

# BAGRAM NEWS EXPRESS

Start Right, Finish Strong | Vol. 3 Issue 22, December 06, 2009

## CMSAF pays visit to Bagram Airfield



**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Roy looks through the scope of an M-24 sniper weapon at one of the observation towers that surround BAF, Nov. 28, 2009. Chief Roy spoke to dozens of members of the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron while taking a tour of the base defenses. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. John Jung)**

**By Tech. Sgt. John Jung  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs**

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -** The chief master sergeant of the Air Force travelled to Afghanistan and spoke with 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Airmen at several locations here Nov. 28.

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Roy wanted to hear what the Airmen had on their

minds in a deployed environment and took questions in brief and informal meetings.

He also wished Airmen a happy holiday season as well as a good and productive deployment experience.

"I wanted to also thank you, your spouses and your family for the sacrifices you and they are making while you are deployed defending our nation," Chief Roy said.

# Afghanistan: McChrystal sends message to troops

Courtesy of the American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON - Army Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, has posted a message to the troops on the way ahead. The full text follows:

We have been presented a great opportunity to take the tremendous work of our coalition force to the next level. The clarity, capability and commitment outlined in President Obama's address are critical steps toward eliminating an insurgency in Afghanistan and terrorist safe havens that threaten regional and global security.

Each of you can be proud of the effort we have made here, not just in bringing the fight to the enemy, but in reshaping that fight to achieve more lasting effects, grow our partnership with Afghan security forces, and strengthen relationships with government officials and the Afghan people. You have performed magnificently, and I believe our renewed coalition campaign is fortified by the path President Obama has put forward.

Our NATO International Security Assistance Force objective remains clear: We will work toward a transfer of responsibility to Afghan security forces as rapidly as conditions allow. They need our help and we are here for them, for their future and for the safety and security of coalition nations.

The additional resources called for by President Obama will continue to advance a winning strategy. In recent months we have seen real progress that must be preserved and expanded. The increase of coalition forces earlier this year in the Helmand River Valley, along with expanded civilian capacity, have improved security and stability. This is also helping to foster essential governance and basic economic development.

We still face many challenges in Afghanistan, but our mission has renewed purpose sustained by one unassailable reality: Neither the international community nor the Afghan people want this country to remain a sanctuary for terror and violence. The price to be paid in this conflict is high. But the stakes are higher.



**Army General Stanley A. McChrystal, is the current Commander, International Security Assistance Force and Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan. He assumed his current assignment on June 15, 2009. (ISAF photo)**

President Obama's decision is a clear reflection not only of his intended strategy, but of his confidence in the success we can achieve, success earned by the competence and courage you display every day in Afghanistan.

I am privileged to be serving with you and I am confident that our partnership with Afghans will enable real change to Afghanistan, grounded in a secure and stable environment that allows for effective governance, economic independence and the freedom of every Afghan to choose how to live. In doing so, we will preserve for our own coalition nations the lasting security we seek for the people of Afghanistan.

# New physical fitness standards effective July 1, 2010

by Master Sgt. Russell P. Petcoff  
Secretary of the Air Force Public  
Affairs

WASHINGTON - The Air Force's deputy chief of staff for manpower and personnel announced the new Air Force fitness standards will officially begin July 1, 2010.

Lt. Gen. Richard Y. Newton III said the service's top leaders sought feedback from commanders and senior NCO leaders throughout the Air Force when deciding to execute the updated program that will test Airmen twice during 2010.

"Based on feedback from the field, we are implementing the July start date so Airmen have the opportunity to excel," General Newton said. "This implementation strategy will allow for a smoother transition of the new Air Force Instruction and afford commanders adequate time to establish installation fitness assessment cells to include manning for the FACs."

According to General Newton, a new AFI detailing the new fitness standards is due out within the next few weeks. This fitness AFI is the first to cover the total force of active duty, Guard and Reserve.

The general added that the July start date will provide commanders and Airmen plenty of time to be prepared and in compliance with the new AFI.

"We want to do this right," General Newton said. "It's about readiness and our continued commitment to ensure we have a fit force, ready to perform its global mission."

Col. Joan H. Garbutt, chief of military force management for Air Staff Manpower and Personnel, said the new start date



Airmen run PT in preparation for the new standards. (U.S. Air Force photo)

for the new fitness standards will "set our Airmen up for success." She believes Airmen will excel with the new standards.

"Every time you raise the bar, our Airmen reach higher to meet the standards," Colonel Garbutt said.

Biannual physical fitness testing will begin Jan. 1 using current fitness standards. Units with FACs will use them to conduct the assessments. Units without FACs will continue to use their physical training leaders, or PTLs, to assess Airmen. Enlisted and officer performance reports will reflect fitness training scores based upon their reports close out dates, General Newton added.

According to the change, during the Jan. 1 to June 30 testing phase, unit PTLs will provide two scores -- one for the current system and one for the new standard so Airmen can gauge their performance. Starting July 1, Airmen will officially

test under new requirements with the new scoring. Scores will be annotated on EPRs and OPRs accordingly.

Under the new standards, the aerobic run will count for 60 percent of the test. Body composition will count for 20 percent. Under the current standard, they count for 50 and 30 percent, respectively. The sit-up and push-ups remain at 10 percent each. The new standards have differently valued waist measurements and 15 seconds, rather than 30, separating run scores.

Passing the test will require a composite score of 75 while also meeting a minimum level for each component. The new physical fitness test will place Airmen in one of five age groups: less than 30, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60-plus. Results will fall into one of three categories: 90 and above, excellent; 75-90, satisfactory; and under 75, unsatisfactory.

# NCAA football brightens doctors, wounded-troops morale

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

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** - When the bullets on the battlefield stop flying and the fog of war lifts, wounded servicemembers often find themselves in midst of college football greats at the Craig Joint Theater Hospital.

Two Air Force doctors deployed here in August, 2009 and found record-breaking traumas and a hospital lacking character, but they found support from the NCAA football program, specifically the schools, coaches and players of the South Eastern Conference.

The hospital is a first-rate facility, but it just needed some personality, according to Capt. Matt Howard a Camden, Ark. native, deployed from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

"Everything was black and white; it just needed something more," said Captain Howard, a University of Arkansas Razorback football fan. "What better than college football?"

One of the first SEC teams to come forward was the University of Florida; their football team's head coach expressed why.

"I often use the military as an example with our football team and student-athletes," said University of Florida Head Coach Urban Meyer. "They are an example and should be an example for all because of their unselfish dedication to operate as a unit and a team. They have an unwavering commitment to their values and respect the goals and objectives of the unit. I am forever grateful for what they do to protect our freedom and our country."

Working more than 300 traumas, often with 90-hour work weeks, these doctors see the stresses of war firsthand and being able "to look up and think for a brief second about the game allows me to collect my senses and continue," Capt. Frank Cunningham said pointing to the 'Crimson Tide Bed.'

As the largest trauma hospital in the region, the Craig Joint Theater Hospital sees the war, up close.



**Capt. Frank Cunningham (left) and Capt. Matt Howard**

"We're in a business where people die and the stress can go through the roof," said Captain Cunningham, a Mobile, Ala. native and avid University of Alabama football fan.

"Seeing the teams all represented here raises the morale of the medical staff and the American patients," Captain Howard said. "We see so many traumas, and guys in here are hurt; it can give you a break when you look death in the eyes every day."

The "Notre-Dame-football room," still in design, is currently occupied by a six-year-old Afghan girl who was the victim of a gunshot wound to the abdomen.

"She's having a rough time," Captain Howard said. "The hospital has almost turned into a pediatric trauma-ward," referring to the increase of local children coming in with injuries from gunshots and IED and rocket-attack blast injuries.

Every team in the SEC has contacted the hospital offering their support, but the ones with the major support are: The Universities of Alabama,

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# NCAA

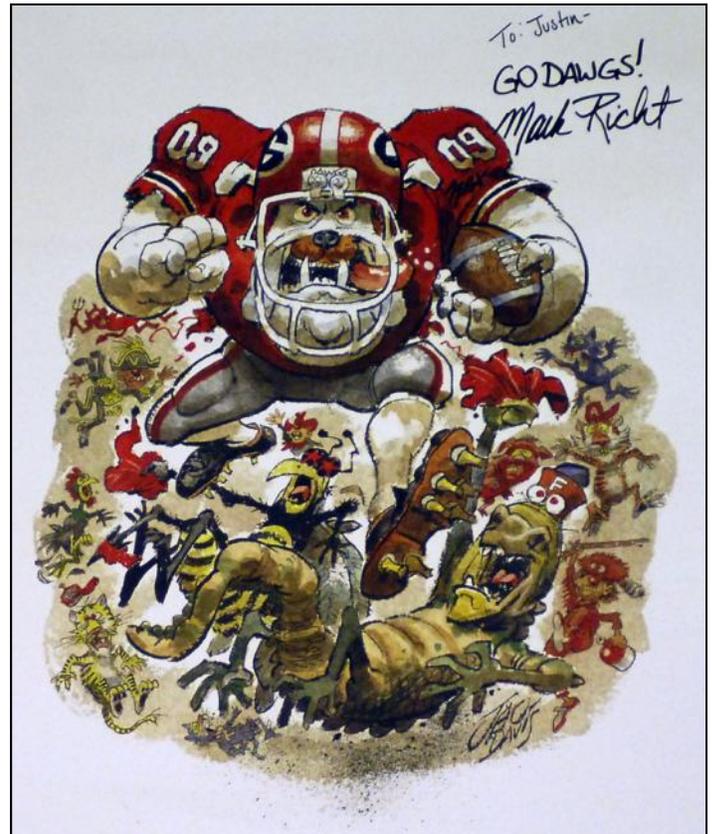
Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana State, Mississippi, Mississippi State, Notre Dame and Texas. The U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Military Academy and the U.S. Naval Academy also sent items for a "Service Academy Room."

On an uncommonly quiet Winter morning in the hospital, the two Air Force doctors wanted to express their thanks to the South Eastern Conference football teams who sent items that brighten the day of the wounded Marines, Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen.

"Many schools have contacted us, but it's the SEC that has come full force," said Captain Cunningham.

Bed spaces in the trauma ward were unofficially re-designated from a number to a university's football team. Other items include a signed lithograph from the head coaches of Alabama's Nick Saban and Florida's Urban Meyer, as well as their Heisman-Trophy quarterback, Tim Tebow. A signed football from Mack Brown and Colt McCoy's entire University of Texas team is encased in glass high above a bed, just feet away from an Afghan man wounded in a battle. There is also a caricature of a large Georgia Bulldog signed by head coach Mark Richt.

The University of Florida has history of supporting the men and women in uniform and recently organized an effort enlisting the support of three Jacksonville, Fla. elementary schools and



A caricature of a large Georgia Bulldog signed by head coach Mark Richt

2,500 children to write letters to deployed troops. The school's College of Dentistry also organized a donation drive to send toothpaste, toothbrushes and other toiletries overseas.

"I'd like the schools, coaches, players and students to know that we appreciate their support," said Captain Cunningham. "Knowing Americans back home care for us and our mission allows us to work [save lives]."



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# Article 31 of the UCMJ: Silence is golden

By Capt. Michael J. Felsen  
Area Defense Counsel

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** - You are face to face in an interview room with agents of the Office of Special Investigations or members of the security police. You are suspected of committing a crime. Your heart is racing. You're short of breath. They say to you, "You have the right to remain silent. Any statement you make, oral or written, may be used against you in a trial by court-martial. Do you want a lawyer? Are you willing to answer any questions?"

You might be wondering what options you have if this should ever happen to you. That's not surprising, because very few Air Force members are familiar with Article 31 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Article 31 gives all military members a very important right. It states that no person suspected of an offense can be compelled to answer any question if the answer may tend to be incriminating. What this means is quite simple: every person being interrogated as a suspect by the OSI, the security police, the commander, the Shirt, your supervisor, or any other person work-

ing for the government has the legal right to politely refuse to answer questions, and the legal right to speak with an attorney.

Now, why might the person being interviewed want to remain silent until speaking with an attorney? It may be that they don't know whether they did anything illegal – and they want to find out before getting themselves in deeper trouble. It may be that they did do something wrong – and recognize that, by confessing, they would just be helping the prosecution put together an air-tight case. Or it may be that they're just nervous - and want some time to think over their options.

Whatever the reason, if a suspect exercises his right to remain silent, which is usually the smartest thing to do, the fact that he was unwilling to answer questions can't be used against him.

Once a suspect states that he is not willing to answer questions and wishes to speak with an attorney, the interviewer by law must immediately terminate the interview.

In summary, Article 31 exists to protect you, but only if you choose to take advantage of it! You are free to telephone the Area Defense Counsel at DSN 318-437-6300 if you any questions.

**OVER AFGHANISTAN**  
- U.S. Air Force F-15E Strike Eagles, from the 335th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, drop 2,000 pound Joint Direct Attack Munitions on a cave in eastern Afghanistan, recently. The 335th EFS is deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. (U.S. Air Force photo/ Staff Sgt. Michael B. Keller)



# The First Anglo-Afghan War, 1839-41

By Doug Beckstead  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Historian

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** - The history of Afghanistan is marked by one group after another attempting to conquer it. The earliest recorded conquest was by Alexander the Great in the 3rd century B.C. After that, Ghengis Khan and the Mongols came in the 13th century A.D. exercising a modicum of control over the region for several centuries.

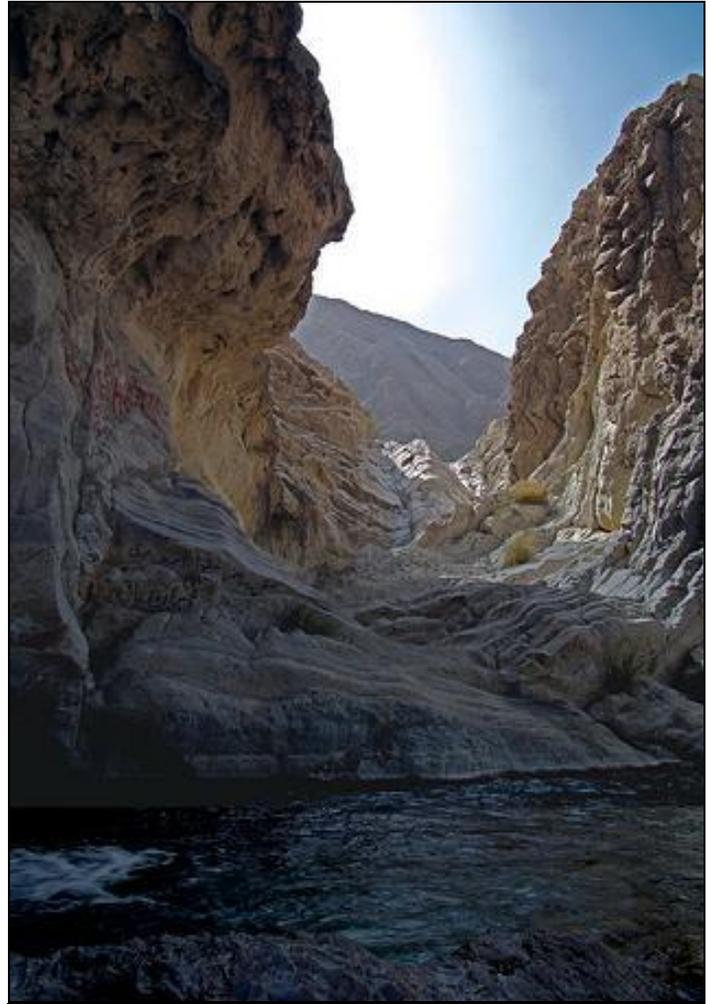
Prior to the 17th century, Afghanistan had been the crossroads of world trade between Asia and Europe. After these routes shifted to the sea, Afghanistan lost its importance until Russia starting pushing its territorial interests south toward the Arabian Sea. By the 19th century, Afghanistan found itself as a pawn in what historians call "The Great Game" played out between Imperialist Russia and the British Empire.

India, at the time, was seen as the crown jewel of the British empire. In order to curtail the encroaching Russians, the British started their own push to the northwest into the Pashtun region of what is now Pakistan and Afghanistan. Now, rather than being a trade conduit, Afghanistan would become a barrier.

When the British army invaded in early 1838, it must have been quite a sight. The army of over 21,000 troops and mercenaries was accompanied by 38,000 Indian servants, 30,000 camels and even included a pack of fox hounds belonging to the 16th Lancers. One Brigadier required sixty camels to carry his personal belongings. The staff of General John Keane, commander of the force, required 260 camels. Each regiment was allotted two camels simply to carry the unit's cigars.

In early 1839, this massive army crossed the Bolan Pass a narrow 55-mile long divide through the mountains between Quetta and Kandahar. The fact that the trail was lined with dead camels and abandoned baggage should have been an omen to the British of things to come.

They arrived in Kandahar on 25 April 1839 after the city's rulers had fled. The army left a divi-



The Bolan Pass

sion there and proceeded northeast to Kabul, 320 miles away. En route they encountered the greatest fortification in Asia at the walls of Ghazni.

After a short siege, followed by a bloody battle, the British entered the city. Leaving a small force behind they continued northeast to Kabul arriving there on 7 August 1839 to little opposition.

As is often the case in modern history, the British invasion of Afghanistan was politically motivated. The army brought with them the grandson of former Afghan king Ahmad Shah. The plan was to install Shah Shuja to the thrown in anticipation that he would be sympathetic to British interests.

Now that they controlled the cities of Kandahar, Ghazni and Kabul and had empowered Shah

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# WAR

Shuja with little opposition from the Afghan people, much of the army was recalled to India during late 1839 leaving approximately 8,000 in Afghanistan. As the occupation drew longer, General William Macnaughten allowed his soldiers to bring their families to Afghanistan in order to improve morale. This further infuriated the Afghans as it now appeared that the British were planning for a permanent occupation.

The British established a cantonment (fortified camp) just north of Kabul among the remnants of ancient orchards placing their supplies in a small fort approximately 300 meters away. Shah Shuja was never able to win over the Afghan people and as his reign began to crumble, attacks lead by the Ghilzai tribesman began to plague the British army. The situation deteriorated when Afghans stormed the fort outside the

Kabul cantonment cutting off access to food and supplies.

After negotiating with the Afghans, on 1 January 1842, the British agreed to abandon Kabul and withdraw to Jalalabad. The exodus began five days later.

The departing column consisted of approximately 16,000 people of which only 3,600 were military personnel. The remaining 12,000 were civilian camp followers. The military force consisted mainly of Indian units and one British battalion, the 44th Regiment of Foot.

Despite a guarantee of safe passage, the column was attacked repeatedly by Ghilzai warriors as they struggled through snowbound passes and gorges along the Kabul River. The withdrawal soon turned into a running battle for survival through several feet of snow that lasted for weeks. In the end, a single survivor, Dr. William Brydon reached the garrison at Jalalabad.



**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Senior Airman Adam Morehead, a force protection Airman from the 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron, hangs Christmas lights on a B-Hut, Dec. 2, 2009. The lights are being put up to boost morale and give the servicemen and women on BAF a feeling of home during the holidays. Airman Morehead is deployed from Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska and hails from Albuquerque, N.M. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Felicia Juenke)**

