

ALASKA POST

Home of the Arctic Warriors

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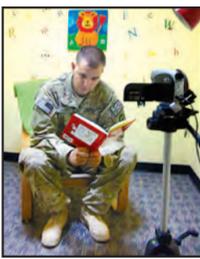
SAYING "GOODBYE"



Missed warning signs may have devastating results.

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SOLDIERS READING TO FAMILIES



Soldiers read to Families on video while children follow along.

More on page 5

WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Mostly cloudy

Low 30 High 55

Saturday



Mostly cloudy

Low 35 High 50

Chance of rain

Sunday



Mostly cloudy

Low 35 High 50

Forecast courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Army Wife Network brings Field Exercise to Fort Wainwright

Trish Muntean, Fort Wainwright PAO

The Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation treated the spouses of Fort Wainwright Soldiers to something special when Tara Crooks and Starlett Henderson, hosts of the radio show Army Wife Network, came to town Sept. 15 and 16.

Crooks and Henderson (also known as Army Wife Network's Lipstick 6 and XO) were here to present two "Field Exercises" titled "Priceless Packages" which, while open to any military spouse, was geared towards the spouses of deployed Soldiers. The seminar was designed to provide them with tools to deal with the deployment and to pamper them for a day with gift bags, door prizes and a meal that they did not have to cook or clean up after.

"We wanted to do something for our Families, for the spouses of deployed Soldiers," said Denise Mitchell, Army Community Service division chief.



Nearly 300 spouses attended the Army Wife Network, Field Exercise sponsored by Army Community Service, Sept. 15 and 16 at Fort Wainwright's Assembly Building. (Photo by Trish Muntean/Fort Wainwright PAO)

See NETWORKING, on page 4



U.S. Public Health Service Cmdr. George Durgin, chief of the Resilience Division at the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, speaks to the USARAK leaders about a recent RAND Corp. study on promoting resilience in the military during a Sept. 7 senior leader conference hosted by U.S. Army Alaska Commander Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt)

USARAK focuses on building resilience

Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt, U.S. Army Alaska Public Affairs

U.S. Army Alaska's leadership and staff focused on building resilience in Soldiers, Families and the community during a conference Sept. 7 to 8 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

The event was an opportunity for USARAK leaders to take stock of its ongoing campaign to develop a comprehensive, integrated approach to promoting mental health and reducing risk among USARAK's Soldiers, civilians and Family members.

A Department of Defense expert briefed the USARAK leaders on a recent study examining the military's most effective programs

After a decade of war and more deployments on the horizon, the need to develop resiliency in Soldiers and Families is as great as ever, according to USARAK Commander Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo.

"The Army's going to be in this kind of challenge for the next several years -- lot of pressure on Families, our loved ones," Palumbo said.

See RESILIENCE, on page 3

Wainwright runners conquer Equinox Marathon

Sheryl Nix, Alaska Post Contributor

Runners most likely don't choose Fairbanks' Equinox Marathon to set a personal record. With a climb of almost 2,000 feet to the summit of Ester Dome and then a steep descent back down, this marathon is known in running circles as one of the most difficult races in North America. Runners and walkers alike choose this race for entirely different reasons, including the opportunity to experience something uniquely Alaskan and personally demanding.

For some runners and walkers from Fort Wainwright, the decision to run this year's Equinox Marathon was also about accomplishing something challenging during the ongoing deployments.

"I've never done anything like this before," said Trisch McMurray, wife of Lt. Col. John McMurray, commander, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. McMurray was one of 12 runners and walkers from Fort Wainwright who formed four Arctic Warriors relay teams and ran the Equinox Marathon Saturday. "This was just mad,"



Trisch McMurray (right), wife of Lt. Col. John McMurray, commander, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Diane Wood, wife of Col. Todd Wood, commander, 1-25th SBCT, and Natalie Rhodes (left), Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, gear up for the start of the Equinox Marathon at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Saturday. They ran the first leg of the relay portion of the marathon and were three of 12 Fort Wainwright runners and walkers who formed four Arctic Warriors relay teams to complete the marathon. (Courtesy Photo)

she said. "I can't believe I really did this."

Erin Reece, wife of 1st Lt. Luke Reece, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Battalion, 1-25th SBCT, became the Arctic Warriors relay teams captain and said she got involved in the event to push herself and to do something she would normally do with her husband, who is currently deployed to Afghanistan.

See EQUINOX, on page 5

Operation Rising Star takes off at Nugget Lanes lounge tonight

Allen Shaw, Fort Wainwright PAO

The Fort Wainwright competition for the 2011 Operation Rising Star singing contest begins tonight at the Nugget Lanes lounge from 6 to 10 p.m. with preliminary auditions. The finals are scheduled for 6 p.m. Saturday.

The program hosted by the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation is open to all branches of the U.S. military, including Family members 18 and older. The competition is similar to popular television shows like "American Idol" and is televised on The Pentagon Channel.

The grand prize winner receives \$1000 spending money and an all-expenses-paid trip for two to Los Angeles to record a three-song demo compact disc. In addition, the winner gets three days and nights of studio time which includes top-rated musicians, recording technicians, a vocal coach and a CD producer.

Last year's winner, Melissa Gomez, joined the Army out of high school and had her sights set on performing in the Soldiers Show, which travels around the world each year providing entertainment for Soldiers, Families and members of their communities. Gomez was never able to be released from her command to tour with the show, but sought every military opportunity available to sing. She eventually became part of a seven-Soldier ensemble named USA Express that spent five months touring the United States and Korea. Her performing career was cut short when she was pulled from the group to report to Korea for military police duty.

See STARS, on page 4

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SN/ BIRCHWOOD HOMES

Better customer service, through the gentle art of persuasion

Allen Shaw, Fort Wainwright PAO

Working with the public is a tricky endeavor and providing exceptional public service is always challenging. Especially when you're at a diversified facility where so many personalities intertwine, an occasional collision should be expected.

One of the best tools available to deescalate a volatile situation can also be the spark that ignites the fire. In the book entitled "Verbal Judo – The Gentle Art of Persuasion," Dr. George Thompson states that the cocked tongue is the single most dangerous weapon when dealing with the public. A single word or sentence shot off without reflection, can precipitate violence, generate a complaint, lose a sale or client or crush one's credibility permanently.

"Your staff, co-workers and the agencies you work with on a daily basis are as much your customer as the ones outside of the organization," said Sonja Taylor, customer evaluation analyst, Plans, Analysis and Integration Office., "Good customer service applies to everyone inside and out."

Thinking before speaking can save many situations.

Natural language is disastrous. The moment you allow words to rise readily to your lips you will create the greatest speech you will ever regret. Natural language is easy language that reflects one's personal feelings. There is no place for such language in our professions and at home it is equally dangerous. Some things should just remain in our heads.

To make this a successful endeavor, we must perform our jobs and use tactical language. The key is to shape our words to achieve a professional goal, whatever that might be.

Professional language is tactical language. Some may call it artificial in that it is tailored to achieve a specific purpose. But if you are working with the public in any capacity you must develop an easy capability with tactical language. Very seldom are we hired to express our feelings or give opinions. Having the skills to deal effectively with other human beings is really a performing art that should become a habit of

mind and a way of life.

"If you are always polite and respectful it becomes second nature. Your customer is affected by your being courteous and polite. It shapes their perceptions of you, the organization and the service that is offered," Taylor said.

The ability to provide excellent customer service or defuse a hostile verbal episode or situation requires more than a communication course. Success in the field is achieved by developing and mastering mental and physical tactics. Knowledge is power.

Once we realize that anytime we or our organization is being verbally attacked, consider it an opportunity. It is a chance to show good customer service skills. When someone else is emotionally charged, you should immediately grow calm inside and listen. Don't just wait for them to finish talking, listen to what they are saying because they will usually provide the information you need to handle the situation professionally. People who are angry will always provide you with clues as to what they

value, what they fear or what they want, and these can be used to calm them and redirect hostility. Of course it is not natural to do this when people

are in your face, but when you are aware you will gain the strength and power.

It's easy for people to become agitated in today's society. They have effortless avenues to complain and complaints aren't good for anyone. Two or three will get you noticed and more can stall a career and cause undue stress. The way to reduce complaints and increase compliments is to always perform and never react. When you perform, you respond to the person and the situation. Organizations are successful when they teach their people to be responsive to the needs of the public and not reactive to confrontation. Remember, conflict is an opportunity take a rational approach and help people address their own selfish desires. Everyone can win.

For more information on improving customer service, contact Taylor at 353-9721.



Medical Department Activity - Alaska Corner

Col. George Appenzeller, MEDDAC-AK commander

National Suicide Prevention month

September is National Suicide Prevention month and throughout the Army we are encouraging Soldiers and Families to speak up and reach out for help. As we all know, military life is both physically and mentally stressful for both Soldiers and Families. At times, this stress can seem overwhelming and individuals may see no way out and turn to suicide. In the last two months alone, the Army has lost 41 active duty Soldiers to what appears to have been suicide.

MEDDAC-AK offers assistance through our emergency room and behavioral health programs both at Bassett Army Community Hospital (Bldg 4066, 361-6059) and at the Fort Richardson Troop Medical Clinic (384-0405) which provide daily emergent, acute and routine care. Additionally, local TRICARE behavioral health providers do not require a referral from your primary care manager to begin care for Family members. The latest list of participating providers is available at www.triwest.com. Today I wanted to take the opportunity to also highlight three additional programs which are available.

The first program is Military One Source. This free and confidential program is designed to help Families with day to day problems. It offers short-term counseling that can be face-to-face, telephonic or online with professionals who either have prior military experience or have received training about the military lifestyle. The counseling is designed to address issues such as adjustment to situational stress, stress management, decision making, communication, grief and family/parenting-skills issues. Soldiers and Family members are eligible for up to 12 sessions per issue at no cost. Military One Source can be accessed via the web at www.militaryonesource.com, or by phone at 1-800-342-9647.

Military and Family Life Consultants (MFLCs) are free, licensed clinical counselors with masters or doctorate degrees who augment the existing military support services for Soldiers, Family members, and DA civilians. MFLCs provide a wide range of non-medical counseling services and education including anger management, conflict resolution, communication, parenting, relationship issues, decision making skills and productivity at work, as well as military lifestyle issues such as deployment stress, reintegration issues, relocation adjustments, separation, how to build resiliency and dealing with homesickness, loss and grief. MFLC consultants do not maintain records, and contact with the agency is kept confidential. MFLC consultants are easily accessible and frequently meet with their clients in community settings such as dining facilities or coffee shops. MFLC contact numbers include: Fort Richardson: (907) 382-1407, Fort Wainwright: (907) 388-2553, and Alaska National Guard: (907) 382-1408.

A final program that is available is TRICARE's online behavioral healthcare. This website (www.triwest.com/en/beneficiary/behavioral-health/triwest-online-care/) provides online educational resources, access to a 24/7 crisis line (1-866-284-3743), and the TRICARE Assistance Program (TRIAP). TRIAP is a confidential counseling and therapy program providing a full range of behavioral health assistance and non-medical counseling with licensed therapists via video chat from your home computer. This service is available to all TRICARE members and can be used wherever you have a web connection. Additionally, the TRICARE Behavioral Health Center can be contacted via online chat at the website or phone at 1-866-874-9378.

USARAK Families have several options available beyond the traditional office visit, some of which can be accessed from our homes. If you or someone you know needs help, the most important thing you can do is to speak up and get it or encourage those you care about to do so. If the resources are not available here, we will get you to them. Every person in our military family is too important to sit idle. MEDDAC-AK is committed to improving behavioral health care and reducing stigma. We stand ready to assist and never hesitate to call or come by if you or someone you care for needs help.

Saying, "Goodbye" without end

Deborah Ward, Fort Greely PAO

Sgt. 1st Class James Casteel, came home from another day of working in Special Operations at Fort McCoy, Wis., Feb. 23, 2004. He was greeted by his 15-year-old son, J.J., an outstanding student, an Eagle Scout, editor of the school paper, socially well-adapted and loved by many.

Immediately the two started their customary conversation about each other's day and what transpired.

The conversation - so routine, so ordinary that Casteel cannot pick out the details, ended without event. J.J. went downstairs as he normally did and Casteel went upstairs to clean up for supper.

"I never heard the gunshot," said Casteel "I was in the shower when I felt this horrible, eerie feeling come over me. I ran downstairs to check on him [J.J.] and I found my son lying on the basement floor... dying."

Casteel paused to control the devastating memory before continuing, "We had a few moments together before he passed away."

Looking back at the warning signs, Casteel remembers J.J. working his way throughout the house, a few days prior to his death, making lists.

"When I asked him what he was doing he said, 'Oh I'm just taking an inventory, Dad.' Then

later that day he was sitting down writing notes so I asked him again what he was doing. His reply was strange to me, 'What's the word for 'window' in Spanish, Dad?' I told him, 'ventana' and he said, 'thank you.' That was it. To anyone else with kids that may seem like typical things to do and one would blow it off as normal, but on that day I knew something was going on; I just didn't know what."

Casteel, like many other parents whose children commit suicide, did not make the connection of oddities and eerie feelings until it was too late.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the third leading cause of death for people ages 15-24 with the top two causes being accidents and homicides

Most adults can remember the difficulties of being a teenager. They remember the gray area between childhood and adulthood; the need and desire to fit in and be accepted socially; the constant pressures from parents and peers to be responsible, continuously perform at high academic standards, and to be the best at sports, etc. Then there's the hormonal aspect of being a teenager and that alone can be monumental to deal with.

See LOSS, on page 3



The Fort Wainwright, Fort Greely 2011 Installation Guide now available online.

Visit the website at:

www.aqppublishing.com/pub_militaryGuides.html and select "The Army in Alaska Base Guide 2011."

ALASKA POST

Home of the Arctic Warriors

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The ALASKA POST - Home of the Arctic Warriors

LOSS: Saying, "Goodbye" without end

Continued from page 2

Teens with an adequate support network of family, friends, religious outlets, supportive peers or extracurricular activities can use that network for an outlet to deal with those everyday frustrations. Many teens, despite the available network, still feel disconnected and isolated from friends and family and those are the teens who remain at an increased risk for suicide.

It is important to note the risk of suicides with teens increases dramatically when they have access to firearms and ammunition at home. Nearly 60 percent of all suicides in the United States are committed with a gun.

According to "Suicide factors for teens" at www.kidshealth.org, there may be many possible factors leading to suicides and attempted suicides the following, presently, take the lead: A psychological disorder, especially depression, bipolar disorder and alcohol and drug use; feelings of distress, irritability or agitation; feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness that often accompany depression (a teen, for example, who experiences repeated failures at school, who is overwhelmed by violence at home or who is isolated from peers is likely to experience such feelings); a previous suicide attempt; a family history of depression or suicide (depressive illnesses may have a genetic component, so some teens may be predisposed to suffer major depression); physical or sexual abuse; lack of a support network, poor relationships with parents or peers and feelings of social isolation; dealing with homosexuality in an unsupportive family or community or hostile school.

Being involved in your teen's life, showing that you care and remaining supportive can help avert suicidal thoughts and non-genetic bouts of depression; however, even the most involved families can still suffer from the tragic, senseless loss that suicide brings.

Casteel recalled having "a



James Junior (J.J.) Casteel
1989 - 2004

second family at McCoy. J.J. was well-known and loved on the installation, especially with the Emergency Operation Center guys and the Explosive Ordnance Device team members. He'd come in to work to visit them and discuss Army field manuals and technical manuals. He was so interested in those things. If it blew up, J.J. knew about it. He had a great social life."

Casteel remembered that one of J.J.'s favorite family things to do was to invite 15 of his classmates each year to the Armed Forces Day Celebration in May where J.J. and his friends would spend the day climbing in and throughout the display tanks, helicopters and various military vehicles. J.J. had an intense fascination with his father's career, military history and procedures.

Missed warning signs have a devastating result. Not all warning signs will be present in possible suicide cases, but it is important to know them and take them seriously. They are a call for help. Seek immediate help if you think you know a teenager - or any individual for that matter - who may be contemplating suicide.

According to "Teen suicide warning signs" at www.teensuicide.us, some warning signs to look for include but are not limited

to: Disinterest in favorite extracurricular activities; problems at work and losing interest in a job or important projects; substance abuse, including alcohol and drug (illegal and legal drugs) use; behavioral problems; withdrawing from family and friends; sleep changes; changes in eating habits; begins to neglect hygiene and other matters of personal appearance; emotional distress brings on physical complaints (aches, fatigues, migraines); hard time concentrating and paying attention; declining grades in school; loss of interest in schoolwork; risk taking behaviors; complains more frequently of boredom; does not respond as before to praise; actually says, "I'm thinking of committing suicide" or "I want to kill myself" or "I wish I could die."

There are also verbal hints that could indicate suicidal thoughts or plans. These include such phrases as: "I want you to know something, in case something happens to me" or "I won't trouble you anymore."

People may begin: Giving away favorite belongings, or promising them to friends and family members; throwing away important possessions; showing signs of extreme cheerfulness following periods of depression; creating suicide notes; expressing bizarre or unsettling thoughts on occasion.

"If I could go back to...just before," said Casteel, "I would have asked more questions. I wouldn't have settled for the odd replies that didn't explain the strange little things he was doing. As far as parents knowing what to look for, unless you search for, have training or a health professional... counselor...tell you what those warning signs are, you may miss them - overlook them. Some are so very small. Some would seem 'acceptable' until after the fact.

"My wife and I, though now divorced, went through countless hours of beneficial counseling to begin the healing process. We took classes, sought out chaplain assistance and used many resources that were available to us to help get through. Some counseling may not work, but you don't stop; you keep going until you find some that do.

"I couldn't take it at Fort McCoy anymore because of the day-to-day contact with people that had

known my son, so I requested to transfer to another installation. I didn't know it then, but staying involved with the community, working with other people with similar experiences and staying involved with the counselors help to make it better. You never get over it, but it does become easier to make it through each day."

Casteel moved to Fort Greely in 2009 and dove in to help Chaplain Vince Cepeda with the program from Living Works, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training also known as ASIST. Casteel spoke of his experiences and offered his services on this topic frequently to help educate others on the programs and services available.

One such program is safeTalk. This program offers training to anyone over the age of 15 to prepare them for identifying persons with thoughts of suicide and connecting them with suicide first-aid resources and to learn how to apply the TALK steps of Tell, Ask, Listen and Keep Safe. Casteel continued to build his support network and often thinks back to all of the friends and family who helped him get through the loss of his son.

"The support and love we received when J.J. died was unsurpassed," Casteel said. "We had planned a small funeral, but in the end over 2,000 people attended. Busses from two school districts, full of children came - he had attended two schools. Susie, my wife, was stationed in Minnesota and I was in Wisconsin so J.J. spent time in both locations. Children from both schools came to his funeral. A lot of people from the installation came as well as J.J.'s entire Eagle Scout troop."

Today, Casteel takes some comfort in knowing that J.J.'s brilliantly clear, hazel eyes are able to see the beauty in the world and his heart can experience the fullness of life and love. "He donated his organs to the hospital and my wife and I found out later that two children were saved because of this. One received J.J.'s eyes, the other his heart."

"We still look for reasons why this happened...what J.J. was going through, what he was thinking - we have no explanation. We'll never have closure. Every day I have to fight to get through it and learn to say, 'good bye' all over again."

RESILIENCE: USARAK focus on Soldiers and Families

Continued from page 1

"What we're trying to do is talk about coping skills, things we can do to improve the resilience of not only our Soldiers and their Families, but the communities."

The Army adopted the term resilience, which Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines as "an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change," after the 2007 troop surge in Iraq brought longer deployments and less time back home.

"We were sending folks over there for a year, to come home for 10 months, and go back for a year, then come home for a year, then go back for a year," Palumbo said. "You need to be resilient to be able to do that over the long term."

U.S. Public Health Service Cmdr. George Durgin, who heads the Resilience Division at the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, spoke to the USARAK leaders about a recent study he co-authored on "Promoting Psychological Resilience in the U.S. Military."

The study, published by the RAND Center for Military Health Policy Research, identifies factors that show scientific evidence of improving coping skills when dealing with stress, he said.

"The leaders in Alaska are developing a flagship Family program, and they asked where they could find a source for best practices, since there are so many military Family programs," Durgin said. "Sharing

this information gives senior staff a toolbox to help their troops stay combat ready."

The RAND study found a broad range of resiliency programs and practices proven to be effective in combating the kind of repeated stress Soldiers and Families deal with, according to Durgin. "Everything is in. We have psychology, we have behavioral health, we have fitness, we have environmental ... It all ties into each other in a holistic approach around the service member," Durgin said.

Durgin pointed his audience to a number of web-based resilience resources currently available to commanders, Soldiers and Families.

This is the second year in a row that U.S. Army Alaska leaders have convened on the topic of promoting resilience.

Last year, prompted by the release of the Army's "Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention," or HP/RR/SP, report, USARAK launched a study of its own, looking at its many resiliency programs and determining how best to use them.

Such self-examination has become part of USARAK's business process for promoting

resilience and preventing high-risk behavior, according to Palumbo. The command compiles data and statistics on high-risk behavior among its units and uses it to determine where and how to focus its efforts.

Information about the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury is online at: www.dcoe.health.mil/

More information about the Army's flagship resilience program, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, can be found online at: <http://csf.army.mil/>

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STARS: Rising tonight at the Nugget Lanes lounge

Continued from page 1

Sgt. Gomez decided to trade in her uniform and become a full-time Army mom and wife. "I didn't want to keep leaving my kids behind," she said.

She tried a couple regional competitions in Raleigh, N.C., which helped maintain her singing dream and then last year found herself as an Army wife competing in Operation Rising Star at Fort Bragg.

Gomez said winning the competition changed her life. Since then the family has moved, they have a new home and she has a new job working for the Department of Defense. "But singing-wise," she said, "I have found that I am invited to sing at more events. Before we moved I did sing during a prestigious event at Fort Bragg, the USAOC Gold Star Ceremony, which Gary Sinise and Ross Perot were present." She also recorded a CD and is often asked to travel and sing. "But my schedule does not really allow for that too much," said Gomez.

For now she plans to continue singing, trying to get into larger venues and events. "I would like to hear my songs played outside of the military setting. I want them to touch people and help them understand the life we live," she said. To hear her song "The Life (of a Soldier)" visit www.reverbnation.com and search Melissa Gomez.

As for advice to this year's competitors or those who might be on the fence, "Believe in you," she said. "There is no one genre that rules over any other. The Army is diverse and so is the ORS fan base. They just want to see great talent and enjoy the show. You will thank yourself for

competing. You'll make lifelong friends and learn so much about your craft."

"If you are chasing a dream," said Gomez, "Don't sell yourself short; the winner could be you."

Is it possible a trip to Alaska might be in her future if she goes on tour? "Of course," she said, "I went to Alaska with USA Express in August 2004...I had a blast, was lucky enough to see the Northern Lights and visit Santa's workshop. The 16 or 17 hours of daylight had me a bit messed up but I had an awesome time. I would love to go back."

For more information on Operation Rising Star visit www.OpRisingStar.com or call 353-2654.



2010 Operation Rising Star winner Melissa Gomez of Fort Bragg, N.C., sizes a handprint near Meryl Streep's autograph at Grauman's Chinese Theatre's forecourt of stars' footprints, handprints and autographs immortalized in the legendary cement alongside Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles. (Photo by Tim Hipps/FMWRC Public Affairs)

NETWORKING: An Army wife field exercise

Continued from page 1

"I am so thankful that Tara and Star agreed to come over here and put on this event," she said. "They are going to have a wonderful time, just getting a chance to mingle with each other. These types of events bring these Families out, show what is available, they become friends with other people, develop a whole new friendship."

Crooks and Henderson tag themselves as interactive empowerment for Army wives. They have a radio show, a website (www.armywifetwork.com), an online advice column entitled "Field Problems" (which can be found on their website) and the "Field Exercises."

"What we mean by interactive empowerment is for all of these Army wives to join together and share information, resources and empower each other, via interactively, via social media, via podcast and our radio show, and our websites, all of these different things," Crooks said.

"The bigger our network grows, the more information and resources we have to empower," she said.

"It all came together under one roof when social media started," she said. "We said, oh, this is a good thing and we should probably be a part of this. It was a hobby at that point, and we needed a business plan, so we formed Army Wife Network."

Army Wife Network is based on Army Wife Talk Radio. As Crooks interviewed subject matter experts for an array of subjects, she started to gather the information and wanted a place to share it with other Army spouses and encourages others to take advantage of what can be found on their website.

Crooks took a moment to offer advice for new military spouses so that they could not just survive, but thrive in the military environment. First was to reach out to the command or their Family Readiness Group, because that is where they would get their official information from.



Michele Walker, spouse of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael Walker, B Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade, was one of the spouses who attended the Army Wife Network Field Exercise Friday. She was recognized with a show of hands as being one of the spouses with multiple deployments. (Photo by Trish Muntean/Fort Wainwright PAO)

Then to connect themselves with another person, because no one can face a deployment alone.

"Deployment is hard. Multiple deployments are even harder. On Families, on Soldiers, on their spouses." She said, "Everyone is like, done it, over it."

To get through it she says that "Everyone needs a battle buddy. Whatever it is you do, whatever it is that you like to do as a hobby, if you like to volunteer, connect yourself to just one person, because if each one of us can get just one, we will each have someone to go through this journey with. You cannot do this alone and unless your family is military, they don't know what it is you're going through."

"If you can't find that person right here where you are, then reach out online. That is where a lot of the younger, newer Army spouses are, is online."

"I hope that is what we have given them (Army spouses) is a way to connect."

Stryker medics deliver aid through understanding

Spc. Thomas Duval, 1-25th SBCT PAO

When Pvt. Liliana Nunez joined the Army in 2009 with the hopes of being a combat medic, she had one goal in mind: help save the lives of the men and women defending her freedom.

After deploying to Afghanistan with the 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division earlier this year, the Brownsville, Texas, native, and her fellow medics from the 25th BSB sprang into action providing care to a number of sick and injured Soldiers.



A combat medic assigned to the 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, cradles two Afghan children during a women's clinic in Kandahar, Afghanistan. (Army Courtesy photo)

But that wasn't enough for the 25th BSB, medics who sought to bring a healthier lifestyle not only to U.S. forces but to Afghan women and children as well.

In order to reach the Afghan women and their children, the 1-25th SBCT medics opened their doors and their minds to start a regularly scheduled Kandahar Regional Military Hospital women's and children's health clinic.

"Our goal is to help train the Afghan National Army midwives and to help improve the overall health of the Afghan women and children," said Capt. Marilyn Cowles, physician assistant and Anchorage, Alaska, native assigned to the 25th BSB. "We are trying to get them to have faith in their own medical system."

"It's interesting to go out and get a closer view of their culture," Nunez said. "It's something that you would want to do again and again."

Twice a week local villagers gather at a local forward operating base and are shown ways of promoting better health in women and children through a number of hands-on training events.

"It's an important educational training that aids in diagnosing and



Capt. Marilyn Cowles, physician assistant and Anchorage, Alaska, native assigned to the 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, enjoys the company of Afghan children during a women's clinic in Kandahar, Afghanistan. (Army Courtesy photo)

treating injuries," Cowles said.

Once trained, the midwives can better treat things like pregnancies and other overall health issues, according to Cowles.

She said the medical staff, with help from their Bulgarian military counterparts, also began efforts to improving the Afghans' ability to conduct ultrasounds.

"It's a slow-going process but it's improving and that's what matters," Cowles said. "[Medical programs] continue to be beneficial to bridging women's healthcare with their cultural beliefs."

Medical outreach programs dedicated to the Afghan people have become an important part of life in Afghanistan and serve as a reminder that as the war continues so does the growing positive relationship between U.S. and Afghan forces.

"We have established a very good working with Afghan Army's 205 Kandak," said Lt. Col. Barnett Gibbs, physician to the 25th BSB. "We are successfully improving their ability (to take) care of themselves."

'United through Reading' bringing Soldiers and Families closer

Spc. Thomas Duval, 1-25th SBCT PAO

For decades, children have relied on the words read to them during bedtime stories to bridge the gap between reality and fantasy. Often, the slow, calm tone of their parent's voice helps bring to life the words effortlessly written by the famous authors, sending them into a deep sleep.

For most children, the stories read to them become a memory etched deep into their memory, but for the children of service members serving away from home, the opportunity to hear their parent's voice is reserved for the occasional phone call. Here, in Kandahar, Afghanistan, that trend is steadily shifting, as more and more soldiers have discovered a "diamond in the rough" through the use of the United through Reading program.

Tucked in the center of Kandahar Airfield, Soldiers are able to sit in a quiet room decorated with calming colors and stuffed animals and record themselves reading to their children. Once the service member has customized his or her video, dedicated staff members finalize the disc and mail it to the Family member at no cost to the defenders of freedom.

Recently deployed to Afghanistan, Soldiers from the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division

have become the latest Soldiers to take advantage of the program.

Spc. Jason Harris has learned first-hand how the program helps bring his family together during their year of separation.

"It's an unbelievable feeling to sit in the room and read to my son," said Harris, a cavalry scout assigned to the 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1-25th SBCT. "I forget that I'm reading to a camera and instead just picture looking in my son's eyes and reading him a bedtime story."

He added as a smile spread across his tear-filled cheeks, "My wife says my son always asks to 'see Daddy.' It makes me happy to know that even while deployed, I can still read him and, to him, it's almost like I'm there with him."

Sgt. Victor Saucedo, a personnel sergeant, is another Arctic Wolf Soldier who has found comfort from the UTR program.

"The exciting part for me is when my son opens the book and starts watching the movies," he said. "My wife records his reaction and, for me, that's a morale booster." He continued, "My son is always surprised and excited, whether he's following along on the right page or not; the point is I get to be the one reading it to him, and that means



Spc. Jason Harris, a cavalry scout with the 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, reads Dr. Seuss' famous book "Green Eggs and Ham" to his son, Brayden, during a United through Reading session at Kandahar Airfield Sept. 9. Harris is currently serving in Afghanistan as a part of a year-long deployment. The Alabama native likes to spend his rare free time reading to his son on one of the many USO - sponsored UTR programs. (Photo by Sgt. Thomas Duval/1-25th SBCT PAO)

the world to me."

The program is such a success in the Saucedo family that the Dalzell, S.C., native has returned to record three different reading videos, each time picking a different book from the full bookshelves that line the walls.

The program has been bridging the gap between separated families since it was created in 1989. It was

formed by a military spouse, mother and teacher, Betty J. Mohlenbrock. Since then, the program has touched thousands of lives to service members all around the world.

For more information on the UTR program, service members and their Families can go online to www.unitedthroughreading.org/military-program/

So, here are some practical, tried and true tips for you as you prepare for your own R&R experience:

- Really communicate with your Soldier. What is most important to him or her about this time? What is most important to you?

- Keep it simple. Again, this doesn't mean you can't make special plans, but arranging complicated travel itineraries, excursions and visits may end up being more of a burden than a blessing. Two weeks may seem like a lot of time, but it will fly by. The most important thing is to have good, quality time together. One tip is to plan special time for just the two of you before your Soldier even makes it to your home. A fellow GI Jane is doing this with her Soldier soon. She's booking a room in town for the evening he arrives in Fairbanks, arranging for overnight childcare and ensuring that she and her Soldier will have some special time to talk and get reacquainted before he hits the front door and becomes "Daddy."

- Check your expectations. It's so easy to dream about this R&R time and imagine it to be an experience that no fairy tale can live up to. Just enjoy this time without crazy expectations.

- Don't miss it. This sounds obvious, but can end up happening if you get so caught up in all the things you want to do while your Soldier is home. Again, communicating, keeping plans simple and adjusting expectations will help ensure you don't miss out on any of your R&R time.

So, go ahead; get excited. R&R is definitely an exciting time. It has quickly become one of my all-time favorite seasons; probably yours, too. Your fellow GI Janes and I wish you a glorious R&R season full of new memories, fun and cherished time with your Soldier.

Editor's Note: The Alaska Post features the GI Jane column every other week. GI Jane is a composite character of many different military spouse contributors and offers a wide variety of viewpoints and perspectives. We would like to hear from readers. Submit column ideas and feedback to pao.fwa@us.army.mil.



GI Jane embraces R&R season, gives practical tips

GI Jane, Alaska Post Contributor

You can feel it in the air; an almost crisp sense of anticipation. Everything looks a little different and everyone seems just a little more alert. No, I'm not referring to fall and all the changes this season is bringing to Fort Wainwright. I'm talking about R&R season.

While the changing leaves, cool mornings and excitement over all the changes that autumn brings is invigorating, what I'm noticing most about my fellow GI Janes is a new focus and excitement about their Soldiers' impending visits for the two-week rest and recuperation break we affectionately call "R&R."

Whether your Soldier is coming back to Fort Wainwright or you are meeting him or her somewhere else, there are bound to be some anxieties mixed in with all the excitement. So, let me give you some advice based on my past experience with R&R leave and that of some fellow GI Janes who've been through numerous deployments. Relax.

I know, it sounds way too simplistic. I'm not saying that we shouldn't try to make this time special; we most definitely should. But the biggest thing to remember is that your Soldier is coming back to see you, your children and his or her home and that just having a break from deployment will already boost Soldiers' spirits.

EQUINOX: The marathon

Continued from page 1

"My husband is an ultra marathoner and would have loved to run the Equinox if he were here now," Reece said. "Being a part of the relay teams was my way of continuing our family traditions while he's deployed and accomplishing something that I knew would make him proud."

Arctic Warriors relay team members wore custom-made team shirts and cheered each other on at each leg transition during the race and at the finish line. They also carb-loaded, a time-honored race tradition, the night before the marathon with a pasta dinner.

"Some of the really wonderful byproducts of forming these Arctic Warriors relay teams are the friendships that we formed and the encouragement we all received in doing something so challenging," said Diane Wood, wife of Col. Todd Wood, commander, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

Many Stryker Brigade Soldiers are also planning to run marathon relays to mirror the Equinox Marathon while they're deployed

so this experience has been an encouragement to Families and deployed Soldiers, Wood said. "The deployment has been difficult at times and we provided our Soldiers a distraction and great source of pride knowing that we are thriving at home," she explained. "What an experience this was."

While other Wainwright Soldiers, Families and civilian employees raced in the 2011 Equinox full marathon, relay and ultra marathon, the following runners and walkers participated in this year's Equinox Marathon relay as part of the Arctic Warriors teams: team one -- Natalie Rhodes, Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation; Erin Reece, wife of 1st Lt. Luke Reece, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division; and Kathryn Oliver, wife of Capt. John Oliver, 3-21st; team two -- Trisch McMurray, wife of Lt. Col. John McMurray, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1-25th SBCT; Erin Carius, wife of 1st Lt. Brandon Carius, 3-21st; and Sheryl Nix, wife of Maj. Chris Nix, 1-25th SBCT; team three



Seven of the 12 Fort Wainwright runners and walkers who formed four Arctic Warriors relay teams pose for an after-race photo at the end of the Equinox Marathon Saturday at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. The relay teams tackled the challenging marathon, achieving personal goals and boosting morale in the process. "Some of the really wonderful byproducts of forming these Arctic Warriors relay teams are the friendships that we formed and the encouragement we all received in doing something so challenging," said Diane Wood (third from the left), wife of Col. Todd Wood, commander, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. (Courtesy Photo)

-- Laura Deems, wife of Maj. Mike Deems, 715th Contingency Contracting Team; Lisa St. Clair, smokejumper, Alaska Fire Service; and Laura Bergman, wife of Capt. Zach Bergman, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1-25th SBCT;

team four -- Diane Wood, wife of Col. Todd Wood, 1-25th SBCT; Bridget Nelson, wife of Capt. Scott Nelson, 472nd Military Police Company; and Maggie Robitaille, wife of 1st Lt. Adam Robitaille, 3-21st.

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

find it here!

Friday – 23rd

STORY HOUR and CRAFT, 4 to 5 p.m., Post Library, Building 3700. Call 353-4137.

HOMEWORK CENTER, 2:45 to 6 p.m., School Age Services, Building 4166. Call 361-7394.

CLEARWATER SILVERS, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., The Clearwater River Boat Launch. Cost \$25 for adults, youth 7 to 15, \$10. An Alaska state fishing license is required for this trip. Call 361-6349.

OPEN ICE SKATING, 5:30 to 7:45 p.m., Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink, Building 3709. Call 353-7223. Admission for open recreational ice skating: AGE (individual daily fee), 4 and under: Free, 5 to 17: \$2.50, Adults: \$3.50, Family of 4 or more: \$8.00, skate rental: \$1.50

OPERATION RISING STAR, 6 to 10 p.m., Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, Building 3702. Call 353-2654.

Saturday – 24th

OPERATION RISING STAR, 6 to 10 p.m., Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, Building 3702. Call 353-2654.

CLEARWATER SILVERS, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., The Clearwater River Boat Launch. Cost is \$25 for adults, youth 7 to 15, \$10. An Alaska state fishing license is required for this trip. Call 361-6349.

QUILTED ORNAMENT CLASS, 1 to 3 p.m., Arts and Crafts Center, Building 3727. Cost is \$25 and includes all materials. Open to participants ages 16 and older. Call 353-7520.

ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS, 1 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Class is \$7. Call 353-7223.

Sunday – 25th

CLEARWATER SILVERS, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., The Clearwater River Boat Launch. Cost is \$25 for adults, youth 7 to 15, \$10. An Alaska state fishing license is required for this trip. Call 361-6349.

OPEN ICE SKATING, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Physical Fitness Center Ice Rink, Building 3709. Call 353-7223. Admission for open recreational ice skating: AGE (individual daily fee), 4 years and under: Free, 5 to 17: \$2.50, Adults: \$3.50, Family of 4 or more: \$8.00, skate rental: \$1.50

Monday – 26th

CLEARWATER SILVERS, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., The Clearwater River Boat Launch. Cost, \$25 for adults, youth 7 to 15, \$10. An Alaska state fishing license is required for this trip. Call 361-6349.

SIMPLE SNACKS AND MEALS FOR TEENS, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Youth Center, Building 4109. Open to registered youth in grades 6-12. Call 361-7713.

GROUP CYCLING CLASS, noon to 1 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

ROMP AND STOMP PLAY MORNING, 9:30 to 11 a.m., Youth Center, Building 4109. Call 361-7713.

SAFETY ORIENTATION, 6 p.m., Auto Skills Center, Building 3730, Call 353-7436.

ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS, 6 to 7 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Class is \$7. Call 353-7223.

HOMEWORK CENTER, 2:45 to 6 p.m., School Age Services, Building 4166. Call 361-7394.

Tuesday – 27th

HOMEWORK CENTER, 2:45 to 6 p.m., School Age Services, Building 4166. Call 361-7394.

PRIME TIME FITNESS, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

STRESS MANAGEMENT, 3 to 4:30 p.m., Army Community Service, Building 3451, Call 353-4248.

AFTB INSTRUCTOR TRAINING, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-2382.

BUILDING YOUR CHILD'S SELF ESTEEM, 4 to 5:30 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Classes may be cancelled if a minimum of 5 participants is not met. Childcare is not available but children are welcome. Call 388-2553.

Wednesday – 28th

HOMEWORK CENTER, 2:45 to 6 p.m., School Age Services, Building 4166. Call 361-7394.

GROUP STRENGTH FITNESS CLASS, noon to 1 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

ANGER MANAGEMENT, 3 to 4:30 p.m., Behavioral Health Conference Room, Building 4066. Call 353-4248.

OUR HEROES' TREE AND OUR FAMILY TREE, 3 to 6 p.m., Post Library, Building 3700. Call 353-4137.

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

AFTB INSTRUCTOR TRAINING, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-2382.

Thursday – 29th

AFTB INSTRUCTOR TRAINING, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-2382.

PRIME TIME FITNESS, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

GROUP CYCLING, noon to 1 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

ROMP AND STOMP PLAY MORNING, 9:30 to 11 a.m., Youth Center, Building 4109. Call 361-7713.

ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS, 6 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Class is \$7. Call 353-7223.

HOMEWORK CENTER, 2:45 to 6 p.m., School Age Services, Building 4166. Call 361-7394.

Arctic Wolves bring clean water to Afghan village

Spc. Thomas Duval, 1-25th SBCT PAO

International Security Assistance Forces soldiers are providing more than just security in southern Afghanistan.

During a recent mission in Dand district of Afghanistan, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division brought purity and cleanliness to the water of Banbalay village.

The Arctic Wolf Soldiers presented the local village in southern Dand with a water filtration system designed by the 1-5st Female Engagement Team, or FET, and the 25th Brigade Support Battalion Preventive Medicine team.

"At the time of our visit, the locals were drinking dirty water due to their broken well," Capt. Tammy Smoak, a medical officer with the 25th BSB, said. "It was a great feeling to know this slow sand filter could provide them

with the clean water they need to reduce the prevalence of illness and even provide better tasting water to the community during times they cannot access otherwise safe water."

The homemade filtration system allows local villagers to purify more than 20 gallons of water at a time.

To ensure that the Afghan locals understood how to properly operate the system, the U.S. soldiers took time to explain how to properly maintain and run the slow sand filter on a daily basis.

"Once built, we unlayered part of the system and relayered it again in front of the locals in a designated area of Banbalay village," Smoak said. "We brought translated visual aids and had our female language assistant interpret them."

See WATER, on page 8

40384790
DIRECT TV
FF RHP/AK POST/HELP
2 x 2.0

56385575
FARNI, KENT
AK POST/AP/ORPHANS
2 x 2.0

17386916
FAIRBANKS CURLING CLUB
AK POST/OPEN HOUSE
2 x 4.0

12386156
BEAVER SPORTS
AK POST/SKI FEVER
2 x 6.0

50386547
ALASKA FUN CENTER SALES
AK POST/AK POST
2 x 6.0

21387637
DOWNTOWN BINGO
AK POST/SEPT. CELEBR
2 x 4.0

For your information

POST OFFICE Q AND A

Ft. Wainwright Post office is being reviewed for possible closing due to declining office workload, which may indicate the facility is not warranted. Opportunity to discuss alternatives with postal representatives will take place at the Last Frontier Community Activities Center, Sept. 29, from 6 to 8 p.m. Postal representatives will be available to answer questions and provide information. For more information, contact Blessie Lochmann at (907)564-2815.

ROAD ACCESS SEQUOIA DRIVE

Due to emergency construction, Sequoia Drive will be closed through Sept. 28. Impacts to vehicle access of units 4508, 4509, 4512 and 4513. Parking is available at the parking lot on the east side of 8th Avenue.

FLU VACCINE KICK-OFF

Family flu kick-off starts tomorrow, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Bassett Army Community Hospital, Primary Care Department. Last year, 80 percent of confirmed flu cases on Fort Wainwright occurred to persons who did not get the flu vaccine. Flu clinic will continue from Sept. 26 till Oct. 7, Mondays through Thursdays, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Fridays 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

NORTHERN ALASKA MILITARY RETIREE COUNCIL

Meetings will begin starting Oct. 6, continuing through May 2012. The first meeting, Oct. 6, 7 p.m., will take place at the Last Frontier Community Activities Center, building 1044. Meetings are open to retirees of all branches of service. The agenda will include updates on legislative and Tricare issues; there will also be seating of new council officers. For more information contact, Carlos T. Garcia, Retirement Services Officer, 353-2099.

TDS HAS MOVED

Trial Defense Service is now located across Gaffney Road from the Law Center, Building 1051, Apt. 8.

PET BLESSING

The Fort Wainwright Community of Faith celebrates the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. Blessing pets, a spiritual celebration to honor loyal companions who love unconditionally. Bring pets to the Southern Lights Chapel between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m., Oct. 4 to the Chapel. Have animals on leash or in appropriate containers. Please bring only domestic animals. No exotic pets such as reptiles or feral animals. Ensure pets are up-to-date with shots before arriving. Coffee and hot chocolate will be provided throughout the day. St. Francis Medals provided for pets. For more information contact CH Brocato at 361-4380.

DENTAL ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Training for the American Red Cross Dental Assistant Training Program will start January 2012 at the Kamish Dental Clinic Fort Wainwright. 650 hours of classroom and clinical training, held Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This program will require a significant commitment on the student's part and in return, they will receive high quality dental assistant training and when graduated will have a marketable skill. Call 353-7234 or email: wetzell@usa.redcross.org.

LEGAL NOTICE

Anyone having claims against or who is indebted to the estate of Spc. Douglas J. Green, of Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division may contact Capt. Donald Smith, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1-25th SBCT, Fort Wainwright, Alaska 99703, phone 353-2211.

Anyone having claims against or who is indebted to the estate of Sgt. Timothy D. Sayne of Bravo Troop, 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division may contact 1st Lt. Krystal Harrell, Echo Company, Brigade Troops Battalion, 1-25th SBCT, Fort Wainwright, Alaska 99703, phone (321) 960-5494.

Out of the woods and back in the saddle: Week 3 – That's what I'm talking about

Allen Shaw, Fort Wainwright PAO

After spending last week in the wilderness doing lots of armed-hiking and moose-waiting, I am back in the game and putting serious effort into improving my dismal record of pigskin predictions. At least the Jones Bros are keeping me company. Next in line are Brain and Urbi who posted decent numbers week one, but not so good week two. Tate is sitting in the third spot, just behind BrowBrose Salsa while the Bear is eating up wins like a ravenous land predator.

Although it's still awfully early in the season this should prove to be an interesting week

with half the slate being division battles. There will definitely be a clash of titans when the Packers take on the Chicago. Those Bears are also hungry and this week they smell the cheese. That's what I'm talking about.

The other games that should be barn-burners are Atlanta and Tampa Bay as two of the league's young guns take it to the turf. It will also be the week we find out if the Bills are for real as they take on the New England Patriots. This one may light up the scoreboard like the pyrotechnics at a Kiss concert. The other two sizzlers to watch are the matchups between the

New York football Giants and the Philadelphia Eagles. Expect feathers to fly while they put plenty of pressure on young Mr. Manning in the backfield.

Last, but definitely not least is the Texans against the Saints in the Superdome. With super-aggressive defensive coordinators on both sides of the ball, this could prove to be a serious slobber-knocking, knock-down, drag-out fight. Real down and dirty football, and that's what I'm talking about.

STANDINGS

Bear
23 Wins / 9 Losses

BrowBrose Salsa
21 Wins / 11 Losses

Steve Tate
20 Wins / 12 Losses

Ed Urbi
18 Wins / 14 Losses

Brain
18 Wins / 14 Losses

A - Team
15 Wins / 17 Losses

Jones Bros
15 Wins / 17 Losses



A - Team

JAC @ CAR CAR
DET @ MIN DET
SF @ CIN SF
MIA @ CLE CLE
NE @ BUF NE
NYG @ PHI NYG
DEN @ TEN TEN
HOU @ NO NO
NYJ @ OAK OAK
BAL @ STL BAL
KC @ SD SD
ATL @ TB TB
ARI @ SEA ARI
GB @ CHI CHI
PIT @ IND PIT
WAS @ DAL WAS



Steve Tate

JAC @ CAR CAR
DET @ MIN MIN
SF @ CIN SF
MIA @ CLE MIA
NE @ BUF NE
NYG @ PHI PHI
DEN @ TEN TEN
HOU @ NO NO
NYJ @ OAK NYJ
BAL @ STL BAL
KC @ SD SD
ATL @ TB ATL
ARI @ SEA ARI
GB @ CHI GB
PIT @ IND PIT
WAS @ DAL DAL



Jones Bros

JAC @ CAR CAR
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MIA @ CLE CLE
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WAS @ DAL DAL



BrowBrose Salsa

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MIA @ CLE MIA
NE @ BUF NE
NYG @ PHI NYG
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HOU @ NO HOU
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GB @ CHI CHI
PIT @ IND PIT
WAS @ DAL DAL



Brain

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Bear

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PIT @ IND PIT
WAS @ DAL DAL



Ed Urbi

JAC @ CAR JAC
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SF @ CIN CIN
MIA @ CLE MIA
NE @ BUF BUF
NYG @ PHI PHI
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PIT @ IND PIT
WAS @ DAL WAS

10384839
AMERICAN TIRE WRHSE
AK POST/COOPER
3 x 10.5

12384992
FAIRBANKS LIGHT OPERA
AK POST/HOW TO SUCCE
3 x 3.0

5-1 Cav Soldier returns to Fairbanks



Pfc. Nick Keene, a cavalry scout with 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division returned to Fairbanks Sept. 16 and was greeted by his unit family readiness group and Soldiers from his unit at the airport. Keene was injured Aug. 25, when his truck was hit in a rocket attack. "It was something (to find the people waiting to greet him)," said Keene. "I wasn't expecting it. I was actually surprised when Capt. Dallman was there. I just thought it would be one of the Rear D Soldiers when I got off the plane. It was a big shock. It is kind of bittersweet," he said. "It is good to be home, with my Family and stuff, but I miss my guys. I feel like a wife now, I worry about them." Keene's wife, Jenny was not on hand to greet him. She is expecting their first child in January and is visiting Family in the Lower 48. Keene is now there with her, recovering from his injuries. (Photo by Trish Muntean/Fort Wainwright PAO)

WATER: Arctic Wolves help Afghan village

Continued from page 6

The ISAF infantrymen and members of the FET said they plan to make routine visits to the district to ensure the system is still meeting the needs of the Banbalay residents.

Malik Abdul Ghafar and other village elders welcomed the 1-25th soldiers and the new addition of the filtration system.

During their visit with the local villagers, the FET took the time to talk to the women of the district to address any of their needs or concerns. During the impromptu meeting, the FET presented the Afghan women with Ramadan gifts.

"We were pleased that the people

of Banbalay village welcomed us, the water filtration system, and a wide variety of Ramadan gifts with gratitude and excitement," Smoak said.

Providing aid to the people of the Dand district has been a primary focus among the key leaders of the 1-5th since taking over responsibility for the area earlier this year.

Prior to the water filtration system, the ISAF team worked with District Gov. Nazik to provide more than 300 of the most severely poverty stricken locals with humanitarian aid. Each humanitarian aid package presented to the locals included two boxes of chai, a bag of sugar, rice, noodles and cooking oil.



Afghan locals from the Banbalay village in Kandahar, Afghanistan, test a new water filtration system presented to them by soldiers of 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, and 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. (Courtesy photo)

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