

Fort Wainwright

This Week

WEDNESDAY

Play group

Child, Youth and School Services is offering a free Deployment Parent and Child Playgroup today from 1 to 3 p.m. at Melaven Gym for children 1 to 5.

To register or for more information, call 353-7372.

Get active

The Physical Fitness Center is having an Instructor's Choice class today at 5:30 p.m. for \$3.

Some of the offered classes include group strength training, Pilates, power stretching, kickboxing, balls and bands and aerobics.

For more information, call 353-7274.

THURSDAY

EFMP bowling

The Exceptional Family Member Program is hosting an EFMP night at Nugget Lanes from 6 to 8 p.m. for \$2.25 per game.

Families must be enrolled in the program prior to the event. Shoes are free.

For more information, call 353-4243.

Two for one

The Last Frontier Community Center is offering two-for-one laser tag today from 5 to 8 p.m.

For more information, call 353-7755.

Wii me

The Zone is offering a family readiness group Wii golf activity today from 9 a.m. to noon for adults only.

A \$5 fee includes instruction with the system, a staff member to organize play and coffee and refreshments.

Call 353-1087 for information.

Friday

Poetry jam

The Zone is hosting a poetry night today from 7 to 8 p.m.

For more information, call 353-1087.

Upcoming

MARCH 22

Free youth bowling

Nugget Lanes is having a Bowlopolis Blast-Off party March 22 from noon to 4 p.m. Youth 12 and younger can participate in free bowling, contests and activities and receive a free Bowlopolis DVD. Everyone is welcome. Those older than 12 are welcome to participate, but must pay regular prices.

Call 353-2654 for details.

MARCH 27 TO 29

March madness

The Birch Hill Ski and Snowboard Area is offering three days of family-friendly events March 27 through 29.

Call 353-9131 for information.



photo by Ramona Hillstrand/FMWR Marketing

Icy venture

Air Force Staff Sgt. Paul Croft, of Eielson Air Force Base's 354th Logistics Readiness Squadron, and wife, Catherine, take their son, Andrew, 4, on the ice for the first time at the Physical Fitness Center indoor ice rink Saturday. The PFC ice rink is available for recreational skating, hockey and group gatherings.

Fort Richardson

This Week

SATURDAY

Keep in step

The Sisters Wallace is performing an Irish dance demonstration today at 11 a.m. at the Consolidated Library in Building 7.

This free event is open to the entire post community.

For more information, call 384-0964.

Go green

Celebrate the luck of the Irish with a Saint Patrick's Day party today at 8 p.m. at the Arctic Chill, Building 655.

Be sure to wear green in the spirit of the event and join us for green re-

freshments, the Pot of Gold Coin Toss, door prizes and food.

For more information, call 384-7619.

MONDAY

FRG leader training

Army Community Service is offering family readiness group leader certification training today and Tuesday in Building 600, Room A37 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

For more information, call 384-7687.

WEDNESDAY

Make a difference

The Army Family Action Plan Conference is today and Thursday in the Community Education Center,

Building 7. Registration begins at 8 a.m., and training starts at 9 a.m. Lunch is provided.

For more information, call 384-1513.

Resume 101

An employment readiness class on writing a civilian resume is today in Building 600 in Room A112 at 3 p.m.

For more information on this or other employment readiness programs, call 384-6716.

THURSDAY

Spouse support

The Family Advocacy Program is offering a Deployed Spouses' Support Group in the Family Zone on Dyea Street from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to-

day. This group is open to all ranks.

For more information, call 384-7506.

Resume writing

Army Community Service is featuring a federal resume workshop today at 3 p.m. in Building 600 in Room A37.

For more information, call 384-6716.

FRIDAY

Child caring

Army Community Service is hosting a class on the dangerous effects of domestic violence on children today in Building 600, Room A37 from 1 to 2 p.m.

For more information, call 384-7506.

Sign ups begin online Monday for Operation Purple camp

Rob McIlvaine
FMWRC Public Affairs

The National Military Family Association's Operation Purple camp program will once again be accepting applications online beginning Monday at www.operationpurple.org.

The program aims to help military kids experience carefree fun while also learning coping skills to deal with war-related stress and fosters relationships with others who know what they are going through, because they are experiencing it too.

Operation Purple camp also helps kids gain confidence and teaches them to be stewards of the community and of the environment.

In 2008, military children 7 to 17 had a chance to stay at the free, weeklong, overnight camp at one of 62 locations in 37 states and territories, to include those in the fort Richardson and Fort Wainwright areas.

Camps are free to all participants, thanks to support from the Sierra Club and the Sierra Club Foundation. More than 20,000 kids have participated in the program since its inception.

War takes its toll not only on the troops who fight in the field, but also on the families who wait and worry at home.

More than 155,000 children have at least one parent who is deployed as a part of the Global War on Terrorism. That number doesn't include those experiencing routine, but often lengthy, deployments and separations from loved ones through military service. Many of these children have more than one parent or family member deployed.

The Operation Purple camp program, created in 2004, imparts the message on these young heroes that "they serve too."

Any military child can apply, but priority is given to those who have a parent, guardian, or family household member deployed between September

2008 and December 2009. If all spaces are not filled with campers who meet the deployment



photo courtesy of National Military Family Association

Lifelong friendships are made at Operation Purple camp between military children who share the same experiences.