
Bagram News Express



Fighting Terror, Building Peace

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Awarding the Purple Heart

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Task Force Med
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BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – There is a flurry of activity around the bed side. The Soldier, Sailor, Airman, or Marine is being cleaned up and covered the best they can be. Several of their comrades are present, along with their medical care givers and the ever-present chaplain. The commanding general walks in with a small group of Soldiers, the command sergeant major and aides.

A conversation begins, if possible, between the commanding general and the wounded U.S. service member. Many times there is no two-way conversation because the patient has just come out of surgery or has a tube down his throat and is sedated because

of the pain or the injury. Even if they are unconscious, he talks to them anyway, because sometimes even in that state they can remember hearing his voice. If he is able to, the wounded warrior tells his story - improvised explosive device blast, rocket propelled grenade attack, small arms fire, rooting out the bad guys in a building or cave, or shooting it out on a street or roadside. The general listens intently, comments on the action and tells the wounded warrior how the big picture turned out that day.

Depending on the injury, the general asks about the wounded warrior's family. He makes small

talk about their unit, or where they are from in the states, all the time trying to gage the emotional state of the wounded warrior. The command sergeant major tells them how they are going to get better and wonders when they will be able to lead their unit run or physical training. But what they both mostly see are broken bones with what looks like an erector set holding them together, tubes and bandages, shrapnel wounds, with signs of blood oozing through. They might see an amputated limb or multiple traumas



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The life of an aerial gunner

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Senior Airman Ryan Ballinger, 33rd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron gunner, clears a jam in his 50-caliber machinegun onboard an HH-60G Pave Hawk here on August 2, 2008. As an aerial gunner, Airman Ballinger provides security for combat search and rescue missions. Airman Ballinger is deployed from the 33rd Rescue Squadron, Kadena Air Base, Japan. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Samuel Morse)



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from the head to the feet. These are heroes who have paid the price of being wounded while serving their country.

The general finishes up the small talk and then tells the wounded service member he knows they woke up this morning with no intentions of earning this medal today - he then tells them the story behind the Purple Heart, explaining why Gen. George Washington's likeness is on the medal. The general orders the citation to be read - everyone in the room and those listening outside snap to attention as the order is read. It is a time honored tradition for those who serve in uniform.

He bends down and pins the Purple Heart on whatever clothing or piece of material he can find. He hands them the Combat Action Badge if they have not

earned one as of yet. If they have a hand he can shake he hands them a coin. He tells them to hurry up and get better so they can get back in the fight.

The ceremony is over now. He leaves them with hope and, if they are going to be aerovac to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, reassurance of what good care they are going to receive there as well. Sometimes it's hard to walk away. He knows what's in store for them now - a journey of recovery and hopefully a return to duty in their respective services. He starts to leave. The Purple Heart recipient always thanks him. He stops, turns and says, "No, don't thank me. I thank you for your service to your country. Get well soon."

Note: From May 1, 2008 to Aug 8, 2008, there have been more than 100 Purple Hearts awarded at Task Force Med by the leadership of the 101st.

Wing honors new promotees, award winners

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Members of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing honored the newest promotees, top performers and outstanding contributor during the monthly recognition ceremony here Aug. 1.

The newly-promoted NCOs were administered the NCO charge by members of the 455th Expeditionary Medical Group.

The August promotees were:

To Senior Airman: Catherine Brown, Adam Buchanan, Heather Davis, Sherida Dewitt-Smith, Timothy Edge, Chad Gouin, Shalara Hammock, Joshua Hamrick, Patrick Heyrman, Dominique Hrcir, Brittney Jernigan, Robert Kaster, Lake Leafy, Kevin Leal, Jonathan Leonard, Timothy Lewis, Eric Lindholm, Kenneth Maharas II, Colin Mayo, Eric Otero, Derrick Rash and Anthony Zehring II.

To Staff Sergeant: Ryan Adam-Brady, Byron Alde, Ernesto Cabreraramirez, Jayme Cline,

Randy Davenport, Andreas Jaramillo, Matthew Joines, Koreta Keke Warmke, Joshua Lockwood, Dimon Malson, James McGrath III, Christopher Meyer, Sean Mullins, Sean Oliver, Amilia Owens, Bret Oyler, John Ruiz, Jesse Schierloh, Brandon Sharitt, Culver Stone and Eric Strzelczyk.

To Technical Sergeant: Gabriela Rangel, Michelle Robertson, Lisa Silva and Keith Spenard.

To Master Sergeant: Albert Carrizales, Timothy Carson and Domingo Quitos.

To Senior Master Sergeant: James Redmond.

To Chief Master Sergeant: Dennis Beogher and Roy Stomberg.

To Major: Patrick Holland, Dale Robertson, Martin Salinas II, Richard Schreiber, Jennie Sheffield and Mark Taylor.

To Lieutenant Colonel: Patrice Morrison, Sean Murphy,

Sheila Thornton and Jason Turner.

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 the month. The winners in their respective category were:

Outstanding Contributor: SGT Zachary Waters, 755th Air Expeditionary Group

Airman of the Month: Airman 1st Class Shalina Burgan, 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group

NCO of the Month: Staff Sgt. Eliezer Ortiz, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group

Senior NCO of the Month: Master Sgt. Wayne P. Snyder, 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group

CGO of the Month: Capt. Kenneth M. McGinnis, 755th AEG

Civilian of the Month: Mr. Craig J. Ransaw, 455th EMXG

News Briefs

FIRE ALARM ACTIVATIONS IN RLBs

When the fire alarm is activated in the RLBs please contact the Fire Department at 911. All residents must evacuate the facility until the Fire Department determines that it is safe to re-enter. The rally point for personnel in these facilities is around the Route 5/6. Keep the street in front of the RLBs clear for the emergency response vehicles and their operations.

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 and from 2330L/1900Z to 0030L/2000Z. 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.

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.

LAUNDRY CLAIMS

If you have lost or damaged laundry you may be wondering what to do. The first thing is to take inventory. If something is damaged or missing contact Senior Airman Cherie Randall at 455 EMSS/SVS as soon as possible. Airman Randall is the Camp Cunningham Key Liaison between the laundry facility and KBR. KBR has 14 days to locate your missing items, if after 14 days they do not locate your goods, KBR is liable for your lost items. Liability will not exceed AAFES pricing, regardless of name brand. KBR is not liable for any loss or damage due to your own negligence. This includes, but is

not limited to loss due to improper categorization, damage due to your items bleeding onto each other. Any "special" non-military items such as Under Armour or Thorlo brand clothing should be listed separately.

HOMETOWN NEWS

Airmen who are deploying or redeploying can "get the word out" about notable events related to their service via the Hometown News Program. The process is easy - individuals simply fill out, sign and return the Hometown News Release (available on the Bagram website, <http://www.bagram.afnews.af.mil>, under "Other Links") to Public Affairs (paper copy or scanned electronic copy) and PA will take care of the rest by marketing these events to their local media. Some examples of events include: award of Afghanistan Campaign Medal, NATO Medal, arrival for deployment, completion of deployment, etc. For more information, contact public affairs at 455aewpa@swa.army.mil.

CONSERVE OUR RESOURCES

Turn off Chigo (AC) units when not in your living area for an extended period of time. Turn off lights when not in use. Also, minimize the use of water during your daily operations. Three minute combat showers are in effect.

Services Info

- ◆ First Run Movies: Sunday at 1700L, Wednesday at 1330L, and Saturday at 1600L.
- ◆ Mixed Martia Arts/Jujitsu: Sunday from 1300L to 1430L, Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1000L to 1130L.
- ◆ Abs Workout: Monday through Friday from 1200L to 1230L.
- ◆ Capoeira/Brazilian Martial Arts: Sunday from 2000L to 2200L and Tuesday from 1630L to 1830L.
- ◆ Foosball: Monday at 1800L and Thursday at 1900L.
- ◆ Salsa: Monday from 2030L to 2230L.
- ◆ Texas Hold'em: Tuesday at 1900L, Thursday at 1330L, and Saturday at 1330L and 1900L.
- ◆ Dominoes: Tuesday at 2100L and Thursday at 1330L.
- ◆ Reggae Night: Wednesday from 2000L to 2300L.
- ◆ Spades: Thursday at 1800L.
- ◆ Blackjack: thursday at 2100L.
- ◆ Bingo: Friday at 1900L.