



**Fighting Terror...**

**....Building Peace**

# Bagram Bullet

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## Air Force aids Army with medevacs Flight medics modify HH-60 Pave Hawks for new mission

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

**KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** – Tech. Sgt. Mark DeCorte still can't forget the blood. There was so much that it puddled up in the indents on the floor of the HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter.

At 1 a.m., May 26, a rocket propelled grenade hit an armored vehicle in Afghanistan's Panjwai area, injuring five Canadian soldiers. Normally, an Army medical evacuation unit would have picked up the injured Canadians, but since February, the Air Force has been helping the Army medevac wounded from the battlefield.

"I just can't seem to forget the blood," said Sergeant DeCorte, deployed from Minot Air Force Base, N.D. "I also had to figure out a way to get five guys into the helicopter."

Normally, the HH-60 Pave Hawk helicop-

**"MEDEVAC" continued on Page 3**



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

**Tech. Sgt. Mark DeCorte stands next to an HH-60 Pave Hawk that displays little feet, representing successful patient recoveries.**

## Engineers work to solve Kandahar problems

by Maj. David Kurle  
455 AEW Public Affairs

**KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** – Airmen deployed all over the world overcome obstacles every day in order to get the mission done.

Here in Southwest Afghani-

stan, two of those Airmen collaborated to build antennas for radio communications between pilots and a replacement air traffic control facility built here to improve airfield and flight operations.

When members of the 215th Engineering Installation Squadron, from the Washington Air

National Guard, arrived here in May, their task was to install new UHF and VHF radio antennas. After taking inventory of the parts that were delivered and what they needed to do, the engineers found they had the poles and antennas, but no way to mount the antennas to the poles.

That's when Master Sgt. Curtis Conner, the 215th team chief, turned to Master Sgt. Frank Swygert of the 451st Expeditionary Civil Engineer Flight, deployed here from Dover Air Force Base, Del.

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*Air Force turns to old standby to re-supply Soldiers throughout Afghanistan*

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“Through modification and ingenuity we were able to make it work because parts and hardware on this installation are hard to come by.”

Master Sgt. Curtis Conner, 215th Engineering Installation Squadron

#### “RADIO,” from Page 1

“Basically they came and said, ‘we have a problem,’” Sergeant Swygert said. “They had antennas to put up, but no mounting hardware, which no one realized until the stuff arrived.”

#### Missing parts

Not only was the mounting hardware missing, but so were the cross arms to hold the antennas, as well as braces to keep them stable.

As a CE flight, the 451st is tasked with airfield support, which means it’s not manned, nor equipped, for base support, which includes building structures and certainly not building mounts for radio antennas.

The first challenge was to find usable metal the team could use to fabricate parts for the antennas. At Kandahar, the exact parts needed for the project were not available, and relying on the supply system would take time they didn’t have.

“We kind of realized the situation they were in because we weren’t much better off ourselves,” Sergeant Swygert said. “About the time we were ready to give up we came up with an idea.”

Sergeant Conner scoured the base for the parts they

would need to build the mounts, crossbars and braces.

“One of our missing pieces was a water pipe found alongside the road,” Sergeant Conner said. “Through modification and ingenuity we were able to make it work because parts and hardware on this installation are hard to come by.”

The next obstacle was the lack of welding equipment, because it was obvious the parts would have to be fabricated from the metal they had by welding pieces together.

However, the CE flight did have an acetylene torch designed to cut metal.

Sergeant Swygert relied on his experience as a former civil engineer instructor and came up with a plan involving a technique called “Oxy-acetylene” or “gas” welding.

#### Forgotten skill

“Most people have not gas welded since they left tech school,” Sergeant Swygert said. “To be honest, if I hadn’t just gotten out of being an instructor and practicing it, we may not have even considered it.”

So using a piece of equipment designed to cut metal, rather than welding it together, Staff Sgt. Joseph Boll, also from the 451st CEF, and Sergeant



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

**Master Sgt. Frank Swygert cuts a piece of angle iron using an acetylene torch at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. The angle iron will be used as a brace for radio antennas at a new air traffic control facility.**

Swygert went to work fabricating the needed hardware.

“The cross bars were no problem, it was just a matter of cutting angle-iron,” he said. “The pole mounts however, those were a problem.”

To mount the antennas to the poles, Sergeant Swygert cut the 3 1/2-inch pipe found by the side of the road into sections. Then he cut those sections apart and spread the pipe so that the pipe would fit over the 4 1/2-inch antennas.

The procedure worked and the 215th EIS went to work constructing the antennas for the

new ATC facility.

“It took both of us, sitting down trying to come up with ideas, because we had limited resources here,” Sergeant Conner said. “I couldn’t have done it without the CE crew.”

Capt. Matt Altman, commander of the 451st CEF, said he is proud of the work his team has done while deployed here.

“They really have adapted and gotten creative in overcoming a lack of parts,” he said. “There’s something about this environment, troops just take whatever they’ve got and get the job done.”

#### Bagram Bulletin Editorial Staff, Disclaimer

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### “MEDEVAC,” from Page 1

ter will comfortably carry two, maybe three patients. Sergeant Decorte somehow crammed all five of them into the helicopter. He didn't want to leave any behind for fear the Taliban extremists would kill them.

The medevac crew safely carried the injured soldiers here, where most of Canada's 2,200 soldiers are based. Medics treated four of the injured and sent the fifth to Germany for further care.

### In-lieu-of mission

Last year, the Army asked the Air Force for help with its medevac operation. Called an in-lieu-of mission, the Air Force agreed to assist and tasked Master Sgt. Scott Currin to form the first team of Air Force enlisted aerospace evacuation technicians, or flight medics — as they like to call themselves.

Sergeant Currin, a senior flight medic at the Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine at Brooks City Base, Texas, knew the type of Airmen he needed on his team: ones with good flying skills, medics who specialized in treating trauma and people who could work in unique environments. Sergeant Currin found those traits in Sergeant DeCorte and Tech. Sgt. Shawn Bendixson, who deployed from Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.

“I knew I could trust them to do something that has never been done before by the Air Force,” Sergeant Currin said. “I didn't need someone who always needs to be told what to do.”

### Medevac vs. aerovac

The major difference between a medical evacuation, or medevac, and an aeromedical evacuation, or aerovac, is that medevac refers to moving patients from the point of injury, usually from the battlefield, to a nearby medical facility. The Army uses the UH-60Q, a specialized helicopter built on the Black Hawk's heritage. An aerovac refers to transporting patients via a fixed-wing aircraft, usually C-130 Hercules or C-17 Globemaster III, from a medical facility to a higher level of care.

The flight medics' first order of business was to get qualified to fly in a helicopter, which meant attending helicopter survival school in January. When they finished in February, they deployed here.

A medevac crew consists of two pilots, two gunners and a flight medic. Two of the flight medics are based here, while one is always deployed to a forward-operating location like Qalat or Tarin Kowt to stay close



U.S. Air Force courtesy photo

**Master Sgt. Scott Currin, right, gets ready to care for an injured Afghani caught in an ambush near Kandahar.**

**“It's like working in a broom closet as opposed to an auditorium. We've had to change the way we do business.”**

**Master Sgt. Scott Currin, lead flight medic**

to the action. They say when lives are in the balance, time is of the essence.

Because the Air Force doesn't normally carry out the medevac mission, it doesn't have a helicopter designed for that purpose. This meant the flight medics had to make do with what they had, the HH-60 Pave Hawk — a helicopter the Air Force uses for combat search and rescue missions. It, too, is a distant relative of the Army's Black Hawk.

“Our experience is with fixed-wing assets, like C-130s, and integrating to a rotary asset has been challenging,” Sergeant Currin said. “It's like working in a broom closet as opposed to an auditorium. We've had to change the way we do business.”

The flight medics have had to get accustomed to noisy, vibrating helicopters. They adapted their Air Force aeromedical evacuation medical equipment for use in the Pave Hawks. They found ways to secure their equipment, and they ran a cargo tie-down strap along the ceiling so they could grab hold of it to steady themselves when they have to lean over patients while wearing heavy body armor and other clunky equipment.

“The changes may sound rudimentary, but they really helped,” Sergeant Currin said.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Expeditionary Rescue Squad-

ron, deployed from Kadana Air Base, Japan, was the first squadron to have a combat-search-and-rescue mission and a medevac mission. They placed one HH-60 on alert to handle either task. More often than not, they used the alert aircraft for medevacs.

“This is my sixth deployment to the Middle East and fourth to Kandahar,” said Maj. John Mangan, the 33<sup>rd</sup> ERQS commander. “We've done five times as much work than in all the others combined. If we got 10 rescues in the other deployments, that was good. On this deployment, we're out every day, every night — sometimes four sorties a day. We escort the Army everywhere. When we fly with an Apache on our wing, let me tell you, that's pretty nice.”

Every time they successfully pick up a patient, the medevac crew paints a little foot on the side of their aircraft. During four months, medevac aircrews have painted 135 feet on their aircraft.

That equates to 30 percent of all medevac missions in Afghanistan. Not bad, considering the Air Force only has three aircrews on call.

“I have been blessed to be able to come out here and do something that has never been done with a team I was allowed to select,” Sergeant Currin said.



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

## Learning their future

**Afghan children and their teacher hold the tools of their trade at the Qalat Provincial Reconstruction Team's Trade School in Qalat, Afghanistan. The trade school teaches rug weaving, a skill that is becoming rare here because of this country's quarter century of war.**

# Air Force, Army agree on plans for joint cargo aircraft

by Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez  
Air Force Print News

**WASHINGTON (AFPN)** — With the signing of a memorandum of agreement June 20, the vice chiefs of staff of the Air Force and Army have agreed on a way ahead for converging the service's independent acquisition programs for a joint cargo aircraft.

Both the Air Force and the Army independently pursued options for a smaller cargo aircraft to fly intratheater airlift missions. In late 2005, the Department of Defense directed the Army's "Future Cargo Aircraft" program and the Air Force's "Light Cargo Aircraft" program be merged into the single "Joint Cargo Aircraft" program.

The agreement, signed by Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. John D. W. Corley and Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Richard A. Cody, spells out how the two services will pursue the new joint program and how each service will use their version of the aircraft.

In March 2005, the Joint Requirements Oversight Council approved the Army's Initial Capabilities Document. That document identified the Army's capability gap in organic airlift. Brig. Gen. Andrew S. Dichter, Air Force deputy director for joint integration, said the JROC recognizes the joint cargo

aircraft as a good option to fill the Army's organic airlift need and the Air Force's requirement to provide intratheater airlift in support of all Services. The memorandum of agreement, he said, is an important next step in filling both service's missions.

"They believe (the joint cargo aircraft) is an important capability to fill Army's organic lift," he said. "And for the Air Force we have an intratheater capability gap looming.

"So the bottom line is we are here together to tell you, our two services recognize the importance of this mission, we are working together collaboratively and it is an important event today to reach this agreement," General Dichter said.

In the agreement, the Air Force and Army agree on key components of how the program will be run, to include roles and missions, command and control, sustainment, doctrine, standardization and training and integrated testing.

Part of the memorandum of agreement defined the roles of the JCA within each service. For the Army, the aircraft will provide intratheater organic airlift.

"The Army's Future Cargo Aircraft's primary mission is on-demand transport of time-sensitive/mission-critical cargo and key personnel to forward deployed Army units

operating in a joint operations area," the agreement reads.

The document also outlined the Army's version could be used as part of the "common user pool," that is, to serve all services in theater, if it were not being used specifically to support Army organic airlift needs.

For the Air Force, the aircraft will provide the service with the capability to provide intratheater airlift full time as part of the common user pool.

The agreement also states that the Air Force and the Army will develop a joint training strategy to ensure both Air Force and Army crew members receive standardized initial training on the aircraft.

The joint cargo aircraft will be a small aircraft developed for both the Army and the Air Force. It will be smaller than the Air Force's C-130 Hercules, but larger than the Army's C-23 Sherpa. Most likely, the aircraft will be a variant of an aircraft already available in the civilian sector and the manufacturer will modify it for military use.

The Air Force and Army will initially purchase 145 of the aircraft, with the Army taking 75 and the Air Force taking 70. Additional purchases of the aircraft will be determined once the on-going analysis of alternatives is complete in summer 2007.



## Brief Bullets

### Tops in Blue to perform July 1

The Tops in Blue will perform in the Bagram MWR Clam Shell at 1930L July 1.

### Services July events

All events begin at 1900L, unless otherwise noted.

<b>Today</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>
Bingo	Fourth of July festivities
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
Texas Hold'em	Texas Hold'em
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>
Pizza & movie	Dominoes
<b>Monday</b>	
Madden 06 Tournament, 1800L	

### A-10 tour open to all

Everyone is invited to tour and take pictures of an A-10 Thunderbolt II at 1100L Saturday, July 1. If interested, meet at the USO.

### AF accepting physician assistant applications

The Air Force is taking applications from active-duty enlisted Airmen for Physician Assistant Phase I training classes beginning in January, April and August 2008.

Completed applications must arrive at HQ AFPC/DPAMW, 550 C Street West, Suite 27, Randolph AFB TX 78150-4729 by Jan. 26.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be on active duty in the grades of E-3 through E-8 with a minimum of two years and a maximum of 14 years active military service as of Aug. 31, 2008.

- Meet age limitations specified in Air Force Instruction 36-2005 for appointment as second lieutenants in the biomedical sciences corps.

- Must take the Scholastic Aptitude Test within four years of the board date, with a minimum math score of 450 and a composite score of no less than 950 in the old version or a minimum composite score of 1,425 in the newer version.

- Have a minimum general score of 80 points on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery or Air Force Classification Test.

- Sixty semester hours of transferable college credits and a grade point average of 2.5 or better on a 4.0 scale.

For more information, contact the local military personnel flight, or visit the Air Force Military Personnel Web site.



Photo by Senior Airman Brian Ferguson

### Phase dock

Senior Airman Damon Johnson, left, and Staff Sgt. Shannon Hughes, 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron aero repair, work on an A-10 Thunderbolt II in a phase dock here.



By Maj. David Kurle  
455 AEW public affairs

## Air Force turns to old standby for Army re-supply

**T**he U.S. military has turned to an old work horse as the delivery method for supplies and humanitarian cargo needed to sustain Operation Enduring Freedom.

The C-130 Hercules has

been around, in one form or another, since the 1950s. It is now the aircraft of choice for inter-theater airlift in Afghanistan where the U.S. Army is conducting operations from far-flung outposts and forward operating bases in some of the toughest

terrain on the planet.

The last time the "Herc" crews flew combat airdrops on this level was the Vietnam War.

"It's the perfect tool to use in this theater," said Lt. Col. Mike Feeley, a C-130 navigator deployed to the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron here from the Delaware Air National Guard's 142nd Airlift Squadron.

"We're flying short, inter-theater airlift missions to unimproved airstrips and small drop zones."

The 774th is an amalgam of Airmen from six Air National Guard units from Texas, Delaware, Alaska, Tennessee, Rhode Island and Michigan, as well as two active-duty units from Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, and Yokota Air Base, Japan.

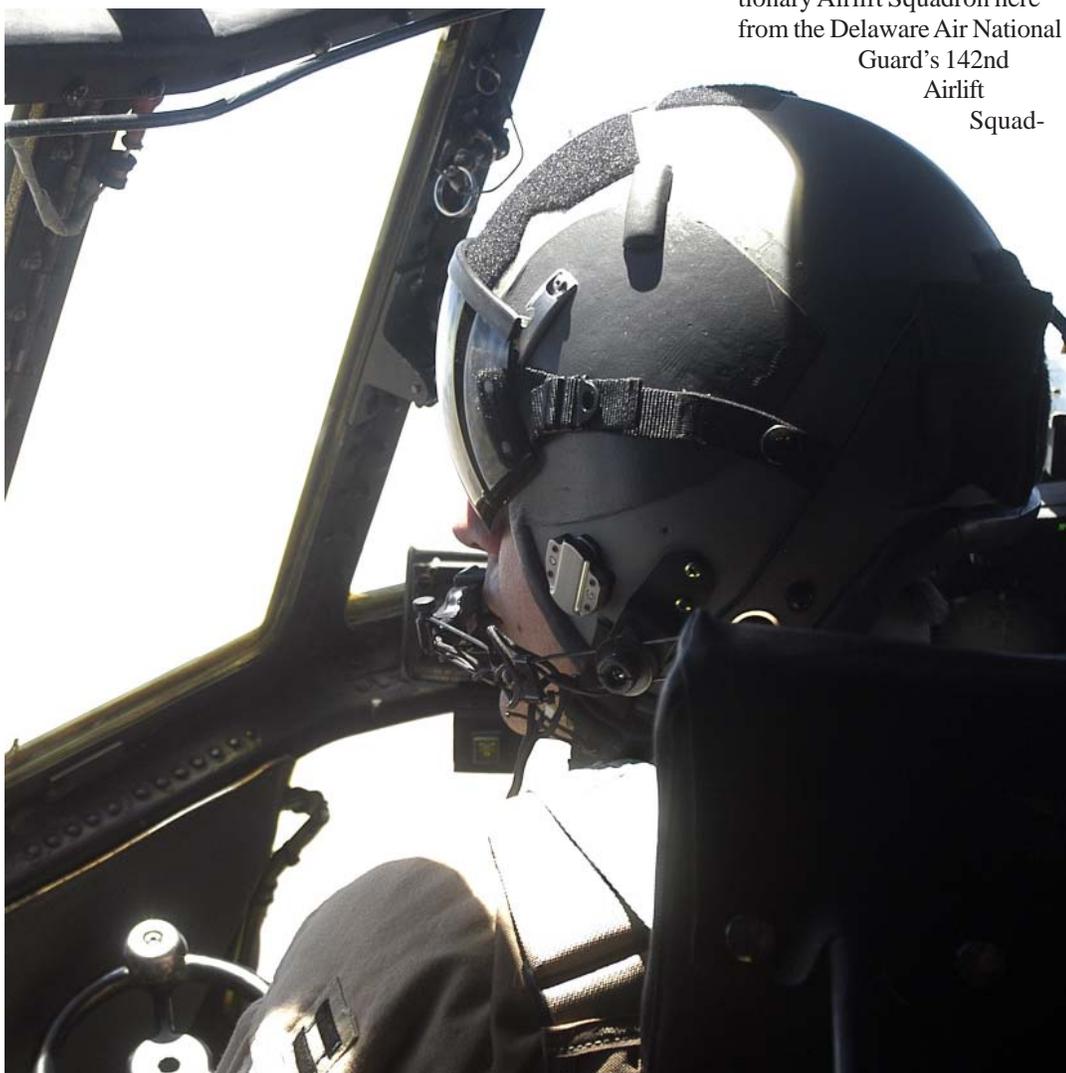
"The C-130 is not out here to support the Air Force," said Lt. Col. Blake Gettys, commander of the 744th EAS and a C-130 pilot. "It's here to support the Army, the troops on the ground."

"We have not worked so closely with the Army since Vietnam," he said.

Since early 2006, C-130 crews in the 774th have airlifted and airdropped thousands of supplies, some of it falling from the sky in the form of container delivery system bundles weighing 1,200 to 2,300 pounds.

"Soldiers are operating from forward operating bases throughout Afghanistan that are not located near established road ways or airstrips because of the remoteness and ruggedness of the terrain," said Army Chief Warrant Officer Cortez Frazier, the senior airdrop technician for the Joint Logistics Command in Afghanistan.

"This necessitates the need for airdrops of crucial supplies, such as ammunition, food and water to the Soldiers fighting the war on terrorism and humanitarian civil assistance materials for



U.S. Air Force photo Maj. David Kurle

**Capt. Andrew Sides scans for another aircraft while flying a C-130 Hercules on a combat mission over Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Captain Sides is a pilot in the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, and is deployed from the Delaware Air National Guard.**

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## “C-130,” continued from Page 6

use by Afghan civilians,” he said.

Most C-130 crew members will agree that the terrain provides one of the biggest challenges to flying missions over Afghanistan.

“You’ve got to be on the top of your game here,” Colonel Feeley said. “You use everything you’ve learned in the 130.”

And C-130 crews have learned a lot in the past few years.

“Our unit was activated in March 2003 and we’ve been continuously going to Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom for three years,” Colonel Feeley said. “As long as the Army’s out in the field, the 130’s going to be here.”

The crews’ combat experiences in recent years are coupled with the overall experience of the aviators in the Guard units that make up the 774th.

“That’s one of the nice things the Guard offers is the experience level,” said Colonel Gettys, a Guardsman himself from the 144th AS, part of the Alaska Air National Guard. “We have people who have been around this airplane for 30 years.”

This means most of the Guardsmen leave civilian jobs behind and volunteer for deployments overseas.

“We’ve got firemen, school teachers, just wide variety of people,” Colonel Gettys said, noting that more than eight airlines are represented among the 774th’s aircrews.

One of those leaving behind her life as a student is Staff Sgt. Kelly Ward, a C-130 loadmaster, also with the 144th from Alaska. Unlike a lot of her comrades, this is her first deployment to a combat zone.

“At the end of the day, when you’re tired, it’s a good feeling knowing our guys got what they needed in the way of supplies,” she said. “I’m glad I got to be a part of this mission, it’s good experience and it’s what we train for, so it’s good to finally put our training to use.”

And with each airdrop or cargo delivery Sergeant Ward carries that experience forward with her to the next mission.

“I don’t have to worry about sending any crew on any mission and wonder about mission success,” Colonel Gettys said. “We do not cherry-pick crews for certain missions.”

This is good news for Soldiers waiting for supplies on the ground.

“There will probably be a C-130 here that takes home the last Army Soldier,” Colonel Feeley said.



U.S. Air Force photos Maj. David Kurle

**Lt. Col. Mike Feeley makes calculations for an airdrop while sitting in a C-130 on the ground at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Colonel Feeley is a navigator deployed to the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron from the Delaware Air National Guard.**



**Tech. Sgt. Carlos Zapata watches as eight container delivery system bundles fall from a C-130 Hercules during a combat air drop over Afghanistan June 19. Sergeant Zapata is a loadmaster deployed to the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.**



## The price of war is high

by Master Sgt. Todd Sieleman  
455<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Maintenance Group

I stood on a street corner, on my way to lunch, and saw two young soldiers passing by. Maybe I am strange, or maybe I'm blessed, but I sometimes stop and look at someone, anyone in particular, and question who they are or what life may have presented them.

This was the case with these two. And being Father's Day I wondered who their fathers were, where they were, and what thoughts or fears they may be having with their sons serving in a war zone. I then began to look at the two through a father's eye.

In one, I saw a little boy, who from the earliest age, was always quiet and calm and contented. He never fussed, never complained, he would simply go about his way with an easy-go attitude and simply enjoy life. He was one who always did as he was asked. If ever a brother or sister would ask for a glass of water, or whatever, he would do so with never so much as a question or a vision of imposition. He never made a sound or complication except when, as a three year-old, he coated the kitten from head to toe with baby lotion, or the time he attempted to place the same kitten in the microwave. I also saw him as a child chasing a soccer ball around the backyard for hours and hours on end and a father coming home from work to join him. I saw this same father standing proudly on the sidelines as the boy competed successfully in high school competition.

In the other I saw a boy who, while grow-

ing up, was the social glue of his family. Outgoing and confident, he was the one who found humor in almost every situation, was as quick-witted as can be imagined and kept his family in stitches. This one had leadership and placement in the family where his brothers and sisters unquestioningly played the games he wanted to play. This one was the heart and soul of his family.

In both boys I saw an obvious sense of duty and a desire to serve a purpose for the greater good without consideration of personal sacrifice. And I saw two families that molded and produced this quality.

I stood on the street corner today, on my way to lunch, and saw two young soldiers passing by. My M-16, un-slung from my shoulder, rested in my right hand butt end on the ground. As they passed the command was given and I positioned my weapon in line with my chest, parallel with my body, in a position of attention in an armed salute. Those standing at attention on my left and right, armed with handguns, rendered a hand salute as did those on their left and right, and their left and right, and so on -- rendering armed or hand salutes -- as far as one could see.

As the procession of vehicles carrying two American boys in flag-draped coffins passed by me at a crawl, I realized -- it's Father's Day...

The price of war is high; the benefit immeasurable; and with this enemy, the need required.

"Better to fight for something, than to die for nothing," Gen. George S. Patton once said.

## General North sends 4th of July message

By Lt. Gen. Gary L. North  
Commander, 9th Air Force  
and U.S. Central Command  
Air Forces

This week we will be celebrating America's 230th year as an independent nation. As we remember the past and honor those Soldiers who fought for our freedom, I often wonder what the common soldier thought when he heard that Congress had declared independence. The thought that comes to my mind, and many historians, is that those soldiers must have realized they were no longer fighting for their rights as English citizens



Lt. Gen. Gary L. North

but for the rights and privileges that come with being a free and independent nation.

Today's Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines are also fighting for independence. However, it is for the independence of two other nations, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The people in both Iraq and Afghanistan are struggling to maintain their freedom from oppression and fear -- the type of oppression and fear caused by terrorists.

They have already defied the terrorists by forming a national government, holding public elections and continuing to rebuild their lives. This is a fight they cannot win on their own. We must help them to create

stable nations. This is a fight that we must win for both the people of Iraq and Afghanistan.

As we celebrate our independence, remember that we in 9th Air Force and U.S. CENTAF are fighting everyday for the freedom of other nations; you are spending this holiday away from home in the U.S. Central Command area of operations, and many others are supporting the warfighting effort from their home stations.

You are the heroes of today like those Soldiers who fought for our independence 230 years ago. With tremendous pride, I thank you.



# We should reflect on more than just our independence

by Chief Master Sgt.  
Brian Hornback  
455<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary  
Maintenance Group

Afghanistan — What will you be doing this independence day? That probably depends on who you are. As professional Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines currently deployed to Bagram, many of us will probably go about our day just like any other.

We'll put on a uniform and go to work doing the hundreds of vital jobs that we do every day.

Most of us will work somewhere near 12 hours, some more. We will probably get a break or two to run to the dining facility, inhale a meal and quickly return to the job to make sure we do our share. And most of us will put a smile on and be professional in every task because that is what we do.

However, somewhere in the midst of the myriad of tasks we have to do, I think we need to take a moment and consider what others around the world might be doing July 4. Our families will probably celebrate our American independence with some sort of picnic or barbecue. They will have time to relax and watch the kids play in the yard. Maybe some of them will catch a ballgame or go play at the nearby lake. However, you won't be there to share in their celebration because you're here defending freedom. Both you and your families are sharing in that sacrifice.

In many places, the celebrations will center not

only on the history of our nation, but also on the sacrifices made by this great nation's military members to preserve the freedoms we uphold as rights, not privileges. So far I haven't stated anything most of you don't already know, but sometimes it's good to look at the obvious, and sometimes it's good to look a little deeper.

You see, at other places in the world whole countries are doing the same thing you are on the Fourth of July. They get up and go to work. They may choose to go to a church or watch a futbol (soccer) game, but most will not celebrate the Fourth as Independence Day like your friends and family at home. Although they may not recognize it, whole nations will benefit from the strength and commitment of men and women like you who protect and defend the United States. They will receive the gift of a commitment to the ideals of freedom that U.S. forces all over the globe present to them every day.

So on this Independence Day, I invite you all to take a moment and be proud of the commitment you've made to those freedoms our friends and families experience every day. I also invite you to gratefully accept the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of our parents and grandparents who ensured those freedoms for us and for so many other nations.

Today it is our turn to assist a nation in its quest for basic human rights and freedoms. We have to opportunity to allow the



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

**Tech. Sgt. Paul Hanson and Tech. Sgt. David Steidley raise a 13-star American flag above the flightline here June 26. Both sergeants are deployed from the 442nd FW at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo, and are both avionics technicians.**

Afghan people the freedom to educate their children, to voice concern for families, to choose a course in life, and to determine a future course for their own country.

While we can't guarantee that some day the people of Afghanistan will celebrate their own independence day, we can guarantee that we will remain committed to the love of freedom and the elimination of those would take it from us. We can guarantee that those who attack the freedoms we cherish and who prevent others from grasping those freedoms will not freely destroy what others have fought to protect.

So on this Indepen-

dence Day, I invite you to take a moment to reflect on the freedoms we have earned and the freedoms you provide — not only to your friends and family back home, but to nations all over the world. Then take a moment to be proud and accept the gratitude of our nation on behalf of all those around the world whose freedom we protect.

And finally I invite you to put a smile on, go to work, and remember to share that gratitude by saying thanks to your brothers and sisters in arms who share your commitment to ensuring the safety of our nation and the growth of freedom in all nations.



## Horrible past should teach us lessons for future

**By Tech. Sgt. Corey Miller**  
455<sup>th</sup> Air Expeditionary Wing Anti-terrorism officer

It's a dangerous world we live in.

It's the 23th anniversary of the Marine barracks bombing in Beirut, Lebanon.

It's the 10th anniversary of the bombing of Kobar Towers in Saudi Arabia.

Five years ago, the World Trade Center towers were destroyed by suicide bombers.

Each of these terrorist acts changed the world, in one way or another.

Many believe the Marine barracks bombing was the first time terrorists used suicide bombers. A delivery truck crashed through a fence, then a gate, and ended up in the lobby of the Marine headquarters building. According to one Marine, the driver was smiling as he sped past him. The driver detonated the equivalent of 12,000 pounds of dynamite. In the end, 241 service members were dead — the largest single-day death toll for the U.S. Marine Corps since Battle of Iwo Jima.

At Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia, a security policeman noticed two white-robed men wearing traditional red-and-white checkered headdresses get out of a truck and run to

a car. The tanker truck, packed with an estimated 5,000 pounds of plastic explosives, blasted the face off Bldg. 131. It left behind a crater 35 feet by 85 feet. It also changed the way the Air Force viewed anti-terrorism.

As for the World Trade Center — again a first — terrorists used civilian airliners as bombs in the deadliest attack on U.S. soil in the history of the America.

In each of these attacks, America learned something. However, as time goes by, people tend to forget the lessons learned.

Airmen also become complacent.

Because Camp Cunningham is a compound, inside a compound, Airmen wonder why they need to practice force protection. This type of thinking is dangerous — ask a Marine who was in Beirut that fatal day 23 years ago, or an Airman who survived Kobar Towers. They, too, thought they were safe.

Airmen may not know when, where, or how the next terrorist attack is going to happen, but there are things they can do.

☛ Be ever vigilante. Force protection is everyone's business. Look for things that are out of the ordinary — strange vehicles, unattended boxes, unescorted visitors.

☛ You are a target every day of your

tour here. Ensure you know where the nearest bunker is in relation to your duty section and your living area. Like a fire drill, you should automatically know where to go in the case of an emergency.

☛ Mum's the word. When you go to the dining facilities, do you find yourself and your friends talking about what just went on at the job site? Providing something as simple as the amount of time it takes for an aircraft to reach a location can aid in the enemy's planning.

☛ Trash is an information source. Make sure to shred everything you can because not everything gets burned. For proof of this just drive the perimeter and you will see a lot of trash which, due to the wind, has been lifted from the burn pit and now sits on the outside of the perimeter fence.

Force protection starts with the individual.

Understanding the threat and practicing your protective measures is the key. For a start, think about your daily activities and find just one thing you can do to improve your force protection awareness.

It's a dangerous world we live in — especially when you live in a war zone.



A competitor prepares to lift during a bench press competition held here Sunday.

U.S. Air Force photos by Master Sgt. Orville F. Desjarlais Jr.

## Wing holds bench press competition

They were canvas-to-canvas in the Camp Cunningham fitness tent Sunday to witness the rotation's first bench press competition.

Twenty-four competitors, both men and women, from different services entertained the crowd as they tried to out-lift their opponents.

First-place winners included:

Name	Pounds lifted
Nina Lawson	45
Amanda Kokk	125
Gregory Gottfried	265
John Cisneros	315
Curtis Rocke	365
Jaron Romine	385



U.S. Marine Amanda Kokk lifts 125 pounds to place first in her weight category.

## Air Force cadet places second at U.S. track, field championships

6/26/2006 - INDIANAPOLIS (AFPN) — With a throw of 183 feet, 9 inches, a recent U.S. Air Force Academy graduate concluded her collegiate career with a second-place showing at the U.S. Track and Field Championships June 23 in Indianapolis.

Finishing second out of 17 athletes,

Dana Pounds posted the best throw by a collegiate athlete and out-distanced the third-place finisher by more than 12 feet.

The newly commissioned second lieutenant opened the rotation with a throw of 172 feet, 7 inches, before recording near-matching distances of 169 feet, 4 inches and 169 feet, 11 inches.

As one of eight contenders to advance to the next round, Pounds tallied a toss of 170 feet, 5 inches, before posting the second-best throw of the night at 183 feet, 9 inches. She closed out the evening with 164 feet, 7 inches, and was one of three athletes to successfully complete all eight attempts.



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

Air Force Capt. Matthew Polus sits on a Navy EA-6B Prowler before takeoff from here, June 15. Captain Polus is an electronic countermeasures officer with the VAQ 133 Wizards. Air Force and Navy crewmembers perform Prowler missions, supporting ground troops in Afghanistan.



## On the prowl

Left, Air Force Capt. Matthew Polus walks a Navy EA-6B Prowler, checking it before he goes on a mission. Below, Navy EA-6B Prowler crewmembers perform pre-flight checks before take-off.

