



The Bagram News Express

Start Right, Finish Strong

Vol. 3 Issue 10, September 13, 2009

Bagram Airmen gather aid for Afghans

By Senior Airman Susan Tracy
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - The staff of the Joint Task Force MED at the Craig Joint Theater Hospital came together for a joint mission of a different kind. Instead of packing wounds, they packed brown paper bags filled with clothes, toys and shoes for the Afghan people of the Parwan Province.

Twenty volunteers gathered in the brightly decorated conference room around a long table packed with a wide variety of items donated by people in the U.S. A bag would be started at one end, something would be placed in it, and then the bag would be handed to the next person for the next item.

Staff Sergeant Christopher Thompson, the non-commissioned-officer-in-charge of the hospital chapel described the bounty as "a hodgepodge of everything - it is toiletries, candy, stuffed animals, jackets and clothes - it's a plethora of multifaceted stuff that we try to get to the people." All the items are donated by people and organizations in the States that see what is going on in Afghanistan and want to make a difference in the lives of the troops and the local nationals.

"A lot of the villages don't have a Wal-Mart or a K-mart or



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Members of Joint Task Force MED east/455th Expeditionary Medical Group take time out of their busy days to participate in a humanitarian aid packing party here, recently. The members packed an assortment of things from candies to jackets to toys and different clothes for the local Afghans. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Felicia Juenke)

anything where they can actually go and pick up toiletries or children's clothes," said Sergeant Thompson, a Nashville Tenn., native, "plus a lot of the time whenever we get them [patients] here into the hospital we have to cut them out of all their clothing. By getting toys or clothing we make it a little easier for them, plus it provides a little bit more for their vil-

lages that they wouldn't nor-

mally get." With the coming winter months, the temperatures in the mountainous regions of Afghanistan will average between minus eleven degrees and eighteen degrees Fahrenheit. According to Master Sergeant Charles Anderson, a reservist

**See HELPING,
next page**

HELPING

deployed from Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., who runs another volunteer operation on base, the people desperately need shoes of all sizes, coats, hats and gloves. There is also a constant need for women's and men's items, baby clothes and toiletries. The children like soft stuffed animals, balls and candy. Because of cultural constraints, the hospital cannot give out stuffed animals in the shape of dogs or pigs or objects with skull and crossbones or religious symbols on them. If interested in donating, items can be shipped to:

**Task Force Med
Chaplains Office
Re: Humanitarian Aid
APO AE 09354**



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Members of Joint Task Force MED east/455th Expeditionary Medical Group take time out of their busy days to participate in a humanitarian aid packing party here recently. The members packed an assortment of things from candies to jackets to toys and different clothes for local Afghans. Task Force Med from the Craig Joint Theater Hospital helps a variety of patients to include U.S. and coalition forces, local nationals, the Afghan National Army and Afghan police. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Felicia Juenke)



Please join us in celebration of the
62nd Air Force Birthday
Friday, 18 September
0600 Reveille at the flag pole in
Camp Cunningham, then a run to
complete the **Birthday Challenge**,
followed by an **Official Ceremony** at 0900
at the ECP on Alaska St. in Camp Cunningham
with an **Open House** displaying
Air Power belonging to the
World's Greatest Air Force





FORWARD OPERATING BASE LIGHTNING - Brig. Gen. Steve Kwast, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing commander, thanks dozens of Airmen here recently in a make-shift "commander's call." The Airmen are assigned to FOB Lightning as Joint Expeditionary Tasked Airmen who work day to day for U.S. Army commanders while they're also administratively assigned to U.S. Air Force commanders under the 755th Air Expeditionary Group at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo/Capt. David Faggard)

Bagram JET Airmen demonstrate their importance to Afghanistan, joint operations

By Capt. David Faggard
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LIGHTNING, Afghanistan -- Joint Expeditionary Tasked Airmen have two commanders, the Army one responsible for their day-to-day missions and the Air Force one responsible for their administrative and operational control; but they both sing the praises of their Airmen.

According to Army Lt. Col. Matt Smith the Task Force

commander here, Airmen are crucial in ensuring the joint and combined services achieve their missions.

"Airmen help fill a critical function in our headquarters and are doing an exceptional job - every one of them," said Colonel Smith. "One of my greatest fears is if the Air Force leaves us here; our operations run like a charm because of our Airmen."

According to the wing commander responsible for all JET Airmen in Afghanistan, Airmen

supporting the joint fight are examples of the Air Force's "all in" approach to the conflict in Afghanistan.

"Mentoring and partnering with the Army, Navy and Afghan forces are crucial to this war effort," said Brig. Gen. Steven Kwast, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing commander. Every Airman has to be all in; you'll be more focused on the

See BAGRAM JET, next page



FORWARD OPERATING BASE LIGHTNING -- Chief Master Sgt. Dennis Vannorsdall, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing command chief, congratulates Master Sgt. Gary Walters, Medical Embedded Training Team, for being an FOB Superior Performer. The Airmen are assigned as Joint Expeditionary Tasked Airmen who work day-to-day for U.S. Army commanders while they're also administratively assigned to U.S. Air Force commanders under the 755th Air Expeditionary Group at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo/Capt. David Faggard)

mission and you'll ultimately be a better Airman and person. Airmen will do anything you [the joint community] ask of us, as long as we're trained to do the job correctly."

JET Airmen are crucial to Afghanistan's future, according to the General. The Embedded Training Teams here are empowered to teach and mentor their Afghan counterparts.

Airmen at the Paktia Regional Medical Hospital mentor Afghans in what might seem like the basics back home, but to this part of the world it's

revolutionary.

We helped them safely transport blood from our hospital to another for the first time in history," said Tech. Sgt. Jason Levine, a laboratory technician at the hospital who also said the basics of calibration and maintenance are new ideas for the Afghan technicians they're teaching. "It could have been a logistical nightmare, but now we've got a process that's repeatable and sustainable thanks to the coordinated planning and efforts by Airmen."

The procedures and process

BAGRAM JET

taught by the Airmen was well received by their host.

"We understand our problems," Afghanistan National Army Colonel (Dr.) Sultangal Totakhail said through a translator. "We are thankful to the American people and we're developing and making progress. We believe we have a great relationship with the U.S.," he said discussing how they were prepared for the Afghan National Elections, Aug. 20, with the help of their Air Force counterparts who ensured they had enough supplies and blood on hand if needed.

Another portion of the visit was for the General to meet with those Airmen far out in the remote portions of Afghanistan to tell them they are extremely important to this war.

"Victory in counterinsurgency is getting the Afghans to believe we're here to help them defeat the enemy; that will win this war overnight," he said.

"The moment that they [Afghans] believe we're here for the long haul to help them, we've won."

"This war isn't about dropping bombs, or how many of the enemy we can kill, it's about bringing hope to the Afghan people and teaching them to do this for themselves," the General said to his Airmen.

JET Airmen in Afghanistan are making history, according to the General.

"You're at the foundation of this war and this war will teach you to be a great Airman and a great person," the General said. "You'll be able to look back on this time here and tell your grandkids that you were at the bedrock of success of this great nation."

Commentary: Remembering 9/11

By Chief Master Sgt. Jerry S. Shelton Jr., 755th Air Expeditionary Group

"Where were you on 9/11?" I am sure many of us can answer this question without hesitation. It was September 11, 2001, the day America was attacked. Some of us lost friends and family, some of us witnessed it with our own eyes, and many others like me sat in shock, staring at the television news broadcasts as the horrifying images unfolded.

My family and I, along with others on Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan, were barricaded inside our quarters riding out Typhoon Nari. This rather unusual typhoon passed near Okinawa on September 10th but suddenly veered away from the island. After the "all clear" was given, it mysteriously backtracked and returned to within 50 kilometers of Okinawa, intensifying overhead on September 11th. As gale-force winds lashed outside late into the night, I found it difficult to sleep so I tried to find something interesting to watch on television. I stopped on CNN, watching as thick smoke belled from the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Reporters were just beginning their media coverage, still trying to make sense of what we were seeing, when suddenly a passenger airliner smacked into the South Tower. America suddenly realized that it was evident that a coordinated attack on American soil was now in progress.

September 11, 2009 marked the 8th anniversary of that day as a day of remembrance. America, as well as those around the free world, remembered this day by organizing memorial services and other events to honor and remember the victims of those attacks. As members of the Armed Forces, remembering 9/11 is a constant in our lives and for many of us be-

comes the answer to another question, "Why do you serve?" At Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, we began our day of remembrance with the Patriot's Day 9.11 Kilometer Run. Several hundred participants representing the international community came together in the early morning of September 11, 2009 and pushed themselves physically and mentally during this organized running event. As we waited for the race to start, we remembered where we were on that fateful day and how it changed us, some of us looked inward and found



strength in our service, and we honored the fallen.

I grew up in Shelbyville, Ind., and have been an avid runner since high school. During my early years as an Airman, physical fitness was not a big part of who we were. So as a runner, I was elated when our Air Force leadership recognized the importance of physical fitness and began introducing fitness into our culture. As an explosive ordnance disposal chief, I can say with some authority that the physical challenges of EOD can be intense, especially

when performing dismounted operations to locate and destroy enemy weapons hidden within the high altitudes and mountainous terrain of Afghanistan. Proper diet combined with physical training; weights, running, and core strength routines build muscle, improving strength and endurance. Today, all services within our Armed Forces have adopted this "culture of fitness." These organized races, such as the Patriot's Day 9.11 K Run, further promote and validate this culture, and everyone I meet has their own story. I've met cancer survivors, those who had struggled with obesity, those who strive to improve their fitness level, and even those who remain active despite loss of limb. Each story is one of varying degrees of personal courage, triumph, and perseverance, and I'll surround myself with people like that every chance I can.

Throughout my 26 years of service in the Air Force, I've participated in numerous organized 5Ks, 10Ks, biathlons and base perimeter runs. It's a great opportunity to promote running, meet other fitness-minded people or raise awareness on particular issues. Staying focused on our commitment to service, remembering our fallen heroes and their loved ones who have sacrificed so much, and by demonstrating a commitment to fitness, improves readiness and serves an example for others.

We have a solemn obligation to remember 9/11. And as we move on to tomorrow - by staying mentally, spiritually and physically ready - we continue to honor our fallen by our service in defense of our freedom.

NEWS BRIEFS

IMMUNIZATIONS: Are your immunizations up to date? Active duty members are required to stay current on all immunizations during their deployment. Report to your nearest medical treatment facility to check your status and get vaccinated. For questions, contact Task Force Medical Public Health, 431-4426.

GOING TDY: All Air Force members are required to in and out-process through PERSCO for TDYs, Emergency Leave or R&R Leave/Pass. The PAX terminal will not manifest you until they have documentation stamped from PERSCO. All personnel assigned to the 455th are required to complete the AOR Travel Authorization Memo for any type of TDY. Please direct questions to PERSCO, 431-4409/2070.

NEWCOMERS INPROCESSING: All Air Force members are required to inprocess with PERSCO. The inprocessing will start your combat pay entitlements. If you have been in the AOR for at least 30 days and you are not receiving combat pay, visit Finance in the crow's nest tower on Camp Cunningham. If you know for a fact that you did not inprocess with PERSCO, please visit PERSCO located in Bldg. 700 near the passenger terminal. Call 431-2070/4409 for more information.

PAPERLESS HOMETOWN NEWS RELEASE: Just arrived here at Bagram? Got promoted? Hit a milestone in your career? Tell your family and friends at home by sending a paperless Hometown News Release available on the Bagram Air Field public Web site at this link: <https://hnforms.dmasa.dma.mil/lfserver/455AEWBAGRAM>. Just fill out the form and hit submit. It's that easy.

COMBAT O: Combat Orientation is Wednesday at 0830Z/1300L at the Enduring Faith Chapel. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Air Field. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the first sergeants.



All personnel not in an authorized military uniform (duty or PT) are required to display IDs or BAF badges at all times. All military or civilian personnel are obligated to challenge others not properly displaying badges. People not in possession of proper identification shall be turned over to the PMO. Get involved, strengthen our security, and keep our war fighters safe!

455 AEW AT/FP Office: 431-4207
Capt. Sprute - Antiterrorism Officer
MSgt. Holtzmann - AT/FP Program Manager

Force Protection is **your** business - **everyone** is a sensor



Get your Bagram news fix online

VISIT

www.bagram.afcent.af.mil

