

Medivac crews provide care in the air

By Senior Airman Brian Ferguson
CENTAF News Team

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—It was only a 30-minute flight from Bagram to Salerno, Afghanistan, and the C-130 Hercules carried four pallets and two passengers.

When it returned, that 30-minute flight proved to be just one leg of a longer aeromedical evacuation mission that would eventually take two wounded soldiers to Lundstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany.

“It is very rewarding to be able to get these troops out,” said Capt. Kathy Martin, aeromedical evacuation flight nurse.

And getting troops out depends on the 455th Expeditionary Aeromedical Evacuation Flight, aeromedical evacuation crew here

A standard crew consists of a flight nurse and two aero-medical evacuation technicians.

“Our job is to pick up patients from combat surgical hospitals or field surgical teams

-- See “EVAC,” Page 3



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brian Ferguson

Staff Sgt. Jody Gragg loads a litter of medical equipment aboard a C-130 Hercules as her fellow aero-medical evacuation crewmembers re-configure the aircraft for an early morning aero-medical evacuation mission June 8. **Sergeant Gragg** is from the 43rd Aero-medical Evacuation Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, NC.

RED HORSE keeps planes landing at Kandahar

By Maj. David Kurle
455th AEW public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Runways are essential to any air operation and a lot of the airfields in Afghanistan, used in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, need improvements.

Here, the runway is being refurbished by cutting it in half

length-wise, with crews repairing one side, while aircraft land and take off on the other. With the first half complete, construction crews are working on the next stage.

In order to use the now-completed side of the runway, the 1st Expeditionary RED HORSE Group had to first install airfield lighting.

Master Sgt. Richard Brown,

a RED HORSE infrastructure supervisor, leads a team of six Airmen deployed to Bagram Airfield in Southwest Afghanistan to install an emergency airfield lighting system to keep the planes landing.

“(The lighting) is specifically made for contingency en-

-- See “LIGHTS,” Page 3



INSIDE:

Multi-service team delivers humanitarian goods to remote Afghan village

Page 4



To be good leaders we must evolve

by Brig. Gen. (Dr.) James Dougherty
81st Medical Group
commander

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss. (AFP) — Leadership is often thought of as a skill that’s developed gradually, but I disagree.

In my journey through the ranks, I’ve often wondered how our systematic approach to officer development translates to actual leadership growth.

The Air Force promotes gradual increases in responsibility and mentoring from senior officers.

But has anyone completed a case study of officers who have undergone leadership development to determine our actual return on the investment?

If you think about it, do any of the service schools you’ve attended really prepare you to command?

In a past assignment, a new commander came into my unit. The orderly room staff was doing their usual “beating the bushes” to find any “intel” on the new boss.

By talking with friends and connections at the commander’s old unit, they knew exactly who was coming.

Then I overheard one of the sergeants say she remembered him as a second lieutenant.

I asked, now that almost 15 years had passed and he’s a colonel, how he’s changed. Her response is ingrained in my memory, “He’s still the same.”

I don’t think she was saying he still acted like a second lieutenant, but that he led like one.

To me, the implication was that what you learn during your initial experience as an officer or enlisted Airman sets the tone for the rest of your career.

I can’t count the times I’ve heard that if you want to be a general or chief you

need to prepare when you are a lieutenant or Airman. This is true, but you also need to be aware that more than likely your disposition 10 to 20 years from now has been predetermined. How we handle people and situations early on becomes a permanent part of our personality.

This isn’t to say there isn’t anything you can do about it, but I believe if you continue your career with blinders on, then yes, you’ll still be a “second lieutenant” or “Airman” when you retire.

If you are thinking, “I’m not planning on making the Air Force a career,” the point isn’t applicable to military service alone.

Your style follows you wherever you end up. We will all work for someone.

So how do we escape our predetermined approach to leadership? I believe the answer lies in constant evolution and a state of awareness — keeping your ears to the ground, accepting criticism from all sources and doing what’s right.

There will always be someone better than you, there may be someone trying to hold you down and there can be someone trying to lift you up.

You might not always be around “the someone” you want, but you need to learn from every experience, and remember you’re “the someone” for those around you.

Seek out new experiences and new opportunities, and soak up knowledge from those around you to improve yourself and your teammates. In this way, you evolve as a person and as a leader, removing the blinders that keep you from going beyond your predetermined limits.

Where do you start? Promote constant evolution in others through this rule: Never try to take down your competition; try to make yourself better first and then help your competition to be better than you.



Flag Day takes on new meaning in a country at war

by Master Sgt. Orville F. Desjarlais Jr.
455th Air Expeditionary Wing

I never gave Flag Day, June 14, a second thought until last week, when I visited the small city of Qalat in southern Afghanistan.

A Qalat Provincial Reconstruction Team, composed of Airmen and Soldiers, is deployed there. They’re helping the people of Zabul Province get back on their feet after 25 years of war. But it isn’t going to be easy.

In Qalat, good mixes with evil.

The good people of Qalat are happy to have the PRT in their town, after all, 124 of their residents graduated from the PRT’s trade school in May alone. The school offers classes in computer training, auto mechanics, welding, agriculture, carpentry and electronics.

However, extremists roam the countryside, ever on the minds of the townspeople and PRT volunteers.

Two days before I arrived, an insurgent’s mortar had blown a hole in an inner wall inside the PRT compound. Although nobody was injured, it rattled everybody’s nerves.

Extremists are not interested in educa-

-- See “FLAG,” Page 5

Bagram Bulletin
Editorial Staff, Disclaimer

Brig. Gen. Christopher D. Miller..... Commander, 455th AEW
Maj. Dave Kurlle Chief, Public Affairs
Master Sgt. Orville F. Desjarlais Jr.Editor, NCOIC



This newspaper is an authorized publication for Airmen and Sailors deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Contents of the Bagram Bulletin are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government or the Department of Defense. The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs office.



-- From "EVAC," Page 1

and provide in-flight patient care during transport. The facilities here can provide more definitive care to stabilize the patient for travel to Germany, and if necessary, home," Captain Martin said.

All Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines wounded in Afghanistan will come to Bagram before being transported out of the country, and the aeromedical evacuation crews here will transport and care for the majority of them.

"Improvised explosive devices are a problem," said Aeromedical Technician Staff Sgt Jodi Gragg, "We see more of them than anything."

In less than ideal conditions, crews here continue to provide injured personnel the medical treatment they need, even though medical evacuation missions here have almost doubled since 2005.

"During Vietnam it could take up to 30 or 35 days for a soldier to get back to the states," Sergeant Gragg said. "To move them as far as they go in just a few days is incredible. I know it would be important to me."

From the time of injury stabilization, a patient can be transported to Lundstuh Regional Medical Center, Germany, in as little as 24 hours, and depending on the severity of the injury, can be transported back to the United States in as little as 72 hours, according to crew members.



U.S. Air Force photo/senior Airman Brian Ferguson

An injured soldier walks off a C-130 Hercules after being transported here by an aero-medical evacuation crew June 8. The 30-minute flight was only one leg of an aero-medical evacuation mission that will take this soldier to Germany, and then home.

"The patients on this mission were in stable condition," Captain Martin said. "The litter patient was awake and alert, and he said thank you. That's a hero. We should be telling him thank you."

With troops still on the ground in Afghani-

stan, the mission of the aeromedical evacuation crew is far from finished.

"These Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines are strong and they are tough," Sergeant Gragg said. "We are just taking care of those who are taking care of us."

-- From "LIGHTS," Page 1

gineering, to put down so we have an MOS, minimum operating standards for airfield operations," he said.

Normally an installation requires one to two days, but because the team needed to bolt the lights to a concrete runway to prevent them from being knocked over by the British Harrier aircraft that operate from here, the job took just over a week.

"Airfield concrete is harder concrete than normal, so drilling the holes is a lot tougher than (drilling holes in) regular concrete," Sergeant Brown said.

The team also needed to overcome parts shortages and a lack of materials that comes with operating in remote locations like Kandahar.

"Simple stuff like a screw

can hold up an entire project," he said.

The team overcame a problem with a lack of hardware by switching to different kinds of screws, which were "scrounged" from around the base by Airmen deployed here to the 451st Expeditionary Civil Engineer Flight.

"We get the job done with the limited resources we have," said Capt. Matt Altman, 451st ECEF commander.

The assistance from the RED HORSE team was crucial for air operations to continue here during the ongoing runway construction, according to Captain Altman.

"We're constantly doing runway repairs and without RED HORSE doing the lighting system, we couldn't have done the runway swap," he said.



U.S. Air Force photo by Maj. David Kurle

Senior Airman Joshua Williams fastens a runway light at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, June 4. Sergeant Williams is an electrician with the 1st Expeditionary RED HORSE Group.



Multi-service team delivers goods to remote Afghan village

by Air Force Capt. Joe Campbell
Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction
Team Public Affairs

PANJSHIR PROVINCE, Afghanistan

— A multi-service supply convoy slowly crawled along a dusty, rock-strewn road winding up, up, up and around mountains, through tiny, remote villages, scenic wheat fields and pastures enroute to a relief mission June 12.

At approximately 8,000 feet above sea level, the village of Dara was the destination of the Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team. Volunteers from the 405th Civil Affairs Battalion offloaded beans, rice, cooking oil, salt, powdered milk and tea.

“It was slow-going in a fully-loaded five-ton truck that is as wide as the road in places,” said Army Reserve Sgt. First Class Brian James, who drove the six-by-six truck. He is a supply NCO deployed with the 405th CA-BN from Pleasant Grove, Utah. “I’d say we averaged about 20 kilometers per hour, which was good considering the narrow passes and rough road.”

The team and several volunteers formed a human supply chain to offload the bags and boxes of food and stack them in storage containers at the Dara District Center.

“Governor Bahlol and Deputy Governor Kabiri coordinated the humanitarian assistance drop after determining that Dara had the most immediate need of the six provincial districts,” said Army Maj. Cliff White, Panjshir PRT deputy commander who is a reservist deployed from Colorado Springs, Colo.

“They delegated distribution oversight to the Panjshir director of refugees, the district director and village elder,” the major said.

The provincial council president was also on hand to oversee the distribution process and coordinate future humanitarian assistance drops in other districts.

“The district director, village elders and the provincial director of women’s affairs compiled and prioritized (based on need) a list of the 450 families from a 30-kilometer area around Dara to receive the HA items,” Major White said.

The mission met several goals including keeping an Afghan presence at the forefront of the operation, which serves to ex-

tend the authority of local and provincial governments.

“While we usually aren’t involved in the direct distribution of humanitarian assistance, that doesn’t detract from the importance of these missions,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Neal Kringel, Panjshir PRT commander, deployed from the U.S. Embassy in Libreville, Gabon.

“It is quite an accomplishment just getting people and supplies out to a remote location such as Dara and safely back again with the precarious roads,” the colonel said.



Courtesy photo by Shahla Hammond

The Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team, members of the 405th Civil Affairs Battalion, Marine Col. Steve Hasty and a local villager offload bags and boxes of food and stack them in storage containers at the Dara District Center June 12.



Courtesy photo by Marine Col. Steve Hasty

A truck loaded with humanitarian assistance supplies slowly makes its way along a narrow and winding road in the Panjshir Province June 12. With help of a ground guide and spotter in the truck’s turret, the multi-service supply convoy delivered approximately four tons of food to the village of Dara.



Airmen selected for promotion to TSgt, MSgt

(Editor's Note: Because of the Bagram Bulletin newspaper deadline, the following is not a complete list. If you, or someone you know, is not on this list, please e-mail af.orville.desjarlai@afghan.swa.army.mil for inclusion in next week's paper.)

The following Airmen were notified Thursday of their selection for promotion to technical sergeant and master sergeant.

Technical sergeant selectees

- 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group
- Nikki Boone
- Stephen Boulanger
- Micah Good
- 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group
- Richie Bill
- Brian Bock
- Michele Gates
- 455th Expeditionary Operations Group
- Hulen Watkins
- 755th Expeditionary Mission Support Group
- Bret Reinhardt
- Sean Schuster
- Benjamin Kelly
- Kathleen Langley
- Robert Schwartz

- James Shelton
- Jon Stewart

Master Sergeants selectees

- 455th AEW
- Theresa Lex
- 455th EMSG
- Monty Willis
- Howard Bonham
- 455th EMXG
- Richard Howell
- Kenneth Sanders
- 755th EMSG
- Rodney Morris
- Samel Brown
- Ronald Stacy
- Theron Rumsey

Brief Bullets

Web site available to check VA theft status

All active-duty, Guard and Reserve Airmen can check the Air Force Personnel Center Web site at to see if their personal data was compromised in the Veterans Administration data theft. This is an additional effort on behalf of the Air Force to ensure affected Airmen are aware their information was compromised. For more information, visit afpc.randolph.af.mil.

USO goes wireless

The USO here has commercial wireless internet access for all those with wireless laptop computers.

Operations security should be in the forefront when people are surfing the web or sending photos home to family and friends, remind public affairs officials.

The USO is also seeking volunteers to help maintain the facility. If interested, visit the director.

Combat-Push suspended

Combat Push, which helps Airmen process out of Camp Cunningham, has been suspended until further notice. Large units that need to out-process must contact their unit travel monitor or first sergeant to arrange a special Combat Push. To schedule a Combat Push, call 231-4409.

Assignment programs stopped until Aug. 20

Air Force officials temporarily suspended the base of preference and the voluntary stabilized base assignment programs, in addition to follow-on and home-basing assignments requests until Aug. 20 because of upcoming authorization cuts, according to Air Force Personnel Center officials. Officials said Airmen may continue to apply, but the Air Force won't act on it until after Aug. 20 because manning projections could change based on the expected cuts. Short-notice follow-on and home-basing requests and first-term base of preference requests will be worked on a case-by-case basis.

For more information, call personnel center at DSN 665-2557, or e-mail afpc.randolph.af.mil.

-- "FLAG," continued from Page 2

tion, in making a better life for their people. They'd just as soon kill Afghan students as Americans. No doubt the trade school students live in fear.

However, the promise of a useful education overshadows the fear – makes it manageable. After weeks of studying, the students take a final test. If they pass, they earn a graduation certificate, in addition to a starter kit of supplies. For instance, auto mechanic graduates receive a tool kit to get them started.

All graduates also earn a certificate – a diploma, if you will.

It displays the Afghani flag on one side, the American flag on the other, along with

the graduate's name and course.

Awhile back, members of the PRT decided to remove the American flag from the certificate, for whatever reason.

The Afghan graduates didn't like that decision.

They insisted the American flag be returned to the certificate. They show that certificate with pride to everyone in town, including future employers.

To them, the American flag certifies that they indeed passed a difficult course offered by the Americans. The symbol of the flag states that the graduation certificate is backed by the United States of America.

In other words, the Afghan students are proud of the American flag.

ENDURING FAITH CHAPEL

Weekly services:

Muslim

Fridays 1800L (1330Z)

Jewish

Fridays 1930L (1500Z)

Seventh Day Adventist

Saturdays 0930L (0500Z)

Roman Catholic

Saturdays 1945L (1515Z)

Liturgical Protestant

Sundays 0830L (0400Z)

Protestant

Sundays 1130L (0700Z)

Latter Day Saints

Sundays 1300L (0830Z)

Church of Christ

Sundays 1400L (0930Z)

Korean Protestant

Sundays 1545L (1115Z)

Gospel

Sundays 1730L (1300Z)



If

it's flying over Afghanistan, Airman 1st Class Kyle Neill will be the first one to notice it.

That is, as long as he is on shift as a surveillance technician with the 73rd Expeditionary Air Control Squadron at Kandahar Airfield.

His job is to manage data as part of a two-man team in an operations module, containing screens and computers translating data from a radar antenna, which is constantly monitoring the skies over Operation Enduring Freedom.

The other part of that team is an air surveillance officer, either an air battle manager or an enlisted weapons director, and together they direct strike aircraft where they are needed and make sure civil and other military traffic stay a safe distance from ongoing combat operations.

The air surveillance officer relies on surveillance technicians to identify then establish contact with any aircraft flying over Afghan airspace, Airman Neill said.

"Usually, the surveillance technician is the first one to find everybody," said Staff Sgt. Rhiana Caldwell, the chief of all the surveillance technicians in the 73rd.

"If there's a troops in contact right in the middle of an air route, we get the air support there to support the troops, then coordinate with the civil air traffic control to clear the airspace," said Maj. T.J. Courtney, the 73rd EACS commander.

The controllers divide the entire country into grids. When airpower is employed they direct strike aircraft to the location and coordinate with civilian controllers to re-route other aircraft away from what becomes a restricted area.

The 73rd is a large squadron, designed to set up a working air traffic control system anywhere in the world. It boasts a whopping 24 Air Force specialty codes, the system that identifies career fields.

Despite the diverse career fields, the squadron's unity of effort is focused on monitoring the airspace via radar and sending that information to the Combined Air Operations Center in Southwest Asia so decision makers and commanders get a clear picture of the situation in the air.

"We're the only long-range radar for Afghanistan," said Capt. Eamon Jordan, the squadron's chief of maintenance. "We can tie into other air traffic control radars so we can also see their pictures."

With all of the specialized communica-



U.S. Air Force photo by Maj. David Kurle

Tech. Sgt. Ken Bosshard, right, and Staff Sgt. Charles Bina fix radio equipment used by the 73rd Air Control Squadron at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, June 3. Both sergeants are deployed from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany.

Squadron looks to skies of Afghanistan

by Maj. David Kurle
455th AEW public affairs

tions gear, radar and computers, not to mention generators and other heavy equipment, it's no wonder two-thirds of the people are dedicated to maintenance.

If equipment fails, the Airmen get it back on line as quickly as possible.

"When you're dealing with air traffic control and people getting shot up on the ground and a communications link goes down, we've got to fix it immediately," he said.

Equipment failures are the exception rather than the rule thanks to the constant,

preventative maintenance performed by the Airmen of the 73rd.

Staff Sgt. Kyle Brock, deployed here from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, is a computer maintenance technician whose job is to keep the three operations modules, or "boxes," running so the operators can do their job.

"It becomes kind of like our baby after a while," he said. "As long as we can keep them cool and clean they run fine."

The most dominating physical feature of the squadron is the large radar antenna, which rotates ceaselessly and is set apart from most of the equipment on top of a small hill.

According to Staff Sgt. Eric Haupt, a ground radar systems craftsman, it is the basis of everything the squadron does.

His task is to keep the radar functioning and make sure the high-voltage components inside stay dust-free, a daunting task in the Southwest part of Afghanistan, known for its dust storms.

"We provide the primary picture to the operations modules through fiber (optics)," he said. The radar is designed to filter out moving objects from stationary, background objects such as high terrain.

Everything is powered by generators that run on JP-8 jet fuel, and the 73rd has it's own power production specialists to keep those running.

The squadron is designed to go anywhere in the world, set up a working air traffic control system and make it run in any environment. Their know-how includes convoy and ground defense training, and the squadron runs pretty much autonomously no matter what situation it finds itself in.

The 73rd is set up apart from the main part at Kandahar, and the biggest chunk of its Airmen come from the 606th Air Control Squadron at Spangdahlem AB with augmentation from the 603rd ACS at Aviano Air Base, Italy, and Air National Guard units all over the US.

Every Airman in the 73rd considers their job vital to the war against extremists in Afghanistan, and rightly so.

Producing situational awareness of the airspace doesn't do anyone much good if it's not communicated to decision makers.

"Even though I'm not in a plane fighting the war, I'm taking care of the communications and you've got to have comm," said Tech. Sgt. Steven Hatcher, NCOIC of the tactical control systems.



Memories of father remain strong, even after 63 years

By Annette Crawford
Air Force Print News

SAN ANTONIO (AFP) — She hasn't seen her father since 1943, but the years have done nothing to lessen the admiration and love she feels for him.

"He's been gone 60-something years, but all my sister and I remember is a kind, sweet man," said Margaret Ramey Watkins, speaking of her father, Brig. Gen. Howard K. Ramey.

In January 1943, General Ramey took command of the 5th Bomber Command in New Guinea. The assignment was at Port Moresby on the southeastern shore of the island. The location was coveted by both sides in World War II due to its strategic location near the Coral Sea and South Pacific Ocean.

On March 26, 1943, the 47-year-old general flew a B-17 Flying Fortress from Port Moresby on a reconnaissance mission. The aircraft vanished over the Bismarck Sea. The general and his crew were declared missing in action.

Exactly nine years earlier, on March 26, 1934, then Captain Ramey had been one of 35 American military pilots from World War I who founded the National Order of the Daedalians, a fraternal order of military pilots.

General Ramey was one of four Daedalians honored at the "Spirit of Founders Ceremony" at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio May 27. Sponsored by the Daedalians' Stinsons Flight No. 2, the ceremony also honored Lt. Gen. Barney Giles, Maj. Gen. Warren Carter and Maj. Gen. Clements McMullen.

Mrs. Watkins was 10 when the pilots met at the Ramey home at Maxwell Field, Ala. She knew something special was happening.

"It was exciting; you could just feel it," she said. "All the men, of course, they knew each other so well. In the old air corps there were so few of them."

She still has the songbook that her father and his friends used at their home more than 70 years ago.

"They would gather in the evening and we would hear many of these songs," she said.

The historical significance of those times were lost on her until she grew older.

"I was just a little kid that people patted on the head and say, 'Hey little Margaret, aren't you a pretty little girl?'"

Paging through a historical book of the Daedalians, Mrs. Watkins looked at the list of the 35 founding members. Running her finger down the list, she read out some of the names with whom she was familiar.

"There was Beau and Blackburn (Capt. Lucus Beau and 1st Lt. Lloyd Blackburn). They were good friends of Dad's. And Eglin ... he painted my portrait that's in the back room." That was Capt. Frederick Eglin, namesake of the northwest Florida base.

Mrs. Watkins was born at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C.

"She's a southerner because she was born in the south wing," said her husband, retired Air Force Lt. Col. Miles Watkins. The colonel, a proud South Carolinian, is also a member of the Daedalians and served in the Air Force 28 years.

The couple, married 61 years, now live in Air Force Village I in San Antonio. From their apartment they have an expansive view of the Texas countryside — countryside where her father flew as a young pilot. One of her favorite stories about her father took place just a few miles from her present home.

"He was an instructor pilot at Kelly around 1925 and he sent one of his students off on his solo cross-country flight," she said.

"In the process of flying the designated route, he had engine trouble ... in those days the planes only had one engine.

"(The student pilot) landed in a pasture of cattle out in west Texas. I'd give anything to know where (that pasture) is. When he didn't appear for several hours, Dad went out after him.



U.S. Air Force photo By Tech. Sgt. Cecilio M. Ricardo Jr.

Margaret Ramey Watkins reminisces about the man in the portrait, her father, Brig. Gen. Howard K. Ramey.

"All the pilots then wore white scarves. When it was cold in the cockpit they'd wrap them around their faces. The student was waving his scarf and Dad saw him and landed," Mrs. Watkins said.

"He thought he had scared all the livestock away but this one steer changed its mind and ran in front of the plane, and he hit him and killed him. And Dad said when that old rancher came running up with a gun they knew they were in for it. You don't kill a man's cattle.

Mrs. Watkins laughed and said the rancher surprisingly didn't pay any attention to the dead steer.

"The rancher was so glad to have company — he was out in the middle of nowhere. He told Dad if he'd let him know when he was coming to visit he'd make sure the pasture was clear.

And so evidently he went out there a number of times. Dad said they used to play chess," she said. "He often brought back hot chili peppers.

"On his next to last visit, Dad told him he was being transferred, and that his next visit would be his last," she said.

"And so on his last visit, the old man gave him a set of handmade silver pilot's wings, with his name engraved on the back. I believe he had a silversmith on the property who made them.

Mrs. Watkins, now owner of the wings, held them up for view, the workmanship evident in the finely crafted pin.

"As a child I loved that story," she said. "It was just a good story he told and one I heard many a time."