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## AT A GLANCE

### LEADER OF THE PACK



Col. Todd R. Wood, commander of the 1-25th SBCT leads the Arctic Wolves on an esprit de corps run to begin deployment ceremonies Wednesday.

**More next week**

**STRYKER CREED:  
STRIKE FIRST,  
STRIKE HARD**

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### ARMY SERVICES

[myarmyonesource.com](http://myarmyonesource.com)

### DEFENSE VIDEO

[dvidshub.net](http://dvidshub.net)

## WEEKEND WEATHER

### Friday

Mostly sunny.  
Low 13 High 45

### Saturday

Partly sunny.  
Low 12 High 41

### Sunday

Partly sunny.  
Low 13 High 35

Unrestricted visibility  
NE winds 5 -10 mph

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

## PACK ATTACK: Arctic Wolves ready to run down the bad guys



Col. Todd R. Wood, commander, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, led the Arctic Wolves in an esprit de corps run around the airfield Wednesday. Almost 4,000 1-25th SBCT Soldiers participated in the morale run starting off a day of symbolic and ceremonial preparations for the brigade's upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. Fort Wainwright leaders, family and community members joined 1-25th SBCT Soldiers Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. at Hangar 6 for a deployment ceremony. Look for more on the deployment ceremony in next week's Alaska Post. (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

## A magical night of warriors and princesses in the "Secret Garden"

Staff report, Fort Wainwright PAO

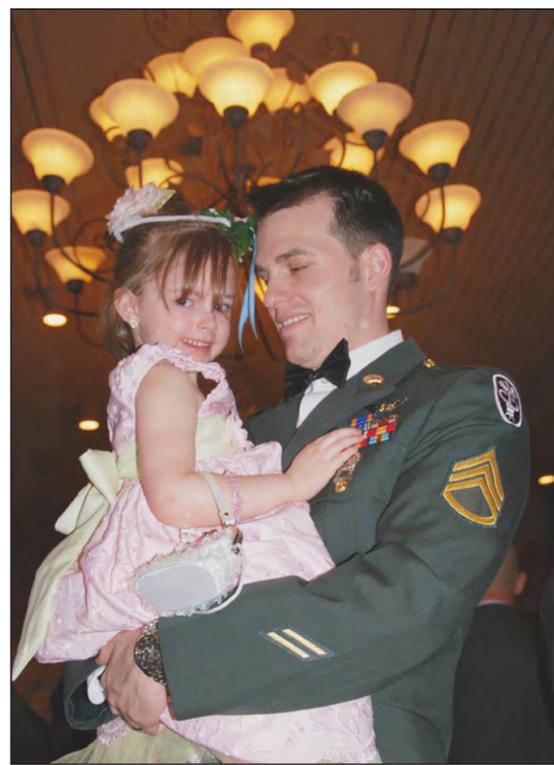
Military fathers were afforded a fun-filled experience with their daughters April 3rd, at the fifth annual Military Father-Daughter Ball. With the assistance of sponsors and volunteers the Armed Services YMCA of Alaska organized the event. "The ball is a highly anticipated annual event for fathers to spend precious time with their daughters," said Katrina Sczesny, program coordinator.

This year's sold-out "Secret Garden"-themed gala featured a visit from the Fairy Garden Princess, professional photographers, a fun photo booth and numerous door prizes to help preserve those special memories for the little princesses.

"The annual ball is a special evening made just for dads and their girls and is a great opportunity to strengthen the father-daughter bond," Sczesny said. Fathers are encouraged to bring their daughters of any age and for some families this means one dad with a few daughters as dates for the ball. "This annual event was a huge success thanks to the Fairbanks community for their generous support."

The ASYMCA of Alaska is a non-profit organization and does not generate revenue through membership fees. In order to support the 30-plus free and low-cost programs and services provided to service members and their families stationed in Alaska, "We rely on the generous support of private and corporate donors," Sczesney said.

Please see more BALL photos, Page 4



Abigail, daughter of Leslie and Staff Sgt. Nicholas Hoffman, Medical Department Activity-Alaska, attended the Armed Services YMCA Father-Daughter Ball at the Westmark Hotel April 3. The theme for the event was "The Secret Garden" and over 400 people attended. Katrina Sczesny, program coordinator said "We couldn't have made all these little girls' dreams come true without the help of our volunteers." (Photo by Trish Muntean, Fort Wainwright PAO)

## Alaska mechanics help update Army repair manual

Staff Sgt. Jason Epperson, 3rd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade PAO



JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON -- Spc. James D. Johnson, a wheeled vehicle repairer with Forward Support Company, 6th Engineer Battalion, pulls a crank shaft from an M1083 engine March 17 at the 6th Engineer Battalion Motor Pool. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Epperson/3rd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade PAO)

Few things are more important to a unit's readiness than vehicle care and maintenance.

In Alaska, with its extreme sub-arctic temperatures, maintenance is particularly important, as well as challenging.

Two mechanics from the Forward Support Company, 6th Engineer Battalion, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson recently conducted repairs of an engine with a Class III leak that saved the Army thousands of dollars.

They also identified a critical omission in existing Army technical manuals that triggered corrective action at the Department of the Army level.

Mechanics in the motor pool had discovered four vehicles with the Class III leaks, which the Army defines as "seepage of fluid great enough to form drops and drip during inspection."

This deficiency deadlines a vehicle, making it non-mission capable. Mechanics weighed the options of buying a new engine for almost \$25,000 or spending around \$1,700 in replacement parts to fix the engine leaks.

The decision was ultimately made to attempt to fix the Class III engine leaks, rather than replace the engines. Spc. Adam R. Powell and Spc. James D. Johnson, both light wheel

mechanics from the Forward Support Company, 6th Engineer Battalion, were immediately identified out of more than 34 mechanics in the battalion as the best mechanics for the job.

"My two guys, Powell and Johnson, they got picked for the job," their supervisor, Sgt. 1st Class Jerome A., Shackelford, said.

"Basically Powell is one of the number one mechanics we have and he got picked for an inspector slot, which is usually reserved for a staff sergeant," Shackelford said. "Johnson came in because he's another one of our top mechanics. This is a no-fail mission and we know that they won't fail the mission."

Powell was a mechanic who worked with Caterpillar Inc. before he joined the Army. He joined the National Guard in 2005 and then went active duty in January 2009.

"I wanted to do something meaningful with my life," Powell said.

After he joined the Army his supervisors were impressed with his job performance and quickly realized his potential and talent.

Johnson, a Channelview, Texas, native, was recognized for his exceptional skills as well.

Please see MECHANIC, Page 2

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SN/ BIRCHWOOD HOMES

## Commander's column

Col. Timothy A. Jones, Garrison commander



### Honoring the military child Month of the Military Child

We are surrounded. We are outnumbered. One day we will be governed by our children.

It is an especially challenging time for many of our Fort Wainwright children, many of whom have – or soon will have – a deployed parent. In rare instances, both parents deploy. Our Soldiers are deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq, Japan. As Soldiers, often far from home, we miss our children's milestones, their day-to-day lives. We miss our children.

To mark the April celebration of our military children, we wanted to do something special to honor our military families. That's why the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation leaped at the opportunity to host the Muppets of Sesame Street Show, a USO tour.

The Muppets of Sesame Street Show and our local Month of the Military Child (MOMC) Carnival take place Saturday, April 23. Show times are 10 a.m., 2 and 3 p.m. The carnival activities begin at 10:45 a.m., running until 1:45 p.m. and again from 2:45 to 4:45 p.m.

The traveling Sesame Street USO Experience is a free show, exclusively for military children and their families. It features Elmo and his friends Rosita, Cookie Monster, Grover and Zoe, as well as free giveaways for families. The tour is part of Sesame Street's Talk, Listen, Connect initiative for military families.

The MOMC Carnival, hosted by Child, Youth and School Services, will feature a bouncy hut, carnival games and tasty treats like cotton candy and snow cones.

After the activities, the excitement and the sugar, grown-ups can retreat to the "parent comfort zone." CYSS thought of just about everything for "all ages."

Carnival games and activities will be paused during the Sesame Street Show so children can enjoy the "furry, fuzzy and friendly Muppets" of Sesame Street without too many distractions.

Month of the Military Child events support our Army Family Covenant initiatives. We recognize the commitment and increasing sacrifices that our families are making every day.

We recognize that the strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their families.

We are committed to providing Soldiers and families a quality of life that is commensurate with their service.

We are committed to providing our families a strong, supportive environment where they can thrive.

Soldiers and their families receive support before children are born by way of parent support programs at Army Community Service and Bassett Army Community Hospital.

Each day, Child, Youth and School Services provides safe, consistent and caring programs with licensed Family Child Care providers in home-settings, in child development centers, before and after school programs and in the youth center.

As the Army's home, garrisons are charged with caring for Army family members. By taking care of families, we help Soldiers focus on the mission.

As garrison commander, I have an opportunity to meet the children who live, learn and play on our installation. From reading to preschoolers, to addressing quality-of-life issues with teens at last week's Army Family Action Plan conference, I'm privileged to interact with our most precious resource on a daily basis.

It is often said that the most challenging jobs are also the most rewarding. That goes for parenting and mentoring children. Soldiers and civilian employees – I encourage you to reach out to our children as much for your own benefit as theirs. Coach, mentor, volunteer if you can, let the children know you care.

Our children serve too.

## MEDDAC commander

Col. George Appenzeller, MEDDAC-AK commander



**QUESTION:** How do you recognize a MEDDAC-AK employee for going above and beyond?

**ANSWER:** The command staff here has challenged all members of the organization to provide that extra level of service which separates them from others in their field. When this effort goes above and beyond expectation, we encourage you to take a moment to help recognize their exceptional service.

Each month members of Medical Department Activity-Alaska are chosen to receive special recognition as part of our organization's CARES program. This program was designed to help facilitate a patient and family centered organization and to empower MEDDAC staff members to provide Compassionate, Attentive, Responsive, and Enthusiastic Service.

Anyone may nominate a staff member for this award. Blank CARES nomination forms are available from front desk personnel, our patient advocates, or from any headquarters section at our facilities. Nominations should simply describe what the staff member did that exceeded expectations. Nominations are reviewed monthly by a committee and a winner(s) is selected based upon service which went above and beyond the call of duty.

Patient letters and compliments not formally submitted on a nomination form are also used for inclusion in the CARES award process. These often originate from comments included on survey forms found throughout our facilities. Regardless of if your intent is to recognize a specific staff member or not, please take a moment to fill out one of these survey forms. The information provided helps MEDDAC continually evaluate its services, conditions of facilities, and patient and family interactions and make changes that improve our systems.

One way is through ICE and patient advocate comments which help us get rapid feedback and to identify specific items that can be made better, issues that need to be resolved or things that should be continued or encouraged. They also enable us to recognize specific staff members for outstanding performance or who did something special. Please include your name so that we may contact you to ensure we have all the information needed to make improvements.

The Army Provider Level Satisfaction Survey - or APLSS - (those you get in the mail) help us with trends, analysis and overall provider, department and hospital issues. APLSS looks at a large number of patients seen by specific providers and in specific departments. It is anonymous so we cannot contact you if there is a problem, but there is the ability to leave specific comments. It is very good at showing us trends in specific areas such as courtesy, phone, lab and radiology service and overall satisfaction. We use them to identify areas for improvement and to recognize staff and clinics that provide outstanding care. Additionally, the Office of the Surgeon General tracks our performance on the APLSS surveys and MEDDAC receives additional funding if we perform well. That is money that can be put back into the hospital.

MEDDAC remains responsive to your input and we appreciate all feedback we receive. If you ever have any question, please feel free to contact us. We are here to help. You may also visit us on the web at: [www.http://www.alaska.amedd.army.mil/](http://www.alaska.amedd.army.mil/)

### Use extra caution while driving and always buckle-up

Warm daytime temperatures coupled with freezing nighttime temperatures creates hazardous road conditions consisting of "Black ice" a major contributor to loss of vehicle control and accidents. Driving during this time of year here in the Interior can be fatal. Not using seatbelts is the main cause of injuries and death in automobile collisions on our roadways in and around Fort Wainwright and Fairbanks. Buckle-up and drive carefully.

For more information call the Garrison Safety Office at 353-7085.

## How to be the MVP of your health team

Tyler Patterson, TriWest Health Alliance

As one saying goes: If you don't have your health, what have you got?

Remember: It's your health. You should work with your doctor, your nurse, your pharmacist—all the other members of your health team—to manage your health.

Not only is your health a precious resource, so is your time. To help make sure you are making the most of your medical appointments, here are a few tips to keep in mind when visiting your doctor:

Update your roster: Accurate contact information is vital to keep you up-to-date on appointments and test results. Wrong information in DEERS can affect your eligibility for some care. Learn how to update your DEERS contact record online at [www.triwest.com/bve](http://www.triwest.com/bve).

Be ready for pinch hitters: You may be referred to a specialist for care your primary care manager cannot provide. If that happens, remember

to wait for your authorization letter to arrive before setting your specialty care appointment. Register for a secure [triwest.com](http://www.triwest.com) account and receive an electronic version of your authorization letter in hours, instead of waiting for days on the mail. Follow the directions in the letter to make sure you don't get a claims curveball later.

Play as a team: When you are seeing a new doctor or specialist, share any medications or tests from your other doctors. This goes double if you have multiple prescriptions, or are taking over-the-counter medicines.

Preparation is key: It can be easy to forget things during an examination. Preparing in advance can help eliminate those "I should have asked..." moments while you're heading home.

You are a critical part of your healthcare team. You owe it to yourself to be involved.

## MECHANICS: Fix problem, save money

Continued from Page 1

Johnson explained the temperature dictates how long to let the vehicle run before driving.

"When it's cold like this (15 degrees), anywhere between 20 and 30 minutes," Johnson said. "Let the engine warm up, let the fluids get moving; otherwise it's possible to crack the head gasket and it's going to leak," he said.

Powell and Johnson performed a complete replacement of one engine's head gasket, oil-pan gasket, front main seal, and O-ring on the fuel pump. The mechanics are working on their second engine and have two more to go.

The jobs take between five and seven duty days to complete, due to the intricate parts and assembly. After all four engines are repaired, the Army will have saved close to \$100,000.

During the repairs, the mechanics noticed vital torque specifications weren't covered in their technical manuals, or TMs, as their repair manuals are called. They brought this to the attention of their senior automotive technician, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brendan W. Kallenbach.

"In addition to doing the actual repair, they recognized in the actual repair manual that the torque specs weren't in the TMs any longer," Kallenbach said. "They made a recommendation to the Tank and Automotive Command, so now the entire Department of the Army is going to put the torque specs for the engine in there."

Johnson and Powell were both recommended for the Army Achievement Medal for their exceptional performance.

Capt. James S. Kwoun, 6th Engineer Battalion, contributed to this story.

## Using tobacco does not reduce stress

Paul Fitzpatrick, Tricare Management Activity

Falls Church, Va.—Most tobacco users believe that tobacco reduces their stress and helps them manage unpleasant moods. Many service men and women report that stress is a major reason they smoke or chew tobacco, since military life produces unique pressures and challenges. But a recent article published on the U.S. Department of Defense tobacco cessation website, <http://www.ucanquit2.org/>, explains how tobacco actually increases stress and why stress levels go down after people kick the nicotine habit.

According to the article, tobacco users feel normal after using nicotine, but stress levels rise in between smoke or chew breaks. Thus, the tobacco user is kept constantly bouncing back and forth between feeling normal immediately after using and feeling increasingly stressed as the hours since their last intake of nicotine go by.

"Nicotine gives the impression of reducing stress because, for those addicted to nicotine, the experience of not having nicotine in their body is extremely stressful," said Cmdr. Aileen Buckler, M.D., M.P.H., U.S. Public Health Service officer and chairman of the DoD Alcohol and Tobacco Advisory Committee.

Many tobacco users may fear quitting because they imagine that the discomfort of nicotine deprivation – and the accompanying anxiety and irritability – will go on indefinitely. But studies show that the tide quickly turns. Although stress levels rise in the initial days of the quit process, after 14 days of abstinence the former user is no more stressed than he would be if he were smoking. From there, it only gets better. Six months out, the former tobacco user can expect to experience significantly less stress than he did as a tobacco user.

To help active duty military, veterans, retirees and their families achieve a less stressful, tobacco-free life, DoD offers stress management techniques and a variety of helpful tools at <http://www.ucanquit2.org/>. When tobacco users are feeling stressed as they withdraw from nicotine or just need to find support for quitting tobacco, they can access live help, a free, confidential online chat service from trained tobacco cessation coaches, available 24/7 in real time.

They can also locate support with the interactive tool for finding local tobacco cessation programs.

# ALASKA POST

Home of the Arctic Warriors

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The ALASKA POST - Home of the Arctic Warriors

## Spring clean your cash flow, April is Financial Literacy Month

Staff report, Fort Wainwright PAO

April is Financial Literacy Month, the perfect time to do some spring cleaning of your finances (and records, if the taxes are done) and get your financial house in order.

It is also a good time to educate yourself to be "financially literate" said Shea Vines, Marketing and Business Development officer for MAC Federal Credit Union.

"Financial literacy means being aware," she said. "Knowing what they mean when they talk about various products at a financial institute, understanding the terminology at a financial institution and that you are aware of what your situation is."

"Finances are scary, it is a very intimidating subject," Vines said. "Most people are not experts, so you need to talk to people who are experts to educate yourself."

The Army Community Service Financial Readiness Program can help. It offers classes for Bank Account Management, Credit and Credit Reports, Budgeting and Debt Liquidation, Consumer Awareness and Large Purchases, Saving and Investing, Financial Planning for Deployment, PCS/ETS Moves and Personal Financial Readiness.

Monica Teel, Financial Readiness Program manager said that the Personal Financial Readiness Class is given the first Wednesday of every month for first-term Soldiers, E-1 to E-4, but spouses and other ranks new to Fort Wainwright are also

encouraged to attend.

The class covers subjects such as Principles of Personal Finance, Banking and Checking Accounts, Using Credit Wisely, Saving and Investing, Setting Goals and Budgeting, Getting Insurance, Large Purchases and Consumer Scams.

Topics of discussion include family financial issues, shared responsibility, finances and children, protecting your family and military specific issues such as deployment, relocation, benefits and transitioning into civilian life.

It also covers potential problems, bank accounts, credit cards and identity theft and numerous other subjects Soldiers and their families may find helpful.

Teel said one-on-one counseling is available for budgeting, payment planning, debt liquidation, reconciling bank accounts, credit reports and credit repair, consumer advocacy issues, and planning for PCS/ETS/Retirement or major purchases.

"Soldiers that will be PCSing or ETSing upon their return from deployment may want to attend a LEVY brief, scheduled for the first Thursday of the month, or schedule an individual counseling session to discuss projected loss of income for COLA, BAH and spouse income," Teel said. "Now is the time to plan on how to best use their deployment income and spouse income to reduce their debt and save for the future."

"I am also available to help spouses that do

not have strong financial management skills get set up for taking over the finances," Teel said. "An individual session might include goal-setting, planning for future expenses, changes in income, and emergencies. I also assist with bank account management and payday planning to avoid missed payments and negative bank account balances. If the client requests, I am available to schedule recurring check-ups throughout the deployment to see if they are on track or if adjustments to the plan need to be made in order for them to reach their goals."

Teel is also available as her schedule permits to brief Family Readiness Groups about the program. If the meeting is scheduled after duty hours she needs two week's notice to request approval.

MAC Federal Credit Union offers classes as well, including The Psychology Behind Spending and Building Your Financial Future.

The websites for Military OneSource and National Military Family Association, ([www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com) and [www.militaryfamily.org](http://www.militaryfamily.org)) both have extensive information on financial matters including worksheets, calculators and links to other websites that Soldiers and their families may find helpful.

For more information on Army Community Service Financial Readiness Program classes call Monica Teel at 353-7438, for information on MAC Federal Credit Union programs call Shea Vines at 356-7209.

## Senior leaders take active role to improve quality-of-life



Col. Timothy A. Jones (center), Fort Wainwright garrison commander, discusses proposed local issues with senior U.S. Army Alaska and local leaders during the installation Army Family Action Plan conference outreach March 31 at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center. AFAP gives Soldiers, family members, civilian employees and retirees a voice in their local community as well as in the Army as a whole. (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

## Army identifies problem areas and minimizes stress on Soldiers, families

Editor's note: Fort Wainwright and U.S. Army Alaska leaders are examining Army Family Action Plan issues to determine how to best serve Soldiers, families, civilians and retirees who gathered in AFAP workgroups last week to identify quality-of-life concerns and recommended solutions during the installation's AFAP conference last week.

Rob McIlvaine, FMWRC PAO

ALEXANDRIA, Va. - The Army Family Action Plan has once again proved invaluable for Soldiers and families.

On Jan. 21, eligible enlisted family members will begin receiving 36 months of Transitional Compensation, the same as officer family members, rather than the average of 22 months of payments they formerly received. The change ensures payments are standardized for all approved applications.

Transitional Compensation is a congressionally-authorized program. The TC benefits help ease the transition from military to civilian life by providing temporary payments and benefits for families in which a Soldier has been court-martialed or is being administratively separated from the Army because of a dependent-abuse offense such as domestic or child abuse.

The difference in duration of compensation between family members of enlisted and officers was an anomaly of the program and was based solely on the Soldier's rank.

The current change is a direct result of Army Family Action Plan Issue #540, Duration of Transitional Compensation for Abused Dependents, which surfaced in 2003.

After Army senior leaders

reviewed numerous recommendations, queries and cost analysis, a revision to Army Regulation 608-1, Army Community Service Center, became a reality.

The Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command manages the Army's TC Program and began authorizing TC payments in August of 1995. The Army recognizes domestic and child abuse may be an unfortunate symptom of stress on the force that needs to be positively addressed and minimized.

The Installation Management Community focuses on providing standardized, effective family readiness programs and services to ensure Soldiers and families can enjoy a quality of life commensurate with their level of service and sacrifice to the nation.

"Quality programs can greatly improve the well being of Soldiers and families and reduce incidents of abuse," said Lt. Col. Nancy Ruffin, FMWRC Army Family Advocacy Program chief.

"Our challenge is to provide awareness and access to the available programs and services."

"The Army and its leadership are working hard to ensure Soldiers and families are prepared and supported before, during and

after deployments, and throughout their military careers," Ruffin said. "Nothing is more important than ensuring the well being of our Soldiers and families - our most precious resource."

The Army Family Action Plan, administered by the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, is a year-round program that begins at the installation or unit level. It is the Army's grassroots process to identify and elevate the most significant quality of life issues impacting Soldiers (all components), retirees, DA civilians, and families to senior leaders for action.

AFAP is the preeminent means for commanders at all levels to learn about and seek solutions for the concerns of their communities. The changes made through the AFAP process - unique in all military branches - foster a satisfied,

informed, and resilient Army community.

Soldiers, family members, retirees, survivors, wounded warriors and Department of the Army civilians - of all components - have the ability to search the database of active issues, review the status, and learn what is needed for resolution.

"Searching for active issues is simple and easy," Shaunya Murrill, FMWRC Family Programs, said.

"Simply visit Army OneSource at [www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com), click on Family Programs and Services, click on Family Programs, and then click on Army Family Action Plan to access this new search application.

"Several filter options are available, allowing a search to be customized. Additionally, if an end-user has a question regarding an active issue, they can pose a question through email and receive a response



12379903  
BLUE LOON, THE  
AK POST/UPCOMING  
EVE  
1 x 12.0

11378435  
TOP NAILS  
AK POST/AK POST  
1 x 3.0

11378458  
PERFECT PARTY, THE  
AK POST/AK POST  
1 x 2.0

40380525  
ALASKA AUTO GLASS  
PG 3 AK POST/AK POST  
2 x 2.0

## Teams compete during 472nd Arctic Titan Challenge 2011



A gunner from the 472nd Military Police Company keeps an eye out for signs of trouble as his vehicle moves through the counter-Improvised Explosives Device lane as part of a training exercise. The lane has three tasks in which each three-man team is evaluated. They must recognize a possible IED and react to an ambush and IED, and evaluate and treat a casualty during the Arctic Titan Challenge March 31. (Photo by Sgt. Trish McMurphy, USARAK PAO)



Soldiers from the 472nd Military Police Company compete against one another in teams of three during the combatives portion of the Arctic Titan Challenge March 31. (Photo by Sgt. Trish McMurphy, USARAK PAO)

## Warrior shows extraordinary perseverance, skill

Brian Schlumbohm, Fort Wainwright PAO

"He's kind of like the picture-perfect warrior." Sgt. Allan Marley, B Company, Warrior Transition Battalion, has left a big impression on his fellow Soldiers, according to Capt. Charlea Allen, B company commander. "If I had to define Sgt. Marley, it would be as a professional, mature Soldier," she said.

Marley was injured in an IED explosion in Iraq in 2005, but has made much advancement since he first began his rehabilitation. "I'm as recovered as I'm going to be," he said. "I have a little machine in my back that sends electrical impulses to block nerves in my ankles; otherwise you'd see me walking with a cane."

He praised the medical care he received during his time with the WTB and said his experience has been excellent. But even more than the care he received, Marley said the eight years and two months he has spent as a Soldier, including the time since his injury, have helped him learn valuable life lessons.

"It has taught me not to quit," he said. "It has allowed me to overcome obstacles both personally and professionally. But it has been an overall good experience. The negative is that I'm hurt, but there are too many positives that I'm taking away from the Army."

Marley's journey will not end when he medically retires from the Army next week. In many ways, it is just beginning. "My whole family are teachers," he said. "I hope to become a middle-school science teacher."

He will pursue this new life with his wife, daughter and other family in North Carolina and he has used his time with the WTB to further his goals

by volunteering at Arctic Light Elementary School on post. "The experience has been wonderful," he said. It also helped him see that he is more suited for middle school.

Marley was one of two Warriors in Transition from Fort Wainwright who competed in the inaugural Warrior Games last May at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. He competed in several shooting competitions and earned the silver medal in the air-pistol contest.

Allen attributed Marley's success both here and during his time at the Warrior Games to his maturity and his willingness to help others.

He is just one of the 35 Soldiers currently in B Company and although Allen has seen a constant rotation of Soldiers through the company in the 17 months she has been there, he is one of the success stories. The key for Soldiers who find themselves in Marley's position is in the acceptance process, she said. Marley is one of the fortunate ones who had family support and the right attitude to make the adjustments necessary in beginning a new life.

Marley will retire from the Army and leave Fort Wainwright Wednesday, joining his family in North Carolina to start his new adventure. But even as he prepares to leave the Army, he is still mindful of the wounded warriors who will follow a similar road after him. He wants to help them, too.

"You are your own strongest advocate," he said of those who find themselves in his situation. "If you won't fight for yourself nothing is going to happen. That's the biggest thing you need to take care of - take care of yourself and fight for yourself. If you don't, then things will just stay the same and that's not why you came here."



Sgt. Allan Marley of B Company, Warrior Transition Battalion has overcome obstacles both physically and professionally in his eight years of military service and takes with him the indelible of not quitting, as he transitions into his new . (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm, Fort Wainwright PAO)

## BALL: A night for daddy and daughter

Continued from Page 1

*"We couldn't have made all these little girls' dreams come true without the help of our volunteers."*

*-Katrina Sczesny, program coordinator*



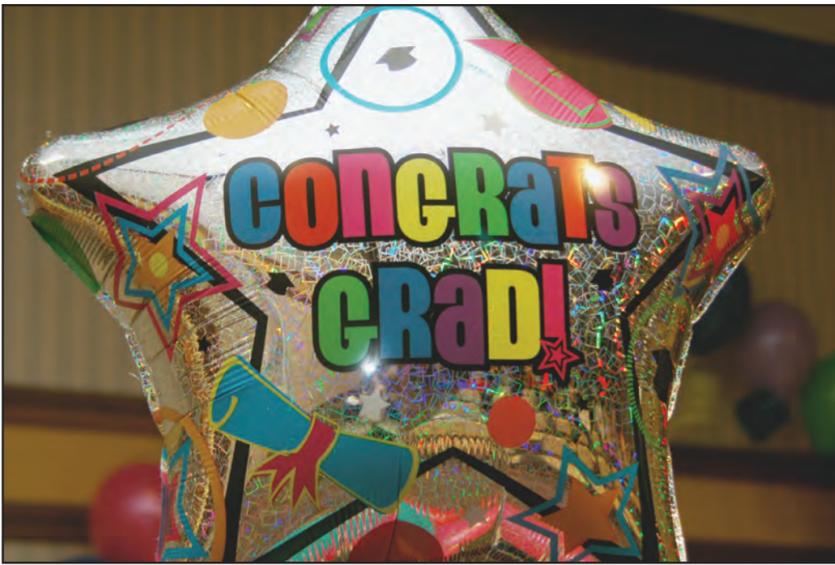
Abby, daughter of Stephanie and 1st Sgt. Timothy Abrahamson, Medical Department Activity-Alaska, was escorted to the Armed Services YMCA Father-Daughter Ball by her father. He said he wanted to spend some quality time with his daughter before she goes off to college. Abby will graduate from Lathrop High School this year and plans to study science at Augusta State. (Photo by Trish Muntean/Fort Wainwright PAO)



Katie, daughter of Jessica and Sgt. 1st Class Richard Healy, 28th Military Police Detachment, attended the Armed Services YMCA Father-Daughter Ball at the Westmark Hotel April 3. (Photo by Trish Muntean, Fort Wainwright PAO)

# Wainwright families enjoy early commencement ceremony

Sheryl Nix, Alaska Post contributor



Twelve graduating seniors and their families participated in an early commencement ceremony April 1 at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center. The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District joined forces with the Wainwright garrison to ensure that students who have deploying parents could share the graduation experience with them before they leave. (Photo by Sheryl Nix/Alaska Post contributor)

**“Pomp and Circumstance,”** the traditional graduation ceremony hymn, flooded the ballroom at Fort Wainwright’s Last Frontier Community Activity Center April 1, more than a month before local graduating seniors will actually receive their diplomas. This was no April Fool’s Day joke. With many Soldiers from the aviation and Stryker brigades deploying this spring, the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District joined forces with the Wainwright garrison to ensure that students who have deploying parents could share the graduation experience with them before they leave.

“It’s an opportunity for parents who are deploying to be with their children when they go through a commencement and for children to experience that with their parents,” said Col. Timothy A. Jones, Fort Wainwright garrison commander. “It was an important thing to do for Soldiers and families.”

The early commencement ceremony, the first event of its kind in the school district and installation, provided parents an opportunity to share in one of the most significant events in their children’s lives, said Pete Lewis, FNSB School District superintendent.

“Graduation is a right of passage and every parent should have the opportunity to see their child walk across the stage,” he said. “Unfortunately, some of our family members are going to be deployed (during the actual commencement ceremonies) so we wanted to have an event like this so they could celebrate as a family.”

School district and Wainwright officials wanted to mimic an actual ceremony as much as possible, he said. Music by the 9th Army Band, a rendition of the “National Anthem” by Silver Chord, a member of the FNSB Board of Education, a welcome address and blessings from Chaplain (Lt. Col.) David VanderJagt, garrison chaplain, and a commencement address from Col. Mark Lowe, U.S. Army Alaska deputy commander, provided an authentic graduation experience for parents and seniors.

Although the twelve graduating seniors who participated did not receive their diplomas at the event -- they still have more than a month of school, testing and other

requirements to complete before they graduate -- they did receive recognition, inspirational messages and photo opportunities that have become synonymous with graduation ceremonies over the years, which was more than enough for proud parents in attendance.

*“It’s still going to hurt not being there for the real one, but this was great.”*

- Sgt. 1st Class Erick Mitchell

“I think this is really something special,” said Sgt. 1st Class Erick Mitchell, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. “It’s still going to hurt not being there for the real one, but this was great.”

“I thought it was kind of cool that they put all this together and decided to do this for the families. I’ve never heard about them doing this before,” said Hannah Marie Mitchell, 19, graduating senior from Lathrop High School and daughter of Donna and Erick Mitchell.

The Mitchell family credits the school district and installation with giving them a priceless memory.

“We thank them for doing this so her father could be a part of it,” said Donna Mitchell. “Even though he is going to miss out on the real one at least he gets to see what it will be about and be a part of it.”

Jonathan Franklin, 18, son of Margaret and Chaplain (Maj.) Herb Franklin, 1-25th SBCT, said the ceremony was meaningful to him because of the close relationship he has with his father.

“It’s important to me because I would like my dad to be there with me,” he said.

“We are calling this the ‘heart ceremony,’” Margaret Franklin said. “The other one will be the official ceremony, but this one is the graduation ceremony of the heart; the one that really counts.”

Growing serious after joking that he was a little “verklempt,” or choked up, when he saw his son in his cap and gown, Herb Franklin said he is grateful for the chance to experience this with his oldest child. “I think this is a great opportunity and better than we had hoped for,” he said. “It was one of those moments you look

forward to as a parent. It really was very special.”

The idea for the early ceremony was born out of a military parent’s concern that her husband would not experience their senior’s graduation together due to his deployment, said Bridget Lewis, North Pole High School principal.

“A parent came to me earlier in the year who was concerned about the potential of her husband being gone during the graduation and asked what we could do to video stream or record the event,” she said. “That made me start thinking about possibilities. I thought it would be really nice for families, before deployment, to experience seeing their kids walk across the stage. It’s a once in a lifetime moment and a little bit different to experience it in person.”

She spoke with the garrison commander and the joint collaboration began, resulting in the early commencement ceremony.

“The school district played a huge role in this and working with them on this has been a really good experience,” said Joan York, Fort Wainwright school liaison officer. “These kids deserve to have their parents at their special moment when they graduate so it’s really wonderful that we can work with the school district to make that happen for them.”

While this type of ceremony is a first for the school district and Fort

The following graduating seniors participated in the early commencement ceremony: Jessica Nicole Doak, Lathrop High School; Chelsea Lynn Enoch, West Valley High School; Jesse Coleman Flenniken, Building Educational Success Together High School; Jonathan David Franklin, Lathrop High School; Christopher Lee Herrera, Lathrop High School; Mary Elizabeth Holcomb, BEST High School; Lacy Danielle Magee, West Valley High School; Breanna Nicole McCain, North Pole High School; Hannah Marie Mitchell, Lathrop High School; Misha Maria Parson, Hutchison High School; Nicole Ann Wayfield, Hutchison High School; and DeVante R’shan Woods, Star of the North Career Education Center.

In addition to the early commencement ceremony, the school district will also provide DVDs of the actual ceremonies for military families with deployed parents, post videos of the official ceremonies on the school district website, [www.k12northstar.org](http://www.k12northstar.org), within a week of the events and is also looking into providing live satellite feeds during the ceremonies for Soldiers in deployed locations, Pete Lewis said.

“We hope that they had a positive experience during this event and can talk about the culmination of their student’s high school career and that they have a chance to commemorate together and create a memory,” he said. “It was really about making memories.”

Students who participated in the early commencement ceremony will also participate in their schools’ graduations next month.

The official graduation ceremonies for high schools in the school district will be: Ben Eielson High School, May 16; BEST High School, May 17; Effie Kokrine Charter School, May 13; Hutchison High School, May 18; Lathrop High School, May 16; North Pole High School, May 18; Star of the North Secondary School, May 12; and West Valley High School, May 17.



Wendy Dominique, Fairbanks North Star Borough Board of Education member, congratulates Misha Maria Parson, Hutchison High School, and presents a diploma holder to her as she walks across the stage during the early commencement ceremony April 1 at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center. (Photo by Sheryl Nix/Alaska Post contributor)

## Unwanted guests return: Bird nests on buildings and equipment

Staff report, Natural Resources Office

We experience problems with unwanted guests this time of year. We’re not talking about visiting in-laws, but nesting birds. Migratory swallows and mew gulls build nests creating cavities in inactive or uncovered dirt piles, creating mud constructions under building eaves or constructing grass and twig nests on elevated platforms or low traffic areas. Mew gulls are more commonly found in the Interior. Favorite spots for cliff swallows include the eaves of buildings. Bank swallows prefer large inactive and or uncovered dirt piles. All nests, once built and occupied (by chicks or eggs), cannot be removed or destroyed by mandate of the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Harming a listed migratory bird (including removal of an occupied nest) could result in a violation carrying a maximum penalty of \$15,000 and/or six months in jail. It is not a violation, however, to remove old nests or to prevent the birds from constructing new nests.

Returning cliff swallows will often settle into an already existing nest still intact from the previous season. Consequently, it is recommended that personnel inspect their living and/or work areas for existing nests and or potential nesting sites like large dirt piles that will be needed during the breeding season, prior to arrival of the migratory swallows. Any such nests found that, when occupied, would prove an inconvenience or health hazard to occupants of that building, should be removed now or covered before the birds arrive. It is recommended that existing nests be removed by knocking them

down with high-pressure water spray.

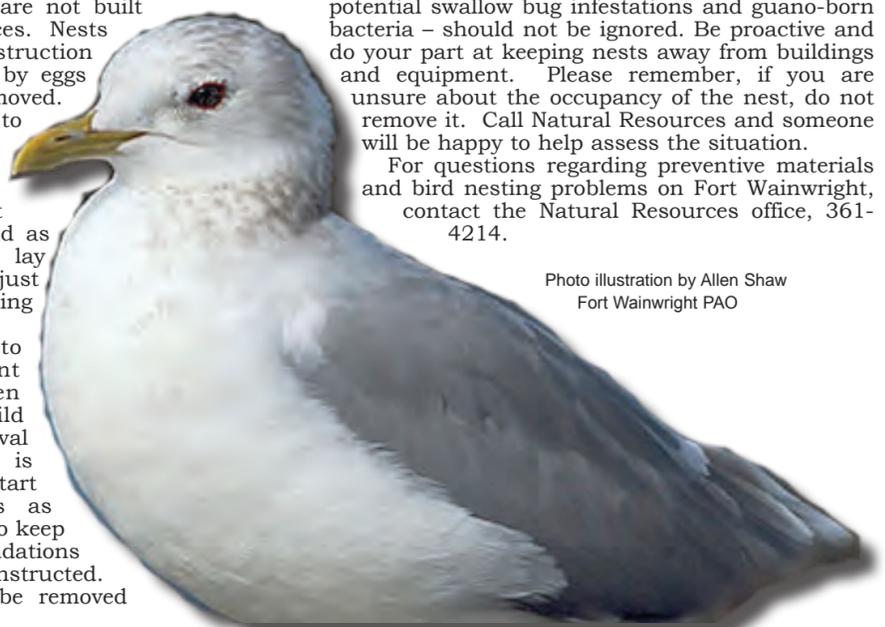
Once the birds arrive and begin to actively build their nests, personnel must remain vigilant to ensure that nests are not built in inappropriate places. Nests that are under construction but not yet occupied by eggs or young can be removed. Care should be taken to remove the nests at the earliest stage possible, preferably after the placement of the first twigs or pieces of mud as the female will often lay her hard-to-see eggs just prior to the nest becoming finished.

Swallows tend to be very persistent nest-builders, often attempting to rebuild mere hours after removal of a former nest. It is thus imperative to start the removal process as early as possible and to keep removing nesting foundations as soon as they are constructed. Nests often have to be removed twice daily.

Garrison residents love our wildlife, birds included. The problems associated with birds nesting in human dwellings, however – financial damage, potential swallow bug infestations and guano-born bacteria – should not be ignored. Be proactive and do your part at keeping nests away from buildings and equipment. Please remember, if you are unsure about the occupancy of the nest, do not remove it. Call Natural Resources and someone will be happy to help assess the situation.

For questions regarding preventive materials and bird nesting problems on Fort Wainwright, contact the Natural Resources office, 361-4214.

Photo illustration by Allen Shaw  
Fort Wainwright PAO



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

find it here!



Lily, daughter of Janine and Staff Sgt. Paul Barboza, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, enjoys making crafts at the Post Library's story hour, held each Friday at 4 p.m. and Saturday at 10:30 a.m. in Building 3700. (Photo by Trish Muntean/Fort Wainwright PAO)

## Visit the library, just for the fun of it

Staff report, Fort Wainwright PAO

When is the last time you visited the library? If it has been a while, you may be surprised by what you find inside. It is not just about books anymore.

Joy Wohlman Boyce, library technician, said the Fort Wainwright library offers not only CDs, but an extensive (almost 3,000) DVD collection that includes current and older television shows, lots of documentaries, an Academy Award section, Sundance section and children's films and video games as well.

"We get new releases every month," said Wohlman Boyce. "They are very quickly checked out. However, you can put a hold on the copy so that as soon as it is returned, we call you."

If the library doesn't have what you're looking for, they may be able to get it through an interlibrary loan.

The Fort Wainwright library offers more than just materials to check out; they

have programs they hope will draw people in. They especially want to encourage guests at the Northern Lights Inn to get out and visit the library to see what is available, such as computers, video games in Xbox 360, PS3, Wii and Nintendo DS formats and WIFI if you just want to bring in a laptop and hang out for a while.

The library has numerous board games that can be played at the library or checked out, Wohlman Boyce said. Community game day is Saturdays from 1 to 5 p.m.

"Come and play the day away," said Wohlman Boyce. "Bring your family and friends in for a good game of Battleship, Risk and Apples to Apples. We have many other games as well." She encourages patrons to challenge the staff as well.

On Friday afternoons at 3:45 members of the community are invited to come to the library for story time and crafts. An encore

is offered on Saturday mornings at 10:30.

Thursdays are "Thor Art" days at the library, with the craft and theme changing monthly. It's "Mini Me" art in the month of April and in May the group will work together to produce four very large pieces of art.

The activity is free, but registration is required and space limited. This is a "community" event-- open to Soldiers, their families and Department of Defense employees.

Once a month the library offers "Baby and Me" The next session will be April 13 starting at 2 p.m. "It is an opportunity to get out to meet other families and enjoy the activity with your little one," Wohlman Boyce said. Not only will parents read stories to children, but they will have a craft to create and enjoy as well.

National Library Week is April 10 to 16, so stop in and create your own story at your library.

## Earth Day events planned

Fort Wainwright organizations, partners and friends from both on- and off-post will host an Earth Day open house April 22 from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Physical Fitness Center. There is no admission fee and children are encouraged to bring their parents. There will be interactive displays about energy, recycling and sustainment including a plastics-to-fuel demonstration. Participants and presenters include Fairbanks North Star Borough air-quality compliance display, the post's environmental management program, archaeology and prehistory preservation and what we've learned about the peoples of Interior Alaska; Alaska Native cultural resources, the commissary coloring contest, and more. Also joining in Fort Wainwright's Earth Day are the installation's partners in power, housing and recycling: Doyon Utilities, North Haven Communities, and K and K Recycling, respectively. For more information, call 353-9746.

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## Alaska Post

To submit a photo, place an event or class on the calendar send an email to [pao.fwa@us.army.mil](mailto: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.



## Friday - 8th

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

**FREE MAKE AND TAKE: QUILTED FABRIC ORNAMENT/MAGNET**, 6 p.m., Arts and Crafts Center, Building 3727. Open to all DoD cardholders 16 and older. Call 353-7520.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS**, 7 p.m. Southern Lights Chapel

## Saturday - 9th

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

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

**GEOCACHING 101**, 1 to 5 p.m., Outdoor Recreation Center, Building 4050. Call 361-6349.

## Sunday - 10th

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT MASS**, 11 a.m., Southern Lights Chapel

**CHILI COOK-OFF**, 1 to 4 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-7755.

## Monday - 11th

**BOUNCY HUT NIGHT**, 5 to 7:30 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-7755.

## Tuesday - 12th

**CHOLESTEROL CLASS**, 2 to 4 p.m., Bassett Army Community Hospital. Call 361-4148.

**GROUP CYCLING**, 5 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7274.

**PARENTS NIGHT OUT**, 5:45 to 8:45 p.m., Care is provided at Child Development Center I, Building 4024. Cost is \$12 per child. Must register by April 5. Snack provided. Call 361-7713.

**CUDDLE CURE CLASS**, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Child Development Center I, Building 4024. Call 361-7713.

## Wednesday - 13th

**ASTHMA AND ALLERGY CLASS**, 2 to 4 p.m., Bassett Army Community Hospital. Call 361-4148.

**BABY AND ME STORY HOUR**, 2 to 3:30 p.m., Post Library, Building 3700. A special story hour for baby, 24 months or younger. Call 353-2642.

**CARDIO SCULPT: STRENGTH AND CARDIO**, 5 to 6 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7274.

**HOOR OF POWER: GROUP STRENGTH**, noon to 12:45 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7274.

**INTRAMURAL SKEET ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**, 2 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7274.

**Wii BOWLING LEAGUE**, 2 to 4 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-7755.

**NEWCOMERS ORIENTATION**, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Mandatory for Soldiers. Spouses and civilians are strongly encouraged to attend. Call 353-4227.

## Thursday - 14th

**TOBACCO USE CESSATION**, 12:30 to 4:30 p.m., Bassett Army Community Hospital. Call 361-4148.

**SCHOOL REGISTRATION HELP**, noon to 1 p.m., Child Development Center I, Building 4024. Call 361-9377 or 361-9897.

**WOODSHOP 101**, 6 p.m., Arts and Crafts Center, Building 3727. Cost is \$35. Open to all DoD cardholders 16 and older. Call 353-7520.

## Chapel Services

### Northern Lights Chapel

Sunday

10 a.m. - Sunday School

11 a.m. - Protestant Worship

5 p.m. - Protestant Youth of the Chapel

Thursday

9:30 a.m. - Protestant Women of the Chapel

Every other Saturday

8 a.m. - Protestant Men of the Chapel

### Southern Lights Chapel

Sunday

9:30 a.m. - Catholic Education Classes

11 a.m. - Roman Catholic Mass

Thursday

5 p.m. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

### Bassett Army Community Hospital Chapel

Sunday

11 a.m. Gospel Bible Study

Tuesday and Thursday

Noon - Roman Catholic Mass

Wednesday

Noon - Catholic Liturgy of the Hours

## For your information

### STOP LOSS - TODAY

The deadline to file for retroactive stop loss is today.

Was your enlistment involuntarily extended due to Stop Loss between September 11, 2001, and September 30, 2009? If so, and you have yet to file a claim for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay, today is the last day to file for payment.

Go to [www.defense.gov/stoploss](http://www.defense.gov/stoploss) for links to the claim forms and individual military service links with instructions on how to file claims.

### BUCK A RIDE

There is no need to walk. Call the Y on Wheels. You can catch a ride anywhere on post with Y on Wheels Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. for \$1 each trip. Call 353-3733.

### COPING WITH PTSD

Are you struggling with adjusting to life post-deployment? This class is about signs and symptoms of PTSD, severity, coping measures and stress management, current treatments, and where you can go to find help. The next session meets Friday at ACS from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

For more information or to reserve a seat, call 353-4248 or 353-6286.

### ID CARD APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

The DEERS-ID Cards Office has an online appointment system. The website is available for all ID card customers including active duty, family members, retirees, civilians and contract employees.

To alleviate waiting time, please go to the following website to make an appointment with the DEERS - ID Cards office: <http://appointments.cac.navy.mil/> Appointments are highly recommended.

For additional assistance or questions contact the Fort Wainwright DEERS-ID Card Office inside the Welcome Center, 3401 Santiago Ave. Room 138, call 353-2195. The office is open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, but is closed all federal holidays.

### PWOC MEETINGS

Protestant Women of the Chapel meets Thursday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Northern Lights Chapel, 3430 Luzon Avenue. Free on-site childcare and home-school room. For more information, call 356-1299 or email [wainwright@pwoc.org](mailto:wainwright@pwoc.org) or Facebook: PWOC Fort Wainwright.

### U.S. ARMY BLUES BAND

The U.S. Army Blues Band will perform at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Wednesday, 7 p.m. Stop by the Armed Services YMCA office at 1047-4 Nysteen Road to pick up your free tickets. ASYMACA is open Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### MYPAY PIN RESET

The Fort Wainwright finance office has the ability to reset myPay PINs.

Customers needing a new PIN must show up in person and present a valid CAC or DoD ID card Monday to Friday from 8:30 to 4:30.

Questions can be directed to William French at 353-1318.

### ANGER MANAGEMENT

Is there a disconnect between you and your co-workers or family? This is a four-session anger management group that discusses triggers and expressions of anger, understanding where it comes from, and finding solutions that work for you.

The second class of the April session is Wednesday, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. with sessions three and four meeting April 20 and 27. A certificate is awarded on completion of all sessions.

Class two: Physical basis of anger, family history exercises, review of triggers, recognizing anger styles, anger monitoring log exercise, review of time out strategies, using 'I' statements, breathing meditation exercise.

Class three: Video and discussion, anger interrupting techniques, negotiation, changing negative self-talk, progressive muscle relaxation and relaxation imagery.

Class four: Review of what works to interrupt your anger cycle, anger distortions, relaxation without tension, meditation, post-test, evaluations and contact information.

For more information or to reserve a seat, call 353-4248 or 353-6286.

### COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT

The Fort Wainwright and Eielson Air Force Base Joint College Commencement ceremony is April 18, 2 p.m. at the Eielson Air Force Base theater.

A reception follows at the Yukon Club at 4 p.m. For more information, call 353-7486.

### TAX CENTER OPEN

The Tax Center is open through April 18. 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.

Both appointments and walk-ins are available, but customers having an appointment take priority.

For more information or an appointment call 353-2613.

### ACAP SERVICES LIMITED

The ACAP Center will be open with limited services through Thursday while supporting the deployment. Only these services are available: clearing, scheduling, general questions, computer workstation use and pre-separation briefings in case of emergency only. All other individual appointments will be scheduled for April 15 or later. Regularly scheduled classes and workshops will be unaffected.

For more information call 353-2113.

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Arctic Light Elementary School kindergarten registration will be May 2nd and 3rd at the school.

Children must be five-years old by Sept. 1 to be enrolled.

A birth certificate and Social Security card are required to complete registration.

Students will also be required to have immunizations records and proof of address, like a housing letter, utility or insurance bill.

It is not necessary for the child to accompany the parent to registration.

For more information call Gena Bolton at 356-2038 extension 201.

### BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### March 21

A son, Kayden Nigel Khaleed, was born to Babita and Pfc. Nigel Whitehead, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

#### March 23

A son, Rashod Quandel Green Jr., was born to Rashod Quandel Stephen-Green Sr. and Pfc. Shantwanice La'Faye Green, 184th Military Intelligence Company, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

#### March 25

A daughter, Falissa Briel Morales, was born to Anya Briel Morales and Sgt. Derek Morales, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

#### March 27

A daughter, Jordyn Alexis, was born to Kelly and Sgt. Ryan Conard, 539th Transportation Company, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

#### March 28

A son, Leyton Jeffery Michael, was born to Nichole and Sgt. Michael Weaver, 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade.

#### April 2

A daughter, Micah Catherine, was born to Michele and Staff Sgt. Quaithan Sargent, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

#### April 3

A son, Mason Juan, was born to Geni and Spc. James Charbonneau, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

### 1-52ND AWARD CEREMONY



1st Sgt. Russell Hawkins, D Company, 123rd Aviation Regiment, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade, shakes hands with Col. Robert Werthman, commander of the 16th CAB, after being pinned with the Joint Service Commendation Medal at an awards presentation ceremony held at Fort Wainwright April 1 honoring members of Task Force Denali. The Soldiers and helicopters of Task Force Denali provided humanitarian assistance in support of flood relief operations in Pakistan. The task force flew over 3,500 flight hours, delivered 14 million pounds of relief supplies and carried more than 28,000 evacuees and passengers in the wake of unprecedented flooding there caused by the heavy rains of the 2010 monsoon season. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Reece Von Rogatz, 16th CAB PAO)

### STRESS MANAGEMENT

Need 27.5 hours in a day? How about stress reduction instead? This stress management group discusses stress and relaxation techniques in order to effectively deal with stress. Relaxation techniques are taught in each session.

All Soldiers, spouses and civilian employees are welcome. The next class is Tuesday, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. with sessions 3 and 4 meeting April 19 and 26.

You Can Handle Stress: introduction and pretest. This session outlines types and signs of stress, coping with anxiety, self-talk and "I" statements.

Balancing Act-Mind, Body, and Soul: Perceptions, mind-body Integration, moderation, rest and relaxation are the topics discussed in this session.

Time Management: Learn about the importance of being assertive, mastering time effectively, clarifying and developing your goals, fighting procrastination and organizing your time.

Combat Stress: Find out about battle fatigue, stressors, combat stress, PTSD, and prevention. Post-test, evaluations and contact information.

For more information or to reserve a seat, call 353-4248 or 353-6286.

### 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](mailto:pao.fwa@us.army.mil) or call 353-6700.

**DON'T DRIVE  
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CALL 353-6610**

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NEW HOPE METHODIST  
AK POST/AK POST  
1 x 2.0

18380660  
DEB'S CAFE  
FF/AK POST/BREAKFAST  
2 x 2.0

18380127  
ANN'S GREENHOUSES  
AK POST/HEAT IS ON  
2 x 2.0

18380665  
MACS IN ALASKA  
AK POST/MAC SUPPORT  
2 x 1.5

18379779  
CUTCO CUTLERY  
AK POST/SPRING BLING  
2 x 2.5

11379102  
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AK POST/AK POST  
2 x 3.0

21380373  
DOWNTOWN BINGO  
AK POST/AK POST  
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## Monster of Chowkay: Army lieutenant feared by Taliban

Sgt. 1st Class Mark Burrell, 20th Mobile PAD



First Lt. Benjamin A. Amsler, a platoon leader assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, Task Force No Slack, poses for a photo March 20, to depict that he has been made out to be a monster with incredible powers by the local Taliban leaders in Afghanistan's Kunar province. Amsler, a Ranger, has been in the military less than two years and is on his first deployment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Burrell/20th Mobile PAD)

KUNAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan (Army News Service, March 28, 2011) -- He's 10 feet tall. When he walks through the valleys, he makes bombs fall from the sky and controls helicopters. After a failed attempt to recruit him, the Taliban put a reward on his head: \$25,000 dead or alive.

Some of this is true, some of it exaggerated by hyper-imaginative insurgents. One thing is sure - U.S. Army 1st Lt. Benjamin A. Amsler is rattling Taliban leaders in Chowkay district in eastern Afghanistan's Kunar province.

"They fear our platoon basically. They've created this character, I represent it, but it's my guys. It's not me. It's this Lt. Ben guy," explained Amsler assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, Task Force No Slack.

"When we first got here you couldn't really get into the valley without getting hit and beat up a little bit," said Amsler. "So we made it a point to kind of say who we were, specifically me. I put my name out there, this is me and this is why I'm here. I'm in support of the government and I'm here to support the

governor because he's unable to get up here. I have the armored trucks and guns. I'm here to help the people and kill the Taliban."

Amsler said his platoon makes contact with the enemy about 85 percent of the time they head into the Dewegal Valley in Chowkay. Yet, that hasn't stopped him from continuing to push farther into the valley to further the influence of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

"We've gained a lot of support for us and the government, which is ultimately our goal,"

said Amsler. "We try to build support for the government, but first you have to be trusted by the people before they're going to listen to you. I think we've gained the people's trust and that shakes the Taliban up a little bit."

When Amsler, a recent graduate from Ranger School who took over the platoon in August 2010, visits elders and local leaders, he isn't shy about passing out his contact information. He gives Afghan National Police and Afghan National Army troops his personal cell phone number. He let's everybody know that he's not in Afghanistan to hide behind the walls of Combat Outpost Fortress.

"I'm not afraid to give my cell phone number out to anybody that could possibly need me at any point or to possibly contact me for [information]," Amsler said and folded his arms defiantly.

Then one day, he got a phone call.

"Lt. Ben? Lt. Ben?"

"Yes, this is him," he said.

Then the caller started

to speak in Pashtu and Amsler passed the phone to his interpreter. It was a Taliban leader calling to propose a compromise.

Amsler explained the Taliban commander said, "We respect you as a fighter and you have good men. You're a good leader and have excellent fighters. So we're going to give you one chance."

The young lieutenant was willing to listen to the Taliban if it meant helping the people in his district.

"I told him I'd be willing to sit down and talk about our differences and just try to provide for the people, but they didn't want that," said Amsler. "They wanted me to covert to Islam and fight for them. [It's] so not going to happen."

Shortly after that, Amsler started hearing rumors about a bounty placed on his head.

"It's a matter of getting underneath their skin," Amsler said. "All my guys fighting, they feared our platoon. We rattled them."

Though Amsler laughs at the mythical proportions of the situation, he knows it's not a game out there and has been more cautious.

It's just one more thing to worry about as a platoon leader.

"My guys have joked about turning me in for [the reward money]

if I make them climb one more mountain," said Amsler as he was preparing to go out on yet another patrol. "It's funny, and it's a game, but at the same time, it's not a game. If they truly are trying to target me and or us, then we'll have to be more careful."

After patrolling into the Dewegal Valley for hours and taking enemy fire, Amsler came upon an Afghan villager.

Immediately, the villager recognized Amsler and said that he was doing a good job in getting rid of the Taliban.

He explained one last thing to his interpreter about a villager before heading out, "If he's not going to tell me anything about the enemy, then I'm not going to treat him good. Cause I know that the enemy was talking about using this as a staging point to attack me. So that means that he's friends with the Taliban. If he's friends with the Taliban, he's not friends with me."

Amsler, stands about 5 feet 9 inches tall, is broad-shouldered, has a set jaw and piercing eyes. Though he has been in the military for less than two years and is on his first deployment, he doesn't back down from much, especially not the Taliban.



First Lt. Benjamin A. Amsler, a platoon leader assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, Task Force No Slack, uses an interpreter to speak to an Afghan villager during a recent operation in the Chowkay district in eastern Afghanistan's Kunar province, March 13. The villager already knew who Amsler was because of his reputation in the area. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Burrell/20th Mobile PAD)

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