

# Army Corps of Engineers requires face masks at all recreation projects

Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

As we work to slow the spread of COVID-19, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reminds all visitors, volunteers and employees that a face mask is required in all USACE buildings and facilities. Masks must also be worn outdoors on USACE-managed lands and recreation areas if physical distancing cannot be met, such as when hiking on trails or visiting sites that may be popular or crowded.

Visitors actively engaged in water-related activities with a clear and immediate risk of masks becoming wet may temporarily forgo wearing masks. These activities may include but are not limited to swimming, waterskiing, riding on personal watercraft, kayaking and other boating related activities that present a clear and immediate risk to the mask becoming wet. However, physical distancing must always be maintained whenever possible.

This requirement complies with President Biden's Executive Order



Graphic depicting COVID19 considerations when visiting a Corps Recreational Project. (Headquarters, u.s. Army Corps of Engineers)

on Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing, issued Jan. 20, as well as guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

USACE continues to evaluate facility capacity limits and implement measures to adjust the density

of visitors in buildings, recreation areas, and other areas prone to crowding. Areas where crowding impedes physical distancing will be evaluated for closure or modification of operating procedures to reduce impacts.

USACE will continue to leverage social media and

local media to inform the public of mask and physical distancing requirements, and to inform the public when areas have reached capacity to reduce overcrowding. We ask visitors to assist in our efforts by avoiding crowded areas and wearing masks. Park rangers are available

to provide information, protect visitors and park resources, and to encourage compliance with this requirement.

"Protecting the health and safety of our visitors and workforce are our top priorities," said Thomas Smith, USACE Chief of Operations and Regulatory Division. "We must do all we can to ensure the health and safety of our workforce, our families, and our communities."

For information on the current status of USACE recreation areas, we ask that you contact the USACE lake or river project before your visit. A complete list of recreation areas is available at [www.CorpsLakes.us](http://www.CorpsLakes.us).

USACE is one of the nation's leading federal providers of outdoor and water-based recreation, hosting millions of visits annually to its more than 400 lake and river projects. It's estimated that 90 percent of the USACE-operated recreation areas are within 50 miles of metropolitan areas, offering diverse outdoor activities for all ages close to home.

## How are you protecting your heart?

Michelle Thum

According to studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. About one in four deaths can be attributed to heart disease.

"Women and men experience heart attacks differently," said Lt. Col. Renee Howell, Army Public Health Nursing Regional Consultant at Public Health Command Europe. "When thinking of a heart attack, chest pain and shortness of breath come to mind but there are additional signs you need to be aware of."

Men commonly complain about a discomfort or tingling in arms, back, neck, shoulder or jaw. Women, however, tend to exhibit additional symptoms such as nausea or vomiting, unusual tiredness, cold sweat, sudden dizziness and heartburn-like feeling.

"You can greatly reduce your risk for heart disease through lifestyle changes and exercise," said Howell. "Thirty minutes a day, six days a week of aerobic activity with strength training can reduce your risk immensely."

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, fitness centers across Europe limited their services or closed entirely, making scheduled



Cardiovascular disease is the number 1 health threat to all American adults. Talk to your provider today about your individual risks. (Rebecca Westfall)

exercising a bit more challenging.

"Try to use your car less and walk to places that are reachable by foot. Maybe go for a bike ride or take a hike to stay active," explains Howell. "Your routine of exercising at the gym may need some modification, but it's still doable."

Small changes in your day-to-day routine can become healthy habits. Regular physical activity, picking healthy foods and drinks such as fresh fruits and vegetables and fewer processed foods can help prevent heart disease. PHCE officials also recommend limiting alcohol intake and

not smoking. Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease.

According to Howell it is equally important to know your numbers. "Unlike your family history, ethnicity and gender - which cannot be changed - these factors can be altered by the choices you make every day."

"If your numbers are higher, this is not permanent. You can change your health, choose a healthy lifestyle," said Howell.

There are three measurements that are crucial indicators of your overall health and

related to risk for heart attack and stroke.

1. Blood Pressure: Your healthy target: 120/80 mm Hg or less

If it's too high, your heart must work harder. Over time, high blood pressure can cause the heart to enlarge or weaken. This can lead to heart failure. High blood pressure can also narrow your arteries, which disrupts proper blood flow to your heart or brain and can trigger a heart attack or stroke.

2. Blood Cholesterol: Your healthy target: Total blood cholesterol lower than 200 mg/dL

See HEART on page 4



## Keep the Army ready: Report crime, suspicious activity

U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly referred to as CID, is asking the Army community and American public to help the Army maintain its readiness by reporting any and all criminal or suspicious activity.

"It is critical for people to say something when they see something and it literally can mean the difference between someone receiving the justice they deserve or victimizing another innocent person or our Army," said Christopher Grey, spokesman for CID.

CID is responsible for conducting felony criminal investigations in which the Army is, or may be, a party of interest. The digital crime tips submission system allows users the ability to easily and anonymously submit information online. Utilizing the P3 Crime Tips, a nationwide platform used by crime stopper programs, schools, law enforcement entities, and a various federal agencies, CID is able to vet crime leads from incoming tips.

The program allows a person to submit crime solving assistance to CID without being directly involved in the investigation process and eliminates fear of retaliation.

Whenever a person submits a tip online, the completed form

See REPORT on page 4

### WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Chance of snow. High: 18F.

Saturday



Snow. High: 18F.

Sunday



Chance of snow. High: 4F.

### IN BRIEF

While growing up in rural Iowa and Kentucky, Phillip Kennedy Johnson collected boxes of used comics.

The stories became an escape that took Johnson to places beyond his small town. As a child, he pored over the worn pages in his bedroom reading about Superman as he defended Metropolis and Earth from Lex Luthor and other threats to mankind.

Read more on page 5



# Nutrition Corner

Consuming the proper nutrients at the proper time can make a big difference for those with goals to improve their physical performance and/or fuel their workouts properly. A special consideration to when and what you eat can pay off.

For those trying to improve their physical performance in areas such as speed, strength and endurance, the nutrients you consume makes a big difference. Remember you cannot put a Band-Aid or “quick fix” on a bad diet but this is especially true if you are an athlete or physically active in general.

Focus on consuming a healthy diet most of the time - eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day, choose lean proteins, whole grains at least half

the time, and switch to low fat dairy.

For protein, distribute it evenly throughout the day. Instead of eating a mostly carbohydrate breakfast, like a bowl of cereal, and then a large portion of meat for dinner, try spreading out protein consumption and have some at each meal. It is better to eat consistent amounts of protein throughout the day than to consume a large portion once or twice per day.

For pre-workout fueling, focus on a meal or snack, depending on what time you work out, that provides carbohydrates, is relatively low in fiber and fat, and moderate in protein. The fat and fiber will slow gastric emptying and increase the possibility of having a stomachache during your workout. A small bowl of cereal or piece of

fruit about 45 minutes before your workout are good choices for a pre-workout snack.

During your workout, focus on staying hydrated. For physical activity that lasts less than an hour, water alone is sufficient for those who normally follow a balanced diet. For intense exercise lasting longer than 60 minutes, rehydrate with a sports beverage or product that contains fluid, carbohydrates and electrolytes.

For post workout muscle recovery, and to replace glycogen (storage form of glucose in muscles and the liver) stores, consume a meal or snack that contains carbohydrate and protein. This can be a nice balanced meal using the plate method which is appropriate for workouts right before mealtime.

For workouts not close to a

mealtime, a post workout snack can be as simple as a glass of low fat chocolate milk. If you are interested in individualized guidance on how to tailor your diet to maximize your physical performance, make an appointment with one of the registered dietitians at Bassett Army Community Hospital.

**Featured Recipe:**  
**Strawberry Banana Smoothie**  
3/4 cup strawberries  
1 banana  
6 ounces of Greek Yogurt (low fat)  
1 cup fresh spinach or kale  
1 tablespoon ground flaxseed  
Crushed ice to achieve desired consistency

Blend all ingredients in the mixer and serve chilled.

# History Snapshot: Klondike Kutey during the winter of 1944/1945



On Feb. 24, 1947, the B-29 Superfortress Klondike Kutey took off on a classified mission from Elmendorf Air Force Base, and was never heard from again. Officially, the crew was conducting routine weather reconnaissance, but unofficially they were recording radio traffic and watching for any activity at nearby Soviet military bases.

When the Klondike Kutey was overdue for her return to Elmendorf, it was assumed that the mission has taken extra time. It was eventually evident, however, that something had gone wrong and an emergency alert was issued. Available aircraft from Elmendorf, Ladd Army Airfield and Fort Randall Army Airfield in Cold Bay joined the search for the plane and her crew. The poor visibility and bad weather may have contributed to the plane’s disappearance and also hindered the search and rescue efforts. On March 19, the search was officially called off, although the 10th Air Rescue Squadron continued to search until March 25. The wreckage was never found. (Photo courtesy of Levi Ballard)

# MEDDAC Minute

**Important Phone Numbers**

**Emergency:** 911  
**24 Hour Nurse Advice Line:** 1-800-874-2273 Opt. 1  
**Appointment Line:** 361-4000  
**Behavioral Health:** 361-6059  
**Benefits Advisor:** 361-5656  
**Immunizations:** 361-5456  
**Information Desk:** 361-5172  
**Patient Advocate:** 361-5291  
**Pharmacy Refills:** 361-5803  
**MEDDAC-AK Website:** [www.bassett-wainwright.tricare.mil](http://www.bassett-wainwright.tricare.mil)  
**MHS Patient Portal:** <https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/>  
**Health Net:** [www.tricare-west.com](http://www.tricare-west.com), 1-844-8676-9378

**COVID vaccination**

All TRICARE beneficiaries over 18 who would like to receive the COVID-19 vaccine will soon have the opportunity. Bassett Army Community Hospital is expecting 1,000 doses of the vaccine in early March. Upon delivery, we will begin scheduling appointments online.

**Patient Advocate**

The Medical Department Activity – Alaska Patient Advocate acts on behalf of all patients and the commander to resolve problems and implement necessary corrections. Beneficiaries needing assistance, or who have questions about the

care received at MEDDAC-AK, can contact our Patient Advocate at 361-5291.

**Town Hall**

MEDDAC-AK will conduct a Facebook Live event Monday, March 1 at 6 p.m. to discuss the COVID-19 vaccine and answer questions from our beneficiaries.

**Talk With A Registered Nurse**

Think you should go the emergency room but aren’t sure? Wondering if you need an appointment? A registered nurse is standing by 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help. Call the Nurse Advice Line for your immediate health care needs. The nurse can even book you an appointment if necessary. Call 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273).

**Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet**

The new year is a great time to check your medicine cabinets for expired prescription and over the counter medications. A MedSafe box, located inside the main entrance of Bassett ACH across from the information desk, is in place to securely receive your expired or no longer needed medications.

# ALASKA POST

## The Interior Military News Connection

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# The Chaplain’s Corner

## Give up or get up?

**Chaplain (1st Lt.) Eunjun Jeong**  
1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment Chaplain

There is a story about an old farmer whose mule fell into a well. After many unsuccessful attempts to haul the mule out of the hole, the farmer decided it was hopeless. With sadness, he instructed his boys to fill up several truck-loads of dirt and bury the old mule right in the well. Dutifully, the boys backed up the truck filled with dirt, and shovel by shovel, they began to fill the well and bury the mule. The mule didn’t take kindly to this action. The first shovel

of dirt hit him square on the head, got in his eyes and mouth, and made him sneeze. Every shovel full after that hit him somewhere, causing the old mule to stomp around in the bottom of the well. Several truck-loads of dirt later, the mule was still stomping and packing dirt firmly underneath his feet. Little by little, that mule was lifting itself out of the hole. Sure enough, about mid-afternoon, that mule simply stepped out of the well and snorted at the whole business. Let’s think about the mule’s situation. When the dirt comes into the well, the mule may have two options.

He already spent quite a long time in the well and may be very tired and thirsty. So he can quickly adapt himself to the problem and be buried as alive. On the other hand, he can do something he can do in that limited and challenging situation. So he started moving his feet slowly and never stopped stomping the ground. He changed his difficult obstacle to the perfect method of the solution to escape the well. In life, from time to time, we meet hopeless situations like this farmer or the mule. We have two responses to the negative things that happen to us – give up or get up. The old

farmer gave up to rescue his mule, but this mule decided to get up! This decision enabled him to shake off what was meant to bury him, which eventually secured his release. Sometimes we have very little to no motivation. Not only do we not know what to do, but we do not want to go on. It always seems tough to make tremendous progress. Dramatic change and huge success often seems impossible. However, for making a change starts with the first step. Keep moving your feet, one step at a time and eventually, without even thinking, you will find yourself at the top of



the well. The point is no matter how difficult your problem is, you need to keep going, little by little, one step at a time. When the first shovel of dirt comes into your life, just move your foot. And when the next shovel of dirt hits, move the other foot. Life’s beauty begins when we put forth a little effort in hopeless situations and eventually causes significant change. If you are in a situation analogous to this mule’s, take a lesson from him – don’t give up, just keep getting up.

## Worship Services on Fort Wainwright

- Good Shepherd Catholic Community**  
Mass: Sundays, 9 a.m., SLC  
Holy Hour Adoration: Thursdays, 6 p.m., SLC  
Catholic Women of the Chapel: Wednesdays, 9 a.m., SLC
- St. George Anglican Parish**  
Holy Communion: Sundays, 11 a.m., SLC  
Mid-Week Holy Communion: Wednesdays, noon, BACH
- Cornerstone Protestant Community**  
Worship Service: Sundays, 11 a.m., NLC  
Protestant Women of the Chapel, Wednesdays, 6 p.m., NLC  
Cornerstone Youth, Sundays, 1 p.m., NLC
- Congregación Protestante Piedra Angular**  
Servicio de adoración: Domingos, 1 p.m., SLC  
Northern Lights Chapel Nov. 22, 2020
- Fort Wainwright Religious Support Office, 353-6112**  
1051 Gaffney, Unit 10  
Southern Lights Chapel (SLC), 8th St & Neely Rd.  
Northern Lights Chapel (NLC), Luzon & Rhineland Avenues

## New MILITARY STAR accounts receive 15% off first-day purchases March 12 to 25

**Carina DeCino**  
Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

Spring is almost here, and savings are blooming at the Fort Wainwright PX. Soldiers and military shoppers who open and use a new MILITARY STAR® account from March 12 to 25 will receive 15 percent off on all first-day purchases, instead of the regular 10 percent. The discount will appear as a credit on the first monthly billing statement. Cardholders earn two percent in rewards points on their MILITARY STAR purchases – including at the commissary and Exchange mall vendors – and receive a \$20 rewards card every 2,000 points. Rewards exclude Military Clothing. Other benefits of the MILITARY STAR card include:

- Free shipping on all ShopMyExchange.com and MyNavyExchange.com orders.
- Five cents off every gallon of fuel at Exchange fuel locations.
- 10 percent off all Exchange restaurant purchases.
- The lowest flat-rate APR (10.24 percent) among store cards – rate is offered to all cardholders upon account approval.
- No annual, late or over-limit fees.
- Reduced-interest deployment plan with no payments required for eligible customers.


“It matters where you shop, and it matters what payment you use,” says Fort Wainwright Exchange gen-



The MILITARY STAR card is administered by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, and is accepted at all military exchanges and commissaries. For more information, visit MyECP.com.


eral manager Gloria Sylvia. “Shopping the Fort Wainwright PX puts money back into the community, and using the MILITARY STAR card helps shoppers save money too.” 100 percent of Exchange earnings are reinvested in the military community, including through funding for critical on-installation quality-of-life programs. When shoppers use the MILITARY STAR card, the Exchange also saves on transaction fees – savings that add up to millions of dollars a year – which allows the Exchange to better support Warfighters and their

families. New accountholders will receive the 15 percent discount on all first-day purchases at military exchanges and commissaries, as well as online at ShopMyExchange.com, myNavyExchange.com and ShopCGX.com. All honorably discharged Veterans who have confirmed their eligibility to shop at ShopMyExchange.com can use their MILITARY STAR card shopping the Exchange online. Veterans with a service-connected disability are eligible to shop in stores. For more information, veterans can visit ShopMyExchange.com/Vets.



USAG ALASKA GARRISON SAFETY OFFICE

# SAFETY GRAM



### Slippery Conditions

Have you ever heard the phrase “Walk like a Penguin”? These are great words to live by here in the Interior of Alaska. Recent snowfall has caused the outside environment to become extremely slippery. Each year numerous individuals are seriously injured from slips and falls. It is important to remain aware of the dangers and take precautions to reduce your chance of injury. Walking like a penguin can help you get through the winter safely.


1. Walk flat footed and take short steps

2. Wear footwear that provides traction

3. Step down, not out from curbs

4. Use your arms for balance

5. Carry only what you can



Wear boots or shoes with soft rubber soles to and from work and change into your work shoes while indoors. Traction devices are also great tools that can be placed over the boots to increase your traction. If you are wearing these, remove them before entering the building or inside the doorway if there is a rug or carpet. These can cause you to slip and fall on smooth surfaces inside.

If you do fall report it to your supervisor, immediately.



# New retirement extensions allow the Army to retain critical talent

Army Talent Management Task Force

U.S. Army Colonel Paul Schmitt, a foreign area officer stationed in Kyiv, Ukraine, was planning to retire after 30 years of service. Schmitt serves as the Army Attaché with the Defense Attaché Office at the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine. The DAO represents the Department of Defense to the host-nation government and military and assists and advises the U.S. ambassador on military matters.

With Schmitt's impending retirement and no one qualified to replace him, the Army faced a critical capability shortage. A new authority granted by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 allows the Army to authorize select officers to serve up to 40 years. Under previous authorities, officers could only be retained no more than 5 years based on their time in grade and service. When offered to extend his MRD, Schmitt agreed to postpone his retirement plans and continue to serve.

Schmitt is one of ten officers selected for a 2020 pilot, which includes Army War College professors and FAOs. The MRD Extension differs from previous Selective Continuation and retiree recall authorities because it focuses solely on an individual's unique talents and leverages their knowledge, skills, behaviors, and preferences to retain proven officers where and when they are needed.

The new MRD Extension policy applies to officers in the grades of O-3 to O-10. It allows the Army to select individuals with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors to deliver strategic impacts. Similar to the SELCON process, officers cannot apply for this program but must be selected and agree to the extension before their file is submitted to the board. The board must consider the balance between extensions and the overall force strength. While the initiative most directly impacts the Foreign Area Officer, Medical Corps,



Col. Paul Schmitt and his daughter, 2nd Lt. Schmitt, stand in front of a sign for the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine. Schmitt serves as the Army Attaché to the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv, Ukraine and is a participant in the pilot for the new retirement extension program aimed at retaining officers with unique talents to meet critical requirements. (Photo by Col. Paul Schmitt)

and Army War College proponents, Engineer and Infantry branches are also included.

Without Schmitt, the Army Attaché position in the Ukrainian embassy would remain vacant for more than one year. The FAO proponent identified Schmitt as having the requisite background and experience to fill this critical capability gap. Given the opportunity to continue service, Schmitt quickly agreed noting the cost savings to the Army and the continued benefit of the relationships he had already built.

"The Army could either pay my pension and get no

backfill, or extend me for a few more years to receive a motivated and willing volunteer," said Schmitt.

Schmitt's knowledge, skills, and behaviors make him uniquely qualified to continue service in the Army in this capacity. He is a FAO with a Special Forces background and nearly 18 years of regional experience. He has undergraduate and graduate degrees in Russian, and he previously served as a foreign language instructor at the United States Military Academy at West Point. His record of service includes multiple assignments in the United States European

Command theater as both a Special Forces officer and an FAO.

In recent years, Schmitt has been instrumental in equipping and training foreign military forces in former Soviet republics. His extension provides the Army with a uniquely-talented and experienced officer in a strategically consequential region of the world. His extension is an example of how new authorities and flexibility in talent management can retain the right officers in the right positions.

The MRD Extension is one of the many tools the Army is implementing to

keep a competitive and intellectual advantage over adversaries. Since the initial pilot, the Army conducted five additional MRD Extension boards to identify officers with unique skills to retain in the service.

For Schmitt, the MRD Extension policy is a positive step towards talent management across all ranks.

"This is a win-win for the Army. Officers can continue to serve, and the Army can retain key capabilities," said Schmitt.

For more information about Army Talent Management visit <https://talent.army.mil>.

## REPORT

Continued from page 1

is securely transferred directly to Army CID through a Secure Sockets Layer connection, which means that the tips are encrypted, entirely confidential and completely anonymous. Users can also attach images, videos and documents with their tips.

Additionally, persons providing anonymous tips will have the ability to communicate with CID Special Agents. After submitting a tip, a tip reference/ID number is created that allows the tipster to create a password to check the status of the submitted tip or check on the status of a reward – if applicable.

There is also the multi-language feature for global use that allows tips to be auto-converted into English on the backend regardless of what language they were submitted.

The public can access the system via any Internet-connected device by visiting, <https://www.cid.army.mil/>.

In addition to the web interface, the app is available for free download from the Apple Store and Google Play at <http://www.p3tips.com/app.aspx?ID=325>. Regional information please visit: <https://cyber.mil> or <https://public.cyber.mil>

## HEART

Continued from page 1

Too much cholesterol can lead to plaque buildup inside your blood vessels. This sticky substance causes your arteries to harden and narrow, which limits blood flow. These blockages can create a heart attack or, if located in the brain, a stroke.

3. Body Mass Index: Your healthy target: 18.5 to 24.9

Your BMI is a weight-height calculation that can help determine if you're overweight or obese. Excess body fat increases your risk for a wide range of health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

It is important to know these critical numbers in your life because they will allow you and your health-care provider to determine your risk for heart diseases.



# Super Soldier: DC Comics picks Army musician as new Superman writer

**Joseph Lacdan**  
Army News Service

While growing up in rural Iowa and Kentucky, Phillip Kennedy Johnson collected boxes of used comics. The stories became an escape that took Johnson to places beyond his small town. As a child, he pored over the worn pages in his bedroom reading about Superman as he defended Metropolis and Earth from Lex Luthor and other threats to mankind. He sometimes imagined his own storylines for the iconic superhero.

Johnson collected piles of books; Disney, Marvel, and DC, but he specifically favored the Man of Steel and Batman.

"I remember watching the 1978 film ['Superman'] and seeing [Christopher Reeve] on screen, the way he embodied the inherent goodness of Superman," Johnson said. "He had almost absolute power, but he wielded it with absolute humility and compassion." More than three decades later, Johnson, now a sergeant first class, reached a milestone in his five-year comic writing career. DC Comics announced on Dec. 16, a day after the 42nd anniversary of the film, that the Soldier would be writing the new storylines for DC's Superman and Action Comics beginning in March.

Johnson, also 42, has written for seven comic publishers, including both DC and Marvel, and has been nominated for an Eisner Award, the comics equivalent of an Oscar. His stories have a diverse range from independent original comics, such as Warlords of Appalachia, to dark visions of familiar heroes in Marvel's Zombie Resurrection and finally to his own take on Captain America.

When Johnson received the call from DC, he instantly felt the weight of becoming the next storyteller of the world's most renowned superhero.

"I felt this tremendous excitement, down to a molecular level," Johnson said. "It's definitely a huge responsibility that I take extremely seriously, but the anxiety that sometimes comes with a really big opportunity never came. I'm still just really excited about it, and really confident in the stories my amazing artists and I are telling together."



Sgt. 1st Class Phillip Kennedy Johnson splits his time between his duties as an active-duty Soldier in The Army Field Band's trumpet section and as a full-time comic book writer. He has written for both DC and Marvel comics as well as an independent publisher. (Left photo by Rob McIver and Army Field Band photo)

Johnson wants to depict the character in the way he remembers from his childhood, as a being of immense power fueled by an unshakeable moral core. "I want people to see the version of Superman that I see," he said. "I want them to see the man with absolute power, but also absolute compassion and humility. Powers are not the point of the character; the powers are there to illustrate how incorruptible and inherently good he is."

"That's the version I want to see. When he speaks, I want people to get the same chills, the same aspiration feeling that I felt watching that [1978] film."

**Midwestern roots**  
Pella, a small Dutch immigrant town of about 10,000, lies in a rural stretch of central Iowa. Farmland surrounded Johnson's childhood house, not unlike the fictional Kansas community where Superman originated.

As a child coming of age in the 80s, the late Reeve's Superman made a stark impression on Johnson. The scene where Superman takes Lois Lane on a scenic flight over Metropolis' night sky as John Williams' soaring score plays in the background, embodies the character of Superman.

"He smiles at her, but you can tell there's no arrogance or ego in it," Johnson said. "He's so powerful, but everything he says and does just says 'I'm your friend, and nothing's going to hap-

pen to you." When Johnson attended high school in Kentucky he aspired to become a comic book artist, often drawing his favorite characters including Batman, Superman, and the X-Men. But Johnson also developed a love for music, and had hopes of one day touring the country as a musician.

Storytelling had been bred into Johnson from the time he first began playing musical instruments. He learned to tell tales through music, playing the piano and trumpet. After earning a master's degree in music from the University of North Texas, he set his sights on joining The U.S. Army Field Band.

In joining the Army Field Band, he began telling musical stories on a grander scale, traveling across the continental U.S. and telling the tales of the Army through song. Johnson said the band connects with the public by telling personal stories of U.S. Soldiers and historical figures. Recently the band posted an 18-minute musical tribute to Martin Luther King Jr.

"Something The U.S. Army Field Band does that I think sets it apart is its use of narrative," Johnson said. "The way that we tell personal stories helps us connect with the audience. Storytelling is something I believe in."

Aside from his role as a trumpet player, Johnson also leads all written projects for his section as chief editor and writer. Section

leader Master Sgt. Ward Yager said Johnson showcases his creativity with improvised solos.

Johnson recently performed his own jazz arrangement of the John Williams' composition "Can You Read My Mind?" from "Superman: The Movie," which was posted to the Army Field Band's YouTube channel just weeks before DC Comics selected him as the next Superman writer.

"His music and writing provide creativity and inspiration for the other [musicians]," Yager said. "Imagination is like a muscle, constantly needing work to grow. Both writing and music require thinking outside the box and taking new directions, and Phillip is always pushing himself to grow and further develop the great talents he has."

**A dream rekindled**  
About 10 years ago, while Johnson was touring the country with the band, his younger brother, Bill Hensley, decided to become a comic artist.

So Johnson decided to embark on a project to help his brother break into the comic industry. While helping his brother, the unexpected happened. Johnson learned how to get noticed by comic editors himself. And in doing so he rekindled his own childhood passion. Hensley also served in the Army as a 25M graphic designer.

"At first, it was really just to help my brother get

a foot in the door," Johnson said. "We set out to educate ourselves about the comics industry together, and as it turns out, I found it really fun and rewarding."

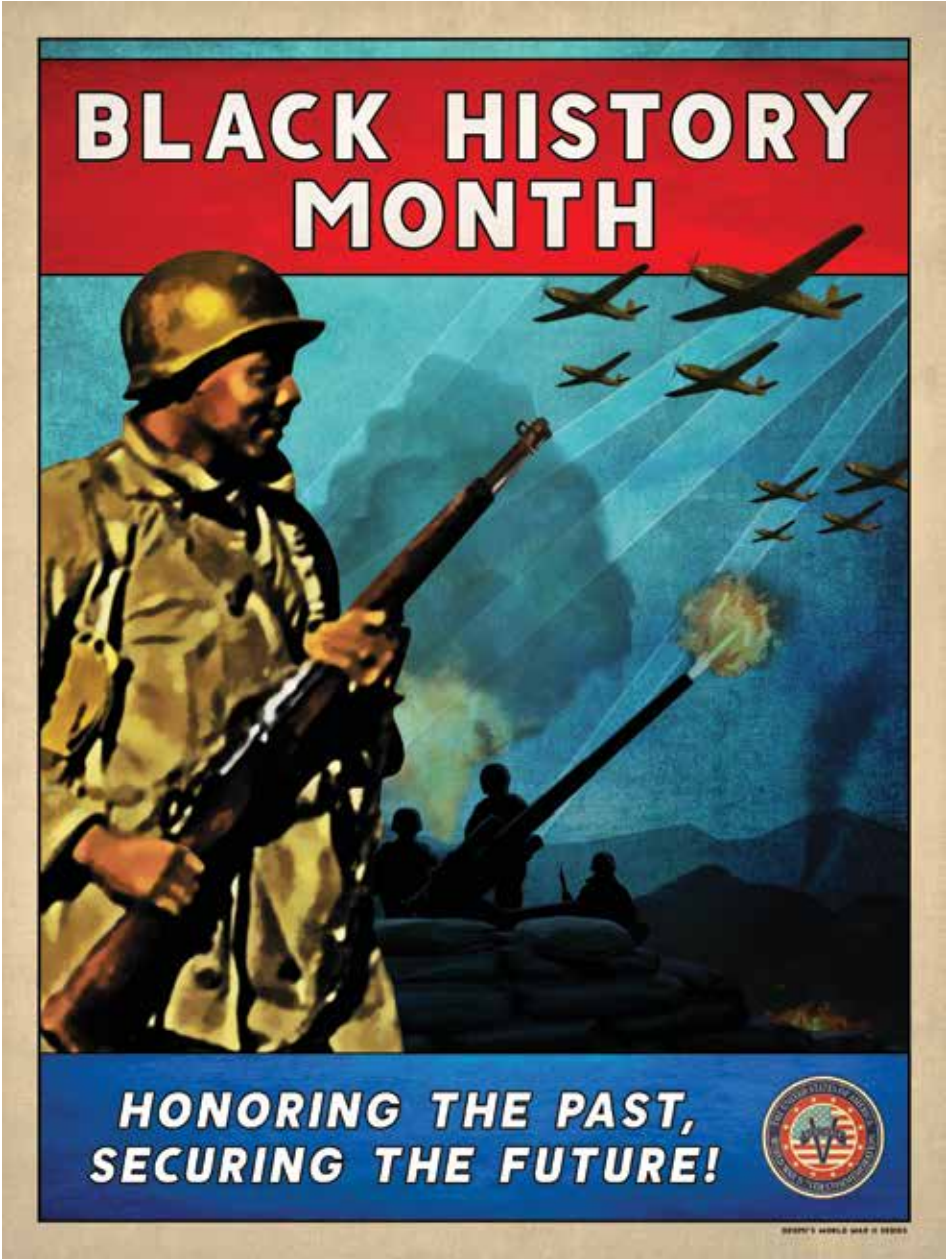
Johnson made his first venture into comics writing with independent publisher BOOM! Studios. He told the story of a grim future for Americans in a mini-series called "Last Sons of America."

In the four-part series, a biological terrorist attack impacted Americans' ability to conceive, forcing parents to turn to other means to raise families, including buying, bartering, or stealing children from foreign nations. Johnson developed the idea while volunteering with anti-human trafficking organizations in Baltimore.

While developing "Last Sons of America," Johnson also concurrently produced a weekly horror webcomic entitled "The Lost Boys of the U-Boat Bremen." Johnson's work with Boom! Studios eventually caught the attention of a DC Comics editor, who read "Last Sons of America" and reached out to the Soldier.

"He poured enormous time and energy into developing his writing, but it's been amazing to see his writing career take off," Yager said. "I'm very happy for him, and I enjoy seeing how his passion continues to grow along with his success. He does it for the love of the craft."

See SUPER on page 7





COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Fort Wainwright Family & MWR

Weekly Events

February 27 - March 6

**27** **White Mountains Snowmachine Trip**  
Registration deadline: February 27  
Event Date: March 6, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Explore the White Mountains by Snowmachine with Outdoor Recreation! \*Snowmachine Safety Certification is required before registering for this event.

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 1045  
Call 361-6349, registration required

**28** **Women in the Wilderness: XC Skiing**  
Registration deadline: February 28  
Event Date: March 7, 11 a.m. - Noon  
Learn the basics of cross country skiing with Outdoor Recreation! Equipment and instruction is included.

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 1045  
Call 361-6349, registration required

**2** **Trek n Tube & Archery Camp**  
March 2 - 3  
4:30 - 6:30 p.m.  
Youth 7-18 years old can join Youth Sports for Trek n Tube & Archery Camp! Cost per child: \$50. Face masks and snow gear are required.

Youth Sports & Fitness, Bldg 1045 Basement  
Call 353-7713, registration required

**4** **B.O.S.S. Meeting**  
March 4  
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.  
Join us for an Installation B.O.S.S. Meeting every first and third Thursday of the month! This meeting is located in Last Frontier Community Activity Center.

B.O.S.S., Bldg 1045  
Call 353-7648

**6** **UFC - 259**  
March 6  
Doors open at 3 p.m.  
Watch the UFC Main Event at the Warrior Zone! COVID parameters in place. Must be 18+ to enter. Must be 21+ to purchase & consume alcohol.

Warrior Zone, Bldg 3205  
Call 353-1087, reservations strongly encouraged



**FRONTIER FITNESS**

\*Microsoft Teams app & Physical required

▶ **MARCH: BASKETBALL**

▶ **APRIL: SOCCER**

**\$25 PER MONTH, PER YOUTH**  
AGES: 5-18

Register today!  
Parent Central Services  
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(907) 353-7713  
wainwright.armymwr.com

MWR  
CHILD-YOUTH SERVICES  
YOUTH SPORTS & FITNESS  
USAID Alaska



Grab lunch at Motherlode Cafe located in Nugget Lanes Bowling Center!  
For more information, go to [wainwright.armymwr.com](http://wainwright.armymwr.com).  
@WainwrightMWR #WainwrightMWR

Researchers help Soldiers find targets with augmented reality

U.S. Army DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory Public Affairs

The U.S. Army continues to explore new technologies to improve warfighter performance on the battlefield, and researchers believe augmented reality, or AR, is a vitally important part of that process.

Researchers from the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command, now known as DEVCOM, Army Research Laboratory discovered a new technique for AR to overcome bright lighting conditions during the day by using low contrast dimming highlights. They said this opens up new research questions that will improve warfighter AR and heads-up display performance in outdoor operations.

“Imagine a Soldier of the future, searching for a target in an urban jungle,” said Dr. Chou Hung, a neuroscience researcher at the lab. “He looks out in the street and

sees drones searching outside. He looks back down the dark hallway. The goggles instantly highlight the location of the target that the drone saw behind the wall, and the highlight is automatically adjusted to the right level in the dim environment, so that the Soldier also sees a second target in another room that was missed by the drone.”

In this scenario, the highlight worked. It was at the right level of contrast to attract the Soldier’s attention, but not so strong that it caused him to miss the second target that wasn’t highlighted.

“We knew that AR displays work well indoors, but outdoors, the icons disappear because the displays have limited brightness,” Hung said. “Even at the brightest level, they’re up to 100 times dimmer than a bright sunny day, so the icons and target highlights become invisible.”

Hung said it’s difficult to make the displays brighter due to the amount of power

needed and it’s hard (and computationally expensive with existing technology) to make sure the highlighting isn’t so strong that it prevents the Soldier from paying attention to the rest of the scene.

“We proposed a new approach, low contrast dimming, that can be used to titrate the visibility of target highlighting, but we were concerned that strong lighting variations on the retina as we shift our gaze would drown out the signal,” Hung said. “Our research shows that it should work; our visual system is actually very resilient to strong luminance dynamics; we can see very low contrast (10 percent) immediately after looking at something 100 times brighter.”

Researchers said future warfighters will need AR in outdoor and mixed indoor/outdoor environments.

“Our discovery paves the way towards enabling that use, including in challenging desert, snow, marine,

and dense urban environments,” Hung said. “The same approach could also improve situational awareness for other display technologies such as image intensifiers, infrared and fused night vision displays. This approach would also enable indirect optics and has potential for laser eye protection as well.”

According to Col. James Ness, professor of engineering psychology at the U.S. Military Academy, “Indirect viewing optics are definitely needed as laser powers that shift blue when hitting optics designed to filter harmful wavelengths become transparent.”

The researchers studied high dynamic range, or HDR, luminance – images in which the brightest and darkest pixels differ by up to 100,000-to-1 ratio in brightness – and how it affects visual processing.

“We believe this should increase situational awareness and Intel, and avoid situations where infor-



DEVCOM researchers discovered a new technique for AR to overcome bright lighting conditions during the day by using low contrast dimming highlights. They said this opens up new research questions that will improve warfighter AR and heads-up display performance in outdoor operations. (U.S Army photo)

mation is lost because the display is simply invisible under bright conditions,” Hung said. “For example, if you’re in hotel room looking outside, we see both inside and outside simultaneously, but a typical camera can only see one or the other because of

limited dynamic range, and current AR technology would have the same display problem. This would ensure that the information is visible on both parts of the screen, when it’s shown against the outside and when it’s shown against the indoor environment.”



# Productivity linked to proactive diversity, inclusion initiatives

Kari Hawkins

Last year the Army launched Project Inclusion, a new initiative to improve diversity, equity and inclusion across the force and build cohesive teams. Now, as 2021 unfolds, the Army remains committed to fostering a culture of trust and to accept the experiences, culture, characteristics and background each Soldier and Civilian brings to the institution. “Our Army is a representative of the citizens of this nation. Just like our nation is a melting pot of different races and cultures, our Army is a great melting pot of Soldiers and Army Civilians coming from all walks of life and diverse backgrounds,” said Paula Taylor, director of the Army Materiel Command’s Office of Diversity and Leadership. In 2020, “we all saw what was happening in our society and our leaders made a commitment to make sure it doesn’t happen within our Army. They are committed to ensuring a diverse Army that is inclusive, and where diversity in race, thought and perspective is valued.” While the commitment has been there for many years and is apparent in the Army’s values, Taylor said it was further solidified in 2020 with a strategic plan to operationalize Diversity, Equity and Inclusion across the entire Army. Her comments were made to more than 100 professionals who



The Army’s strength is based on the diverse capabilities, experiences and backgrounds of its Civilian and Soldier workforce. The Army Materiel Command’s Office of Diversity and Leadership leads the organization’s implementation of the Army’s strategic plan to operationalize Diversity, Equity and Inclusion through the Project Inclusion initiative. (U.S. Army photo)

attended the virtual Sexual Harassment and Assault Response Program Summit in late December. The DEI theme for implementing Project Inclusion is “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – The Army’s Way of Life.” As part of the strategic plan, the Army is calling on its senior leaders to demonstrate its commitment, engagement and support of DEI practices; institutionalize Talent Management policies to acquire, develop and retain employees; establish and resource a governance structure to support Army DEI efforts; implement DEI training and education programs that meet the demands of the Total Force; and create and maintain an equitable and inclusive environment that values diversity. “The Army is working to make sure its senior leaders

understand the importance of valuing diversity in the workplace, and creating a shared understanding of diversity,” Taylor said. “The Army is performing a review of its people processes, policies, programs and procedures to ensure a diverse workforce, and to ensure leaders know how to build cohesive, diverse, inclusive and equitable teams.” Toward that end, one of the key elements is “Your Voice Matters” listening sessions between leaders and employees, Taylor said. Also important is ensuring senior leader DEI training; reconstituting the use of diversity councils to promote alignment of DEI efforts; developing plans for expanding a diverse talent pool within the workforce; developing and executing DEI training; and review-

ing Army policies for biases. “At AMC, our commander, Gen. (Ed) Daly wants to hear what people are saying. He wants to analyze DEI data and understand where we are and to review any trends that seem to be unfavorable to people of different races. Gen. Daly wants all employees to feel safe and to have a conduit to report anything unfair. He wants every member of the team to feel valued and included,” Taylor said. “AMC leaders are leading the change for the Army. We are setting the pace.” Project Inclusion joins Suicide Prevention and SHARP Training/Anti-Harassment Training as the three focus areas within AMC’s People focus area, with the lines of effort including leader awareness and commitment, education and training, and communication. “Project Inclusion is in the people business, as is SHARP, the Chaplain’s Office and Equal Employment Opportunity. With the optempo of the last several years, we have had tremendous challenges in the people business,” Taylor said. “We must be prepared, be postured, to lead the change to an equitable and inclusive environment that empowers all AMC employee to support worldwide missions.” Ensuring a safe and inclusive work environment leads to a productive workforce focused on ensuring readiness and sustainment of the Army’s Total Force.

“This is about enabling our Soldiers,” Taylor said. “It’s about ensuring we have a healthy and productive workforce to support the Soldiers who protect us and defend our nation. When we don’t encourage DEI, we are not only hurting our people, but also our missions and our Soldiers.” In leading AMC’s major subordinate commands, its commander is encouraging a diverse and inclusive culture while also standing against any type of racism or extremism. “Gen. Daly has told us to make sure we have transparency at all levels,” Taylor said. “Our employees have to feel comfortable talking to us about issues and providing feedback. Gen. Daly wants every commander to have a DEI action plan that is achievable, empowers employees, and enhances performance and productivity.” Taylor told the SHARP professionals that their programs are essential to meeting the goal of acquiring, developing, employing and retaining a professional and competent workforce. “SHARP professionals are among those of us who listen, who show AMC’s commitment to them because we listen and value every employee who comes to us for assistance,” Taylor said. “We help to ensure every employee has a place at the table. Our programs help to improve the command culture and give employees a place to go when they need help.”

## Project Athena development program coming to Army enlisted military education

Alofagia Oney

Beginning in March, enlisted Soldiers enrolled in professional military education courses will have the opportunity to participate in Project Athena, a personal and professional self-development program initiated by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. The program’s design is to give future and current NCOs a framework to strengthen their self-awareness and encourage self-development throughout their military careers. This effort is aimed at facilitating Army leaders to make better

decisions, and to realize the best version of themselves. Project Athena initially launched in July 2020 at all Basic Officer Leaders Courses-B and at the Maneuver Captains Career Course at Fort Benning, Georgia. It later expanded into all Captains Career Courses in January of 2021. The implementation of Project Athena for enlisted personnel will begin in the Basic Leader Course, the first enlisted PME program for Soldiers in the rank of specialist or sergeant. “[BLC will be the first NCO PME to pilot the program because] we want to

figure out a Soldier’s skill set at a young age, and make them aware so they can improve them as they continue their career,” Juan Ortiz, director of the NCO Professional Development Directorate at the NCO Leadership Center of Excellence, said. “Not everyone can be a drill sergeant, or a recruiter, or have certain specialty jobs the Army requires. These assessments can help a Soldier identify his or her strengths and weaknesses early on so that they can better shape their own futures in the Army.” Sgt. Maj. Bill Ferguson, the Mission Command Center of Excellence sergeant

major, explained that at each echelon of enlisted PME, Project Athena targets personal and professional qualities that will benefit Soldiers as they assume new leadership roles. For example, in BLC, leadership, interpersonal skills and mental fortitude are important, and the selected assessments focus on a Soldier’s role as a first line leader. “As NCOs assume section and squad leader roles, the assessments they will receive in the Advanced Leader Course focuses on adaptability and how prepared they are for changing environments,” he

said. In the Senior Leader Course, the assessments center on decision making, critical thinking and situational awareness, and how NCOs at this level become platoon sergeants and advisors to their officer counterparts. Finally, Ferguson added that as NCOs move from having tactical, direct contact with troops to broader positions on staffs and as senior enlisted advisors at the company level, the assessments offered in the Master Leader Course focus on systems thinking and decision making. “The Career Long Talent Based Assessments are a goal

of the Chief of Staff of the Army’s People First Strategy,” Ferguson said. “These assessments were considered by a panel of command sergeants major and sergeants major with input from NCOs across the force, some of whom were enrolled in PME at the time.” While most PME for enlisted personnel lasts only three to four weeks – compared to officer PME that may extend over several months – being self-aware and reducing counter-productive tendencies are important lessons for Soldiers to learn when they attend Army courses, Ferguson said.

# SUPER

Continued from page 5

**An ‘epic’ story**  
Today’s Superman comics finds the Man of Steel in a much different place than Reeve’s Superman more than 30 years ago. Superman is married to longtime love interest Lois Lane, and has a son, Jon, also known as Superboy. The changes depart from the traditional depictions of Superman as Clark Kent, a single newspaper reporter for the Daily Planet. Johnson said his predecessor in the Superman line, veteran comics scribe Brian Michael Bendis, grounded the character by emphasizing Superman’s humanity. Johnson said he can relate to Superman’s relationship with his son, Anders, as Johnson has a young son himself. “I feel like Bendis did a really great job of humanizing Superman. You see him on the ground level,” Johnson said. “You see him at his day job with people at the Daily Planet. You see that his supporting cast kind of makes him who he is, and those characters get developed a ton. You see him in a lot of those personal

moments.” To build off Bendis’ work, Johnson promises an “epic” version of the Man of Steel, with a story that shows Superman’s place in the universe culminating in a big event in the fall that will be felt beyond the hero’s storyline. “You’re not only going to see what he means to America, but what he means to the universe,” Johnson said. “By the end of this event, the DC Universe is going to be bigger, older, with some of its more obscure corners blown out and explored in a way that hasn’t been done before. I’m insanely excited for readers to see what’s coming.” Readers can get their first taste of Johnson’s Superman in the two-part “Superman: Worlds of War” and “Superman: House of El.” Both are installments of the DC Comics event Future State, happening in January and February. “Superman: Worlds of War #1” released earlier this month. In addition to the Superman comics, Johnson will also write the launch of the new comic series “Alien” for Marvel, based on the 20th Century Fox film

franchise. And while writing these stories, Johnson still performs with the Army Field Band, whose mission has changed during the global pandemic. Instead of traveling to different American communities, the band has been livestreaming its “We Stand Ready” virtual concert series for nearly a year. The Army Field Band performs several times a week, with performances posted to the Army Field Band’s YouTube channel and Facebook page. Johnson said that the band’s performance can be a calming influence during turbulent times. “It gives people something to unify behind,” Johnson said. “Americans should understand that the oath their military takes is bigger than politics, that their military is behind them no matter what. Despite anything going on at home or abroad, their Army’s looking out for them.” The Army Field Band is working to unify America’s communities, in the way that fictional communities unify behind the Man of Steel.