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AT A GLANCE

9TH ARMY BAND



Sgt. Dan Puls pumps up the audience during the "Arctic Warrior" Band's visit to Ladd Elementary School. **More Music In Our Schools page 3.**

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WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday

Clear and sunny.
Low -20 High 11

Saturday

Clear and sunny.
Low -13 High 12

Sunday

Clear and sunny.
Low -9 High 19

Unrestricted visibility
NE winds 5 -10 mph

Forecast courtesy of
Det 3, 1st Weather Squadron,
Fort Wainwright, AK



Michelle Benjamin, MS,
Survivor Outreach Services Program Coordinator

Survivor Outreach Services at Fort Wainwright is proud to serve family members of the fallen Soldiers and other service members, but we don't do it alone. To embrace survivors and give them reassurance that they are – and will remain – connected to the Army Family is our mission at SOS.

Our monthly SOS support meetings are attended by survivors from several military branches, and service member survivors from all branches – Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Air Force – are welcome to attend. Our outreach and education efforts are extending to guard and reserve units and survivors.

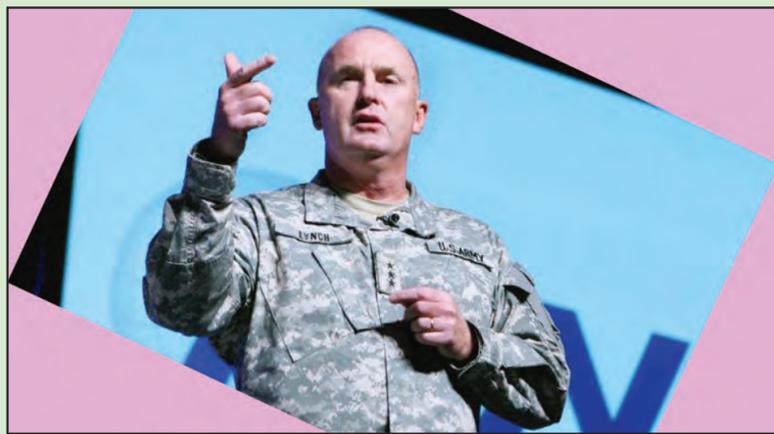
Looking ahead, our SOS family set a goal to establish a garden in the Monterey Lakes Memorial Park. The garden will harbor plants and flowers selected by SOS members, and will provide a welcoming place for families to visit and remember their loved ones.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension gardening expert will visit with survivors in the coming weeks to help us choose plants that will grow and thrive in the memorial garden. The planting and dedication ceremony will take place this summer.

There are times survivors need assistance, times they just need to talk and share their feelings and experiences. In May, as Memorial Day approaches, SOS will honor the families and their fallen loved ones in with a memorial ceremony. We're planning the event with the help of Family and MWR.

I'm so thankful for the survivors who participate in the program, their energy and selfless contributions have made the program better than we could have hoped. Among our SOS volunteers, Maria Sutherland is the Gold Star wife for the Northern Region and wife of Staff Sgt. Stephen Sutherland who died in 2005 while deployed to Iraq with the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, which is now the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

Please see **FAMILY**, Page 5



Survivor Outreach Services: Supporting Survivors and honoring Soldiers

Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, Installation Management Command

I commanded the 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart as part of the surge in Iraq in 2007-2008. During that time, 153 Soldiers died in combat, in a place on the battlefield where I put them. I pray for those Soldiers and their Families every day. Their loss is something I have to live with. For any leader, the loss of a Soldier hits hard. But the loss that Survivors experience is magnitudes deeper and wider, because they have lost not just a Soldier, but a friend, a son or daughter, a husband or wife, a father or mother.

When I visit installations, I meet with those who have lost loved ones on active duty. I make sure to talk with Survivors for two reasons. One reason is that now, as the commander of Installation Management Command, I need to know how we are doing with one of our newest programs, Survivor Outreach Services. The other reason is that Survivors need to know that the Army recognizes and honors their Soldier's service and sacrifice.

The best, most meaningful thing we can do to honor our Fallen Soldiers is to support and care for those they left behind. Survivor Outreach Services was established in April 2008 to do just that, in a more comprehensive manner than ever before.

The Army is fortunate to have a leader like Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., who had the vision and compassion to propel the effort to support Survivors beyond casualty assistance alone. Casualty assistance officers work with Families during a very difficult time, a heart-rending time, when Families are notified of their Soldier's death and have to make funeral arrangements and decisions about entitlements and benefits.

Please see **SURVIVORS**, Page 2

Mother of fallen Soldier: 'I want to let people know about him'

Kari Hawkins, USAG Redstone



Julie Nethery stands with the picture of her son in the Hall of Remembrance at the Survivor Outreach Services facility at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. Pfc. Kevin Ellenburg was killed Nov. 1, 2006, when the Bradley armored fighting vehicle he was driving ran over two buried 500-pound improvised explosive devices that were detonated by remote control by the enemy in Baghdad, Iraq. (Photo by Kari Hawkins/USAG Redstone)

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala. -- There are times when Julie Nethery can't face the truth.

There are times when this mom of three has convinced herself that her youngest son is still coming home from his deployment.

And there are times, now more than four years later, when Nethery can't get out of bed because the memory of her loss is just too painful to cope with.

On a recent Friday afternoon, Nethery visited Redstone Arsenal's Survivor Outreach Services facility with her daughter, Jessica Worsham, her brother Mike Lawrence, who works at the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center, and two granddaughters.

During their visit, mother, daughter and uncle took the time to reach out to tell the story of Pfc. Kevin Ellenburg. No matter how much it hurts, Ellenburg's story is one they feel compelled to share.

"I want to let people know about him," Nethery said. "I want people to know he had the sweetest heart and best personality. He was not shy. He was personable. I want people to know he was my son."

Ellenburg was killed on Nov. 1, 2006, just 14 days before his 21st birthday, when the Bradley armored fighting vehicle he was driving ran over two buried 500-pound improvised explosive devices as they were being detonated by remote control by the enemy in Baghdad, Iraq.

Please see **MEMORY**, Page 8

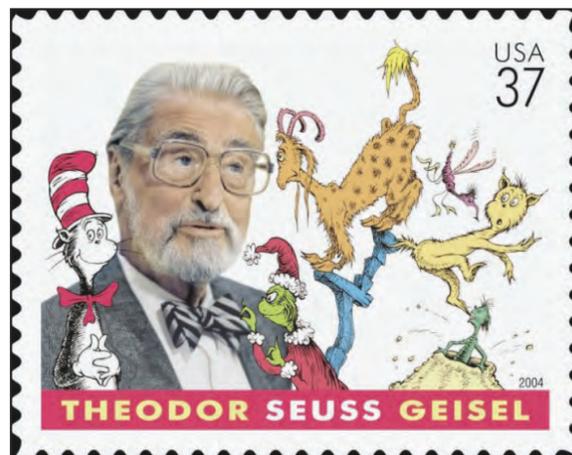
Dr. Seuss, the Cat in the Army hat

Brian Schlumbohm, Fort Wainwright PAO

Most of us know of Dr. Seuss, that famous illustrator and children's book author whose publications include "The Cat in the Hat," "One Fish Two Fish," "There's a Wocket in my Pocket" and many more which are read over and over to little children and held in high regard by kids and adults alike. Last week the National Education Association's annual Read Across America celebration promoted the joy of reading and with it celebrated the 107th birthday anniversary of Theodor Seuss Geisel, otherwise known as Dr. Seuss. Though honored for his contributions to children's literature, his service to the nation as a member of the U. S. Army has gone virtually without notice.

Geisel was born March 2, 1904, in Springfield, Mass. According to the Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego, Geisel started his path to writing after graduating from Dartmouth College in 1925. He studied literature at Oxford University in England, but left without finishing his degree and came back to America to pursue a career as an artist and writer.

Please see **SEUSS**, Page 5



In honor of his life's work, the U.S. Post Office created a commemorative 37-cent stamp issued March 2, 2004, the 100th anniversary of his birthday. It features a photograph of Geisel from 1987 and around his photograph six characters from his books. (Courtesy photo)

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Commander's column

Col. Timothy A. Jones, Garrison commander



AER: Helping stay Army Strong

We are in the midst of an important campaign. I'm talking about the Army Emergency Relief annual fundraising campaign which can reach out and provide critical assistance to Soldiers and their families in crisis.

On Fort Wainwright, since March 1, garrison staff members and key workers in the U.S. Army Alaska units have completed AER training. These key workers are ready to assist Soldiers who want to learn more about - or contribute to - Army Emergency Relief. An additional training is available for key workers next week, set for Tuesday (March 15).

While donations are accepted anytime, this campaign - which continues through May 15 - affords us the opportunity to raise awareness about AER and reinforce our belief that no Soldier or family member should ever be disadvantaged in a time of financial need because they did not fully appreciate the benefits of Army Emergency Relief. You don't have to be a Soldier to donate. AER will take donations from civilian employees as well as Soldiers.

The AER's motto is "Soldiers Helping Soldiers." For nearly seven decades Soldiers and family members have received assistance for emergency needs, child and spouse scholarships and support to the Families of Fallen Soldiers and grants to widows and wounded warriors.

AER assistance is available to Soldiers and their families, wherever they are located, and the amount of assistance is only limited by a valid need. Soldiers and their family members requiring AER assistance can contact their unit chain of command or go to their local installation AER office.

That's a seven-fold "return on investment," (though it merits noting at this point - donations are not a requirement to receive AER funds).

The AER charter is "to collect and hold funds and to relieve distress." This is a commander's program which has the ability to meet a wide range of unexpected needs such as housing, food, utility and travel expenses. The use of AER funds are only constrained by the amount of a Soldier's valid emergency financial need.

While nearly a half-million dollars was distributed to Fort Wainwright Soldiers and their families last year, the AER Command Referral program was utilized one-third less here than the Army-wide average of 30 percent. At Fort Wainwright,

only 19 percent of Solder loans were attributed to Command Referral, wrote AER Director, retired Lt. Gen. Robert F. Foley in a letter to me recently.

The AER Command Referral program is a force-multiplying tool in our kit which gives company or battery commanders and first sergeants the authority to approve up to \$1,000 in interest-free loans to their Soldiers.

Who does AER help?

- Soldiers on extended active duty and their dependents (this includes dependent family members whose Soldier is deployed).

- Members of the Reserve Components of the Army (National Guard under Title 10 authority and Army Reserve) who are on continuous active duty for more than 30 consecutive days and their eligible family members.

- Soldiers retired from active duty because of longevity or physical disability or retired upon reaching age 60 (Reserve Components) and their eligible family members.

- Widows, widowers and orphans of Soldiers who died while on active duty or after retirement as cited above.

Since inception, AER has provided over \$1.2 billion in assistance. But support does not stop there.

Just as the Army transforms to meet demands of changing environs, AER continually looks at new and innovative ways to improve our policies and programs and expedite the process of providing assistance.

The goal of Army Emergency Relief will always be to continue maintaining the highest standards of "Helping the Army take care of its Own" which has been the hallmark of Army Emergency Relief since formation in 1942.

The theme for the 2011 campaign is "Helping to make Soldiers and their families Army Strong."

Donations can be made through unit key workers, our campaign coordinator, Master Sgt. Kenton Allen, or online at www.aerhq.org.

If you have questions about AER, the fundraising campaign or the program's administration, contact our AER program manager, Russell Williams at 353-7453.

The Fort Wainwright, AER Office is located in the Army Community Service suite in the center of the Welcome Center, Building 3401.

If you have a question or issue you would like to see addressed in this Garrison Commander's column, please email the public affairs office at linda.douglass@us.army.mil.

Ask MEDDAC commander

Col. George Appenzeller, MEDDAC-AK commander



QUESTION: Can I really get free over-the-counter medications from the Medical Department Activity-Alaska pharmacies?

ANSWER: A tremendous way for you to take advantage of our healthcare partnership is to utilize the resources which we have available to improve your wellness and quality of life. One of the primary providers of these resources is our Preventive Medicine Department through their Arctic Health Link health promotion centers.

By signing up with Arctic Health Link you are able to access wonderful educational courses, such as: tobacco cessation, diabetes management, lower back pain management, cholesterol management, allergy and asthma awareness, and hypertension management. All of which help provide tools to better manage your and your loved ones' health. Additionally, through Arctic Health Link you are able to access a Self Care (Take Care of Yourself) course which, upon completion, allows eligible Tricare beneficiaries to obtain a select group of over-the-counter medications from our pharmacies, free of charge.

MEDDAC-AK has also launched an on-line version of the Self Care (Take Care of Yourself) class. By going to www.alaska.amedd.army.mil and clicking on the Arctic Health Link Logo on the left side, you are able to enroll and take this class for free. It is easy to navigate and I did it from my home computer, so I know that it works. The class orients you to the self-care tools highlighted in the "Take Care of Yourself" book. It also provides information that will help you self-assess your current medical needs. In addition, just like the course taught at Arctic Health Link, after passing the required examination, eligible Tricare beneficiaries are entitled to a select group of over-the-counter medications from our pharmacies, free of charge. Just stop by the hospital library's Arctic Health Link desk to pick up your card.

These resources are available for eligible Tricare beneficiaries by simply calling 361-4148.

As always, your primary care provider is also available to answer any questions about specific issues and can provide you with more information on the wellness classes available. We at MEDDAC-AK are proud to be a part of this community and are happy to help in whatever way we can.



New gospel service on horizon

(Courtesy photo)

Chaplain (Maj) Steve Munson, Bassett Army Community Hospital

A gospel Bible study launched at Fort Wainwright in January. The intent is to grow a congregation that will worship in the tradition of a gospel service. This type of worship is generally composed of all ethnic groups with a music blend that incorporates Christian contemporary, traditional hymns and soul music, to name a few.

It really comprises music from all different backgrounds to target a diverse congregation of Soldiers and families of every ethnicity. As one member said, "We are the world," which reflects the attitude of the congregation and their desire to reach out to the entire installation.

The congregation is as diverse as its present leadership, Chaplain (MAJ) Steve Munson, the Bassett Army Community Hospital chaplain and assigned to the service. He is

assisted by the hospital command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Marshall Huffman and his wife Patricia, both ordained ministers in their faith group. Together they share the teaching and preaching and take turns leading the study.

The goal is to develop a congregation that would create a new worship service which will launch the first Sunday in May. Currently, the study is taking place in the third-floor conference room at the hospital. A long-term location is yet to be determined. A praise team with live music is being developed and will have a youth-led service at the end of the month. The group is recruiting musicians and if you are interested in participating, you can join them on Sunday mornings at 11 a.m. in the third-floor conference room.

SURVIVORS: Honoring the fallen Soldier, supporting the loved ones the Soldier left behind

Continued from Page 1

But grief is very personal—it cannot be standardized or resolved in a set time period. With the help of a panel of Survivors selected by Gen. Casey, SOS was developed to provide longer-term, expanded support and care, taking up where casualty assistance ends.

SOS offers support through benefits coordinators, who help Survivors understand and apply for local, state and federal benefits; financial counselors, who assist through investment and estate planning education; and support coordinators, who facilitate support groups, provide life skills education and connect Survivors with counseling resources.

More than 200 SOS personnel are now working on installations throughout the United States and overseas, to include National Guard and Reserve locations. The three components work and train together very closely on this One Army program, to provide SOS services closest to where Survivors live.

It does not matter how a Soldier died, and there is no time limit on SOS services. SOS coordinators extend a hand as Survivors are working with casualty assistance officers in the first few months after a Soldier's death, but Survivors do not have to accept assistance right then or ever. They can decide to

return months or years later. The

important thing is for Survivors to know that the support is there. They are not alone—they are part of the Army Family for as long as they want to be.

There are also no exclusions in the definition of a Survivor. For the SOS program, a Survivor is anyone—immediate Family, extended Family, a friend, a fellow Warrior—who feels the loss of a Soldier. Every Survivor is not entitled to the same benefits under law or regulations, but SOS coordinators will work with any Survivor to access counseling and other resources. Our partnerships with local and national support organizations make this more expanded, inclusive approach possible.

SOS staff have made tremendous progress in a short time, receiving more than 24,000 cases from Casualty and Mortuary Affairs and continually reaching out to Survivors, both those who have suffered a loss recently and those whose loss predates the program. As the program becomes established, they continue to refine and enhance services as more Survivors provide feedback on their challenges and needs. For example, this past year, when it became clear that Survivors who do not have ID cards were having difficulty getting onto post to use services, SOS developed a Survivor vehicle decal program to ease access

and provide special recognition. The decals are currently being distributed through SOS offices.

More information on SOS services and Survivor resources is available on Army OneSource www.myarmyonesource.com/FamilyProgramsandServices/SurvivingFamilies/SurvivorOutreachServices.aspx, the SOS Facebook page and garrison SOS webpages. There are also links to partner organizations whose support is so critical to connecting with and providing for Survivors.

The loss of a Soldier is not a topic

people want to talk about, but it is a reality of military life. We do what we can to prevent losses. We train for and plan our combat operations. We stress safety in garrison. We have enhanced programs to prevent risky behaviors and suicide. In the end, though, despite our best efforts, we cannot prevent every loss. That is why Survivor Outreach Services is so crucial. To honor the Fallen Soldier's service and sacrifice for our nation, we can do one last thing—offer support for the loved ones the Soldier left behind.

ALASKA POST

Home of the Arctic Warriors

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9th Army Band on the road for Music in our Schools month

Trish Muntean, Fort Wainwright PAO



Sgt. Jason Taylor performed a solo with the Denali Brass Quintet during the 9th Army "Arctic Warrior" Band's visit to Ladd Elementary School March 2. The band's visit was in honor of Music In Our Schools month. (Photos by Trish Muntean/Fort Wainwright PAO)

The 9th Army Band is taking their show on the road during the month of March, but most of their performances will not be for the Soldiers they usually serve, but for the youngest members of the community in honor of Music in our Schools Month.

Kathie Cook, principal of Ladd Elementary School was happy to host the entire band on March 2.

"It was great for everyone who has a parent in the Army, which is about 80 to 85 percent of our kids, because they see all the different jobs in the Army and it makes us all so proud of what everybody does," she said.

Chief Warrant Officer Jeff Price, the commander of the 9th Army Band, says the Music in our Schools program is one of his favorites.

"It is excellent. We are Soldiers, we serve Soldiers on a daily basis. But we have kids, we have families, we live and work in the community. Here at Ladd, almost all of these students have families on post, and it is a great way to give back to the families we support, a great way to encourage them and to use our skills in the same way we were encouraged many years ago in music class and in schools by our teachers."

"What we try to do is come into the schools and help the teachers in a way that only we can. Because we are professional musicians and we are professional soldiers and it is a way we can go into

the community and give back to the schools the skills we have obtained."

"Music that Lasts a Lifetime" is the theme this year," Price said. "In my opinion you want to give the kids as much as you can give them. You want to saturate them with all the opportunities. What we try to do is present them with a lot of different styles and genres of music and encourage them.

To do this, the band played traditional marches, Dixieland tunes, and The William Tell Overture." The Arctic Rock Band put their own spin on "Yankee Doodle" and the theme to "Sponge Bob Square Pants." A vocal quintet sang "God Bless America" and the whole audience enjoyed "When the Saints Come Marching In."

"It is important that we hold onto music programs when the money gets cut," said Cook. "Music lasts a lifetime, it is a universal language. It will be sad if we cut back on music programs because kids will miss that opportunity to get involved. If we limit those opportunities to people who have time and money to take their kids to private lessons we will lose a lot of talent."

"The great thing about being an Army musician," Price said "is we represent the Army everywhere we go. By our displaying the Army values I hope that is an encouragement to kids as they grow in their citizen ship and respect and love for the country."



The 9th Army Band performed at Ladd Elementary School March 2 in honor of Music In Our Schools month. This year's theme was "Music that Lasts a Lifetime" and the band's performance included traditional marches, Dixieland tunes and "The William Tell Overture." The audience also enjoyed the Arctic Rock Band's version of "Yankee Doodle" and the theme to "Sponge Bob Square Pants" as well as a vocal quintet which sang "God Bless America."

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ACAP: Deploying Soldiers to civilian life

Brian Schlumbohm, Fort Wainwright PAO

The Army Career and Alumni Program provides training, counseling, resources and job assistance to service members leaving active duty in pursuit of a new life in the civilian world. Whether they were Soldiers for 20 plus years and retiring or just finishing up a four-year tour, moving from a military lifestyle into the civilian world is a big change. Being well-prepared is an important step in the transitioning of Soldiers and military families for the changes that lie ahead.

Carlos Garcia, the Transitions Services manager and Retirement Services officer for Fort Wainwright, and the ACAP office personnel want to make sure that every Soldier's move to civilian life is as positive an experience as possible. Garcia and the specialists of the ACAP office offer counseling to Soldiers and their spouses in making these transition decisions and integrating into the civilian work force.

The ACAP's intention is to usher the service member and family into the community as self-reliant and contributing citizens, adding their skills and work value to the economy. "Our main goal is to send back a better citizen into the workforce," Garcia said.

The Army standard time set for allowing Soldiers to attend available ACAP classes starts 12 months out from the separation date. ACAP provides classes and briefings on resume-writing, job-hunting, interviewing skills and starting a small business.

Tailoring a list of each unit's Soldiers coming up on their estimated time of separation, Garcia's office sends a roster of ETS-eligible Soldiers to their commanders, informing them of the Soldiers' status and allowing the commanders to work with Soldiers' time requirements. Normally the ETS roster extends out 12 months, but during the latest deployment schedule, Garcia says, the timetable has now been extended out an additional six months to cover a full 18 months prior. This is to allow Soldiers returning from their deployments to have ample time to prepare and not be subjected to a quick decision soon after returning from overseas. It's an example of the importance the Army is putting on preparing its service members for new careers in the civilian sector.

Beyond the welfare of the Soldiers and their families, the additional care placed on getting ready for separation is felt in cost. Unemployment is expensive to the Army. During the first Quarter of the 2011 Fiscal year, the Army spent \$139,860,751.00 to the Unemployment Compensation for ex-service members (UCX) program, providing benefits for eligible ex-military personnel. This program is administered by individual states working as agents of the federal government to provide

unemployment compensation for those separated service members unable to find employment. The amount of the benefits varies from state to state, allowing for different levels of support to match the economy of the area. The bottom line is, if Soldiers are sent off without the proper tools to become employed, the potential cost of unemployment comes out of the Department of the Army's budget. Thankfully ACAP works.

Success stories and knowing that efforts have a positive effect on Soldiers finding jobs is something the office takes great pride in and the most profound statement of this can be found displayed at the ACAP office on the Success Stories board.

The board is covered with letters from separated Soldiers who felt sending thanks back to the ACAP office was important to share.

"The most important part of my successful transition was the support from the unit during my ETS...without the time spent working with ACAP and local community members, I would not have secured a job." Written and sent in by Justin Adams, a recently separated specialist who found a job in Shelburne, Vt., in the IT services field.

"With the help of one-on-one resume assistance, I was able to create a great resume on USA Jobs...resulted in my being hired by the Veterans Association in WY." Many other letters posted praise the support of the units, briefings and personnel help received.

"...tips on how to apply for positions, classes on resume preparation were great!!!...I had a great paying job in 3 weeks." Bob Williams, radar technician, Ramstein, Germany.

Success is wonderful but it takes some work, starting with the pre-separation briefing which the ACAP office sets up and is mandatory for all eligible members. A follow-up, computer-based question program is accomplished for collecting information on individual skill sets, work preferences and job interests. After that, a counselor works with a Soldier, one-on-one, to help determine the direction to take in obtaining a new career.

Rilene Ann is one of two ACAP Counselors who work with Soldiers and families after the computer-generated portion of pre-separation questionnaire is completed, to find out what they really need to transition them and their families.

"I genuinely enjoy assisting veterans and their families," Ann said. Being a veteran herself, she tries to make them feel at ease and guides them towards their new careers. If resumes are hard for them, she helps in their completion and gives encouragement along the way. Ann said, "They have the rest of

their life to live," so helping Soldiers set new goals, creating positive outlooks and assisting them to discard past discouragements, is her goal. She also encourages spouses to contact ACAP for services. Spouses can accompany their Soldiers to discuss their plans, participate in the workshops and gather information.

Classes are conducted and scheduled throughout the month, and feature various speakers from different areas of the government and private organizations.

Classes include the Transition/Job Assistance Workshop, offered

offered monthly by ACAP Staff.

For those who may already have an idea for a business of their own, there is a class facilitated by a representative of the Small Business Association of Fairbanks which takes place monthly. This class provides tips on planning, marketing, record keeping, taxes, insurance and financing your own business.

Veterans Service representatives located on Fort Wainwright provide an overview of benefits and entitlements for all military who have served, whether retired or separated.

The pre-retirement briefing offers



Willa Henderson a Disabled Veteran's Outreach Program specialist with the Alaska Department of Labor Veterans Employment Representatives, instructs at a Transition / Job Assistance workshop, March 5, on Fort Wainwright. Henderson's office provides TAP workshops to Soldiers going through the Army Career and Alumni Program, as they prepare themselves for new careers in the civilian sector. The TAP employment workshop is a three day class providing the necessary skills for retiring and separating Soldiers to successfully search and acquire jobs by understanding basic networking skills, developing a resume, practicing for interviews and even negotiating salaries and benefits. (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

monthly and run by the Alaska State Department of Labor Veterans Employment representatives. It provides information on how to search for jobs, understand job-networking practices, develop a resume, practice interviewing skills learn what to look for in benefits and how to negotiate a salary.

Classes are conducted on how to apply for federal jobs with the Department of Army and other government agencies through use of the Army Civilian Personnel Online and USA Jobs websites. These classes show how to complete government-style resumes, search federal job databases and how to place applications out for consideration. Army CPOL can be found at www.cpol.army.mil and USA Jobs at www.usajobs.gov

Resume Writing is a must, especially for those who may not have written one since just after high school. This two-hour class teaches the basic principles of writing a resume and is

information on retirement benefits for those one to two years away from their retirement date. Conducted by Retirement Services Officer, Garcia, the class is to inform, educate and ready the future retiree on what to expect and prepare for as they start a new life after completing their military career.

Over 60 hours total of classes, briefings and workshops are available for Soldiers and their spouses in transition and at minimum there are 12 months in which to attend them all. ACAP helps you in making best choices for yourself towards another career, financially providing for your family and providing the Army with positive representatives in the community.

Call 353-2099, to schedule for counseling and to register for the pre-retirement briefing or find out more at www.acap.army.mil/acap_centers/Centers/CenterDetailView.cfm?caller=family&site_id=5

Soldiers return to school to learn more about science by judging projects

Trish Muntean, Fort Wainwright PAO

Soldiers from Fort Wainwright, along with members of the Fairbanks community have been lending a hand and encouraging would-be scientists at science fairs held over the last few weeks at local schools.

Soldiers from the 16th Combat Aviation Brigade were at Tanana Middle School March 1 for their science fair which is open to 7th and 8th graders and had 67 entries this year. After getting their instructions, Soldiers acting as judges, visited the stations and talked to the students about their projects, which varied in topic and scope. The students presented their theories and gave results of their research and then judges had a chance to ask questions.

"My son attends Tanana Middle School and I came to his class while he was doing his presentation for his science project. The teacher asked if I could come be a judge," said Capt. Mohamed Massaquoi, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade. "I was excited about that. I used to do science fairs when I was back in the 8th grade. This is a great opportunity, I couldn't miss it."

"These students know what they are talking about; they put in the time and effort. I am excited to share with them some pointers," Massaquoi said. "But that is it. I am just sharing pointers. They know their projects, they know the work they have put in."

Spc. Matthew Foradori enjoyed science fairs when he was in school so was happy for the opportunity to come out and judge. He found the different projects interesting, especially the ones involving energy drinks and how second-hand smoke affects animals.

Greg Platt, principal of Tanana Middle School, said the students enjoyed and appreciated the Soldiers' participation and that it made the process faster and simpler for all involved.

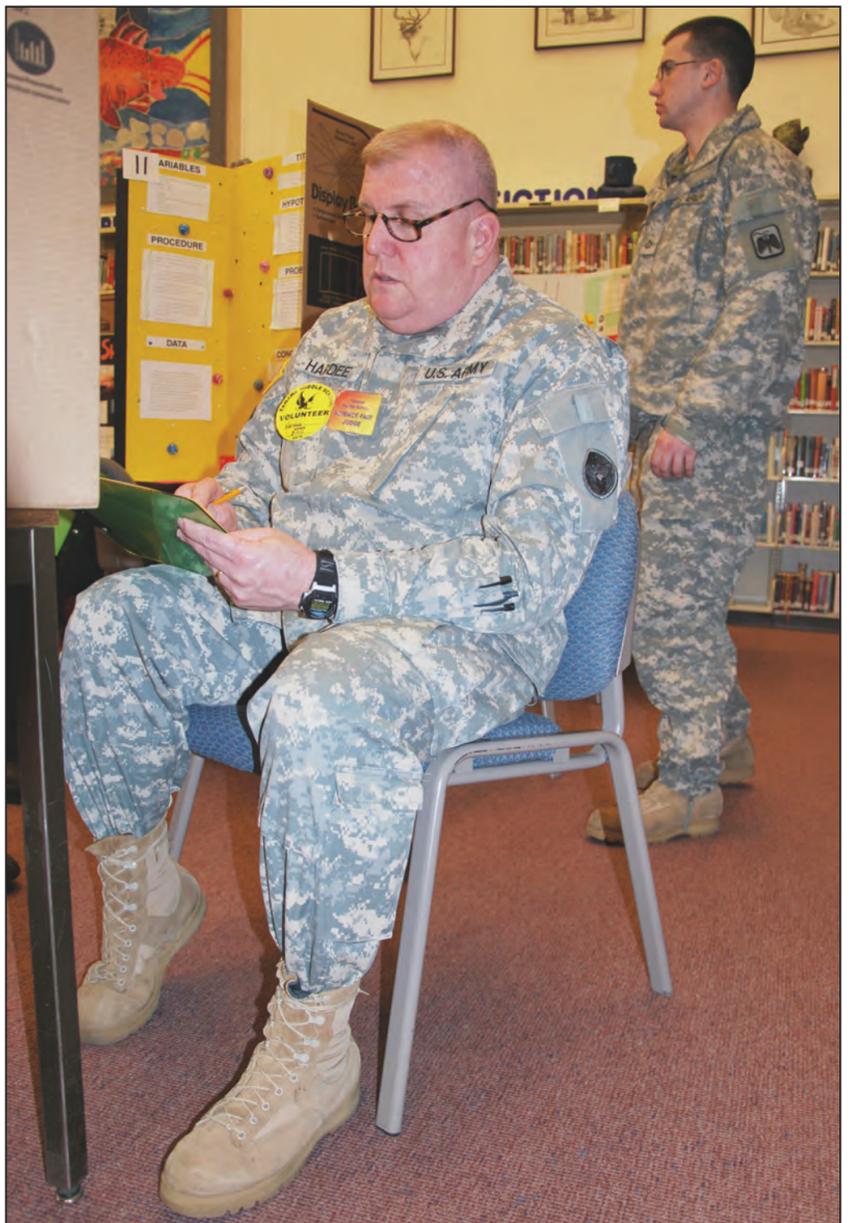
There were six categories for the entries at Tanana Middle School: experiment or investigation, scientific report, demonstration, science collection or original computer program.

Patrick, son of Theresa and Timothy Connors is an 8th grader at Tanana Middle School. His project was about computers.

"My main hobby is with computers and I want to make it my job when I grow up," he said. "I want to work at Microsoft, Dell or HP, one of the bigger corporations that specializes in computers."

He received a blue ribbon for his project and will be moving onto the district science fair which will be held at Pioneer Park later this month.

"It is great to see so much potential here," said Massaquoi. "I'm happy that they are sharing it with me."



Sgt 1st Class Elliot Hardee, Equal Opportunity Advisor for Fort Wainwright was one of the judges for the science fair at Tanana Middle School. He said that he enjoyed getting out and seeing what the other students did after he worked with his son, Isiah Miller on his project. (Photo by Trish Muntean/Fort Wainwright PAO)

FAMILY: Survivor Outreach Services continue support and guidance

Continued from Page 1

Maria will participate in the upcoming garrison Army Family Action Plan conference here, bringing her knowledge and skills from the recently completed Department of the Army AFAP conference. Sutherland will be joined by fellow survivor Susan Hernandez at the AFAP conference. Susan and her two children survive Staff Sgt. Irving Hernandez who also served with the 172nd, died in 2006.

This is the second year survivors have participated in the AFAP conference. These survivors bring a perspective and knowledge base that would be impossible to replicate without their help and input.

Recently surviving spouses discovered they needed help to obtain W2 forms to complete their tax returns. We'll continue to work with Defense Finance Accounting System to ensure our survivors get what they need.

SOS is open to all survivors of all service members who've died no matter when, no matter the circumstance; thus not all have DoD ID cards or post access. SOS endeavors to bridge gaps in services and access where it's

possible. We're putting the finishing touches on the decal program to ensure that survivors are able to access the installation, while ensuring the safety of everyone on the installation. The survivor installation access program will be successful because we have the support and guidance of our Directorate of Emergency Services.

For the surviving family members who choose to stay in Alaska, our senior leaders have invited survivors to unit meetings and events and continue to enfold them within the caring arms of the Army family. Cindy Raugh, our SOS volunteer program manager, Katie Payne, senior spouse of the 1st Infantry and Diane Wood, senior spouse of 1-25th SBCT have been instrumental to the success of our program.

While many find it difficult to face even the possible loss of our dearest loves, we should not shy away from honoring the survivors who have sacrificed so much. Our Army Family is enriched and strengthened by continuing the relationships with survivors. Call 353-4004 for more information.

Olympic hopeful breaks personal-best mark in hammer throwing on national stage

Marisa Petrich, Northwest Guardian

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. -- What's the difference between being good and being great? According to some, raw talent isn't enough. You also have to want it.

Maj. Mike Mai, commander of the 9th Financial Management Company and a nationally ranked weight and hammer thrower, knows what that's like. He recently set a new personal record in the weight throw at the USA Indoor Track and Field Championships and has his eye on the Olympics for the hammer throw in 2012.

"It's almost kind of that very basic human desire be the biggest, strongest and fastest and throw something really far. It's what man has been doing since we - became man, I think," he said.

Mai's longest throw of 23.72 meters (77.82 feet) at last month's nationals wasn't quite the farthest in the competition, but it came pretty close. He placed third, finishing a single centimeter behind the second-place thrower, A.G. Kruger of Nike, and 36 away from Jake Freeman of the New York Athletic Club, who came in first at 24.08 meters (79 feet).

"I was tight, it was real tight up at the top," he said.

Mai also broke his previous best throw of 23.67 meters (77.66 feet), which he set at nationals in 2010.

"You know, I was really

happy with the personal best," he said. "And really, overall, my series was definitely the best I've ever had. I probably

for Mai it's all about the outdoor season and his specialty - the hammer throw.

Now that the indoor season



Maj. Mike Mai, 9th Financial Management Company commander, competed last week in the 2011 USA Indoor Track & Field Championships in Albuquerque, N.M. Mai, a hammer-thrower, took third place. (Photo by Ingrid Barrentine/Northwest Guardian)

had three of the top four throws I've ever had."

Being the third-ranked weight thrower at indoor nationals is no mean feat, but

is winding down, he'll be taking a short break from training to get an injection for tendonitis in his knee.

In April he'll be moving

to San Jose, Calif. for his third tour in the Army's World Class Athlete Program, which enables elite Soldier-athletes to train full-time for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

"One thing with the weight because, again, it's shorter and heavier, you can throw it far by overpowering it," he said. "But the hammer is much more technical. You can't just overpower the hammer because it's lighter and longer."

The hammer is 16 pounds with a nearly four-foot handle, as opposed to the 35-pound weight attached to a triangular handle. Though the sports are similar, the hammer throw requires more than just brute strength.

Imagine the hammer swinging in a perfect circle, like a wheel with a single spoke, returning to a fixed point after each revolution. At the center of the circle, Mai releases the hammer after four tightly controlled turns, after which the hammer usually flies out about 75 meters, or 246 feet.

"It's almost like simple harmonic motion in physics," he said. "When you have the right technique and you really, as we say in throwing, connect to the ball, you know, you add so much more energy into that system."

It's getting that perfect technique that he'll be working

on starting in April.

While assigned at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Mai's been training by sending videos of his meets to his coach, Dave Swan, in San Jose, Calif. But with the Olympics approaching, he's relocating for more intensive personal training.

Swan knows he's up for the challenge.

"Mike is one of the athletes who wants it as much as I want it for him," he said.

"He's a heck of a man," Swan said. "He's a great Soldier and he's a great athlete."

For Mai, leaving Joint Base Lewis-McChord will be bittersweet.

"It's fun being with the troops, even though you know you don't get as much training time," he said. "You know, this job has been really rewarding, and I'm definitely gonna miss being here with all the folks that I've been with."

Next up for Mai are the 2011 USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships in June, and the World Military Games in Brazil in July.

"It's gonna be a completely different lifestyle. It's gonna take a while to get used to," Mai said. "You know, I'm definitely gonna enjoy the time to train and really devote myself to it and see what can happen."

SEUSS: He would, he could, he did you see, help the U.S. military

Continued from Page 1

Returning to Springfield in 1927, he began sending his illustrated political cartoons to magazines and other publications, making his first breakthrough with The Saturday Evening Post's July 16, 1927, issue. Moving to New York City, he joined the staff of a weekly humor magazine called "Judge," where he first used his now-famous pen name, Dr. Seuss.

In 1936, after successfully making a living in advertising and as a political cartoonist, Geisel authored his first children's book, "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street." Geisel had gone to 27 different publishers with his first book, rejected by all until it was finally accepted by the Vanguard Press which published it in 1937.

After the start of World War II, Dr. Seuss joined the war effort by creating cartoons, illustrations and posters for the U.S. Treasury and other agencies, bringing attention to in the war effort by promoting the purchase of war bonds, rationing of goods needed by Soldiers overseas and eventually marketing enlistment posters for the Department of Defense.

Too old for the draft, Geisel volunteered for service, joined the Army in 1943 and was commissioned as Commander, Maj. Theodor Geisel of the Animation Department, First Motion Picture unit, based in Hollywood, Calif. His role during the war was to create informational training films and illustrations for the military and public. Working with famous cartoonists and filmmakers of the day, including Jack Turner, Chuck Jones and Frank Capra, his unit created films for Army training, morale and information. They included "Private Snafu," a series of short animated films featuring a private who continually messes up to show troops what not to do while in the Army; "Your Job in Germany," a 1945 propaganda film on the role of peace in Europe after World War II, and "Our Job in Japan." One of the films he created for the Army, "Hitler Lives," won an Academy Award. As a Soldier in the Army, he was awarded the Legion of Merit for his contributions to the war efforts as a cartoonist, scriptwriter and filmmaker.

At the end of the war, Geisel left the Army and moved to La Jolla, Calif., and went on to create the script for "Gerald McBoing-Boing," a Technicolor short by United Productions of America / Columbia, which won a 1951 Oscar for Best Cartoon Short. During his career he published many books, writing and illustrating 44 in total himself. One of his most well known books was supposedly written on a bet proposed by his publisher, Bennett Cerf. The bet was to write a book using only 50 words, so he did and very few of us haven't heard of "Green Eggs and Ham." Probably his best known and all-time biggest seller was "Cat in the Hat." His final book "Oh, the

Places You'll Go!" was published in 1990 and offered encouragement to young people as they set out on the journey of life.

Geisel died Sept. 24, 1991, in La Jolla, but his writing style, signature artwork and contributions to the nation have made him an enduring part of American culture in the homes, libraries and theaters all over the world.

Would you, could you read some more Of his service, during war?

Read it, read it then you'll see

How Dr. Seuss served in the Army.

Read more on Dr. Seuss, his life and accomplishments at:

www.militarymuseum.org/1stmpu.html
www.orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/dspolitic/
www.signal150.army.mil/theodor_seuss_geisel.html
www.orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/testing/html/mss0230a.html#menu



Sgt. 1st Class Robert Singleton, platoon sergeant with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, read "Horton Hears a Who" to his son's class at the Child Development Center 1 March 2 in honor of the 107th anniversary of Dr. Seuss' Birthday. Many parents made time to stop by and read to children throughout the week. Singleton, who will be deploying with his unit soon, wanted the chance to read for his son's class. "I volunteered; I try to spend as much time with him as possible." Singleton said. (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

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FAIRBANKS ICE DOGS/ARCTIC

what is it?
when is it?
where is it?

find it here!

Arctic Health Link

WHAT: Diabetes Class
WHEN: March 15, 2 to 4 p.m.
WHERE: Bassett Army Community Hospital
COST: Free for all Tricare beneficiaries
CALL: Arctic Health Link 361-4148
NOTES: Classes are by appointment only and space is limited. Please call for more information and to schedule your class.

WHAT: Cholesterol Class
WHEN: March 22, 2 to 4 p.m.
WHERE: Bassett Army Community Hospital
COST: Free for all Tricare beneficiaries
CALL: Arctic Health Link 361-4148
NOTES: Classes are by appointment only and space is limited. Please call for more information and to schedule your class.

WHAT: Hypertension Class
WHEN: March 23, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
WHERE: Bassett Army Community Hospital
COST: Free for all Tricare beneficiaries
CALL: Arctic Health Link 361-4148
NOTES: Classes are by appointment only and space is limited. Please call for more information and to schedule your class.

WHAT: Tobacco Use Cessation
WHEN: March 24, 12:30 to 4:30 p.m.
WHERE: Bassett Army Community Hospital
COST: Free for all Tricare beneficiaries
CALL: Arctic Health Link 361-4148
NOTES: Classes are by appointment only and space is limited. Please call for more information and to schedule your class.

For more Arctic Health Link information see MEDDAC commander's column, page 2.



Col. Timothy Jones, Fort Wainwright Garrison Commander and the Post Library will have a dedication of "Our Heroes' Tree" March 22 at 3 p.m. "Our Heroes' Tree" is a community engagement program co-founded in 2005 by Stephanie Pickup, author of "The Soldier's Tree", and Marlene Lee, author of "The Hero in My Pocket." Our Heroes' Tree promotes awareness of the service and sacrifice of U.S. service members and their families. It is inclusive of all branches of service, Active Duty, Guard and Reserve, and all generations. The tree was designed by a Soldier to honor Soldiers, both past and present, for service to this country. Families, individuals and Family Readiness Groups have created ornaments to display and honor their heroes on the tree. SAS is having a "hero writing" session as well to support the project. Anyone can make an ornament to honor their hero and all are welcome at the dedication. For more information call the Post Library at 353-7372. (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

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BLUE LOON, THE
AK POST/UPCOMING
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Feeling shortchanged from Daylight Savings

Daylight Saving Time starts Sunday, at 2 a.m. This is the time of year clocks spring ahead and Monday feels a bit shortchanged with one less hour of sleep. A positive side to this is the extra hour of sunlight gained in the evening, providing more time for outside activities during the work week.

DST was formally started in America in 1918. Most of the U. S. observes this. Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Arizona all stay with Standard Time. The exception within Arizona's borders is the Navajo Nation Community, which does observe DST. The U.S. consumer Product Safety Commission suggests replacing batteries in home smoke alarms at this time as well.

Our next time change back to Standard Time will be Sunday, November 6, 2011, at 2 a.m. when clocks are turned backward one hour or fall back.

Find out more about Daylight Saving by visiting: www.nist.gov/pml/div688/dst.cfm

AFAP CONFERENCE MARCH 30 - 31

Submit issues now by
calling 353-2382

16376066
NEW HOPE METHODIST
AK POST/AK POST
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Ongoing

CALLING ALL TEENS, 12 to 18 needed to participate in the Army Family Action Plan Conference, March 30 and 31. Call Charles Lyons at 353-2382.

Alaska Post

To submit a photo, place an event or class on the calendar send an email to pao.fwa@us.army.mil no later than close of business Monday prior to the print week.

The name of the event or class, date, time, location and a contact phone number must be included.

For display advertising contact the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner at 459-7548.

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GOOD NEWS FISHING GUIDES
AK POST/AK POST
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BADGER RD BAPTIST CHURCH
AK POST/AK POST
2 x 2.0

Friday - 11th

STORY HOUR AND CRAFTS, 4 p.m., Post Library, Building 3700. Call 353-2642.

"SAW" MARATHON, 6 p.m., The Warrior Zone, Building 3205. Part of the week-long block leave activities. No cost for active duty military. Must be 18 years and older to participate. Call 353-1087.

LASER TAG, 1 to 4 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Part of the week-long block leave activities. No cost for active duty military. Must be 18 or older to participate. Call 353-7755.

MAKE AND TAKE "ARTIST TRADING CARDS," 6 p.m., Arts and Crafts Center, Building 3727. Must be 16 years and older to participate. Call 353-7520.

Saturday - 12th

ENCORE STORY HOUR AND CRAFTS, 10:30 a.m., Post Library, Building 3700. Call 353-2642.

CHESS CLUB, 3 to 5 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-7755.

YOUTH SKI AND SNOWBOARD DAYS, Birch Hill, Building 1172. March 12 to 14 and March 18 to 20. Limited space available. Register early. Call 353-9131/1998.

PING PONG TOURNAMENT, 6 p.m., The Warrior Zone, Building 3205. Part of the week-long block leave activities. No cost for active duty military. Must be 18 or older to participate. Call 353-1087.

ORC NORTHERN EXPOSURE, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Outdoor Recreation Center, Building 4050. Cost is \$115 person. Must be 12 years or older to participate. Call 361-4089.

Sunday - 13th

MARCH MADNESS/DAYTONA BIKE WEEK, 1 p.m., The Warrior Zone, Building 3205. Part of the week-long block leave activities. No cost for active duty military. Must be 18 years and older to participate. Call 353-1087.

Monday - 14th

SAS SPRING SURVIVAL CAMP, March 14 to 18. School Age Services, Building 4391. For registered youth in grades K through 6. Call 361-7394.

YOUTH MUSICAL "SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS," March 14-19. School Age Services, Building 4391. Auditions and practices vary. Final performance will be held in Pioneer Park March 19 at 5 p.m. Call 361-5437.

NATIONAL CHOCOLATE WEEK, Post Library, Building 3700. Call 353-2642.

MATRIX MONDAY, 6 p.m., The Warrior Zone, Building 3205. Featuring all three movies. Part of the week-long block leave activities. No cost for active duty military. Must be 18 years and older to participate. Call 353-1087.

Tuesday - 15th

TACO TUESDAY, 6 p.m., The Warrior Zone, Building 3205. Part of the week-long block leave activities. Cost is \$5. Must be 18 years and older to participate. Call 353-1087.

STRESS MANAGEMENT, 3 to 4:30 p.m., Northern Lights Inn conference room. Call 353-4227.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENTS, March 15 and 16, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. For children age 5 and younger.. Call 361-7372.

Wednesday - 16th

ROCK CLIMBING AT MELAVEN, 1 to 4 p.m., Part of the week-long block leave activities. No cost for active duty military. Must be 18 years and older to participate. Melaven Physical Fitness Center, Building 3452. Call 361-6349.

OPEN MIC NIGHT, 4 to 8 p.m., Birch Hill, Building 1172. Limited space available. Register early. Call 353-9131.

BABY AND ME, 2 to 3:30 p.m., Post Library, Building 3700. For children up to 24 months old. Call 353-2642.

ANGER MANAGEMENT, 3 to 4:30 p.m., Northern Lights Inn conference room. Call 353-4227.

Thursday - 17th

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY SPECIAL, 4 to 11 p.m., The Warrior Zone, Building 3205. Corned beef, cabbage and green beer for \$6. Open to DoD cardholders 18 and older. Call 353-1087.

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. All movies appropriate for children ages 3 to 10. Call 353-7755.

SCREAM-FREE PARENTING, 2 p.m., Northern Lights Inn conference room. Call 353-4227.

CUSTOM FRAMING, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Arts and Crafts Center, Building 3727. Cost is \$35. Bring 5"x7" picture to frame. Must be 16 years or older to participate. Call 353-7520.

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PERFECT PARTY, THE
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BABYSITTER'S COURSE, March 17 and 18, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Youth Center, Building 4109. Open to participants ages 12 and older. Call 361-7713.

For your information

YOUTH AUDITIONS FOR DOWNTOWN PLAY

An audition will be held for the Missoula Children's Theatre production of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" March 14 at School Age Services from 9 to 11 a.m.

Those auditioning should arrive at 9 a.m. and plan to stay for the full two hours. Some of the cast members will be asked to stay for a rehearsal immediately following the audition. Rehearsals will continue through the week culminating in a dress rehearsal March 19 at 1 p.m. followed by a performance for family members and the public at 5 p.m. in Pioneer Park.

Among the roles to be cast are Snow White, Queen Bella, the Seven Dwarfs, her Forest Friends, Black Forest Creatures, a Magic Mirror, Bats, Henchmen and the King. Students from kindergarten through 12th grade are encouraged to audition. No advance preparation is necessary. Assistant directors will also be cast to aid in rehearsals throughout the week, and to take on essential backstage responsibilities.

The Missoula Children's Theatre touring productions are complete with costumes, scenery, props and makeup. MCT Tour actors and directors will conduct rehearsals throughout the week. "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" will be presented March 19 at Pioneer Park.

For more information, call Tonya McCarty, Child Youth and Schools training and program specialist, 361-4392.

NEW CAREER IN CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

Criminal Investigations Division will offer monthly recruiting briefs at the Education Center the third Thursday of every month beginning this Thursday at 3:30 p.m. For more information, call 353-6329 or 353-6214.

TRAVEL CARD OFFICE CLOSED

The Government Travel Office is closed today for training. In case of emergency, call Pat Johnson at 384-1135.

TAX CENTER OPEN

The Tax Center is open. Active-duty, mobilized Reserve, retirees and the family members of these sponsors who have simple personal income tax returns are eligible for tax assistance service.

Returns may be filed electronically whether you are getting a refund or you owe taxes. Only taxes prepared by a Fort Wainwright Tax Assistance Center staff member can be electronically filed at the Tax Assistance Center.

The Tax Assistance Center is located in Building 1049-4 Gaffney Road near the Law Center on the north side of Fort Wainwright. Both appointments and walk-ins are available, but customers having an appointment take priority.

For more information or an appointment call 353-2613.

ALASKA POST HOME DELIVERY

Housing residents who no longer want home delivery of the Alaska Post should e-mail the Public Affairs Office at pao.fwa@us.army.mil or call 353-6780.

FATHER-DAUGHTER BALL

The annual Father-Daughter Ball is slated for April 3 from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Westmark Hotel. The cost is \$25 per family, no matter how many people are in the family. Tickets may be purchased at the Armed Services YMCA office located at 1047-4 Nysteen Road between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. The ASYMCA can only accept cash for ticket purchases.

For more information call the ASYMCA, 353-5962.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION CEREMONY

The 2011 ACS Volunteer Recognition Ceremony is scheduled for April 14.

Nominations for the Military Volunteer of the Year, Civilian Volunteer of the Year, Youth Volunteer of the Year, Military Spouse of the Year, Volunteer Family of the Year and Overall Volunteer of the Year Award are being accepted until March 31.

For more information contact Denise Mitchell at d.mitchell1@us.army.mil

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Feb. 10

A son, Mason Alexander Cruz-Penix, was born to Ashley Cruz-Penix and Spc. David Penix, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

Feb. 18

Twin sons, Austin Levi and Brody Grant, were born to Carol and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Nicolas Simila, 123rd Aviation Intermediate Maintenance, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade.

Feb. 20

A daughter, Sapphira A. Zaldivar, was born to Nancy Heap and Pvt. Jorge Zaldivar, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade.

Feb. 22

A son, Colton Lee, was born to Heather and Cpl. Jesse Lee Quandt, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade.

Feb. 25

A son, Carter Henry Montalvo was born to Henry Montalvo and Spc. Ruby Lara, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

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Bridget Lawson raises her voice and microphone along with Julie Converse, singer and pianist at the annual National Prayer Luncheon at the Northern Lights Chapel here, Tuesday. Fort Wainwright Garrison Chaplain (Lt. Col.) David VanderJagt led the annual program along with garrison chaplaincy, staff, the U.S. Army Alaska chaplains, Soldiers, family members, Department of the Army civilian employees and leaders from Fairbanks, North Pole and Interior Alaska communities for a series of prayers – for the U.S., our Soldiers, military families and the communities. The theme, "Encountering God, Strength for the Journey," was the inspiration for stories told by five chaplains, leading to applause, laughter and a few tears from attendees. Services, programs of fellowship and counseling offered by Army chaplains is vital to Soldier and Family readiness and as spiritual health and resilience is a core element of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness. The Lenten season began this week. The Stations of the Cross takes place at 7 p.m. tonight at Southern Lights Chapel. For more information, call the chapel at 361-4463 or 353-9825. (Photo by Connie Storch/Fort Wainwright PAO)

ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF

Army Emergency Relief is the Army's way of taking care of their own. Soldiers, both active and retired and their family members can get financial assistance from AER during times of emergency.

To do this, AER needs your help. The annual AER campaign continues until May 15. If you need information about AER check out their website at www.aerhq.org/ or contact Master Sgt. Kenton Allen by calling 353-7534.

BEWARE - THE SKY IS FALLING

Falling ice and snow from Fort Wainwright buildings will begin as temperatures rise. Snow and ice on all the structures, including hangars, will begin sliding off the rooftops and can land on vehicles. This can and does occur from structures with and without posted warning signs. Please be aware of these dangers and take precautions to keep privately owned property, including vehicles, further away from structure roof lines. In accordance with Army Regulation 27-20, falling ice and snow is a common occurrence in cold weather climates, therefore, it is considered an "Act of God" and damages sustained as a result of falling snow and ice are generally not compensable through the Army Claims Service. If you have any questions, please contact the Fort Wainwright Claims Office at 353-6155, 353-6507 or 353-6558.

LIFE AFTER THE ARMY

It's never too soon. Soldiers should start working with Army Career and Alumni Program at least one year out but no later than six to nine months before retirement or separation.

Starting ACAP early allows you to fully utilize the program even around your training schedule. ACAP offers classes in employment assistance training, Veterans' and disability benefits, resume writing, federal job application, starting a small business and more. Spouses are also welcome to take advantage of ACAP programs. To get started, call ACAP at 353-2113 or go online to www.acapexpress.army.mil to set up pre-separation counseling and get started immediately planning for life's next exciting adventure.

MILITARY ONE SOURCE

Military life comes with unique challenges. The goal of Military OneSource is to provide expert information – articles, booklets, CDs, DVDs and links to other resources – on how to deal with the challenges and issues military families face every day.

Help is available for military members, spouses, and families from Military One Source.

Education, relocation, parenting, stress - you name it - Military OneSource can help with just about any need. Available by phone or online, this free service is provided by the Department of Defense for active-duty, guard, and reserve service members and their families.

For more information, call (800) 342-9647 or visit the website www.militaryonesource.com

EARLY GRADUATION

A special early commencement ceremony for graduating seniors of deploying Soldiers will be April 1 at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center starting at 7 p.m.

If you are a graduating senior and plan to attend this ceremony call Barb at 452-2000, extension 411 by March 25.

Official graduation ceremonies will be held mid-May.

WOMEN'S HISTORY GUEST SPEAKER

The 16th Combat Aviation Brigade will host the Fort Wainwright Women's History Month celebration March 25 at 1 p.m. at the Physical Fitness Center.

The theme for this year's observance is "Our History Is Our Strength" featuring Jeri Wigdahl as the guest speaker. Wigdahl is a community leader, active volunteer and has recently come out of retirement to work in public relations.

Mariah Ver Hoef a student at University of Alaska Fairbanks, has recorded three albums of original music will perform.

For more information, call Sgt. 1st Class Michael Wiest at 353-0398.

HOME ALONE COURSE

School Age Services is offering a course to prepare families for children being at home without adult supervision.

This workshop is two-fold. The parent portion covers the installation home-alone policy, how to determine if your child is ready to be alone, how to ensure the safest home-alone experience for children and what the children are covering in their classroom. A 4H curriculum is used and each parent will receive a parent handbook to assist with this transition process for their family.

The student portion covers safety, family expectations and house rules, the policy on the installation and some basic snack ideas. Each student receives an imAlone workbook to assist in preparing for being home alone and to keep all of their important information together. They will also receive a packet of nutritious snack recipes to help them on their way.

The last part of the workshop provides an opportunity for parents and students to get together and complete some of the planning and discussion pieces together.

The workshop is March 24 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the SAS Building 4391.

For more information, or to register call 361-7713 or 361-7372.

EMAIL BRIEFS TO: - pao.fwa@us.army.mil

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MEMORY: Honoring the Soldier and helping the survivors heal

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"Two other guys were in the turret and they were OK," Nethery said. "But it killed Kevin instantly. He was sitting right over where they detonated."

"His body came back wrapped like a mummy," Worsham added.

Ellenburg's death affected his entire family. His older brother, Andrew, who also served in the Army, still can't talk openly about it. His sister has dealt with the loss by helping others and is now the one who keeps the family together.

His uncle yearns to work on engineering projects at AMRDEC that will help protect Soldiers in the field so that other families don't have to endure what his family has been forced to accept. And there are now two granddaughters - Jessica's 2-year-old daughter Capri and Andrew's 19-month-old daughter Avery - who will never know their uncle Kevin.

Ellenburg and his siblings grew up in Jacksonville, Fla., where the family was based while their father served 30 years with the Navy. After a divorce, their mother moved to Birmingham.

Ellenburg graduated from high school in Pace, Fla., in 2004, following his brother into military service. Eventually, Ellenburg's brother and sister relocated to the Birmingham, Ala. area and his mother, who works for Brookwood Medical Center, remarried and moved to Cullman.

"Kevin loved his older brother Andrew and wanted to follow in his footsteps," Nethery said. "He wanted to join the Navy like his dad. But he also wanted to be like his brother. Andrew had joined the Reserves and served in Iraq in 2003-04 with the 3rd Infantry Division.

"Kevin decided to follow his brother's footsteps completely as far as being in a Bradley and driving a Bradley, everything. I was not encouraged by either of the boys going into the military because I didn't want them to follow in their dad's footsteps. I didn't want ..."

"Military life was hard on my family," Worsham interjected.

Ellenburg joined the Army in 2005. Even though their father's Navy service made growing up tough, Ellenburg was proud of being in the Army, his sister said.

"He was proud even though I pushed against it," Nethery added. "I told him 'I'll support you in whatever you do. But it doesn't make me happy.' As a mother, you support them no matter what. And he was very proud of that uniform."

"He was in the Army for the long haul," Worsham said. "He went in with the decision that he would someday retire from the Army. He was going all the way, and he was proud to be able to wear the uniform and serve his country. When he was home, he wanted to wear the uniform so people would know how proud he was. He never regretted it."

After training, Ellenburg was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood, Texas. It wasn't long before he was shipped to Iraq with the 4th ID.

"I wasn't happy at all about him being sent straight over there," Nethery said.

Worsham had the power of attorney for her

brother during his deployment. As such, she took care of his business affairs and communicated with him regularly. The family sent care packages for Ellenburg to share with his friends.

"Whenever I talked to him, he would say 'Tell everyone I love them and I'm fine,'" Worsham said.

Ellenburg did come home on leave in September 2006. Though the visit was happy with trips to Six Flags and Pensacola, Fla., it ended with an ominous feeling.

"When we took him to the airport to leave, we knew he wouldn't be back," Nethery said. "It was a horrible, gut feeling. Kevin was crying and shaking."

"He was scared, but he wanted to go back because he was committed to what they were doing in Iraq," Worsham said.

"I knew the last time we said goodbye that it would be the last," Nethery added, with conviction in her voice. "In a strange way, I think God brought him home to have a last goodbye."

Nethery was on her way home from work when Soldiers drove up to her house to notify her of her son's death. At about the same time, Nethery's nephew drove into the driveway.

"He called my husband Darryl to tell him who was at our house. Darryl told our nephew to have the Soldiers leave for a few minutes so that he could get home and be there when they returned," Nethery recalled. "I got home and my nephew was there. Then, my husband came in and his face was white. He told my nephew he could leave. I asked him 'What's wrong?' He wouldn't tell me, but he kept looking out the window. Then, I heard the car drive up."

The news she received that day still brings tears to Nethery's eyes.

"I told them 'You're crazy. You have the wrong person. There are many other people over there and you've got this wrong.' It's still not true to me. I may sit here and cry. But it's still not true to me," she said.

The funeral was on Veterans Day 2006, and Kevin was buried in a cemetery in Pelham, near Oak Mountain State Park in an Army-issued casket.

"We had purchased an awesome casket for him because that was the kind of guy he was. He always wanted to look nice. He was showy," Worsham said. "We picked out the best casket we could afford. But the Army wouldn't let us transfer him to our coffin because his body was in such bad shape. He was wrapped like a mummy."

The days - and years -- after the funeral were hard for Nethery and her family. Nethery still has a hard time participating in family celebrations and finding happiness in life. Her granddaughters, though, have helped her rekindle some of her previous joy.

"Before these grandkids, she just wasn't there. She wouldn't come to holidays. She wouldn't get involved in anything," Worsham said.

"Kevin will never have kids. He will never have a family," Nethery said. "But these girls look like him. I see a lot of him in our girls."

Nethery has tried to go to counseling through Veterans Affairs. And she does appreciate the

programs the Army has established to provide counseling and other support services for the families of fallen Soldiers. But she is not yet ready to join in on those programs.

"It honestly was too hard for me," she said of the counseling. "When I get upset sometimes it goes way beyond being upset and my husband just has to stick me in bed to sleep and get over it. Maybe one day I will be able to."

Time has helped in the healing, but only a little. "There are many days when I put on a huge front to get through the day. There's not a day that's ever fine, that the hurt stops, that you forget about it," Nethery said. "After time goes by, you don't cry every second of the day anymore. You cry less, but you still cry."

"I have to stay busy. I am the type that would crawl back in bed and stay home all day and not talk to anybody if I didn't have somewhere to go and something to do." The family is still in touch with some of Ellenburg's Army friends through Facebook and occasional visits.

Though life is busy, Nethery tries to visit Ellenburg's gravesite at least once a month. The visits make her feel closer to her son.

"Sometimes I've got to be there. And sometimes I can't go," she said.



Julie Nethery, center, copes daily with the loss of her Soldier son with the support of her family, which includes, from left, her brother Mike Lawrence holding granddaughter Avery, and her daughter Jessica Worsham holding granddaughter Capri. Lawrence works at the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center. (Photo by Kari Hawkins/USAG Redstone)

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