundsteen explained. "We have no experiences with this. So basically we know our end state is to develop the capability, but we have no knowledge about the ways and means to develop those capabilities."

"For us, this is a fact finding mission where we are trying to find out, on a tactical level, what are the do's and don'ts, and we have certainly gained a lot of knowledge here," he continued. "We are exploring new territories here, so this was the perfect event for us."

The event was a combination of information briefs and hands-on activities such as snowshoeing, cross-country and downhill skiing and equipment demonstrations.



Northern Warfare Training Center 1st Sgt. Robert Whiteley discusses his global positioning system with German Col. Michael Varter and U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Steven Brunner between presentations at the U.S. Army Alaska-hosted international Cold Region Military Mountaineering Collaborative Event at the Black Rapids Training Site. BRTS was the classroom site Feb. 9 through 12 for participants from 12 nations exchanging ideas about tactics, techniques and procedures for dealing with harsh weather and terrain. (Army photo/John Pennell)

Things are about to heat up in the Interior

Allen Shaw,
Fort Wainwright PAO

It's quite the sight to see. Picture a group of hardcore Interior Alaskans gathering bright and early Saturday morning on the Chena River in Fairbanks bundled in arctic gear. Many will be holding a cup of hot coffee in their furry-mitted hands and when they speak you'll be able to see puffs of breath preceding their words. The Tired Iron event, which starts at 10 a.m. Feb. 28, is a two-day carnival-like celebration where people play human "moose nugget" bowling, enjoy free sled dog rides and take a shot at ice putt-putt golfing. The fun and frivolity surrounds the classic snowmachine races and the northernmost and coldest Alaska State Barbecue Association sanctioned event, the 2015 BrrrBQ.

Historically, it proves to be a crisp, cold, clear day to party on the river with crusty, rusty, revving, rip-roaring, smoke-snorting, rubber-peeling snow-travel contraptions from the past.

Spectators watch competitors fly down an ice track while several brave barbecue chefs stand on the banks blazing their briquettes. The days are getting longer, the sun rises higher in the sky and this event is a good reason to get outside.

The Tired Iron trials begin at 10:30 a.m. and a variety of activities are scheduled through 4 p.m. The 2015 Iron Dog



Gina, wife of Maj. Anthony Minderman, pit-master for the Pitbull BBQ team, stays warm while her husband checks temperature gauges on their homemade drum smokers during the 2013 competition. (File photo)

finish should happen between 1 and 4 p.m. and photo opportunities will be available. The festivities will crank up again Sunday at 10 a.m. and conclude with an awards banquet between 7 and 9 p.m.

For more information on the Tired Iron, contact 452-8602 or visit www.fairbankstired-iron.org.

Barbecue isn't just for warm weather anymore. The set-up and meat inspection begins

at 8:30 a.m. Saturday in the courthouse parking lot next to the big clock in Golden Heart Plaza on First Avenue with three categories to be judged – chicken, ribs and tri-tip.

The temperature usually hovers near 30 below zero in the morning as warmly dressed team-members stake claim on spots where the sun would surely shine later in the day.

The competitors will spend the morning stoking

their flames and seasoning their masterpieces, preparing for the afternoon turn-in times. It's a perfect opportunity to stop by and catch a whiff.

While the Tired Iron snowmachine racers rip up and down the frozen river just a few feet away, the fragrance of barbecue fills the frosty air. "In these temperatures it's just a challenge to get your cooker up the right temperature," said Jeff Deckard of Turnin'

and Burnin' BBQ.

Seasoning, saucing and frolicking will continue throughout the day as the outside temperatures are forecasted to climb to a balmy 10 degrees above zero.

Later in the day, judges will gather in the warm confines of a local bistro to taste the cuisine. Competitors will scurry across the icy street like hasty penguins to turn in their entries on time. That is entertaining in itself.

"It's always a good time for everyone and with all the barbecue pits roaring, no one has gotten frost bit yet," said David Pruhs, president, Alaska BBQ Association. "It's just another day in the Last Frontier for a bunch of crazy cookers."

All backyard barbecue aficionados as well as master chefs are encouraged to compete. For more information, call 456-1959 or visit www.alaskabbq.org.

Fort Wainwright

Friday - 20th

SAC OBSERVES BLACK HISTORY MONTH, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., School Age Center, building 4166. Call 361-7394.

POLAR CARE, 9 to 10:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. to noon, Melaven Fitness Center, building 3452. Call 353-1994.

PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC) MEETING, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Youth Center, building 4109. Call 361-5437.

AFTER SCHOOL STORY TIME AND CRAFT, 4 to 5 p.m., post library, building 3700. Call 353-2642.

Saturday - 21st

KARATE ALL AGES SKIE-SUNLIMITED, Murphy Hall basement, building 1045. Call 353-7713.

NTC KIDS BOWL FREE, Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, building 3702. Call 353-2654.

RECREATIONAL SKAT-

ING, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink, building 3709. Call 353-7223.

ICE CLIMBING CLINIC, 5:30 to 7 p.m., Outdoor Recreation, building 4050. Call 361-6349.

WARRIOR ZONE MONTHLY TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT, 7 to 10 p.m., Warrior Zone, building 3205. Call 353-1087.

Sunday - 22nd

BLIND DATE WITH A BOOK, post library, building 3700. Call 353-2642.

NTC KIDS BOWL FREE, Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, building 3702. Call 353-2654.

RECREATIONAL HOCKEY, 4:15 to 6 p.m., Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink, building 3709. Call 353-7223.

Monday - 23rd

SAC OBSERVES BLACK HISTORY MONTH, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., School Age Center,

building 4166. Call 361-7394.

LUNCH TIME RECREATIONAL SKATE, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, building 3709. Call 353-7223.

FAMILY BEACH PARTY, 5:30 to 7 p.m., Post Library, building 3700. Call 353-2642.

Tuesday - 24th

MILITARY SAVES WEEK, ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE, building 3401. Call 353-4227.

VA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW, 10 to 11 a.m., Soldier and Family Assistance Center, building 3414. Call 353-7322.

LUNCH TIME STICK HOCKEY, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink, building 3709. Call 353-7223.

HOUR OF POWER: GROUP STRENGTH CLASS, noon to 12:45 p.m., Physical Fit-

ness Center, building 3709. Call 353-7223.

Wednesday - 25th

POST NEWCOMERS, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, building 1044. Call 353-7755.

PRESCHOOL STORY TIME, 11 to 11:45 a.m. post library, building 3700. Call 353-2642.

NEW PROVIDER BRIEFING, 11am to 12 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, building 1044. Call 353-6266.

Thursday - 26th

MILITARY SAVES WEEK ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE, building 3401. Call 353-4227.

WIN A GAME, Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, building 3702. Call 353-2654.

BABY SIGNS: SIGN SING AND PLAY, 9 to 9:30 a.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, building

1044. Call 353-7755.

ROMP AND STOMP PLAY GROUP, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, building 1044. Call 353-7755.

Friday - 27th

AFTER SCHOOL STORY TIME AND CRAFT, 4 to 5 p.m., post library, building 3700. Call 353-2642.

RECREATIONAL SKATING, 5:30 to 7:45 p.m., Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink, building 3709. Call 353-7223.

Saturday - 28th

ICE CLIMBING, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Outdoor Recreation, building 4050. Call 361-6349.

WOMEN IN THE WILDERNESS DOWNHILL SKIING CLINIC, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Outdoor Recreation, building 4050. Call 361-6349.

RECREATIONAL SKATING, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink, building 3709. Call 353-7223.

IN BRIEF

RESIDENT SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Apply for a Winning Edge Scholarship from WinnCompanies, the firm providing property management and maintenance services here at North Haven Communities, is offering an amazing scholarship opportunity to residents. Find out more, at www.nhcalaska.com/go/scholarship. Applications must be submitted to your community office by April 1, for consideration.

NON-APPROPRIATED FUNDS VEHICLE SALE

Open to the public. March 6, from noon to 5 p.m. in building 3566 on Neely Road, Fort Wainwright. Cash, debit, Visa/MC will be accepted. All items sold as is and must be picked up by 5 p.m., same day.

No children under 16 are permitted. For more information, call 361-7258.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH OBSERVANCE

The United States Alaska Aviation Task Force and the Fort Wainwright Equal Opportunity Office are hosting an African American/Black History Month Observance Wednesday from 3 to 4:30 p.m. at the Physical Fitness

Center on post. For more information, call (863) 272-8663.

BALLROOM DANCE CLASSES

There is an open dance practice Saturday hosted by Ballroom Dance Club of Fairbanks from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Pioneer Park Dance Center. Cost is \$2 for members and \$3 for non-members. Open to dancers of all levels and styles. Take advantage of the music and the best dance floor in town. This is a great chance to practice the steps you learn in class. No partner necessary. Please bring clean, non-marking shoes. Contact: info@ballroomfairbanks.org, 456-3331, or www.ballroomfairbanks.org

CATHOLIC WOMEN OF THE CHAPEL

Fellowship continues Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. at Southern Lights Chapel on the corner of 8th and Neely Rd. Join other ladies for a time of spiritual renewal, building friendships and light refreshments.

Childcare is not provided. For more information, call 353-3476.

WAINWRIGHT OPEN WEDNESDAY

Protestant religious education continues on Wednesday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Northern Lights Chapel on the corner of Luzon and Rhineland Ave.

Come enjoy a no-cost dinner and Bible studies for all ages. Childcare is

provided up to Pre-K. For more information, call 353-3476.

PROTESTANT WOMEN OF THE CHAPEL

PWOC continues on Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to noon at Northern Lights Chapel. Join other ladies for a time of spiritual renewal, building friendships, and light refreshments. Childcare is provided up to Pre-K. For more information, call 353-3476.

FORT WAINWRIGHT CHAPEL SERVICES:

Catholic Mass, 9 a.m., Sundays at Southern Lights Chapel

Catholic Contact for Mass:

CH (MAJ) James Peak, call (907)361-4269 or email: james-j.peak.mil@mail.mil

Southern Lights Chapel is located on the corner of Neely Road and 8th Street, building 4107.

Protestant Service, 10:30 a.m., Sundays at the Northern Lights Chapel

Protestant Contact for the service:

CH (MAJ) Derrick Gutting, call (907)353-6112, or email: derrick.m.gutting.mil@mail.mil.

Northern Lights Chapel is located on the corner of Rhineland and Luzon Ave., building 3430.

TAX CENTER OPEN

Fort Wainwright's Tax Assistance Center is open and ready to serve all active-duty, military retirees and Fam-

ily members with their simple 2014 personal income tax returns. The Tax Assistance Center is located in building 1051, suite 9 on the north side of Fort Wainwright. Walk-in hours of operation are Monday through Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday, noon to 7 p.m., and Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 353-2613.

OFF-LIMITS

The following establishments are off-limits to military personnel assigned or attached to Fort Wainwright and Eielson Air Force Base until further notice:

Mr. Rock and Roll
1452 Cushman Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Mr. Rock and Roll II
2016 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Still Smoking Tobacco and Gifts
516 Old Steese Highway
Fairbanks, AK 99701

The Smoke Shop
334 Old Steese Highway
Fairbanks, AK 99701

The Scentz
1600 Block S. Cushman
Fairbanks, AK 99701

The following establishments are temporarily off-limits to military personnel assigned or attached to Fort Wainwright.

49er Club
4625 Old Airport Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Club Show Girls
4625 Old Airport Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709

HOCKEY TICKETS

The ASYMCA has military discounted Ice Dog tickets. The tickets are \$14 for adults and teens, \$9 for ages 11 to 5 and children under 4 years old are free. For more information, call 353-5962 or stop by building 1047, suite 4 anytime, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE APPROACHING

The deadline to turn in applications for the Commissary scholarship program is today at 6:30 p.m. Applications must be hand-carried and turned in for applicants to be eligible. For more information, call 353-6218.

INTRODUCING HOMEROOM

The Military Child Education Coalition is proud to unveil Homeroom, a free interactive tool and helpful resource for anyone interested in supporting military and veteran-connected kids.

It is a place for anyone and everyone concerned about military-connected kids to share information, experiences, ideas, and resources. It is an online community where interested individuals can find others with similar interests, communicate about specific topics, find resources or post new ones to share, and much more.

Homeroom is a place to find out what's happening in military communities across the globe and in your backyard, share the good news about what you're doing in support of military connected children and seek new ideas to try where you are.

For more information, call 978-1737 or visit www.homeroom.militarychild.org.

HEALTHY FAMILIES MAKE

Strong Soldiers, strong Families make a successful Army. And that's what ARMYOne-

Source is all about.

ARMYOneSource provides easy access to information, resources and services that are designed to support Soldiers and Families. From deployments to relocations, ARMYOneSource can help manage these changes. To learn more, visit www.myARMYOneSource.com

SEASON PASSES AVAILABLE

Birch Hill season passes are available on location or the Fort Wainwright Outdoor Recreation Center. For more information, call 353-1998.

AVOID WINTER SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Winter in Alaska presents some very challenging environments to cope with like the build-up of snow and ice on the roads, parking lots, sidewalks and entryways.

Avoid slips, trips and falls in the workplace by conducting regular self-inspections of facilities to identify and eliminate hazards. Have a program in place for ice and snow removal so that hazards are removed or treated before employees arrive. After removal, salt and sand the icy surfaces.

Educate employees on which areas of the workplace present potential slip and fall hazards, the proper footwear, and to slow down and adjust their stride to a pace suitable for the walking surface and conditions.

POOL TOURNAMENT

Single elimination pool tournament slated for Saturday at the Warrior Zone, building 3205. Sign up begins at 6 and ends at 6:50 pm. This is a free event and top winners receive prizes. Must be at least 18 years of age and a DoD cardholder to participate. Call 353-1087 for more information.