
Bagram News Express



Fighting Terror, Building Peace

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The Preservation of Freedom

By Maj. Jason Beck
455 Expeditionary Security
Forces Squadron commander

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — How would you explain to someone why we are here? Why America would send us tens of thousands of miles from home to work in a hot, dusty, location like Afghanistan. How would you explain it to an insurgent who trains everyday in the hopes of slowing down our efforts?

Our wing commander, Brig. Gen. Mike Holmes, makes the point that we are here fighting the Global War on Terrorism to bring

the fight into the terrorist's backyard. Quite true. Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations still plan and explore, looking for America's weak points. The citizens of the United States depend on us to ensure the fight doesn't take place in their backyards.

Others explain why we're here differently. Government officials, the media, and celebrities discuss how the world's greatest powers are all on the same side fighting terrorism. I would say the reason we are here, away from our families and loved ones, is to preserve the freedom of the very families and loved ones we leave behind.

“free people will not tolerate terrorist actions or threats against our freedom”

We are here for the right reasons; we are here so the citizens of Iraq and Afghanistan and numerous other countries can experience the same freedoms you and I take for granted everyday. Others can speak big words about what we're doing, but it all comes down to this...free people will not tolerate

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Improvements target Laghman morale

By Master Sgt. James Law
455 Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

LAGHMAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan — A genuine caring attitude drives the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Airmen who continuously work to improve the MWR facilities and events for Airmen and Soldiers here.

Assigned to the Laghman Provincial Reconstruction Team, two of the three MWR Airmen arrived in March to discover a facility infrequently used with no activities or events to entertain the base's occupants.

“On average we had about five to 10 people here a day,” said Staff Sgt. Beverly Simpson, Laghman PRT MWR deployed from Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

Disappointed, the two Airmen began to work on providing more for the roughly 500 service members

here, including approximately 200 Airmen and Soldiers they had spent the previous two months with during combat skills training at Fort Bragg, N.C.

“The first thing we did was clean,” said Sergeant Simpson. “We cleaned and cleaned and cleaned for about a day and a half.”

Tech. Sgt. Diane Schmitt, Laghman PRT MWR deployed from McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., explained once they finished cleaning, they spent the next six weeks painting, laying down new floors, building book shelves and setting up equipment and programs in the four-room building.

One of the programs established was a “free” exchange. Items ranging from snacks to toiletries are taken from care packages sent from various organiza-

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Wing recognizes promotees, award winners

By Capt. Toni Tones

455 Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRBASE, Afghanistan – Members of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing honored the Wing's newest promotees, top performers and outstanding contributor during the monthly recognition ceremony here June 2.

The newly-appointed NCOs and one senior NCO in attendance were administered their respective charges by members of the 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group.

The June promotees were:

To Airman 1st Class: Joel Barrott and Katie Eubanks.

To Senior Airman: Ross Ascani, Max Muessig, Brian Wagner, Lisa Weaver, Ashley Leduc, Amelia Hadrava, Ricardo Garcia and Ryan Darland.

To Staff Sergeant: Karel McWhite, David Betka, Nathaniel Hensley, Patrick Huey, Jr., Stephanie Shultz, and Audrea Williams.

To Technical Sergeant: Jason A. Carlson, Terrance Hathway, Yvonne Thomas, Jessica Gill, Victor Malone, Brian Miyamoto and Michelle Spencer.

To Master Sergeant: James Law Jr.

To Senior Master Sergeant: Alvin Glover.

To First Lieutenant: Art Davidson

To Captain: Bobby A. Cheek, Marchello Graddy, Mario Tellez, George Haka, and William Selber.

The Wing also recognized its best of the best for outstanding contributor outside the wing and the Top Performers in the Airman, NCO, Senior NCO, CGO and civilian categories for May. The winners in their respective category were:

Outstanding Contributor: Staff Sgt. Jeffery L. Havens, 19th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron

Airman of the Month: Airman 1st Class Bernardo T. Acosta, 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group

NCOs of the Month: Tech. Sgt. John F. Dzoik, 755th Air Expeditionary Group and Staff Sgt. Jeffrey R. Fluck, 455th EMSG

Senior NCO of the Month: Master Sgt. Michael P. White, 451st Air Expeditionary Group

CGO of the Month: 1st Lt. Mark C. Phillips, 755th AEG

Civilian of the Month: Greg D. Schlenz, 755th AEG

News Briefs

MUSIC NIGHTS

Stop by the Camp Cunningham Recreation Tent to listen to your favorite genre of music...there's something for everyone. R&B Music Night is Friday at 2100L/1630Z. Country Music Night is Sunday at 1800L/1330Z. Salsa Night is Monday at 2030L/1600Z.

COMBAT O

Combat Orientation is Thursday at 0900Z/1330L at the Enduring Freedom Chapel. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Air Field. Newcomers must attend the briefing within a week of their arrival. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the 1st Sergeants at the end of the Week.

COMBAT PUSH

Combat Push times are Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Camp Cunningham Rec Tent from 0900L/0430Z to 1000L/0530Z. Services, Comm and PERSCO will be available to sign outprocessing checklists. Personnel must complete your Post Deployment Health Questionnaire on-line and pick up your medical records at Flight Medicine/Public Health before coming to Combat Push. For more information call 431-4409.

ATTENTION ALL JUNIOR NCOS

The Bagram AF Route 5/6 meets Thursdays at 1800L/1330Z at Camp Cunningham's Town Hall. The meetings are open to all staff sergeant selects, staff sergeants and tech sergeants. Contact Tech Sgt. Scott Snedeker, 431-4404 or Staff Sgt. Tamesha Cobb, 431-4404 for more information.

BAGRAM AIRFIELD FLIGHTLINE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron reminds all service members that the Bagram Airfield flightline is a "controlled area" and all personnel require either specific inclusion on a certified entry authorization list (EAL), a restricted area badge issued by the 455 ESFS Pass & Registration section, or an authorized escort. Additionally, personnel driving vehicles onto the flight line must have both a restricted area badge and an authenticated AF Form 483 (Flightline Driving Competency Card) on their person to enter. For additional questions or concerns, please contact Air Force Security Forces operations at 481-6018.

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terrorist actions or threats against our freedom.

During the deliberation phase of the trial for the “Liberty City 7,” a group who allegedly plotted to destroy the Sears Tower, the judge reportedly mentioned several things that really put our being here into perspective.

He mentioned this group was considered a terrorist organization. “We as Americans are not afraid of you. We Americans have been through the fire before, and prevailed. You are not enemy combatants. You are terrorists. You are not soldiers in any war. You are a ter-

rorist. To give you that reference, to call you soldiers, gives you far too much stature. And we do not negotiate with terrorists. We do not sign documents with terrorists. We hunt them down one by one and bring them to justice. You’re no big deal.”

The judge went on to say he figured out what it is that the “Liberty City 7” and others like them hate the most about Americans. “You hate our freedom, our individual freedoms. Our individual freedoms to live as we choose, to come and go as we choose, to believe or not believe as we individually choose. The world is not going to long remember what you or I say here. Day after tomorrow it will be for-

gotten. See that flag? That’s the flag of the United States of America. That flag will fly here long after this is all forgotten. That flag stands for freedom.”

The judge wasn’t providing judicial commentary, but was speaking from the heart and soul of a free person on this planet. When the days here get long, you forget why you are here, and you miss your family and home, reach into your own heart and soul and come up with your own words. Just like the judge did when he was on duty.

Imagine standing eyeball-to-eyeball with one of the “Liberty City 7,” or any terrorist for that matter. What would you tell them?

The USAFCENT Band “Falcon” is scheduled to perform throughout Bagram Air Field June 20 through June 22.

The USAFCENT Band is the first permanently assigned Air Force band to the AFCENT Area of Responsibility. Based in Southwest Asia, the band is comprised of deployed Airmen from Active Duty, Reserve and Air National Guard bands. These dynamic musicians perform and tour in small ensembles throughout the AOR to positively promote troop morale, diplomacy and outreach to host nation communities.

The AFCENT Band has several ensembles that perform a wide variety of musical styles to appeal to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. “Falcon” is a nine-member band that performs American hits from the last 30 years ... classic rock, alternative, pop, jazz, R&B and country.

USAFCENT PRESENTS

U.S. AIR FORCE
ABOVE ALL.

FALCON

The Best in
Rock, Pop,
and Country

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tions and neatly categorized on the shelves in a room shared with a library of paperback books.

Another room was converted to a movie and entertainment lounge where large couches and chairs sit back-to-back in the center of the room evenly dividing the four flat-screen televisions mounted on the walls.

“Once we started getting everything in order and finished painting, I set up (game stations) on the four TVs we have,” said Sergeant Simpson.

One of the remaining rooms, and the largest room, contains two pool tables, a pingpong table, two card tables and a couple refrigerators stocked with cold refreshments. Previously, the pool tables and pingpong table were not used because there were no balls, but while cleaning, Sergeants Simpson and Schmitt found both and put them to use.

“When I arrived here, I was very impressed with what I saw,” said Staff Sgt. Laura Dewey, Laghman PRT MWR deployed from Minot Air Force Base, N.D. “I didn’t arrive until about 4 weeks after they did, so I didn’t see how it was before. But I saw pictures and from what I can tell, they have done a great job.”

With a facility now capable of entertaining a large number of troops, a variety of activities and events were incorporated.

“We started all the tournaments: volleyball, pingpong, pool, spades, hearts, and horseshoes,” said Sergeant Schmitt.

Sergeant Schmitt added they



Tech. Sgt. Diane Schmitt, Staff Sgt. Beverly Simpson and Staff Sgt. Laura Dewey (from left to right), Laghman PRT MWR, stand outside the morale, welfare and recreation building here. The three Airmen have continuously worked on improving both the building and the events and activities. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. James Law)

“They are always trying to improve and ask us for ideas to make it better”

extended the hours of operation on Saturday nights for a ‘poker, pool and darts night’ during the summer months. The prize if you win one of the weekly tournaments is a traveling trophy that each winner gets to sign and keep for the week as well as their photo in the dining facility.

There are also weekly social barbecues and a monthly birthday party for everyone who celebrates a birthday during the month. Recently, the Soldiers and Airmen took up donations to pay for the birthday cake, but previously Sergeant Schmitt bought the ingredients and baked the cakes.

“They are always trying to improve and ask us for ideas to make it better,” said Army Staff Sgt. Jean Dugrot, a movement NCO for Golf Battery, 4th Battalion, 319th Air-

borne Field Artillery Regiment. “They take everything into consideration. It keeps the morale high.”

Their desire to assist and make things better is not confined to the boundaries of the base.

“We had a meeting with three of the local women and we are trying to introduce them to canning,” said Sergeant Dewey. “It’s just another idea that may help them prepare for the winter.”

Sergeant Dewey said they also organized a donation drive to get six sewing machines from an American-based company for local widows.

“These sewing machines were donated with the goal of using them to start businesses to support their families,” said Sergeant Dewey.

Whether assisting the local community or improving the morale, welfare and recreation for the troops here, these Airmen are just another example of Airmen contributing to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan.