



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald

Lt. Gen. Walter E. Buchanan III, U.S. Central Command Air Forces commander, addresses Airmen and Sailors Tuesday in the A-10 phase hangar.

CENTAF commander visits Bagram Airmen, Sailors

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

As part of his final trip to Afghanistan, the commander of U.S. Central Command Air Forces visited Bagram Airmen and Sailors earlier this week.

During a troop call Tuesday, Lt. Gen. Walter E. Buchanan III first addressed Airmen and Sailors who have been deployed to Bagram as part of Air and

Space Expeditionary Force 7/8.

“Bagram has continued to evolve and has become more and more effective as an airlift center and producer of close-air support – both lifesaving missions for Airmen, Soldiers and Marines out [in the field],” General Buchanan said. “You should feel good about your part in the mission and what you’ve done to make this base better than when you arrived.”

— See ‘Last visit’, Page 3

Good To Know

☐ **PA photos** — To see photos taken by PA, go to the S Drive, click on the “SHARED FILES” folder, then “455 AEW PA PHOTOS”, then “2005 Photos” or “2006 Photos”. Photos are put in folders based on the date taken.

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3-Day Forecast



Today

Mostly cloudy
H 50/L 25



Saturday

Mostly cloudy
Possible snow
H 47/L 24



Sunday

Mostly cloudy
Possible snow
H 45/L 21

Source: 455 EOG Weather

Every part in the Air Force puzzle counts

by **Capt. Julie Wokaty-Kozma**
777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron

Upon descent, my C-130 Hercules crew prepares for landing. The co-pilot coordinates with air traffic control while the navigator ensures we follow desired ground track to the field. The flight engineer runs checklists and the loadmasters scan for threats.

We keep our speed up as long as possible, configure close to the airfield and the plane settles onto the runway.

Through all the maneuvering, coordinating and flying I have a sense of *deja vu* — with a twist. I've done all this before, but never with this group of people. It's the same, yet different.

But one might wonder: What enables a crew of people who haven't flown together before to successfully maneuver an aircraft to accomplish a combat mission?

I believe the answer boils down to the professional integrity of the crewmembers and the support Airmen on the ground. This professional integrity comes from

knowing your job, performing your duties to the best of your ability and constantly striving to improve your skills.

From my perspective as a C-130 pilot, I know that each crew-member is trained in specific duties and must be able to perform those duties proficiently.

The training and checklists are standardized. Everybody knows what to expect and what's expected from them, regardless of whether they've flown together or not.

Each piece of the puzzle is important, unique and irreplaceable. My part of the puzzle (and yours) fits into the overall puzzle: Each Air Force Specialty Code having its own unique pieces and each AFSC irreplaceable to the total mission.

Professional integrity allows us to trust that others are doing their jobs correctly, and to accept their product as flawless. I count on the professional integrity of maintenance Airmen, intel Airmen and air terminal operations center Airmen in my job — to name a few.

Being able to trust in their abilities and integrity saves crucial time in a combat zone. This trust is vital to mission accomplishment.

Professional integrity also involves challenging yourself to stay at the top of your game and never growing complacent. The enemy and their weapons are constantly changing.

Every Airman must stay ahead of these changes to win the war. Staying in the books and keeping up to speed on latest tactics, techniques and procedures keeps our skills sharp and up to date.

Knowing that you work hard to be your best at your job and trusting others to do the same, that's the professional integrity that allows us to show up in a combat zone and complete a mission with people we have never worked with. It distinguishes professional warfighters from ordinary citizens.

No matter how your duties fit into the puzzle, you are vital to the Air Force mission. Wherever your piece of the puzzle fits, work hard to bring the entire picture together for mission accomplishment.

Book download

Airmen unload books off of a truck at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. The books were donated to the University of Kandahar by George Washington University under the Denton Humanitarian Cargo Program. The Airmen are part of the 451st Air Expeditionary Group, a geographically separated tenant unit of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing.



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. John Alderton



Bagram Bullet Editorial Staff, Disclaimer

Brig. Gen. Bruce Burda Commander, 455th AEW
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Preparing for the flow
Staff Sgt. Gregory Roger marks a sheet of drywall for cutting (left) and Senior Airman Daniel Valencia hangs a sheet of drywall (right) as part of the 1st Expeditionary RED HORSE Group's construction efforts on Bagram's new passenger terminal. Slated to open early this year, the 7,750-square-foot facility will allow a potential flow of 300 people at one time.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald

Last visit

From Page 1

General Buchanan said Airmen and Sailors can be proud of their accomplishments as part of this AEF rotation.

"When talking about your deployed experience with family and friends back home, you should swell with pride," the general said. "You can be proud that you joined other U.S. and coalition forces in this fight against terrorism."

General Buchanan asked the troops to pay attention as the future of Afghanistan unfolds.

"You've been here, and you have a personal stake in this country's success," he said. "Let's watch and see as Afghanistan and [President] Karzai, with the new government in place, begin to march out and put their arms around what is to be the future of Afghanistan. It'll be interesting."

The general then spoke directly to the Airmen and Sailors deployed as part of AEF 9/10.

"During your deployment to Bagram, remember that what you do day in and day out affects

'... remember that what you do day in and day out affects somebody's livelihood outside the wire.'

General Buchanan

somebody's livelihood outside the wire," General Buchanan said. "There's a Marine, there's a Soldier and there's an Airman outside in harm's way that will be relying on you and I to do our jobs day in and day out.

"Each night, there is a Soldier someplace in the vastness of Afghanistan who is leaning back in some safe house someplace scribbling a note home," he continued. "He's able to do that because of what you and I have done either today, yesterday or the day before — making the mission happen."

General Buchanan discussed how the role of women in Afghanistan has catapulted over the past two years.

"Think about what it was like here under the Taliban's [rule] for women," the general explained. "When women went outside of their homes, they had to be fully covered from head to toe. They didn't go to school and nobody bothered to ask for a woman's opinion.

"Yet when given the opportunity to vote for the first time, 40 percent of those who voted in October 2004 were women," he continued. "When the people of Afghanistan voted for parliament this past September, women accounted for 43 percent of those voting. They voted even though it meant risking their lives."

General Buchanan ended the troop call saying that although it is a challenging task, progress in Afghanistan will continue.

"We're beginning to see the people of Afghanistan get on with the business of life, which is not an easy road," he said. "We've got a long way to go ... but we'll be victorious."

General Buchanan is scheduled to retire this spring.



Col. George Skuodas, Bagram's new 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group commander, speaks to attendees at the 455 EMSG Change of Command Ceremony Monday. Colonel Skuodas took command of the group from Col. Peggy Poore, right.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald

New group commanders

Col. Paul Johnson, Bagram's new 455th Expeditionary Operations Group commander, speaks to attendees at the 455 EOG Change of Command Ceremony Sunday. Colonel Johnson took command of the group from Col. Wally Scales.

Citizenship, naturalization workshop set for Jan. 27

On July 3, 2002, President George W. Bush signed an executive order that, for a limited time, allows for expedited citizenship for all U.S. servicemembers serving in an active-duty status after September 11, 2002.

To assist Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines at Bagram in obtaining their U.S. citizenship, the Combined Joint Task Force-76 Legal Assistance office holds a U.S. Citizenship and Naturalization Workshop Jan. 27.

The day begins at 0645L/0215Z in the old Bagram Chapel (located behind the Dragon DFAC) and will consist of taking each military member's picture and fingerprints and assisting them in completing the naturalization application.

Those who wish to attend the workshop must bring the following:

- Alien registration card (or a

copy of both sides);

- Information on their five-year history of previous employment and residence data (to include complete addresses);

- Evidence of military service – (Form 4-1 or 4-2 enlistment contract, DD214, mobilization orders, or a recent leave and earning statement; and
- Alien registration number of their non-citizen children.

If applicable, each male applicant must have a selective service number and the date of his registration with the selective service. If not available, visit www.sss.gov.

Under the new rule, as long as the servicemember is currently serving in an active-duty status during the Global War on Terrorism, he or she is eligible to apply.

Legislation passed on Nov. 24, 2003, allows a military applicant for U.S. citizenship to now take the exam, interview, and oath overseas.

The law authorizes and encourages commanders to provide military leave and transportation to qualifying service member for naturalization purposes.

The legislation also reduced from three years to one the amount of military service required for non-citizens servicemembers to be eligible for citizenship, and waived all citizenship application fees for servicemember.

For more information on the workshop, call the Bagram Legal Center staff at 231-4603 or visit them in Bldg. 430. *(Article courtesy of the Bagram Legal Center staff)*

Bagram flight keeps OEF warfighters in the fight

by Capt. Eric Elliott
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

Moving the wounded, sick or injured, to where they can receive the right level of care is the focus of a group of medical specialists deployed here supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

From coordinating airlift to providing medical care while in flight, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group Aeromedical Evacuation Flight Airmen work all details involved in moving seriously-ill patients to where they need to be.

"Our job is to evacuate wounded, sick and injured (troops) throughout the AOR to a place where they can receive the appropriate medical care," said Lt. Col. David Sullivan, flight commander.

The flight is made up of about 30 people, which include physicians, nurses, medical service corps members, medical technicians, respiratory technicians, medical logisticians and other medical and administrative specialists.

About half are active-duty Airmen, while others are either from the Air National Guard or the Air Force Reserve.

"This total-force effort results in a comprehensive, knowledgeable team and provides outstanding medical care during our transport missions," Colonel Sullivan said. "This ensures the warfighter has access to the best medical care available."

Four air evacuation teams consisting of a flight nurse and two aeromedical technicians are responsible for in-flight care. A critical care air transport team, which includes a critical-care physician, a critical nurse and a respiratory technician, can also be added for the most serious cases.



Photo by Master Sgt. David Baker

Master Sgt. Darrell Ford, right, and other Airmen on his team help transfer a patient from an ambulance to a C-17 Globemaster III.

***'what we are doing
... helps these
Soldiers make it
home to their
loves ones...'***

Airman Butler

"The AE teams provide life-saving care while transporting patients to facilities where they can receive more definitive levels of medical care," Colonel Sullivan said.

Since September, the flight has flown more than 80 missions and evacuated more than 300 patients to hospitals and health facilities elsewhere in Afghanistan and as far away as Germany, said Master Sgt. Darrell Ford, noncommissioned officer in charge of the flight's crew management cell.

"There were no mishaps, no injuries or fatalities in flight," Sergeant Ford said. "I'm very proud of our unit. We strive to be the best for our Soldiers."

Patients have included Soldiers but also other servicemembers

wounded in combat, Department of Defense contractors who have suffered strokes or heart attacks and even Afghan victims of a car bomb.

"Our unit has successfully aerovaced unprecedented numbers of Soldiers and local nationals," said Capt. Robert Lunden, officer in charge of the flight's crew management cell.

"The camaraderie and professionalism carried forth day after day in this most difficult environment has been an impressive feat," he said.

In addition, "the presence of a fully operational AE system, along with providing access to medical care, also increases the morale of the warfighter by eliminating fears that medical care won't be available," Colonel Sullivan said.

Helping others is what the flight is all about.

"Every patient we carry out gives us a feeling of self-worth," said Senior Airman Chantel Butler, medical administration journeyman.

"It ensures us that what we are doing here is really helping these Soldiers make it home to their loved ones and family," she said.

455 EAMXS Airman, dad reunite miles from home

by Senior Airman
Sasha A. Schmidt

American Forces Network
Afghanistan

Call it luck. Call it coincidence. Either way, an A-10 crew chief for the 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron is getting a chance to spend most of his off-duty time with someone he's known since he was born – his dad.

As Airman First Class Alex Ahlstrom, deployed from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., began his tour of duty here as part of Air and Space Expeditionary Force 7/8, his dad, David Ahlstrom, was being notified of a job opening in Afghanistan.

"I'd wanted to go overseas for a while," said Mr. Ahlstrom, who works as an Army contactor here. "When I found out my son was over here, it was even more tempting to jump at this opportunity."

The company Mr. Ahlstrom works for — Management Technologies, Inc. — has five locations throughout Afghanistan. When he was told he was being assigned to the one at Bagram, he soon realized a reunion with his soon would be within reach.

"Before I left Fayetteville, [N.C.], I found out my son was at Bagram and I knew that he worked on A-10s," Mr. Ahlstrom said. "After I got settled in, I went and found his flight commander and told her that my son, Airman

'My dad... inspires people around him...'

Airman Ahlstrom



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald

Airman First Class Alex Ahlstrom, right, and his dad, David Ahlstrom, spend time reminiscing Sunday afternoon.

Ahlstrom, was under her command. Mr. Ahlstrom was taken to his son's room, giving Airman Ahlstrom the "shock of a lifetime."

"When you get a knock on your door in the middle of the night and it's the other flight chief, the first thing that comes to your mind is 'Oh my gosh, did I have a tool in my pocket? That's what I thought. I got up. I looked around and wondered what to do? The next thing I know, my big dad walks in.'"

Now that father and son have found each other, they're spending as much time together as they can before Airman Ahlstrom's tour here ends.

"Usually we try to make it a habit to go to his [Airman Ahlstrom's] place," Mr. Ahlstrom said. "Every Sunday night, we meet up and call home to the family, spending about a half an hour to 45 minutes, talking to everybody. It's great."

Airman Ahlstrom is happy his dad had the chance to come to Afghanistan. Although his rotation is almost up, he said having his dad around has made his deployment to Bagram go by faster.

"I feel more secure about being out here," Airman Ahlstrom said.

'He has made the choices in his life that would make his parents happy.'

Mr. Ahlstrom

"Having your dad in a place like this just brings a better sense of homeliness.

"My dad is one of those guys who inspires people around him no matter what, and just to see him out here in this kind of environment by himself is neat. I've always wondered what it would be like; this is my chance."

For Mr. Ahlstrom, being with his son in Afghanistan is a reward in itself.

"I thought that it was a real nice opportunity for me to bond with my son as man-to-man rather than father-to-son," Mr. Ahlstrom said.

"He has made the choices in his life that would make his parents happy," he continued. "That has just made me so proud. I just can't say enough about how proud I am of my son."

www.americasupportsyou.mil

Americans send messages of support, thanks

Dear Protectors of Freedom: I am so glad to have this opportunity to personally thank you for your tremendous sacrifice.

I firmly believe your efforts are absolutely vital to protecting our freedom and you are doing an awesome job. I thank God for you every day and pray for your protection.

Lois Smyth, Lawrenceburg, Ind.

My heartfelt thanks go to you as you put your lives on the line so we are able to continue our way of life.

I cannot imagine living anywhere but the United States of America and I appreciate your sacrifices and those of your families to protect and keep us safe.

Because of you I can sleep at night, get up in the morning and pursue my career and spend weekends with my family.

May God keep you safe and sound and bring you home to your loved ones.

God speed!

**Maggie Osborne,
Marietta, Ga.**

Every day I thank God for each one of you, my prayers are with you as you selflessly serve to defend our country both at home and abroad.

Please know that every true American supports you and loves you. We know and understand freedom isn't free!

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for being willing to pay the price as you serve in harm's way.

May God bless you and keep you safe from every evil.

Suzy, Ft. Wayne, Ind.

Sometimes we back home get so wrapped up in making a dollar or going about our daily activities that we forget that it is you who make it possible to keep what we make and enjoy our freedom to have diverse opinions without being tossed in jail.

You have accomplished much and we are so proud of you. You are truly heroes. Our prayers are constant for your safe return home. Love and hugs.

Janis Galatas, Meridian, Miss.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Because of the great sacrifice you make serving in a far off land, every American can feel safer.

My family and I deeply appreciate all you do and support your effort 110 percent!

Please don't get discouraged when you hear people say support is faltering.

The vast majority of Americans understand how important your mission is and we will stand with you until that mission is completed.

Once again, thank you, thank you, thank you!

Dino J. Barbine, Norristown, Penn.

God Bless all of you and what you are doing to keep my freedom!

I know that it can take a toll on all of you, but you are the reason why our country is a free country. you are the backbone, the strength that holds this country together.

With God's help, we will keep our freedom. Please keep your watchful eye on us, as God has and come home safely.

Keep your fellow partner in the field in your sight that they also come home safely to their

families as well. We love and support you.

Sharon Smith, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Dear Brave American: Thank you for stepping forward when our great country needed you.

We, the grateful American citizens, pray for your safety and victory, and we will forever be indebted to you and all of the troops who are fighting for the freedom of the world.

May God bless you and keep you from harm.

Rich Phelps, Sausalito, Calif.

May God bless and keep safe all the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Your willingness to serve is appreciated by all Americans.

It is through your courage and humanity that we as a nation are recognized as the greatest nation on the planet. I pray for the safe return of all the brave men and women serving there and all over the globe.

Ron Abigail, Mt. Airy, Md.



2006 Defense budget increases pay, benefits

by Donna Miles
American Forces
Press Service

President George W. Bush last week ushered in an across-the-board 3.1 percent military pay raise, effective Jan. 1.

It includes a variety of new or enhanced benefits for servicemembers and their families when he signed the 2006 National Defense Authorization Bill into law Jan. 6.

In addition to a pay raise that's a half percent higher than the average private-sector increase, the new budget provides about 20 new or increased bonuses or special pays or benefits.

Among the law's most significant features are:

- Increase in the maximum reenlistment bonus offered, from \$60,000 to 90,000;
- New ceiling on hardship-duty pay, from \$300 to \$750 a month;
- New allowance to cover the first \$150,000 in Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance premiums for troops serving in Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom; and
- Full housing allowance payments for Reserve members called to active duty for more than 30 days.

For more information about pay and benefits, visit the DoD's military compensation Web site at www.defenselink.mil/militarypay/.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald

Combat inspection

Tech. Sgt. Paul Breeding, left, and Senior Airman Kevin Bianchi perform an egress inspection on an A-10 here. Since September, Bagram A-10s have flown more than 1,900 combat sorties in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

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

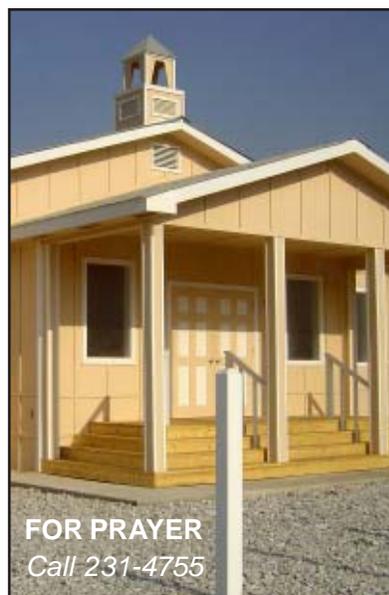
Saturdays 0930L (0500Z)

Protestant

Sundays 1130L (0700Z)

Roman Catholic

Saturdays 1945L (1515Z)



FOR PRAYER
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)