



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald

On behalf of the wing

Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne receives a 455th Air Expeditionary Wing memento from Col. Michael Isherwood, 455th AEW vice commander, at the conclusion of his visit here Dec. 20. Mr. Wynne visited deployed Airmen here as part of his first trip to the region.

Bagram A-10s take fight to enemy

by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

A-10s continue taking the fight to the enemy by providing close-air support to U.S. and Coalition forces participating in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Shortly after deploying from Davis-Monthan Air Base, Ariz., to Bagram in September, the 354th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron "Bulldogs" began making history.

"Our A-10s have provided non-stop presence and lethal firepower since we arrived," said Lt. Col. Martha McSally, 354th EFS com-

mander. "From ensuring the success of Afghanistan's first-ever provincial elections on Sept. 18 to the first seating of an Afghan national parliament in history on Dec. 19, we are continuing to make a footprint on the world around us."

The Bulldogs have succeeded in defeating enemy combatants because of their detailed integration with coalition ground forces.

"Throughout this AEF rotation, we've integrated with conventional and special ops battlefield warfighters to seek out and destroy remain-

— See 'Bulldogs', Page 2

Good To Know

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3-Day Forecast

Friday

Partly cloudy
H 53/L 21



Saturday

Mostly sunny
H 51/L 20



Sunday

Scattered rain
H 49/L 20



Source: 455th EOG Weather

Bulldogs From Page 1

ing pockets of Taliban, terrorist and anti-coalition militia," Colonel McSally explained. "This integration has helped save hundreds of U.S. and Coalition lives and ensured a safe and successful election process."

Since Sept. 15, the Bulldogs have flown more than 1,700 combat sorties, totaling more than 6,000 combat hours, and fired more than 20,000 rounds of 30 mm bullets.

"(The) 30 mm (cannon) is the weapon of choice for A-10 pilots in providing pinpoint accuracy against the enemy with 'friendlies' or civilians unharmed sometimes less than 100 meters away," the colonel said.

The pilots have also used laser-guided bombs, airburst freefall bombs and high-explosive rockets to demolish enemy forces. On more than 100 occasions, A-10 pilots worked with friendly forces in direct contact with the enemy.

"Our pilots have had to integrate with forces on the ground to neutralize the targets," the colonel said. "It takes a great deal of skill and judgment to swiftly identify friendly and enemy positions in a very fluid fight and deliver ordnance in such close proximity to the friendlies."

Close-air support isn't the only thing the A-10s provide. The Bulldogs have also been first on scene at several Coalition helicopter crashes. Pilots provided cover to deter hostile forces and, sometimes, immediate firepower for those needing a more compelling effort to defeat their hostile action. "Uniquely trained to take on the role of rescue mission commander, the A-10s have deconflicted all supporting assets, provided command and control in very dynamic situations," Colonel McSally said. "We then coordinated for rescue/medevac, provided lethal coverage overhead against the threat, and escorted rescue assets to safety, saving dozens of U.S. and coalition lives."

The colonel said the A-10 pilots have also provided escort and presence for movement of friendly convoys, helicopters and cargo aircraft, which sometimes carry high-level Afghan and U.S. leaders, or vital earthquake relief into Pakistan.

Two recently certified A-10 flight leads said protecting friendly forces from those who would cause

'... every Bulldog should be proud of a job well done.'

Colonel McSally
354th EFS
commander



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. David L. Stuppy
An A-10 takes off as A-10 crew chiefs, weapons loaders and an avionics specialist ready others for another mission.

them harm is a key emphasis for A-10 pilots.

"After dropping a 500-pound bomb or firing 500 rounds of 30 mm high-explosive incendiary bullets, it's a good feeling knowing our forces were no longer taking fire," said A-10 pilot Capt. Dan Cruz.

Captain Cruz said using weapons in combat has been the highlight his A-10 flying experience. The "Hog", as Airmen call the jet, was the first Air Force aircraft specially designed to provide close-air support.

"Knowing that friendly forces on the ground were actively taking fire and the need for us to rapidly employ weapons to protect them has been intense and exhilarating," said Captain Cruz, who is from Glendale, Ariz.

When conducting close-air-support missions, the captain said there's little room for error.

"The training I've received over the years has instilled the importance of quickly determining all friendly locations before employing weapons," he said. "With the friendlies factored in, it's simply a choice of what weapon to use that will achieve the desired weapons effects."

Capt. Jay Annis, another A-10 pilot, said he takes pride in what he's doing to support the ongoing global war on terrorism.

"I've been given the skills and confidence necessary to perform our A-10 mission in combat," said Captain Annis, who is from Chanhassen, Minn. "I'm proud to be able to provide my piece of the puzzle — taking the heat off of our brothers who are taking the fight to the enemy on the ground."

Colonel McSally said her Airmen should be proud of their accomplishments.

"We've set a new aerospace standard in unforgiving conditions," she said. "A truly amazing precedent has been set. And each and every Bulldog should be proud of a job well done."



REDHORSE team keeps Kandahar ramp operational



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald
Staff Sgt. Matthew Couch, pavements and equipment operator, cuts a reservoir into the concrete of the Kandahar flightline.

by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald
 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

A team of about 20 REDHORSE civil engineers from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., are doing their part to keep flights coming in and out of here in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. REDHORSE is an acronym for Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers.

As the last of three million construction projects, an additional 150,000 square feet of additional ramp

space at Kandahar will be available by early 2006.

"This project involves placing 6,000 cubic yards of concrete and 1,200 tons of asphalt, which will increase the ramp space here by 151,200 square feet," said Capt. Kelly McAtee, 1st Expeditionary REDHORSE Group project engineer and officer in charge. "We've just finished the concrete portion and expect the finished product to be complete in January."

A previous project is helping Muslims make a religious pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia.

"The ramp allowed the return of the terminal and ramp space in front of the terminal — as an international airport — to the Afghan government in time for the Hajj pilgrimage (to Mecca, Saudi Arabia), which began Dec. 1," Captain McAtee said.

Soon after their arrival here in July, the REDHORSE engineers completed a \$2.1 million construction project. That allowed the British Royal Engineers to construct a 236,400-square-foot concrete ramp for close-air support aircraft.

"My Airmen are doing their part to improve the space we have on the ramp and keep flying missions in and out of here," the captain said. "It's great to see the progress they're making to support U.S. and coalition warfighters on the ground and in the air."

Staff Sgt. Matthew Couch, a pavements and equipment craftsman, said his job gives him and his fellow REDHORSE engineers a sense of accomplishment.

"It's very important for us to deploy over here and complete our projects in support of this war effort," Sergeant Couch said. "When we leave Afghanistan, we'll know we've left our mark for generations to come."

Senior Airman Jared Morris, also a pavements and equipment journeyman, said he enjoys serving his country during this time in history.

This part of the world has never experience freedom," Airman Morris said. "Freedom is a world endeavor that everyone has the right to."



Bagram Bulletin Editorial Staff, Disclaimer

Brig. Gen. Bruce Burda Commander, 455th AEW
 Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald Editor/NCOIC, Public Affairs
 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group Technical support

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Bagram Airmen reflect on deployment experiences

by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

Whether getting fired upon while covering a mission with Marines or experiencing rocket attacks while serving alongside Army Soldiers, two Airmen here have a story to tell about their joint combat experiences downrange as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

While in the field covering the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, Whiskey Co., 2nd Platoon in northern Afghanistan, Airman 1st Class Peter Mellon, a broadcast producer for Bagram's American Forces Network Afghanistan, and the Marines experienced an attack from enemy aggressors Nov. 16.

"Our mission was to join members of the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police on a convoy through the Waterport Valley to find people who had anything they weren't supposed to have," said Airman Mellon, a native of Farmington Hills, Mich. He is deployed here from Kaiserslautern, Germany.

"We were getting reports almost nightly that something was going to happen to hinder our mission," Airman Mellon said. "We just didn't know when."

Preparing for whatever came their way proved successful.

"One night, after everyone — except for those on watch — had gone to sleep, we heard a loud noise and gunshots," the Airmen explained. "Each of us immediately threw on our body armor and helmet, grabbed ours M-16s and returned fire."

From start to finish, the firefight lasted about two minutes.

"It seems like a lot longer when you're actually there," Airman Mellon said. "I was amazed that I was able to think quickly and clearly through it all. You think that the first time you go through something like this that you'll be frightened and that you wouldn't know what to do. That wasn't the case."

'We did everything right, none of our guys were hurt, and we were able to continue our mission.'

Airman Mellon
AFN Afghanistan



'We shouldn't take things for granted ... one day we could be here and the next day we could be gone.'

Airman Beers
CJTF-76 Help Desk



Within a moment's notice, the convoy transitioned from normal operations to the heat of battle.

"Due to previous instruction, each of us knew where we supposed to be and what we were supposed to do in every situation," Airman Mellon said. "Although it was a well-coordinated enemy attack, we did everything right, none of our guys were hurt, and we were able to continue our mission successfully."

Airman 1st Class Timothy Beers, Combined Joint Task Force 76 help desk representative, forwarded deployed to Salerno Forward Operating Base on Sept. 20. Prior to his return trip to Bagram earlier this month, Airman Beers realized what it was like to be attacked by rockets and mortars.

"If you have never been through one of these attacks, you're in for an unforgettable experience," said Airman Beers, a native of Houston. He's deployed from Dyess Air Force Base, Texas. "At the time you are scared, but excited. Your adrenaline is rushing, you're very alert, you're heart is beating fast, and in your mind you're just wondering what is going to happen next."

Airman Beers said his experiences in Afghanistan have showed him that life was short.

"Tomorrow isn't promised to us," he said. "We shouldn't take things for granted because one day we could be here and the next day we could be gone."

The Airman, who returns in January from his first deployment, said he's enjoyed the experience.

"I will never forget my deployment to Afghanistan," Airman Beers said. "Not only have I been given the opportunity to work alongside the Army, but I was also given a chance to excel in my job and accomplish tasks I would have otherwise not been able to tackle."

Iraqi, Afghan elections signal most significant progress in 2005

by **Kathleen T. Rhem**
American Forces Press Service

Free and fair elections in Iraq and Afghanistan represent the U.S. military's most significant accomplishment in 2005, the top U.S. enlisted servicemember said Wednesday.

Army Command Sgt. Maj. William J. Gainey, senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said American servicemembers should take pride in this advance whether they were in Iraq or Afghanistan or elsewhere.

"You were involved too, because you supported it," he said.

"You supported the men and women that were there, so you're just as much a part of being there, and everyone needs to know that."

Sergeant Major Gainey predicted 2006 will bring more involvement from Iraqis and Afghans in defending their own countries.

"I think you're going to see the Iraqi army (and) the Afghan army take more responsibility, and I think they want to do that," he said. "I look forward to that."

"And I think everyone in the United States looks forward to them taking responsibility and us slowly pulling out when the

time is right," the sergeant said.

Sergeant Major Gainey didn't try to predict when that time might be, and he said U.S. servicemembers don't try to predict either.

"Most of them don't worry about timelines. I think it's others who worry more about timelines," he said. "They worry about the mission at hand."

They realize that as soon as the Iraqi or Afghanistan armies take more of the responsibilities for what's going on, they will come home," he continued. "But I would bet you that any Soldier, Sailor, Marine or Airman you ask says that we'd rather stay and do it right than leave and have it wrong."



Photo by Airman 1st Class Barry Loo

Handshake of thanks

U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry thanks 24th Air Expeditionary Group Airmen at Chalaka Air Base for helping move tons of humanitarian relief supplies through the Pakistani base. The Airmen, part of the newest group within the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing, arrived to set up airlift operations just days after 7.6 earthquake devastated parts of the region Oct. 8. The general commands Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan in Kabul.



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Americans send messages of support

My heart goes out to all of you brave men and women serving our country. I thank you from the bottom of my heart, you and your families.

I know it is a great sacrifice to serve. I believe our military is the single group of people who I send up the most prayers for. I pray for you daily, and often shed tears for you.

Though we may never meet, I hope that at least one of you will be touched by this message, and know that I and countless others are truly grateful.

Elizabeth Haddox, Nitro, W. Va.

Cranky & tired I ready my kids for bed. My ten year old daughter and I have a ritual, special hand shake, a kiss and a hug as I hug her I feel a pang of guilt and gratitude.

Guilt for feeling so weary after my light work day compared to yours, gratitude to you for taking yourselves away from your families to protect others unselfishly.

Just then she looks up and says...mom your hugs always make me feel safe at night... and the tears come.

She looks at me funny and I tell her I am crying for you, the troops that leave the safety of our

country to keep it that way and to try to give others the same freedom.

Thank you and may God keep you safe. I will always teach my children of the bravery and sacrifice of our troops. Thank you! You are all our hug each night that tells us it will be safe!

Becky Wettlaufer, Saint Johns, Mich.

To the heroes of freedom and liberty, your country loves you and is behind you all the way!!

Thank you so much, I am eternally grateful for your sacrifice on behalf of my wife and me.

By your strength, courage, and bravery do you ensure millions of families safety and security, our way of life as we know it every day. God bless all of you for protecting my life and letting me enjoy

another day with my wife and family.

Please be careful throughout all the danger and come home safe. God forgive us as a nation, if we ever forget that freedom and liberty are not free.

God forgive us as a nation, if we ever forget that by the strength and honor of our armed forces is our freedom and liberty provided.

Thank you for standing watch over all of us!!!

Lee and Lisa Whitaker, Dallas, Ga.

I wake up every morning feeling safe and alive in my home and I know that my life is protected by courageous people like you; willing to step up and do something. Thank you for everything and my prayers and my family's prayers are with you. Go get 'em!

Meaghan Brody, Chicago, Ill.

Hello to All of You that are working to keep us alive! As a retired police officer of 26 years I know the importance of someone stepping up to take care of our citizens. I know there are critics of the War on Terror but they are wrong and could be dead wrong!

I also know that if police officers all just went home when things got tough or we suffered casualties there would be no one to protect our towns and cities and states... ain't going to happen...we stand the domestic course along with you. I know that you do not shirk that duty so I sleep a lot better knowing you are out there 24-7!!

My husband and I salute you and fly our flag proudly for your service to our country!!

Susan and George Price, Miami, Fla.

Dear troops, I am sending you this message to thank you for all that you have done to keep us safe. It is because of all of you that we have not had another attack.

For the first time since 9/11, my husband and I feel safe enough to go on a plane again. My husband and I wear bracelets that say "Support Our Troops" and we are very proud to wear them.

Please know that all of you will always be in our prayers every day until all of you come home safely. God bless you all.

Kathleen and Ronald Madonia, Brooklyn, N.Y.



Bagram Bob

This week's topic addresses how to avoid getting and/or spreading a cold or flu.

Q How do I avoid catching or better yet, spreading a cold or the flu while I'm deployed here?

A I visited the camp clinic to get details on this one. Capt. (Dr.) Adam Newell from Camp Cunningham's medical clinic passed on some useful advice.

He said that both a cold and the flu are viral infections that cause similar symptoms, such as coughing and sore throat.

A cold, however, is only a minor viral infection of the nose and throat, while the flu is usually more severe, with symptoms that include the sudden onset of high fever and the addition of aches and pains.

The flu, or influenza, is a respiratory infection and it is highly contagious. It is caused mainly by viruses called type A and type B influenza viruses.

These enter the body through the mouth, nose and eyes. When a person with the flu coughs or sneezes, the virus becomes airborne and can be inhaled by anyone nearby.

To avoid getting sick, follow these tips:

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

Wash your hands to protect you from germs.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

If you know you are sick, visit sick call. Sick call hours at the camp clinic are Monday through Saturday from 0700L/0230Z to 1000L/0530Z and from 1400L/0930Z to 1700L/1230Z. On Sunday, you can go to sick call from 1400L/0930Z to 1700L/1230Z.

For more information, visit the clinic or call them at 231-4413.

If this or other topics brings questions to your mind that you'd like to see addressed, visit the 455th AEW/PA office in Tent 719.

ENDURING FAITH CHAPEL

WEEKLY WORSHIP SERVICES

Gospel

Sundays 1730L (1300Z)

Jewish

Fridays 1900L (1430Z)

Korean Protestant

Sundays 1545L (1115Z)

Latter Day Saints

Sundays 1300L (0830Z)

Liturgical Protestant

Sundays 0830L (0400Z)

Muslim

Fridays 1800L (1330Z)

Seventh Day Adventist

Saturdays 0930L (0500Z)

Protestant

Sundays 1130L (0700Z)

Roman Catholic

Saturdays 1945L (1515Z)



PRAYER REQUESTS

Call 231-4755

Sundays 1000L (0530Z)

OTHER SERVICES, MEETINGS

Catholic Mass

Weekdays 1130L (0700Z)

Chapel Cleanup

Saturdays 1100L (0630Z)

Gospel Bible Study

Thursdays 1900L (1430Z)

Noon Day Prayer

Weekdays 1215L (0745Z)

Promise Keepers Men's

Fellowship/Bible Study

(conference room on first floor of base operations)

Wednesdays 1900L (1430Z)

"Friends of Bill" (AA meeting)

(Inner Strength Café, the chapel at Camp Lacey)

Saturdays 1930L (1500Z)