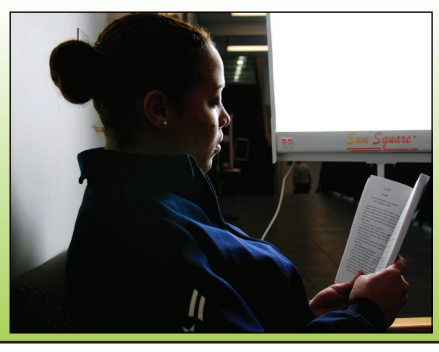

Health

Season change can lead to depression,

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Sports

Footballers dash for base championship

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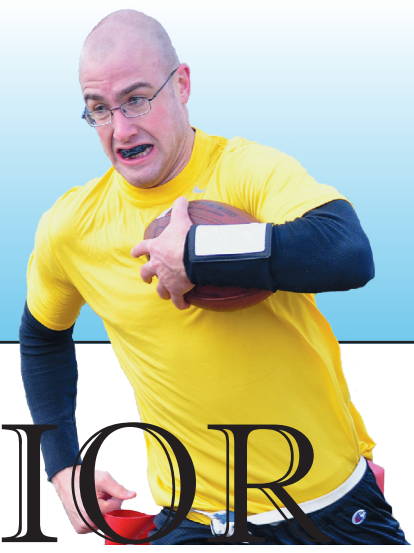

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ARCTIC WARRIOR

Volume 2, No. 43 | Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson | October 28, 2011

Chairman of Joint Chiefs visits JBER

The 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Martin Dempsey addresses Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and civilians at a town hall meeting in hangar 20 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Tuesday. More than 600 military and civilian members listened to Dempsey's goals and challenges for service members and asked questions of the military's top general. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf)

Army Gen. Martin Dempsey delivers message of hope to Alaska military community in uncertain times

By Luke Waack
JBER Public Affairs

Courtesy graphic

Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, landed at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Tuesday with a message of hope for the Alaska military community.

The newly appointed chairman held a town hall meeting in an aircraft hangar with more than 600 service members, family members and civilians.

The uniformed personnel were made up of active-duty, Guard and Reserve Airmen, Marines, Sailors and Soldiers, as well as members of the Coast Guard, all of whom work, train and deploy from JBER.

"Just think of who you are and what you've done," Dempsey said. "I came on active duty right after Vietnam. In the late 80s, we were thinking about 'I wonder if we can really do what we say we can do, I wonder if we have courage. I wonder if our families have resilience.'"

Service members and families can be proud of what they've accomplished over the last 10 years of conflict, Dempsey said.

"You know who you are and what you've done and you know the qualities you have to include courage, resilience, resolve, commitment, teamwork and most important – trust," the chairman continued.

Dempsey used the example of an Alaska Air National Guard pararescueman serving in Afghanistan to illustrate how important trusting one another is to success in the future.

"What gets me through the day is you," Dempsey said. "You've been through a lot tougher stuff than what we're going to face in the next couple years."

Dempsey spoke of Silver Star nominee Alaska Air National Guard Master Sgt. Roger Sparks, of the 212th Rescue Squadron, 176th Wing, hanging off of a cable in the middle of a fire fight off of the sheer edge of a mountain in the Hindu Kush in Afghanistan.

"Why is he hanging off that cable," Dempsey asked. "Not for himself. He's hanging off that cable because he understands, if we trust each other and we care about each other we can get

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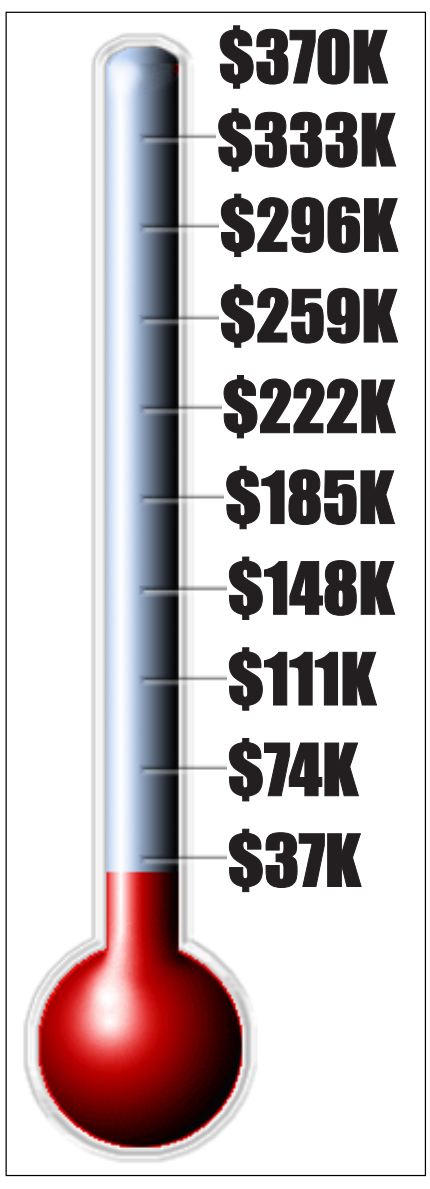

As of Oct. 21, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson had raised $29,482 toward the 2011 JBER Combined Federal Campaign goal of $370,000. Call the U.S. Army Alaska CFC coordinator at 384-0995, the 3rd Wing rep at 551-9035 or the 673d Air Base Wing rep at 552-1060. (U.S. Air Force graphic/Luke Waack)

Senior Airman Richard Wright, 673d Security Forces Squadron, Visitor Control Center technician, inputs data for Bruce Jordan, a contractor who requires freqent base access, into the new DBIDS system. (U.S. Air Force photo/Luke Waack)

DBIDS registration continues, deadline draws closer

By JBER Public Affairs
News release

DBIDS is a Department of Defense identity verification and force protection tool which uses barcodes and biometrics (a person's height and weight, eye color and fingerprints) along with a color photograph to identify cardholders.

It is directly connected with the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System to ensure the most up to date information regarding enrolled personnel, lost or stolen identification cards and biometrics are in the system.

DBIDS is already in use at military locations around the world.

The 673d Security Forces Squadron has registered more than 20,000 ID cardholders so far, but there are approximately 60,000 service members and civilians who require frequent access to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Those not registered should get processed into the Defense Biometric Identification System.

Biometrics for DBIDS will consist of a photo and two fingerprints, according to Tech. Sgt. Mark Centeno, 673d Security Forces Squadron, Base Access noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

Registering with DBIDS is something all those requiring frequent recurring JBER access will have to do, Centeno said.

Due to the large number of people requiring regular base access, registration will be conducted in four phases.

Phase 1 began for non-Common Access Card carrying contractors and

See **DBIDS**, Page A-10

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Honor Guard visits school

The Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Honor Guard visited Abbott Elementary School Oct. 18 to demonstrate proper flag folding techniques and instruct children on how to display the proper respects to Old Glory, Page A-5

Airmen win weapons crew test with zero defects

90th Aircraft Maintenance Unit wins quarterly load competition 'flawlessly'

By Luke Waack
JBER Public Affairs

Tech Sgt. Kimmie Samuel, center, Airman 1st Class Caleb Hill, right and Airman 1st Class Wesley Beversdorf, all of the 90th Aircraft Maintenance Unit inspect a Joint Direct Attack Munition at Fighter Town Oct. 21 during the 3rd Wing quarterly weapons load competition. (Courtesy photo)

Third Wing F-22 Raptor weapons crews at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson competed in the 3rd Wing's quarterly load competition Oct. 21.

The 90th Aircraft Maintenance Unit and the 525th Aircraft Maintenance Unit competed for bragging rights at "Fighter Town," home to the 525th Fighter Squadron.

Tech. Sgt. Kimmie Samuel, of Kirbyville, Texas, Airman 1st Class Caleb Hill of Shawnee, Okla., and Airman 1st Class Wesley Beversdorf, of Yuma, Ariz., represented the 90th Aircraft Maintenance Unit and came out on top with zero defects found in their loading procedures.

Samuel's team won load crew of the quarter earlier this year and will compete for crew of the year as well.

It took two things to win, according to Samuel, "Will power and perfect practice."

The load competition is a regular event in which Airmen can train to increase their speed and efficiency while loading missiles and bombs onto the F-22, which has to be done according to specific Technical Orders, as quickly as possible.

"We, as a load crew, are constantly competing for Load Crew of the Month," Hill said. "We won the month of September, and proceeded to win the Load Crew of the Quarter for the 90th in the 3rd quarter, then beat the 525 AMU's for Load Crew of the Quarter."

The competition was judged by 3rd Wing Weapons Standardization evaluators – experienced, objective Airmen – who make sure the loading is done properly, by the book, according to Chief Master Sgt. Steve Bohannon, 3rd Wing command chief.

Fighter Town is a state-of-the-art, multi-million dollar aircraft maintenance facility which was completed recently and is home to a brand new weapons load trainer.

This was the first quarterly competition at Fighter Town, and last year's competition was canceled because the 525th FS was deployed. A weapons load team is typically composed of a load team chief and two junior Airmen.

For air-to-air combat, the Raptor carries six AIM-120, Advanced Medium-Range Air to Air Missiles and two AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles. In the air-to-ground configuration the aircraft can carry two 1,000-pound GBU-32 Joint Direct Attack Munitions and load crews have to properly load them so they are effective in combat.

"Inspectors tally how many discrepancies they find and whoever has the best score wins," Bohannon said.

Teams prepared diligently for the competition, Bohannon said.

"We spent many nights practice loading outside in the cold and staying late many nights to make sure that we could get the practice in that we needed to ensure that we would succeed in this load competition," Beversdorf said.

Armament Airmen carry the Air Force Specialty Code 2w1, and are assigned to each F-22 aircraft maintenance unit.

"In addition to loading the weapons on the airplane the load team members had to take a written exam beforehand and they were subject to a (AFI 36) 2903 dress and appearance inspection," Bohannon said.

The competition was difficult, Bohannon said, and so was getting the chance to compete.

"They're selected among their peers as the best of the best within the (AMU)," Bohannon said. "There's a very high level of team work and cooperation because there has to be, to be able to move that quickly around an aircraft and load weapons and do it by the book."

Airmen competed intensely, Bohannon said.

"They wanted nothing more than to win this competition," he continued. "It is amazing how quickly they can work and still follow all their TOs and do everything by the book."

"The last load competition was won by the 525th (Fighter) Squadron, which made the determination even greater for us to win back the Load Crew of the Quarter Plaque," Beversdorf said.

Inspector general Q&A : recognizing retaliation, reprisal

Commentary by Steve Wisniewski
JBER Deputy Inspector General

Scenario: A military member went to Equal Opportunity and filed a complaint of sexual harassment against her supervisor. She then received a Letter of Reprimand from her flight commander.

The LOR states the member embarrassed the squadron by going outside the chain of command with her issue and for that she is receiving the LOR.

Q: The subordinate went outside the chain of command; she deserved the LOR right? … or did she?

A: This situation actually occurred and the offending supervisor was investigated by the inspector general and it was substantiated that he was guilty of reprisal against his subordinate and he was punished under Article 92 of the UCMJ and the LOR was removed from the subordinate's record.

Q: What is reprisal?

A: To recognize when reprisal is happening to you or to avoid being guilty of it yourself, it is important to understand what reprisal is.

Air Force Instruction 90-301 defines reprisal as taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action or withholding or threatening to withhold a favorable personnel action on a military member for making or preparing a protected communication. (You don't even have to actually take the action; it is enough to threaten to do it.)

According to the Military Whistleblower Protection Act, members of the armed forces shall be free from reprisal for making or preparing to make protected communication.

Q: What qualifies as protected communication?

A: A broader definition of a protected communication is one where the disclosing member "reasonably" believes he or she has evidence of a violation of law or regulations including Technical Orders, safety procedures, and policies.

It also includes laws or regulations prohibiting sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination, gross mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. The member then discloses this evidence to a member of Congress, IG, EO, Family Advocacy, law enforcement organizations, inspection or audit personnel, group/squadron commander, command chief master sergeant, first sergeant, superintendent or civilians leading an organization designated as a unit in accordance with Air Force Instruction 38-101 or any person in the member's chain of command. This is an inclusive list and reporting potential violations to anyone not on this list may not give you "protected communication" status.

The unfavorable personnel action mentioned is any action taken on a member of the armed forces that affects or has the potential to affect (for example a threat) that military member's current position or career.

Such actions include (but are not limited to): demotion, disciplinary or other corrective action, transfer or reassignment, performance evaluation, a decision on pay, benefits, awards, or training, referral for mental health evaluation, and/or any other significant change in duties or responsibilities inconsistent with the military member's rank. A cancellation of a choice or career impacting TDY/deployment or last minute orders to a "bad" one can also be a reprisal.

The IG is required to identify and investigate all responsible management officials that had involvement with the adverse personnel action. Responsible management officials are officials who influenced or recommended to the deciding official that he/she take, withhold, or threaten a management action, officials who decide to take, withhold, or threaten the management/personnel action, any other official who approved, reviewed, or endorsed the management/personnel action. To gain statutory protection of the law, the Air Force member must file the complaint with any IG within 60 days of becoming aware of the unfavorable personnel action that is the basis for the complaint.

The proper channel for making reprisal complaints for military members is through their military service IG, civilians should contact their base civilian personnel flight.

Q: Can you now recognize the elements of reprisal in the case introduced in the beginning of this article?

A: The EO complaint is the protected communication, the LOR is the unfavorable personnel action.

If someone threatens or takes an adverse personnel action on someone for making a legitimate complaint about a violation of law policy or regulation, that's reprisal. Military members are subject to prosecution and/or disciplinary and administrative action under Article 92 of the UCMJ. Civilian supervisors are subject to admonishments, demotions, or possible dismissal.

Powering energy awareness, efficiency saves installations money

By Airman 1st Class
Tara Williamson
Air Force News Service

In this wire photo, Senior Airman Derek Hunter at Kadena Air Base, Japan checks circuits on an electrical system to promote efficiency. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Jonathan Steffen)

Each October, the Air Force focuses its energy on saving energy.

"Our theme for Energy Awareness Month this year is 'Power the Force - Fuel the Fight,'" said Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Norton Schwartz in an energy awareness message to the public. "This theme seeks to highlight energy as a critical resource to our capabilities and reminds us to focus on the impact our day-to-day energy decisions have on the mission."

During the last 15 years, the Air Force has met or exceeded its energy-saving goals, said Michael Gilbert, the 718th Civil Engineer Squadron energy manager. But with the Air Force relying more on technology over the years, it is becoming harder and harder to keep these goals.

"It is necessary to provide energy to all Air Force equipment and facilities to do the mission, which enables the Air Force to deliver airpower to where it is needed and combat enemy forces wherever they may be," said Dan Sherrill, a 718th CES civil engineer.

Though the energy spent on equipment and facilities to support the mission may not be able to be cut back, each member of the 18th Wing here, whether civilian or service member, is responsible for doing their part to help save energy.

"Each one of us can make a difference, even if our contribution is small," Sherril said. "For example, saving one kilowatt-hour by each of (the) 20,000 people at this base equals 20 megawatt-hours. That's over $3,000 taken off our bill."

Simple savings such as turning off the light when exiting a room or using compact fluorescent light bulbs are examples of how anyone, at work or home, can do their part to conserve energy.

"Hundreds of thousands of people work on or live on Air Force bases worldwide," Gilbert said. "If we all found a way to save $1 per day, together we could save hundreds of thousands of dollars every day. This money could then be used to 'Fuel the Fight.'"

Some ways people can help the Air Force conserve energy are:

- Use compact fluorescent light bulbs
- Air dry dishes instead of using the dishwasher's drying cycle.
- Turn off computers and monitors when not in use.
- Lower the water heater thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or 49 degrees Celsius.
- Wash only full loads in dishwashers and clothes washers.
- Drive sensibly. Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gasoline.

Visit *www.energysavers.gov* for more energy-saving ideas.

Alaskan Command/
11th Air Force
Commanding General
Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins (USAF)

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

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/
673d Air Base Wing Commander
Col. Robert D. Evans (USAF)

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/
673d Air Base Wing Vice Commander
Col. Timothy R. Prior (USA)

ARCTIC WARRIOR

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ABOVE: Air Force 1st Lt. Aaron Green, 773d Logistics Readiness Squadron asks Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, a question about deployments during a Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson town hall, Tuesday at Hangar 20. RIGHT: Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo, U.S. Army Alaska commanding general, center, and Command Chief Master Sgt. Michael Warner, 11th Air Force, right, greet Dempsey upon his arrival. (U.S. Air Force photos/ Steve White)

Chairman

From Page A-1

through anything."

Dempsey took questions from the audience on a wide range of topics.

"Tell me something about yourselves, tell me what's on your mind, tell me how I can help and I'll be as candid as I can with you in scoping where I think we are and where we may be going," Dempsey said.

The first question was asked by a Soldier concerned with potential plans to replace the military pension with a 401K retirement fund system.

"Both the Secretary (of Defense, Leon Panetta) and I have said publicly and privately and frequently that we believe anyone currently serving should get the retirement benefit that they signed up to get when they signed up to get it."

Another audience member asked about potential cuts to family programs.

"We've got to figure out which of the programs that you think and your peers think are most important," Dempsey said, encouraging military community members to speak up for their favorite, most effective programs in DoD surveys.

Dempsey thanked the families present for their sacrifices in the past decade of conflict.

"We are attuned to what we've asked this force – and notably the force's families – to do over the last 10 years," Dempsey said.

The chairman expressed his pride in the many accomplishments of the service members and their families.

"I hope you feel as good about what you're doing, as we feel about what you're doing," Dempsey said. "And just keep that image in mind of that pararescue trooper hanging off that cable. If he can hang off that cable, we can figure the rest of this out, and if you spouses can stick with us the way you've stuck with us for the last 10 years, we're going to be fine."

LEFT: The 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, addresses more than 600 Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and civilians at a town hall meeting in Hangar 20 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Tuesday. BELOW: Inside Hangar 20, between a 3rd Wing F-22A Raptor on the right and an Alaska Air National Guard, 176th Wing, HH-60 Pavehawk helicopter on the left, Gen. Martin Dempsey, Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, addresses an audience of service members and civilians. (U.S. Air Force photos/ Staff Sgt. Zachary Wolf)

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson honor guard members visited Abbott Loop Elementary school to demonstrate military courtesies and procedures for rendering honors to the national flag as well as other military movements for students Oct. 19. (U.S. Air Force photos/Senior Airman Cynthia Spalding)

Honor Guard puts on 'show and tell' at school

By Senior Airman Jack Sanders
JBER Public Affairs

Members of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Honor Guard visited a local elementary school Oct. 18 to demonstrate proper flag folding techniques and instruct children on how to display the proper respects to Old Glory.

Students of Abbot Loop Elementary School got a surprise when members of the JBER honor guard marched into their classroom and began folding and unfolding the flag.

The honor guard demonstrated both the six-man flag fold and two-man flag fold techniques to the students.

"A six-man flag fold is the typical flag folding ceremony you would see at a funeral, while the two-man flag folding ceremony would be used in a case where the remains were cremated or missing," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Kristen Griswold.

Between each fold the honor guard took time to introduce themselves to the students and take questions ranging from military service to personal beliefs surrounding the flag.

"How did you learn to do that," one student from Mrs. Bell's third-grade class asked in awe after watching the team perform a six-man flag fold.

"We all had to join the base honor guard first," said Airman 1st Class Timothy Washington, honor guard member. "It took years of practicing too."

"Base honor guard members symbolize the Air Force to America and foreign dignitaries at public ceremonies in the local area," according to *www.honorguard.af.mil*. "They participate in Air Force and joint service arrival and departure ceremonies for the president, foreign heads of state, and other national or international dignitaries.

It is their responsibility to perform military funeral honors for Air Force active-duty, retired personnel, and veterans according to prescribing publication."

Since the Air Force's earliest years, the Air Force Honor Guard has led the way as representatives of all Airmen serving around the world.

Airman 1st Class Timothy Washington, left, and Airman 1st Class Jose Mejia, perform the two-man fold of the US flag for a third grade class Oct. 19. Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Honor Guard members visited Abbott Loop Elementary school to demonstrate proper flag folding procedures and ceremony movements and procedures for students in Mrs. Bell's third grade class.

ABOVE: Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Honor Guard members demonstrate a six-man flag fold, the typical flag folding ceremony for a funeral with a casket. The honor guard visited Abbott Loop Elementary School Oct. 18 to demonstrate proper flag folding techniques and instruct children on how to display the proper respects to Old Glory. FAR RIGHT: Airman 1st Class Jose Mejia, left, answers questions about the U.S. flag for a third grade class at Abbott Loop Elementary Oct. 19. RIGHT: Senior Airman Larry Markwell, right, and Airman 1st Class Josh Lemke perform the two-man fold of the US flag for a class of third graders at Abbott Loop Elmentary Oct. 19.

Briefs and Announcements

Updated base driving rules

New base driving rules order drivers to slow to 10 miles per hour below posted speed limits during road conditions red or black, typically caused by inclement weather. During road condition amber or yellow, speed limits remain as posted but it is prudent to reduce speeds during inclement weather or low visibility. Call 552-INFO for the latest road conditions.

Green : Roads are clear and dry. Comply with normal vehicle operating procedures and posted speed limits.

Amber: It has been determined that roads may be slippery due to snow, ice, or reduced visibility. Drivers will exercise caution.

Red. It has been determined that roads may be hazardous due to snow, ice, or reduced visibility. Drivers will exercise caution and reduce speeds by 10 miles per hour below the posted speed limit.

Black. It has been determined that road conditions are extremely hazardous due to ice, snow, or reduced visibility. Vehicle dispatching is prohibited unless directed by command authority. Only operate mission essential and emergency response vehicles. Drivers will exercise extreme caution and reduce speeds by 10 miles per hour below the posted speed limit.

Bargain shop

The Bargain Shop will be open Saturday, Nov. 5 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The shop is located at 8515 Saville Ave. Stop by to shop, volunteer or drop off donations. Add the Bargain Shop on Facebook. Become a fan and get weekly updates.

Professional military education

The U.S. Army Alaska Sgt. 1st Class Christopher R. Brevard Noncommissioned Officer Academy will graduate Class 13-11 Oct. 29. The ceremony will take place at the JBER-Richardson Theater at 10 a.m.

The Air Force Professional Military Education Center will hold a graduation ceremony for NCOA and ALS classes 11-7 at the JBER-Elmendorf Theater, Friday at 10:45 a.m.

Halloween candy screening

The 732nd Air Mobility Squadron Passenger Terminal will be offering free Halloween candy screening Monday. After trick-or-treating, stop by Building 10364 18th St. For more information call 552-0503 or 552-6733.

Defense Biometric ID System

All DoD ID card holders are required to enroll into the Defense Biometrics Identification System on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson to include Active Duty, Reserve, Army National Guard family members and retirees.

All personnel are required to be registered by January 2012. Register at the People Center, Building 8517, Room 100 from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. or at the main entrance of the JBER hospital. People can also register at the Visitor Control Center which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Personnel not registered by January 2012 will incur delays at the gate and be forced to the already busy Visitor Control Center to gain access to JBER.

Air Force ID card changes

Due to long wait times for walk-in customers, effective Monday, all military members or Department of Defense civilians will be required to schedule an appointment via the Military Personnel Section Customer Service Appointment website at *https://673fssmpscustomerser.clickbook.net*.

The MPS will only see military members on a walk-in basis if their card is lost, needs to be unlocked, certificates need updating, or it ceases to function.

It is also highly encouraged appointments be made for civilian, dependent, Reserve and retiree ID cards.

November flu vaccine

The 673d Medical Group Immunization Clinic will be offering influenza vaccines to all TRICARE beneficiaries aged 8 years and older at the Joint Military Mall Nov. 8-10 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Influenza vaccines are available on a walk-in basis. A valid military identification card must be presented to receive the vaccine.

Travel charge card changes

Effective immediately, personal use of the controlled spend account government travel charge card is not authorized. The CSA card may only be used for expenses related to official government travel.

Payments in excess of overall expenditures placed on the CSA card, after completion of official travel (credit or residual balance), can be obtained by the traveler through electronic transfer to a personal account through Citi's on-line access system or by phone, request check by Citi, a check automatically mailed to cardholder after 60 days of activity, or ATM withdrawal (two percent fee).

Renters insurance

Aurora Military Housing is providing free renter's insurance to tenants of all Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson housing.

The renter's insurance will be provided, at no cost, to all existing and future JBER residents under a blanket policy with Great American Insurance.

For those tenants currently under the Aurora Allstate Policy, conversion to the new policy will be totally transparent and will be taken care of by Aurora.

Aurora will continue to honor its reimbursement arrangement with those tenants who have previously elected renter's insurance coverage by an insurer other than Allstate.

These tenants will be grandfathered under the previous reimbursement option and will continue to receive reimbursements during their stay with Aurora.

The new policy coverage limits are very similar to those previously provided by Aurora and are as follows:

Deductible – $250

Personal Property – $20,000 per loss

Personal Liability – $100,000 per tenant household, per occurrence

Personal Liability/Medical Payments – $1,000 per person/$1,000 per accident

Fire Legal Liability – $100,000 per tenant household, per occurrence.

As this limited coverage is provided as part of residency, Aurora encourages residents to examine their needs and independently seek supplemental coverage if necessary.

This is a brief explanation of the coverage; please refer to the policy for precise terms, conditions, coverage's and limitations. A copy of the insurance policy will be available at the Aurora Military Housing office or visit *www.auroramilitaryhousing.com*.

Prescription drug 'take back'

The Red Ribbon Week campaign will close with the DEA sponsored, prescription drug take back program Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The local pick-up points on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson will be manned by the JBER Army Substance Abuse Program and the 673d Medical Group Pharmacy at the Joint Military Mall and commissary entrances. Old and no longer used medications can be turned in. Inhalers, liquids, or illicit drugs will not be accepted. This is an opportunity to empty out the medicine cabinet of old medications without polluting our landfills or water supply.

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.

Housing surveys

Surveys are sent to each tenant annually and are a valuable tool for informing base leadership and Aurora Military Housing on satisfaction with the quality of homes and services provided.

The results obtained from these surveys are used to tailor business decisions which are geared toward improving the quality of life desired by Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson housing tenants. Inputs through the surveys are key to ensuring the right decisions are made. Please allow Aurora Military Housing and the base leadership to better serve with base housing by taking a few minutes to complete and promptly return the surveys in the supplied envelope upon receipt. For further questions on the Aurora Tenant Satisfaction Survey, contact Aurora Military Housing at 753-1023, or the Capital Asset Management Office.

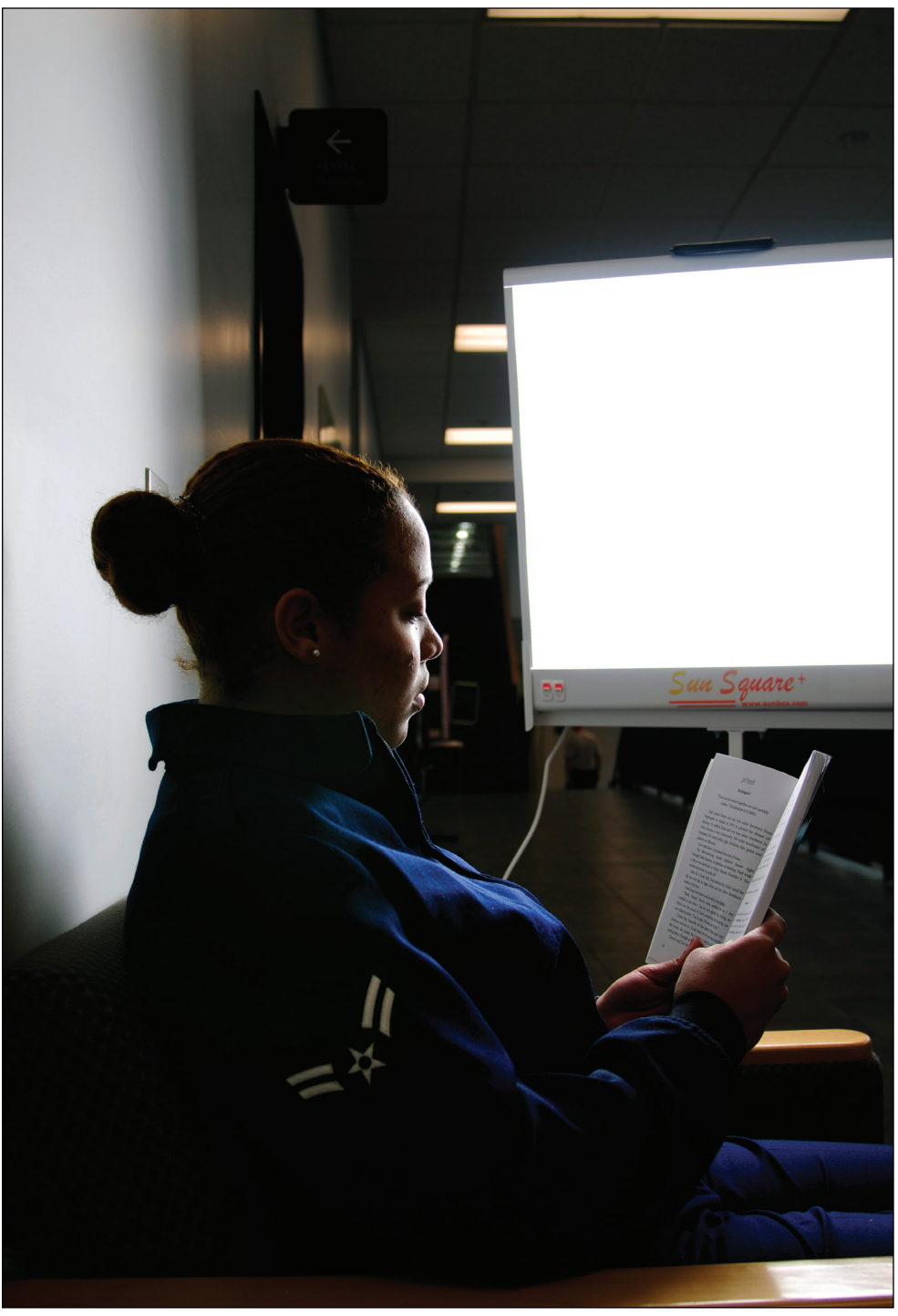
Defense attaché officer

Air Force active duty officers, senior captains, majors or lieutenant colonels, interested in opportunities to help build and sustain international relationships can apply for attaché duty at locations ranging from Burma to the United Kingdom.

AFPC and the Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs are accepting applications for senior defense official/defense attaché, air attaché and assistant air attaché duty at nine locations, with selectees reporting for training between April 2012 and April 2013.

Applications must be received by AFPC and SAF/IA by Dec. 15. Several defense attaché offices have C12 aircraft assigned, so applicants for those offices will need to be fixed-wing pilots. An operations background, foreign language skills and experience in the region are highly desired, although not mandatory. Applicants must have taken the Defense Language Aptitude Battery, and all their immediate family members must be U.S. citizens.

Light therapy assists in avoiding winter depression



Airman 1st Class Martina Nielsen, 354th Communications Squadron information manager, reads under a happy light Oct. 17, Eielson Air Force Base. Light therapy absorbed in a natural or artificial setting is considered one of the best ways to combat winter depression. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Yash Rojas)

By Airman 1st Class Yash Rojas
354th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE – In certain parts of the planet climactic changes take a toll on local inhabitants in the form of seasonal affective disorder.

The Iceman team is no stranger to the effects of this harsh environment, often enduring cold, dark winters with as little as three hours of sunlight.

SAD is considered by the medical community to be a type of depression, but is sometimes overlooked as its mild symptoms often go unnoticed.

According to Janneane Moody, 354th Medical Operations Squadron health and wellness center chief and promotion manager, approximately 20 percent of people within affected populations experience symptoms of SAD.

This means as many as one in five Alaskan residents may be suffering from this disorder.

Common signs include a growing need for sleep, increased appetite and irritability, weight gain and lack of energy.

This may sound like nothing more than the disadvantages of living in a cold, dark climate, but are actually the affects of SAD.

Left untreated this condition can lead to more sever forms of depression.

This is why HAWC staff emphasizes utilizing resources available to help Airmen combat the affects of SAD.

Paying close attention to daily habits may help determine if you have SAD.

It is better to check than let winter depression remain untreated.

"(Airmen) need to stay observant over their diet and activity," said Moody. "They can keep a food diary to document their eating habits."

By having detailed record of your diet you can observe significant changes in your appetite.

Establishing an exercise routine is recommended -- dress warm when participating in outdoor activities and be sure to hydrate -- to maintain health and wellness.

Light therapy is used to absorb light, natural or artificial and is considered one of the best ways to combat winter depression, said Moody.

"Every little bit helps, even if Airmen are only finding a few minutes in their busy schedules to get some much needed sunlight," said Moody.

Happy lights are located at the Eielson Medical Clinic, the HAWC, the library, lodging, ski lodge and youth center.

Several of these locations have more than one happy light and provide Airmen a way to protect themselves and loved ones against SAD.

"It is very important for people to make sure they position themselves 12 to 14 inches from the happy light and allow the light to penetrate their pupil," Moody said. "The pupil is the most absorbent part of your body in regard to light therapy."

In a case study from Winter Blues written by Norman Rosenthal, psychiatrist and scientist, an individual required no more than six hours of sleep in late spring, however, in winter her sleeping pattern changed dramatically increasing to as much as 12 hours of sleep.

As stated in Winter Blues, her personality would take a complete turn. She would spend the morning crying and later take a nap. The patient would not drive her car, seldom leave the house nor answer the telephone. The condition may appear very similar to depression.

"People need to know that every winter is different," said Moody. "They often become overconfident thinking that because they've been here three years they have nothing to worry about."

"I think this is the danger zone where people become too comfortable and forget just how debilitating depression really is," she added.

The weather is certainly out of Airmen's immediate control; however, with the right precautions SAD is preventable. Each winter is different and Airmen have to adjust to make sure they are not severely affected.

At Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, personnel can contact the Health and Wellness Center and the 673d Mental Health Flight for information on light treatment.

Call mental health at 580-2181 and the HAWC at 552-2361.

Officials stress keeping faith on military retirement

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

The Defense Department has no proposals or recommendations on revamping military retirement at this time, but any future proposal must not break faith with those in the military today, senior Pentagon officials told Congress Tuesday.

Jo Ann Rooney, the principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, and Vee Penrod, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for military personnel policy, testified on military retirement before the House Armed Services Committee's military personnel subcommittee.

The Defense Business Board has proposed making a military retirement system more like private-sector systems.

The military system has remained fairly constant over time, Rooney said, while the private sector has changed its retirement systems to cater to the increasingly mobile workforce.

"Unlike (the private) sector, the military services must grow most of their military workforce internally," she said. "It generally takes 15 to 20 years to develop the next generation of infantry battalion commanders and submarine captains. As a result, the military must ensure compensation, promotions and personnel policies that all foster the retention and longer careers necessary to create these experienced leaders."

Sgt. Sean Matthews, team leader attached to the Laghman Provincial Reconstruction Team, pulls security for members of the PRT while on a patrol in Mehtar Lam district, Laghman province, Oct. 8. Defense Dept. officials are considering how to shape retirment benefits. (U.S. Army photo)

The military, she said, needs greater longevity and continuity to develop leaders, and a retirement system mirroring a private-sector approach – with contributions from individuals and transportable benefits – may not be the best way for the uniformed services to go.

This does not mean that the current system is sacrosanct, Rooney said.

The department should examine the retirement system in the context of a total military compensation system, she added.

DOD officials, she told the panel, are examining all aspects of the retirement system for all components.

Rooney said the review has been deliberate, careful and pragmatic, and that officials are reviewing proposals and modeling them to determine the impact on recruiting and retention.

The Defense Department, she said, is working to strike the correct balance. "This includes weighing the impact of a new system on recruiting and retention, considering the welfare of the individual service members and families – which includes grandfathering our existing force who took their oath under the current system – and acknowledging our responsibility to the American taxpayer," she said.

The current military retirement system has supported the most-successful volunteer force in the world, Penrod noted.

"The question now," Penrod added, "is whether the current system is still relevant in today's environment. If not, should it be modified in a manner more in line with the private sector?"

Officials are not looking at retirement in isolation, Penrod pointed out, but rather at how personnel and pay policies affect decisions to join the military and then to stay.

Post Office sets holiday schedule

By Mark Edwards
Army Human Resources Command

The U.S. Postal Service and Military Postal Service Agency have released deadlines to ensure packages arrive to Military and State Department post offices overseas by Dec. 25.

Deadlines to ensure arrival by Dec. 25 are Nov. 12 for parcel post mail; Nov. 26 for space-available mail; Dec. 3 for parcel airlift mail; Dec. 10 for priority mail and first-class mail, letters and cards; and Dec. 17 for express mail military service.

The Military Postal Service Agency highly encourages customers to mail packages on or before the dates for the specific mail category in order to avoid unplanned transportation delays.

Not all Military or State Department post offices are eligible for Express Mail Military Service therefore, customers should plan accordingly.

"Express Mail Military Service is not available for holiday packages and mail going to Iraq and Afghanistan," said Faye Slater, the deputy director of the Military Postal Service Agency.

The Military Postal Service provides mail service around the world to Department of Defense and most Department of State locations.

Mail is moved on commercial and military aircraft and commercial sealift vessels to nearly 2,000 military post offices located in over 85 countries.

The Adjutant General of the Army, located at the Human Resources Command, Fort Knox, Ky., is the executive director of the Military Postal Service Agency.

For information on mailing deadlines and restrictions, email the Military Postal Service at: *MPSA-TR@conus.army.mil*.

There are two post offices on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

There is one at 10437 Kuter Ave., open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and another at 724 Quartermaster Road.

The Quartermaster Road location is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE™

Courtesy graphic

DBIDS

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property owners on JBER Jan. 17, and concluded April 30.

Active duty, Reserve and National Guard military members and their immediate families were scheduled to register during Phase 2, from May to July. Retirees, their family members and all others were scheduled to register in Phase 3, from August to October.

Phase 4 will be for all others not yet registered in DBIDS after October.

Administrators will register each group for base access at the following locations:

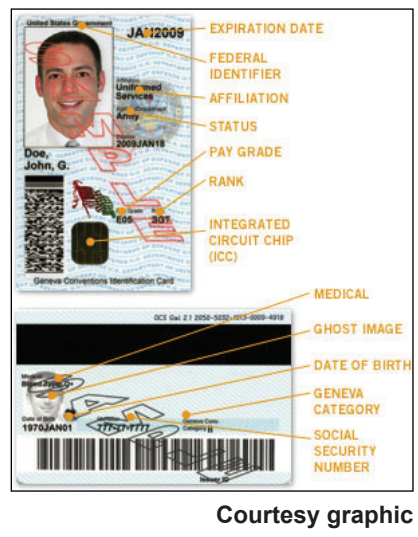
Security Forces Base Access office/ Building 8517, Room 100 (Peoples Center) Monday to Friday 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m, both Visitor Control Centers (D St and Boniface) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Remote registration will also be conducted at the Elmendorf Theater and other locations on JBER still to be determined.

In addition to validating identity credentials, DBIDS also verifies authorizations and assigns access privileges based on identity, affiliation, and the current force protection level.

The new system works very much like the Mobilisa system currently in place. The guard scans the card's various barcodes using a handheld device.

The guard then reviews the screen display; verifies it is the individual utilizing the



Courtesy graphic

credential to access the base, the ID card is an authorized DoD credential and that it is not expired, lost or stolen.

It also verifies the individual's identity and that he or she is not wanted, barred or suspended from entering the installation, and has access to the installation under the current Force Protection Condition.

Administrators will register each group for base access at the following locations:

Security Forces Base Access office/ Building 8517, Room 100 (Peoples Center) Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., both Visitor Control Centers (D Street and Boniface) 24 hours a day, seven days a week.