

# ALASKA POST

Home of the Arctic Warriors

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Fort Wainwright, Alaska

March 9, 2012

## Soldier named 2011 Army Band Junior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year

Trish Muntean, Fort Wainwright PAO

Sgt. Colin Lippy, 9th Army Band was chosen the 2011 Army Band Active Duty Junior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year above all command-nominated, active duty, junior NCOs in U.S. Army bands.

"It's exciting. I was grateful to have been nominated and now am grateful to have won the award," said Lippy, upon hearing the news.

"It's kind of out of the blue, unexpected, a nice surprise for the day," he said.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jeff Price, commander of the 9th Army Band, said that Lippy was chosen above all other active duty corporals thru staff sergeants in the Army band for this honor.

"Sgt Lippy is one of the brightest noncommissioned officers in the Army and is the model for what this award exemplifies," said Price.

Lippy has been in the Army almost five years and was promoted to sergeant three years ago. He has two degrees in music, both a bachelor's and a master's degree in saxophone performance. He had started work on a doctorate, but after doing some teaching (middle school band and choir) he decided he didn't want to be a professor after all and joined the Army.

In addition to being a talented musician that can play several instruments (saxophone and oboe being the primary) he is also the NCOIC of the audio production shop and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear program.

Spc. Spencer Mahoney also works in the audio production shop. "He is among the finest NCOs I have ever worked with," Mahoney said. "He takes his job very seriously and he is an expert in everything he does."

"He is an all around Soldier," Sgt. 1st Class Heather Harmon said. "He is at the top of the heap. He is far and above what you would expect



Sgt. Colin Lippy, 9th Army Band has been named the 2011 Army Band Junior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Lippy was chosen above all other active junior NCOs in the Army band for this honor. His commander, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jeff Price said "Sgt Lippy is one of the brightest noncommissioned officers in the Army and is the model for what this award exemplifies." (Photo by Trish Muntean/Fort Wainwright PAO)

an E-5 in the Army to be. Grade A material in everything he's expected to do and some things you wouldn't expect him to do."

If you ask him to do something, he just looks at it for a minute and just does it. Even things he isn't asked to do, Harmon said.

"He is way ahead of the speed curve of somebody who has only been in the Army as long as he has," she said.

"I am incredibly pleased that we could put him in for the award."

"He's a good Soldier," said 1st Sgt. Miles Griffith. "Not just MOS qualified, but Army qualified. PT, everything."

Lippy is actively involved in the Fairbanks community in his off time. He was recently selected to play with the touring show of the Manheim Steamrollers while they were in Alaska during the Christmas season.

"That was a great gig," he said. "I've listened to the Mannheim Steamrollers most of my life growing up, so the opportunity to play with them for Christmas was really cool."

At this point he plans on making the military a career, doing 20 years or maybe more. He has given some thought to perhaps becoming a warrant officer and band commander someday, but hasn't made any definite decisions.

"I don't know, we will see where that goes. There are a lot of irons in the fire right now," he said. "I try to keep my options open and that keeps doors open too."

"The unit is extremely fortunate to capitalize on the competence and diversity that Sgt. Lippy's skill set affords us," said Price. "He is a consummate professional, who consistently handles military and musical situations with passion and aplomb. His future in the Army is unlimited."

## Support Battalion provides critical lifeline to combat units

Sgt. Thomas Duval, 1-25th SBCT PAO

On an isolated Forward Operating Base in the middle of Kandahar province, Afghanistan, a Soldier is printing important documents, running down the hall of the plywood tactical operations center and briefing his command group on an intelligence breakthrough.

A few miles away, patrolling for 12 straight hours, a combat medic is pushing through sleep deprivation to reach a battle buddy in need.

These two scenarios, although highlighting different aspects of war, may seem in many ways disconnected. But they're not.

Behind each seamlessly unimportant stack of paper and every medical Soldier throughout the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division lays the 25th Brigade Support Battalion.

See **LIFELINE** on page 5

## Fort Wainwright Retiree Appreciation Day: Serving those who served

Allen Shaw, Fort Wainwright PAO

The Retirement Services Office of Fort Wainwright hosts the annual Retiree Appreciation Day at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This event is an opportunity to recognize and honor military retirees of all branches of the armed forces who have served their country honorably, in peace and in war. Retirees and other veterans visiting the event can start off with a free cholesterol

screening from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Fasting before the screening is required.

Carlos Garcia, Retirement Services Officer said Interior Alaska is home to more than 2,300 military retirees. These veterans served in major conflicts like World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the first Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

See **SERVED** on page 2

### EXTENDED WEEKEND WEATHER



Friday

Mostly cloudy, chance of snow. South winds 10 to 15 mph. Low -12 High 16



Saturday

Mostly cloudy, chance of snow. Light winds. Low -20 High 10



Sunday

Mostly cloudy Low -20 High -5



**Spring Forward**  
Sunday, at 2 a.m. clocks are turned forward 1 hour for Daylight Savings.

Aurora forecast is **HIGH ++ ACTIVITY** for Friday, **MODERATE** for Saturday

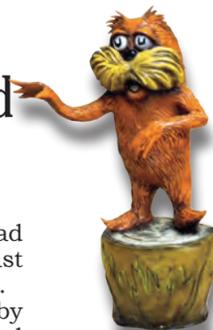
Forecasts courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Geophysical Institute at University of Alaska Fairbanks.

## The Lorax comes to Fort Wainwright as part of Read Across America Day

The Fort Wainwright Post Library's Read Across America event took place at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center, March 2.

Along with the reading of "The Lorax" by garrison command staff, this handcrafted statuette (right), created by artist Earl D. Boyce, veteran of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division was one of many prizes given out during the festivities.

See article on page 4



(Illustration by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

## SERVED: Fort Wainwright Retiree Appreciation Day

Continued from page 1

"This is an opportunity for all retirees in the area (all branches of the service) to get caught up on all the benefits, entitlements and find out about all the changes coming about in the retiree world," Garcia said. There will be representatives from Social Security, Veteran's Administration, VA Medical and more. Garcia said, "All Veterans, Family members, active duty, Guard, Reserve and survivors are also welcome to attend."

Opening remarks by Richard Mauer, deputy to the garrison commander, United States Army Garrison, Fort Wainwright, begin at 10 a.m., followed by guest speaker, retired Lt. Gen. Jack Klimp, United States Marine Corp and president of the National Association of Uniformed Services. The NAUS is a national military-related organization that represents a broad spectrum of members' interests in Washington. According to [www.naus.org](http://www.naus.org), they bring together the diverse concerns, needs and resources of all services, branches, grades and components, active duty, retired, National Guard, reserve, other veterans, spouses and survivors to preserve and protect promised and earned benefits, and ensure a strong national defense.

At the local level, the Northern Alaska Military Retiree Council serves as an administrative and information gathering resource. Joe Sheehan a retired United States Army lieutenant colonel and chairman of the chapter said, "The Council serves retirees and veterans throughout all Alaska. We have a wide email distribution network for keeping members up-to-date on policies, current legislative issues and information. We also provide feedback to commanders and have a direct link to the Army Chief of Staff." Sheehan encouraged everyone with a vested interest in the military to attend. "Although the event is called Retiree Appreciation Day, it is open to all those who are serving, those who served, no matter what rank or branch," he said, "It is also an event for Guard, reserve, Family members and survivors."

Besides having a one-stop information hub available, attendees can get visual acuity screening; basic dental screening; immunization services and find out about other medical programs. "This year there will also be a nutritionist to answer questions about a proper diet and someone from the pharmacy to answer questions about over-the-counter medications," Garcia said, "There will also be opportunities to win some great door prizes."

Retirees may also update ID cards from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and renew post vehicle registrations. Other agencies that will be there to provide information include AAFES, Commissary, Army Community Service, Army Career and Alumni Program, Airman and Family Readiness Center from Eielson Air Force Base and the Red Cross, among others.

Lunch will be served at the Dining Facility from noon to 1:15 p.m. Activities such as bowling and skeet shooting will be available in the afternoon.

All military retirees and their families, regardless of branch of service, are invited to attend. The event is open to anyone who is interested in what is happening in the military retiree community, and a special invitation is extended to those who are approaching retirement.

For more information on the event or the Northern Alaska Military Retiree Council call Carlos Garcia at 353-2099.

### Medical Department Activity - Alaska

Col. George Appenzeller, MEDDAC-AK commander

## Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1.7 million people suffer a traumatic brain injury each year. During the month of March, in recognition of Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month, Army Medicine is taking steps to raise awareness of TBI, a significant health issue which affects service members and veterans during times of both peace and war.

The high rate of TBI and blast-related concussion events resulting from current combat operations directly impacts the health and safety of individual service members and subsequently the level of unit readiness and troop retention.

The impacts of TBI are felt within each branch of the service and throughout both the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs health care systems.

Active duty and reserve service members are at increased risk for sustaining a TBI compared to their civilian peers. This is a result of several factors, including the specific demographics of the military; in general, young men between the ages of 18 to 24 are at greatest risk for TBI. Many operational and training activities which are routine in the military are physically demanding and even potentially dangerous. Military service members are increasingly deployed to areas where they are at risk for experiencing blast exposures from improvised

explosive devices, suicide bombers, land mines, mortar rounds, and rocket-propelled grenades. These and other combat related activities put our military service members at increased risk for sustaining a TBI.

Although recent attention has been intensively focused on combat-related TBI, it should be noted that TBI is not uncommon even in garrison and occurs during usual daily activities. For example, service members enjoy leisure activities that expose them to potential high-risk TBI incidents such as riding motorcycles, ATVs, snowmobiles, climbing mountains, or parachuting from planes for recreation. In addition, physical training is an integral part of the active duty service members' everyday life. These activities are expected for our service members and contribute to a positive quality of life, but these activities can also increase risk for TBI.

Look for weekly articles in the month of March which will delve deeper into issues of TBI in order to increase awareness of the unique issues which contribute to TBI in the military and what is being done to support the care and recovery of combat wounded troops here at Bassett's TBI Clinic.

If you or someone you care about is interested in evaluation of possible mild TBI, please call the Bassett Army Community Hospital's, Department of Behavioral Health at 361-6059.



## GI Jane: Getting past the wall

GI Jane, Alaska Post Contributor

for not doing all we set out to do. We can however, pick a goal or two that we can reasonably attain in the coming weeks and set our minds on finishing well with our revised plan.

When you get overwhelmed with your very long to-do list and you feel completely unmotivated to tackle it, try enlisting the help of friends.

My battle buddy and I are both PCSing this summer. Not only do we have redeployment on our minds, we also have much to do to prepare our Families for our moves. We have started texting each other at night with the three things we want to accomplish the following day. I can't tell you how many times I look back at the text just to see what three things I am supposed to be focusing on. The encouragement and accountability this provides has motivated me to get things done. I finally dropped off those bags of clothes the kids have outgrown, cleaned out my refrigerator and boxed up the last bit of Christmas decorations.

Spending too much time focusing on myself makes it hard to get past The wall. Volunteering helps me to focus on other people, keeping my mind off the slow ticking clock. There are many places within

our community that depend on volunteers. Your Soldier's unit, Armed Services YMCA, Red Cross, local schools and the Spouses Club are just a few. Investing in worthwhile projects and programs can give you satisfaction and help to keep you going.

Need a quick energy boost? Attending welcome home ceremonies to greet Soldiers and to celebrate with Families is a total energy booster for me. I love the excitement, the pure joy and electricity that fill the hangar while Families wait and when their Soldiers finally march in. The reality of my finish line is all the more real as I witness Soldiers returning home.

After we have finished the deployment marathon, we will enter the reintegration race. It is important to mentally understand that when our Soldiers return and the deployment is finally over,

there will still be challenges to work through. In these final weeks we need to take a good look at our expectations and adjust those that are unrealistic. In this final stretch we need to communicate with our husbands about what he thinks crossing the finish line of the deployment marathon will look like. After all, we may have been on different courses but he has been running this marathon as well.

So if you see me dragging or stumbling toward the finish line, please offer me an encouraging word. And I will do the same for you. We will be different people than when we started this race; hopefully stronger, more balanced and resilient. And like any good marathon runner we will use the coming months to rest, recover and reminisce over our accomplishment. See you at the finish line. I mean... the welcome home ceremony!

Complete exhaustion, fatigue, weariness. That is how many describe "hitting the wall" in a marathon running. I wouldn't know because I am not a runner of any distance, but I have spent the last 10 months "running" hard in a deployment marathon. I think I've hit The wall.

We are so close to the end I can hardly think about anything else. On the other hand, time seems to drag and the return of our Soldiers, the finish line, feels almost out of reach.

I've learned a few training tips from prior deployments and from other GI Jane friends that can help to get past The wall and to finish strong. We don't want to drag ourselves across the finish line. We really should want to finish strong. So how do we get from this side of The wall to the other side and into the arms of our Soldiers?

First, we need to celebrate the goals that we have already met. Now that we are 10 months into the 1st Stryker Brigade, 25th Infantry Division's deployment, we can't focus on all the things we didn't accomplish and punish ourselves

## ALASKA POST

Home of the Arctic Warriors

### EDITORIAL STAFF

**Fort Wainwright Garrison Commander**  
Col. Ronald M. Johnson

**U.S. Army Garrison Fort Wainwright PAO**  
Linda Douglass

**Command Information Chief**

Connie Storch

**Editor**

Brian Schlumbohm

**Staff writers**

Trish Muntean

Allen Shaw

**Contributors**

GI Jane, Alaska Post Contributor

Sgt. Thomas Duval, 1-25th SBCT PAO

Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead, U.S. Army Alaska PAO

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The ALASKA POST - Home of the Arctic Warriors

**SOLDIERS AGAINST  
DRUNK  
DRIVING**

**HAVE A PLAN, HAVE SOMEONE TO CALL**

**353-6610**

# USAF officials announce manpower force structure changes

Staff Report, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson PAO

Air Force officials released force structure changes Tuesday resulting in Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson having an approximate net increase of 125 personnel.

The plan is to move the F-16 Aggressor squadron at Eielson Air Force Base to JBER in Fiscal Year 2013, allowing the Air Force to achieve savings in base support at Eielson beginning in Fiscal Year 2015. Other changes included in the overall net numbers are the first and second round personnel cuts and the loss of the four C-130 aircraft

and the movement of the Air Force Band to other locations.

The fiscal 2013 President's Budget adjusts Air Force military end strength to 501,000, with net reductions of 3,900 Active Duty, 5,100 Air National Guard and 900 Air Force Reserve billets.

"Working with our Guard and Reserve leaders, we used a balanced approach to adjust our Total Force end strength while maintaining the ability to execute strategic guidance," Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz said. "Our Total Force programmed reductions follow

detailed assessments of future conflict scenarios and rotational requirements consistent with the new strategic guidance."

According to the Air Force Chief of Staff, the Air Force's strategy is to apply resources to the people, programs and systems that will best contribute to the new DoD strategic guidance.

The Air Force is also announcing manpower changes on unit manpower documents resulting from the previously announced force structure reduction of 227 aircraft as well

as additional adjustments not tied to aircraft. These changes primarily include the inactivation of a combat communications group and several air control squadrons, as well as right-sizing Air Force bands.

"We made a deliberate decision to avoid a 'hollow force' by prioritizing readiness over force structure," Schwartz said. "A smaller, ready force is preferable to a larger force that is ill-prepared because it lacks adequate resources."

See CHANGES on page 7



# Army Emergency Relief campaign begins

Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead, U.S. Army Alaska PAO

The 2012 Army Emergency Relief campaign kicked off March 1 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson with a briefing to AER representatives from U.S. Army Alaska.

AER is a private, nonprofit organization which provides emergency financial assistance to Soldiers (active and retired) and their families in time of distress.

The organization receives its funding from voluntary contributions from Soldiers, unsolicited contributions, repayments of loans, and income from investments. The AER campaign at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson runs until May 15.

Dennis Scott, a retired sergeant major and the assistant secretary general from AER headquarters in Alexandria, Va., gave unit reps an overview of the program and highlighted some recent changes and updates.

"We want to meet our two primary goals when it comes to AER. To inform the entire Army as to the function of AER and what it can offer," Scott said, "and to be a Soldier's first thought when he or she needs to consider any type of financial assistance."

Statistics have shown younger Soldiers unaware of the benefits of AER are much more likely to fall prey to unscrupulous lenders

in times of financial distress, according to Scott.

He also noted that AER has expanded the range of emergency situations for which it will provide assistance, including family member dental care, basic furniture needs, rental vehicles and replacement vehicles.

AER assistance is now available to medical retirees, and widows and orphans of Soldiers, according to Scott.

In addition to emergency loans, AER also provides educational assistance to family members, Scott said.

"In 2011, AER provided just over 1.6 million dollars in education assistance for the children of Soldiers and 1.1 million in education assistance to around 625 spouses, which averaged out to be about \$2,500 per spouse Armywide," Scott said.

Eligible recipients in Alaska received more than \$400,000 in AER assistance last year, according to Salafai Ieremia, AER officer for the JBER Army Support Activity.

"In order to maintain the level of assistance that we can provide, we really need every Soldier to be aware of what AER is, how helpful it can be, and to understand how important it is to donate if they can," Ieremia said.

Ieremia and Scott said they

hope to raise at least \$35,000 in AER donations at JBER by the campaign's end May 15.

U.S. Army Alaska Chief of Staff Col. William Miller commented on the benefits and importance of the AER program and urged unit representatives to inform their Soldiers about the program.

"The great thing about AER is we get every dime we put into

it spent toward us. We use it, not someone else," Miller said. "Help to let your younger Soldiers understand that this isn't about us helping the Army, this is really about us helping us."

For more information about AER, contact 1st Sgt. Tornald Hall at 353-7617 or see your unit AER representative or visit the website [www.aerhq.org](http://www.aerhq.org).

# The Lorax lectures Fort Wainwright during Read Across America Day

Trish Muntean, Fort Wainwright PAO



Joy Wohlman Boyce, librarian technician at the Fort Wainwright Library played host at the special reading event of Dr. Seuss' classic "The Lorax", read by Fort Wainwright garrison commander, command sgt. maj. and garrison chief of staff. (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

"It's a pleasure to get to do this," said Col. Ron Johnson, garrison commander about reading "The Lorax" to nearly 250 people on Dr. Seuss's birthday March 2, as part of the National Education Association Read Across America Day.

Having read Dr. Seuss to his children as they were growing up, he was pleased to have to the opportunity to enjoy it again. He was also happy for the opportunity to educate children about preserving the environment and recycling.

"Especially in Alaska," Johnson said. "Where you have a wonderful, natural, environment and you have to work to keep it that way."

Johnson was joined by guest readers garrison Command Sgt. Major Harry Jeffries and garrison chief of staff Lt. Col. Robert Eriksen.

Joy Wohlman Boyce, librarian technician was responsible for this event.

"The Lorax was a multifaceted project," she said. "The library and Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation support of the National Education Association's Read Across America - that was the primary goal.

Fostering a love of reading among children is a goal shared by the NEA and the library staff.

"However, since the chosen

book was "The Lorax", the theme morphed into environmentalism as well," said Wohlman Boyce. "The library is the perfect place to teach children - reduce, reuse, recycle." Why buy books, DVDs and video games and use more resources and



Garrison chief of staff, Col. Robert (Oncler) Eriksen and Col. Ron Johnson, garrison commander help garrison Command Sgt. Major Harry (The Lorax) Jeffries into his cap and mustache before the reading of "The Lorax" at the Post library's Read Across America event. (Courtesy)

spend more money when you can borrow? Why use more computers and waste energy when the Library has all these things to offer?" she said.

Wohlman Boyce said the turnout for the event was far beyond what she had expected or hoped for with 243 in attendance.

"We were so excited to see so many families at the event," she

said. "Preregistration was required so we knew approximately how many families would be there. However, the difference between seeing 243 people on paper and in person is astounding. I was very excited to see how many



families care about literacy and the environment."

"My only regret is, due to safety reasons, we were forced to turn away some families in the registration process," she said. "The ballroom was completely full. Perhaps next time we can get a stadium. As long as there is the interest in literacy, we will come up with new ways to make it fun and

available to our Fort Wainwright Families."

Staff Sgt. Joshua Kesler, 507th Signal Company, brought his children Jacob, and Cadence, to enjoy what he said was one of his daughter's favorite books, said that they attend the library's programs regularly.

Recycling is not a new concept for them, as it is a habit they picked up in Germany and just continued upon returning to the United States. Kesler said the book was a good introduction to resource conservation for families who are not already doing it.

Another highlight of the day was the awarding of prizes, which included gift certificates for movie tickets, putt-putt tickets, crocheted hats, like those worn by "The Lorax" during the reading and a one-of-a-kind piece of art handcrafted by artist Earl D. Boyce (Wohlman Boyce's spouse and veteran of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.)

Wohlman Boyce said it is meant to serve as a reminder of the lesson Eriksen read from the book: "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better, it's not."

The library's next big event will be Earth Day. The Lorax would be thrilled.



"It's a pleasure to get to do this," said Col. Ron Johnson, garrison commander about reading "The Lorax" to almost 250 people on Dr. Seuss' birthday March 2, as part of the National Education Association "Read Across America Day." Having read Dr. Seuss to his children as they were growing up, he was pleased to have to the opportunity to enjoy it again. Johnson was joined by guest readers garrison Command Sgt. Major Harry Jeffries and garrison chief of staff Robert Eriksen. (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

# LIFELINE: The Support Battalion

Continued from page 1

Tirelessly, working around the clock, the 25th BSB provides everything ranging from weekly supply convoys-dropping off mail and supplies to fill the local post exchanges- to the very medics treating, evacuating and saving the lives of their fellow Soldiers.

Altogether, the BSB is home to 49 different occupational specialties, which are spread out over four companies; Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Distribution Company, Forward Maintenance Company and the Brigade Support Medical Company.

"The Brigade Support Battalion [BSB] is very unique, to say the least. We have 49 enlisted military occupational specialties along with over 60 officer and warrant positions," said Lt. Col. John McMurray, 25th BSB commander.

"If everything is going well and all the battalions are able to receive the support they need, no one hears much about them."

To provide the support necessary for more than 4,000 Soldiers, each company has

specific tasks in which they have been extensively trained to execute.

For example, HHC Soldiers specialize in food service, transportation and maintenance while the distribution company specializes in delivering important supplies like fuel and potable water.

One of the most important assets to any brigade combat team, the Brigade Support Medical Company is tasked with providing continuous medical support to every unit operating in 'Task Force Arctic Wolves' area of operations.

With a team of slightly more than 70 Soldiers, the BSMC provides extensive care in a number of categories to include mental health, advanced trauma, X-ray and basic treatment.

Similar to fixing a patient's wound, the Forward Maintenance Company is responsible for servicing and repairing almost every piece of equipment fielded throughout the entire brigade, whether, it's fixing a set of night vision goggles or replacing the



Soldiers from Distribution Company, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division use a forklift to load supplies onto a truck in preparation for a convoy. Supply convoys are important to each Soldier as they deliver much needed supplies to each forward operating base, combat outpost and patrol base. (Courtesy photo)

engine in a Stryker vehicle.

Whether, it's providing some of life's basic necessities like potable water or providing the technical expertise to fix a multi-million dollar piece of equipment, the 'Opahey' Soldiers of the 25th BSB have proven themselves time and again.

When combined, the BSMC, FMC, DC and HHC provide an

important lifeline to each

Soldier throughout the brigade. Although the concept of the BSB's numerous capabilities may not be fully understood, even to many of the very Soldiers they support within 1-25th SBCT, the blood and sweat of their efforts touch each Stryker Soldier every day.

# USARAK deputy commander's career comes full

Staff Sgt. Trish McMurry, U.S. Army Alaska PAO

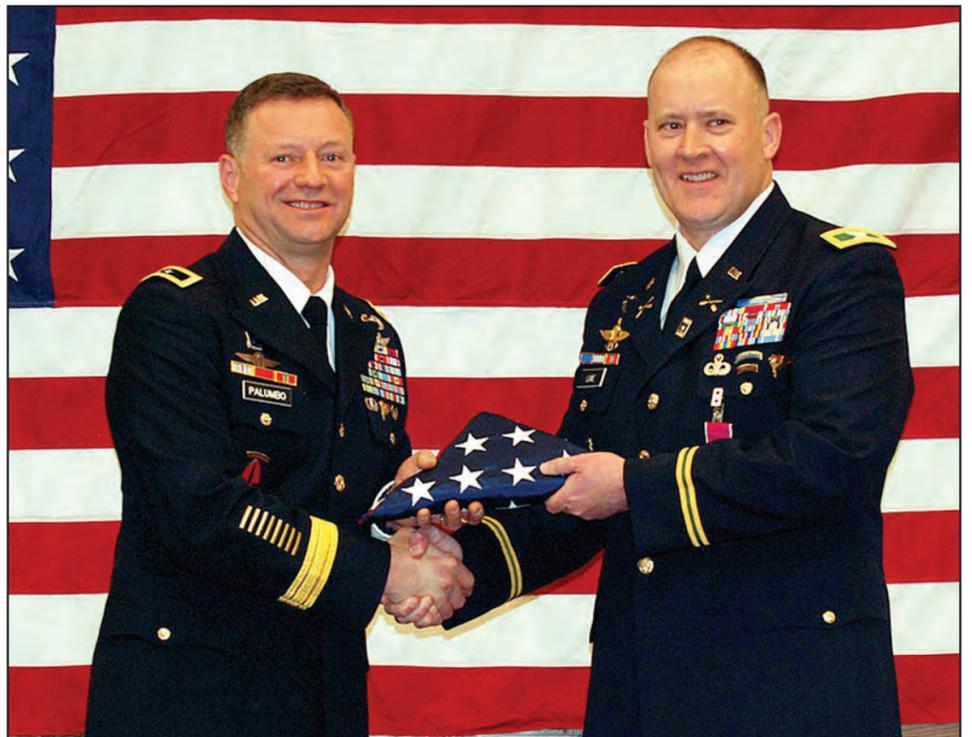
Friends, family, co-workers and members of Fort Wainwright's neighboring communities honored outgoing U.S. Army Alaska Deputy Commander, Col. Mark S. Lowe for his 30 years of Army service at a retirement ceremony here March 1.

Lowe began his career here more than 29 years ago, as a rifle platoon leader and mortar platoon leader in the 6th Battalion, 327th Infantry, 172nd Light Infantry Brigade in 1983. Most of Lowe's subsequent assignments were in special operations.

Retired Maj. Gen. Harley C. Davis, a long time mentor and friend to Lowe, flew in to attend Lowe's retirement ceremony and share a few stories about serving with him. Lowe's son, Air Force 2nd Lt. Matthew Lowe also attended.

Davis made a special point to refer to one of Lowe's early Special Forces assignments, serving in Cambodia as a United Nations military observer.

"In the [ceremony] program it talks about Cambodia and it just says Cambodia. I think I probably volunteered



Maj. Gen. Raymond P. Palumbo, Commander, U.S. Army Alaska presents outgoing USARAK Deputy Commander, Col. Mark S. Lowe, a U.S. flag that was flown over the Fort Wainwright garrison, Feb. 29, the day before his retirement ceremony. Lowe is retiring after three decades of service, mostly in special operations. Lowe's career, which began with his first operational assignment at Wainwright in 1983, has now come, full-circle. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Trish McMurry/ U.S. Army Alaska PAO)



Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Harley Davis, a lifelong mentor of Col. Mark Lowe and highly respected leader of Army special operations, spoke Thursday at Fort Wainwright's Last Frontier Community Activity Center, as he highlights moments of achievement from Lowe's 30-year career. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Trish McMurry/ U.S. Army Alaska PAO)

him for that job," Davis said with a grin. Davis said he needed someone who could be trusted to do the right thing, even when no one was watching. I knew that Mark would represent the Army and his country very well."

"You can trust that when Mark Lowe tells you something, it is fact," Davis said. "When he started making reports about weapons he had come across, some people started to question them. He was reporting tanks and a warehouse full of ammunition. Those of you that may know a little bit about Col. Lowe know, he's kind of into weapons and ammunition."

"Eventually, [the United Nations] did verify that [Lowe] could count mortars, claymores and all kind of foreign mines and demolitions," he said.

"And, he did not bring them all back with him," Davis joked.

U.S. Army Alaska Commander Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo shared a few words and said it was only fitting that Lowe finish his military career where he began it.

Palumbo presented Lowe with the Legion of Merit Medal, certificate of retirement, an Alaska state flag, a sabre and the Bronze Order of Saint Philip Neri Award, recognizing a lifetime of service to the U.S. Army Special Forces.

His awards, specialty tabs, and badges include the Expert Infantryman Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge, the Pathfinder Badge, the Ranger Tab, the Special Forces Tab and foreign jump wings from Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Great Britain, Australia and India.

**Friday - 9th**

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**COSMIC BOWLING**, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, Building 3702. Call 353-2654.

**GROUP CYCLING CLASS**, 6:30 a.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

**FUNCTIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING CLASS**, 4 to 5 p.m., Melaven Physical Fitness Center, Building 3452. Call Ben Ehlers at 353-9137.

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 6 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Cost is \$7. Call 353-7294.

**CHEERLEADING STORY HOUR AND CRAFTS**, 4 to 5 p.m., Library, Building 3700. Call 353-4137.

**EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM CRAFT NIGHT**, 6 to 7 p.m. Arts and Crafts Center, Building 3727. Open to participants in the **EFMP** ages 3 and older. Call 353-4243 to reserve a spot.

**Saturday - 10th**

**GROUP CYCLING CLASS**, 10 a.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**YOUTH SKI AND SNOWBOARD DAYS**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$20 hour for DoD cardholders, and \$30 for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**FAMILY DAY AT THE TUBE HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$20 per hour for Department of Defense cardholders, and \$30 per hour for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**COSMIC BOWLING**, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, Building 3702. Call 353-2654.

**THE WHITE MOUNTAINS SNOWMACHINE TRIP**, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Cost is \$50 per person. Age minimum is 18. If the temperature is 20 below or colder, the trip will be postponed to a later date. Call 361-6349 or 6350.

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 1 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Cost is \$7. Call 353-7294.

**TEXAS HOLD'EM**, 6 p.m., The Warrior Zone, Building 3205. Open to DoD cardholders ages 18 and older. Call 353-1087.

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

**KIDS CRAFTING: CERAMIC POTS**, 10:30 a.m. - noon, Arts and Crafts Center, Building 3727. Ages 4-7. Cost is \$5 and includes all materials. Call 353-7520.

**Sunday - 11th**

**FORT WAINWRIGHT GOSPEL SERVICES**, 9:45 a.m., Sunday school, 11 a.m., Worship service, Bassett Army Community Hospital, 3rd Floor conference room, Building 4076.

**PROTESTANT SERVICES**, 10 a.m., Sunday school, 11 a.m., Sunday Protestant worship, Northern Lights Chapel, Building 3430.

**CATHOLIC SERVICES**, 11 a.m., Catholic Mass, Southern Lights Chapel, Building 4107.

**YOUTH SKI AND SNOWBOARD DAYS**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$115 for DoD cardholders, and \$125 for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**FAMILY DAY AT THE TUBE HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$20 per hour for DoD cardholders, and \$30 per hour for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**SKEET**, 1 to 5 p.m., Fischer Skeet Range, Building 1172. Stop by to practice your shooting skills. Call 353-7869.

**Monday - 12th**

**GROUP CYCLING CLASS**, noon, Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**YOUTH SKI AND SNOWBOARD DAYS**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$115 for DoD cardholders, and \$125 for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**STUDENT DISCOUNT DAY**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Show student id to receive discount. Call 353-9131.

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 6 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Cost is \$7. Call 353-7294.

**NUTRITION AND FITNESS ROMP AND STOMP PLAYGROUP**, 9:30 to 11 a.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call to reserve transportation from the post hotel. This activity is a partnership with Army Community Service and Child, Youth and School Services. Call 353-7713.

**EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM SIP and SOCIAL**, 1 to 2 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Open to participants in the Exceptional Family Member Program. Call 353-4243.

**CHILD ASSESSMENT**, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-7372.

**Tuesday - 13th**

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**GROUP CYCLING CLASS**, 6:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

**HOOR OF POWER GROUP STRENGTH CLASS**, noon, Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223

**FUNCTIONAL STRENGTH and CONDITIONING CLASS**, 4 to 5 p.m., Melaven Physical Fitness Center, Building 3452. Call Ben Ehlers at 353-9137.

**HOME ALONE**, 6 to 8 p.m., Youth Center, Building 4109. Call 353-7713.

**FORT WAINWRIGHT GOSPEL SERVICES BIBLE STUDY**, 6:30 p.m., Bassett Army Community Hospital, Medical Library, Building 4076. For more information email [ac2.claxton@us.army.mil](mailto:ac2.claxton@us.army.mil).

**Wednesday - 14th**

**GROUP CYCLING CLASS**, noon, Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**OPEN MIC NIGHT**, 4 to 7:30 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Singing, poetry and musicians will perform. Call 353-9131.

**FAMILY DAY AT THE TUBE HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$20 per hour for DoD cardholders, and \$125 for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**BOOT CAMP**, 5 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223

**WILD WING WEDNESDAYS**, 5 to 7 p.m., Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, Building 3702. Call 353-2654.

**BABYSITTERS COURSE**, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Youth Center, Building 4109. Call 353-7713.

**NEWCOMERS ORIENTATION**, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-4227.

**Thursday - 15th**

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**GROUP CYCLING CLASS**, 6:30 a.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

**PROTESTANT WOMEN OF THE CHAPEL**, 9:30 a.m., Northern Lights Chapel, Building 3430. Childcare provided, for more information email [wainwright@pwoc.org](mailto:wainwright@pwoc.org).

**HOOR OF POWER GROUP STRENGTH CLASS**, noon, Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223

**FUNCTIONAL STRENGTH and CONDITIONING CLASS**, 4 to 5 p.m., Melaven Physical Fitness Center, Building 3452. Call Ben Ehlers at 353-9137.

**Thursday - 15th (continued)**

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 6 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Cost is \$7. Call 353-7294.

**FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT**, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. (dependent on movie length), Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. All movies rated G or PG. Call 353-7755.

**NUTRITION AND FITNESS ROMP AND STOMP PLAYGROUP**, 9:30 to 11 a.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call to reserve transportation from the post hotel. This activity is a partnership with Army Community Service and Child, Youth and School Services. Call 353-7713.

**Friday - 16th**

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**YOUTH SKI AND SNOWBOARD DAYS**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$115 for DoD cardholders, and \$125 for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**80's PARTY**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Dress in 80's clothes, ongoing mini games, prizes, and more! Call 353-9131.

**COSMIC BOWLING**, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, Building 3702. Call 353-2654.

**WILDLIFE WEEK STORY HOUR AND CRAFTS**, 4 to 5 p.m., Post Library, Building 3700. Call 353-4137.

**Saturday -17th**

**GROUP CYCLING CLASS**, 10 a.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Call 353-7223.

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**YOUTH SKI AND SNOWBOARD DAYS**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$115 for DoD cardholders, and \$125 for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**FAMILY DAY AT THE TUBE HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$20 per hour for DoD cardholders, and \$30 per hour for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**COSMIC BOWLING**, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., Nugget Lanes Bowling Center, Building 3702. Call 353-2654.

**ST PADDY'S DAY 2-HOUR CYCLING CLASS**, 10 a.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Limited to 28 participants, registration suggested. Call 353-7223.

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 1 p.m., Physical Fitness Center, Building 3709. Cost is \$7. Call 353-7294.

**CHILI COOK-OFF**, 1 to 3 p.m., Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044. Call 353-7755. (ages 4-12 with parent).

**CUDDLE CURE CLASS**, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Child Development Center I, Building 4024. Call 353-7713.

**KIDS CRAFTING: CERAMIC POTS**, 10:30 a.m. to noon, Arts and Crafts Center, Building 3727. Ages 8 to 11. Cost is \$5 and includes all materials. Call 353-7520.

**Sunday - 18th**

**FORT WAINWRIGHT GOSPEL SERVICES**, 9:45 a.m., Sunday school, 11 a.m., Worship service, Bassett Army Community Hospital, 3rd Floor conference room, Building 4076.

**PROTESTANT SERVICES**, 10 a.m., Sunday school, 11 a.m., Sunday Protestant worship, Northern Lights Chapel, Building 3430.

**CATHOLIC SERVICES**, 11 a.m., Catholic Mass, Southern Lights Chapel, Building 4107.

**SPRING BREAK AT BIRCH HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Call 353-9131.

**YOUTH SKI AND SNOWBOARD DAYS**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$115 for DoD cardholders, and \$125 for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**FAMILY DAY AT THE TUBE HILL**, noon to 8 p.m., Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area, Building 1172. Cost is \$20 per hour for DoD cardholders, and \$30 per hour for non DoD cardholders. Registration is open through day of event. Call 353-9131.

**SKEET**, 1 to 5 p.m., Fischer Skeet Range, Building 1172. Stop by to practice your shooting skills. Call 353-7869.

**SOLDIERS  
AGAINST  
DRUNK  
DRIVING**  
HAVE A PLAN  
HAVE SOMEONE TO  
CALL  
**353-6610**

## RUN FOR FUN

A Shake Your Shamrock 5K run sponsored by 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Regiment is set for March 17. Soldiers, Families and leashed pets are welcome to participate. Strollers are OK and costumes are encouraged.

Register online at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com) or drop off forms at either Beaver Sports on College Road or at 3-21st battalion headquarters, Building 3211 Santiago Avenue. Registration is also available before 9 a.m. on race day. Cost: Kids 5 and younger free; children 6 and older and adults are \$20. Runners must be registered by 9 a.m. race day.

The race starts March 17 at 10 a.m. at 3-21st battalion headquarters. Bib pickup is available from 3 to 7 p.m. March 16 at headquarters or no later than 9 a.m. race day. A heated indoor pre- and post-race meeting area; hot and cold beverages and post-race snacks will be provided for race participants. The fire department will host their bounce house.

## PRE-RETIREMENT BRIEFING

Summary of retirement benefits for those who are one to two years from retirement. Offered once monthly and presented by Carlos Garcia, retirement services officer. Call 353-2099, to schedule Survivor Benefit Plan or SBP counseling and to register for the pre-retirement briefing.

## ARMY DISASTER SYSTEM

The Army Disaster Personnel Accountability and Assessment System (ADPAAS) is the Army's personnel accountability tool used in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. This web-based system is found at <https://adpaas.army.mil/> to account for Active Duty, Army Reserve, Army National Guard, DoD Civilians, NAF employees, overseas DOD contractors (to include Hawaii and Alaska) and family members.

## FOR YOUR HEALTH CLASSES

Arctic Health Link offers monthly classes on diabetes, cholesterol, hypertension and tobacco cessation. For more information or to sign up for a class, call 361-4148.

## ALASKA POST SUBMISSIONS

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.

## REUNION AND REINTEGRATION

### WEDNESDAY WORKSHOPS

Wednesday - Homecoming and Reunion  
This presentation addresses concerns and guides participants through a proactive approach to encourage a positive reintegration.

March 21 - Reintegration  
This presentation discusses the process and challenges of reintegration and offers tools and coping strategies for a successful journey.

March 28 - Welcome Home!  
Reconnecting with your Child  
This presentation will walk through potential issues the returning parent will face as a result and tips for easing the situation and making homecoming an enjoyable and healthy transition for the whole family.

All Reunion and Reintegration workshops take place from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Last Frontier Community Activity Center, Building 1044 Apple Street. For more information, call the Mobilization and Deployment Manager at 353-4332 or drop by Army Community Service.

## SOLDIERS AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING

The purpose of the Soldiers Against Drunk Driving program is to prevent Soldiers from drinking and driving. If a Soldier has had at least two drinks, they run the risk of getting a DUI and should call a friend, a taxi or SADD volunteer to drive them home. Soldiers can call SADD at 353-6610. Pick-up hours are 11:30 p.m. to 3:30 a.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and training holidays. Volunteers in the SADD program can be Soldiers, DoD cardholders or spouses. Civilian attire is authorized for Soldiers during volunteer times and a Transportation Motor Pool vehicle is available. Soldiers participating in the program qualify for day passes after accumulating volunteer hours. A three day pass for 50 hours, a four-day pass after 80 hours and a four day pass plus eligibility to be awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, worth 10 points towards promotion which helps with staff sgt. and Sgt. 1st Class selection after completing 150 hours of volunteer service. To volunteer call, (573) 680-6085 or (805) 878-4971.

## SPONSORSHIP TRAINING

Remember what it was like when you moved for the very first time? Remember all the questions you had and the answers you didn't get? Be a sponsor and help another Family with relocating to Alaska. Classes are offered through unit requests. For more information call: 353-4227 or 353-7908.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

The deadline for Fort Wainwright Community Spouses' Club scholarship applications is approaching. One way the CSC helps support our local Army Families is through its charitable scholarship program. Award recipients must be accepted to an accredited institution for the upcoming school year (2012-2013) and are selected by a blind review process in the following four categories: high school student jointly enrolled in college courses, graduating high school senior, full-time college student and adult continuing education.

Applicants may download an application from: [www.wainwrightcsc.org](http://www.wainwrightcsc.org) or pick up a paper copy at the Fort Wainwright Education Center. Applications must be postmarked by Wednesday. For more information, contact [scholarship@wainwrightcsc.org](mailto:scholarship@wainwrightcsc.org).

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Every Friday of Lent, March 9 through 30, 7 p.m. at the Southern Lights Chapel, Building 4107. Service is followed by a meatless, meager meal of soup and bread. Please bring some to share.

## NATIONAL PRAYER LUNCHEON

At the Last Frontier Community Activity Center will be the location of The 2012 National Prayer Luncheon is set for March 28 at 11:30 a.m. The guest speaker is U.S. Army Alaska Command Chaplain Col. Richard Quinn.

The luncheon is free to meal card holders and \$4.25 for those who don't have a meal card. Exact change is appreciated. While walk-ins are welcome, reservations are preferred.

For more information call 353-9825.

## CHAPEL EVENTS

Fort Wainwright Community of Faith has released its 2012 Lent and Easter event schedule.

Every Friday during Lent (March 9, 16, 23 and 30) The Stations of the Cross will be observed at 7 p.m. at the Southern Lights Chapel. This will be followed by a meatless, meager meal.

An altar to St. Joseph is filled with delectable food to share with the community. This event is open to the community and is at 6 p.m., March 19 at the Southern Lights Chapel.

On April 1 the Youth of the Chapel Concert Series will host a one of a kind worship experience at 5 p.m. All are welcome for the last concert of the year.

Several services are scheduled for Easter Weekend.

A Holy Thursday Service followed by 12 hours of adoration will begin at 6 p.m., April 5 at the Southern Lights Chapel.

Catholic Good Friday Service is planned at the Southern Lights Chapel for April 6 at 6 p.m.

Southern Lights Chapel will have an Easter Vigil beginning at sundown April 7.

Birch Hill will be the location of the Easter Sunrise Service. This ecumenical worship service will be from 6 to 8:30 a.m.

All worship services will be held at their normal times of 11 a.m.

# CHANGES: F-16s to leave Eielson

Continued from page 3

Achieving the right Active and Reserve component manpower balance became a priority under the new strategic guidelines for the Air Force's future. Since then, the governors have been given an opportunity to provide input to the plan as Reserve component force structure reductions directly or indirectly impact all 54 states and territories.

"Our collaborative process with the Guard and Reserve yields a force with the most effective posture for surge capability and steady-state operational employment," the general said. "Achieving the right active and reserve forces mix is critical for meeting our forward presence, rapid response, and high rotational demands with a smaller force."

"The Air National Guard will also internally realign its

remaining manpower at units across the United States to properly source emerging force structure requirements and bolster readiness," explained Brig. Gen. Brian Neal, Air National Guard Readiness Center commander. "We will also repurpose manpower positions at Combat Readiness Training Centers, command and control units and flying squadrons."

The realignment of military positions will improve our combat capability and ensure we are able to maintain our rapid response requirements as defined in Titles 10 and 32," Neal said. "Although we will retain fewer units available to deploy, we will maintain overall capacity and sustain command and control structure."

"To prepare for the FY13 end strength reductions, the Air Force is evaluating the entire suite of currently authorized

force management programs to determine which ones will best size and shape the force to support force structure changes," explained William Booth, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Force Management Integration. "We plan to announce additional FY12 programs for the active component in the coming weeks, but neither the Air National Guard nor Air Force Reserve currently has force management programs scheduled for FY12 implementation."

Booth said all components are exploring force management options for fiscal 2013.

"As the Air Force takes steps to reduce our end strength, we will offer support programs to help separating Airmen translate their military skills into the private sector and facilitate the transition in a way that capitalizes on the tremendous

experience in technical fields and leadership that they develop while serving," Booth said.

Schwartz emphasized the tough decisions required in the fiscal 2013 President's Budget request.

"In this economy we had to make difficult choices to align with the new strategic guidance and with the cuts required by the Budget Control Act over the next 10 years," Schwartz said. "Finding the proper balance between force structure, readiness, activity levels and modernization was essential."

The Air Force determined the best course of action is to trade force size for quality.

"We will become smaller in order to preserve a high-quality and ready force, one that will continue to modernize and grow more capable in the future," Schwartz said.

# Spring break in the Interior: Springtime did not get the memo

Allen Shaw, Fort Wainwright PAO

Spring break for the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District begins Monday, but it looks like it's just going to be a break. I don't think spring got the memo. Where in the heck is the spring weather?

The weather wizard himself, Roy Metcalf, chief forecaster, Detachment 3, 1st Weather Squadron, provides some insight for Alaska Post readers. Before he got down to business with the crystal ball, chicken feet and smoldering sage, he offered a breakdown of weather activity for the week.

The snow began Monday, with a total of 1.7-inches falling during the evening. Followed by 6.9-inches Tuesday, another 2.5-inches Wednesday (at press time), with flurries continuing.

Although nearly seven inches of snow accumulated Tuesday, it was far short of the record snowfall for March 6 set in 1921 when 13-inches of the white stuff hit the ground according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association.

Some higher elevations around Fairbanks had significantly more snowfall. Keystone Ridge on Murphy Dome observed a storm total of 23.5-inches.

The normal snowfall for the

entire month of March is only 4.9-inches and so far this month 12-inches of snow have been reported at the Fairbanks airport. The total of 54.7-inches is only 2.9-inches below normal. We may very well make that.

Although it is an extremely busy time, the Great Metcalf unveiled the crystal ball of weather and translated the message from weather goddess Meteora.

He said, "All of March will continue to be cold with temperatures below normal. Snow will continue through the month, but not quite as much as the current storm. This one was very unusual for the amount of snow we received but La Nina is famous for lots of snow."

The La Nina is characterized by strong cooling of the ocean waters

in the central Pacific Ocean. This cooling alters the formation of regional storms, atmospheric circulation and atmospheric water vapor around the world.

While the forecast for the next few weeks looks for continued cold and snow, the future looks bright.

"The good news is," Metcalf said, "we'll have 13-and-a-half hours of sunlight by the end of the month and La Nina is weakening, so gradual warming will be normal."

He continued gazing into future and brought forth more good news. "April, if it follows the previous months of the 2011-2012 winter should rebound and be warmer than normal." Meteora is hesitant though, said Metcalf, "Nobody is saying for sure. We don't want to see a rapid melt of

all this snow, but a nice gradual warm up (to gradually take it all away)."

Looking at temperature swings for April 2011, temperatures ranged from 25-below to 55-above zero. The final now occurred April 8, 2011.

As his eyes grew tired, the Weather Wizard looked hard and deep into the crystal ball, which doubled for a snow-globe earlier in the week, and said, "The long-range models indicate an average April, nothing spectacular. With all the sunshine we'll be getting, we can hope for a nice slow melt."

As of Sunday at 2 a.m. we will once again ourselves with saving daylight. Remember to set your clocks ahead an hour before bed Saturday so we can begin to spring forward toward warmer days.



Department of Transportation road crews were busy plowing off the Richardson Highway responding to several inches of snow which had fallen the previous night and into the morning, Tuesday. With no let up in sight, most cautious drivers made their way to and from work safely. (Photo by Brian Schlumbohm/Fort Wainwright PAO)

## Earth Day 2012: If not you, who? If not now, when?

Allen Shaw, Fort Wainwright PAO

Members of the community will come together April 20 at the Physical Fitness Center on post to celebrate sustainability and highlight the partnerships forged between civilians and the military to reduce the environmental impact on the planet. Earth Day 2012, encourages people of all nationalities and backgrounds to

stand united for a sustainable future and calls upon individuals, organizations and governments to do their part.

The United States Army Garrison Fort Wainwright and post housing partner, North Haven Communities are focusing attention on a day designed to educate and create awareness, and demonstrate an appreciation for the Earth's environment. Andy McDonough, plans specialist, Plans, Analysis and Integration Office and event chairman said there will be exhibits and panel discussions intended to inspire and promote sustainability in all aspects, not just environmental. Attention will also be given to social, fiscal, economic and spiritual sustainability. "The hope for the 2012 open house is to build upon the great foundation of last year's event," McDonough said, "We want to give the community an opportunity to find out more about what we do (on Fort Wainwright) to support sustainability." Community members are encouraged to

make individual commitments to contribute. McDonough said, "A symbolic commitment tree was used to capture each attendee's Earth Day pledge for 2011. Each person wrote on a leaf what they were going to do throughout the year to promote Earth Day and sustainability. The leaves were attached to the tree to show their commitment." A new tree will be donated for this year's event, last year's leaves will be recycled and attached, and new leaves will be added.

As part of the 42nd Annual Earth Day event everyone will be given an opportunity to reassert the commitment to environmental sustainability and energy security critical to protecting the earth, protecting lives and supporting mission requirements.

Military, civilians and contractors, Family members and the Fairbanks community are encouraged to join in the Earth Day open house 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. All open house activities and

refreshments are free of charge.

During the open house visitors will be able to drop off recyclable materials such as phonebooks, electronics, and other items; view demonstrations; collect information and share earth-friendly ideas with local area experts. There will be interactive displays with natural resources and archeological activities and a coloring contest for children.

Fort Wainwright's open house will feature on- and off-post subject matter experts from local government and industry, reflecting the mutually beneficial partnerships that have formed between Army garrison personnel and the Directorate of Public Works which encompasses utilities, housing, environmental, natural and cultural resources and more.

Partners in Fort Wainwright's sustainment programs will have representatives, booths or information tables at the open house. The exhibitors will offer real solutions and resources for individuals, units and organizations to make a difference at home, school or on the job.

For more information about Earth Day activities and sustainability, call Andy McDonough at 353-9746.



(Illustration by Allen Shaw/Fort Wainwright PAO)