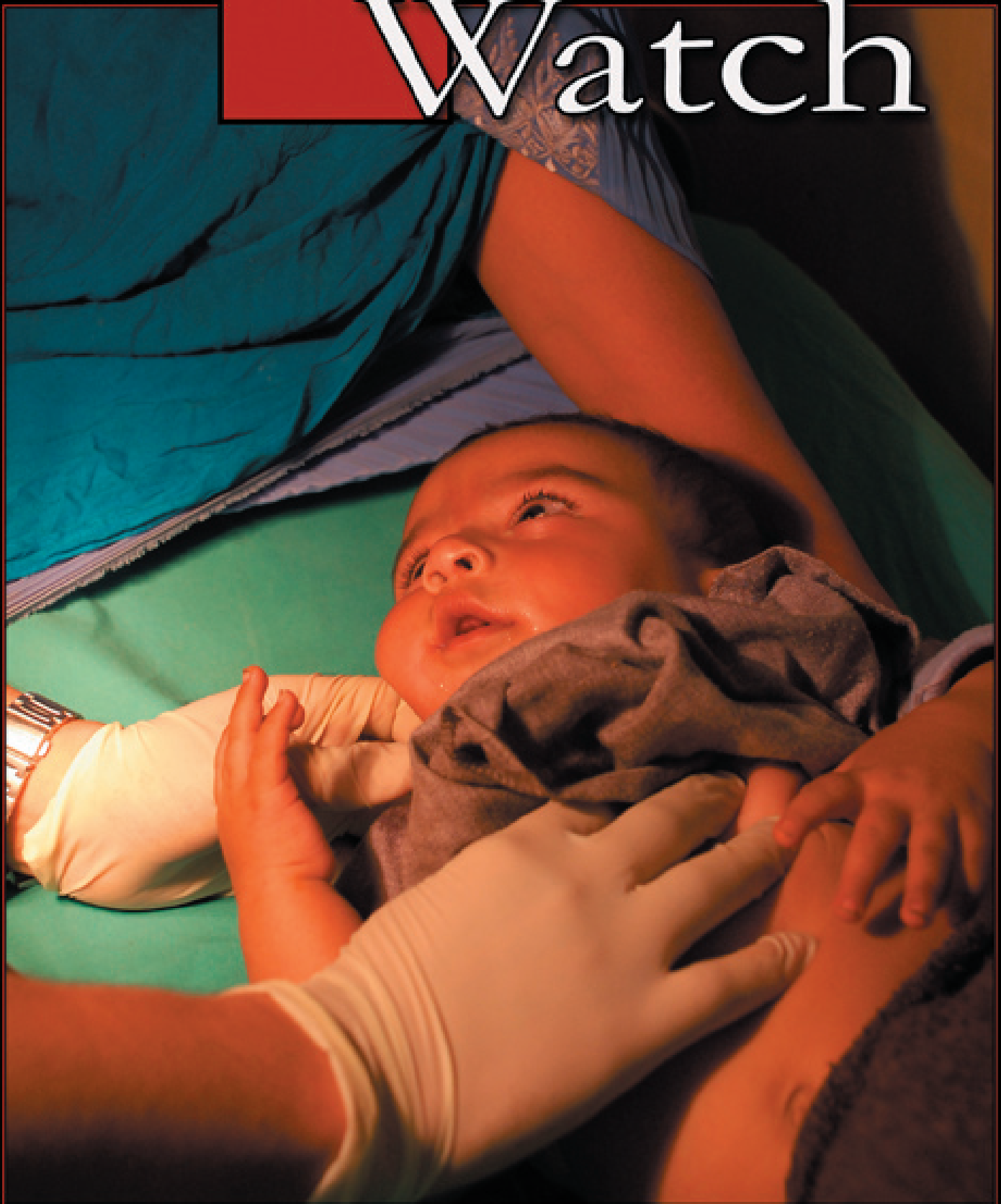


November 26, 2007

Freedom Watch

AFGHANISTAN



Operation Hump ■ Egyptian Hospital ■ Police Partners



Army

New program to boost Army's employment aid to spouses

WASHINGTON – The Departments of Defense and Labor announced a joint program to provide military spouses with resources to help find jobs, receive training and launch careers.

A two-year pilot program that begins in January will provide \$35 million in resources at 18 installations in eight states. Five of the posts that will participate in test of the “Military Spouse Career Advancement Initiative” are Army installations: Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Benning, Ga.; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Lewis, Wash.; and Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

“Today we embark on a landmark program that will open the doors to our military spouses for more fulfilling careers,” Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said as he announced the initiative at the Pentagon. He and Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao signed a proclamation to support the initiative.

“We understand how hard it is for families of military men and women who have to be ready to move anywhere in the world every couple of years,” he said, adding that packing and relocating is often at the expense of spouses’ careers.

Gates said moving makes it difficult for military spouses to “navigate the career licensure and certification requirements that go with most professions.” He said the new program will help spouses obtain credentials for “high-growth, portable occupations” such as education, health care, information technology and financial services.

Eligible spouses will get reimbursed for expenses directly related to post-secondary education and training under the new program. These include costs for tuition, fees, books, equipment, and credentialing and licensing fees in a number of professions. The program also covers the cost of renewing existing credentials and licenses due to a military move.

Spouses of active-duty servicemembers grades E-1 through E-5 and O-1 to O-3 will be eligible to participate. They must have a high school or general-education diploma.

Army education centers at the five installations testing the program will have more information about the initiative said Patricia Wells, the Army’s employment readiness program manager at the Pentagon. She said employment readiness managers at the five installations have also received training in the initiative and will be ready to help spouses apply for the program.

Wells said the Army has been helping military spouses with employment resources for more than 20 years. ERP provides job-search assistance, job-skills training and information and referral services for Soldiers, Family members and eligible military ID cardholders.

It provides assistance with resume and resumix writing, interviewing techniques, dressing for success tips and networking. Job-skills training includes basic computer training, an overview of the federal employment process and a class in entrepreneurship.

The ERP managers work with installation civilian personnel offices, community agencies, contractors and the local Army Spouse Employment Partnership representatives.

Under ASEP, the Army has a partnership with Fortune 500 compa-

nies and federal agencies who pledged their support to increase employment and career opportunities for Army spouses. At present there are 31 Fortune 500 companies and five partners from federal and military agencies participating in the program.

Between September 2006 and September 2007, more than 7,200 military spouses were hired by ASEP partners, bringing the current total number to more than 23,000 spouses hired through the partnership.

The Military Spouse Job Search Web site, www.msjs.org, was launched in July 2005 as a portal for military spouse resumes and a place for ASEP partners and registered military spouse-friendly employers to post their job vacancies.

The new DOD and Department of Labor initiative, however, adds funding for education and training that had not been available before under the Army programs, Wells explained.

Navy

GWOT support assignments give sailors more options

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – More predictability for Sailors is the goal as the Navy transitions from individual-augmentee assignments to Global War on Terror support assignments, announced the chief of naval personnel.

“The more I talk to Sailors around the fleet, the more I’m convinced Global War on Terrorism support assignments is the right thing to do. I look forward to pressing ahead on this plan,” said Vice Adm. J.C. Harvey, CNP, who released the latest GWOT support assignment NAVADMIN 297/07, to provide an update on the transition.

This process allows Sailors to negotiate for an IA when it fits their needs. Eventually it will replace the need to pull Sailors from other assignments mid-tour in order to fill an IA, according to Rear Adm. Sonny Masso, deputy chief of naval personnel.

“We’re done studying the issue. We’ve tested enough billets to make sure the system will work. It’s time to move out and make this happen,” added Masso.

The plan allows Sailors to negotiate eight-month or 14-month PCS orders to an Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center for an assignment in theater in support of GWOT, according to Master Chief Sonar Technician Surface (SW) James Stone, head enlisted GSA detailee.

In addition to billets in Iraq and Afghanistan, GSA detailing will also cover assignments to the Horn of Africa, Kuwait, Bahrain, Germany, South America, Cuba, Kosovo, the Philippines and even stateside duty in Tampa, Fla., and Arlington, Va.

“The feedback from the Sailors I’ve detailed has been positive so far. They get to choose where and when they go and it helps commands because they don’t have to choose what Sailors they are going to send,” he said.

Currently, information systems technician, master-at-arms and yeoman are the most in-demand enlisted ratings, added Stone. However, Sailors with comparable skills sets from other ratings may also volunteer, said Stone.

To date, more 372 Sailors have negotiated orders to an ECRC for GSA, which coordinates and supervises Sailors’ pre-deployment training before sending them in theater.

Approximately 1,500 enlisted GSA billets are currently available on Career Management System-Interactive Detailing, the program enlisted Sailors use to apply for orders.

The Web address is <https://www.cmsid.navy.mil>. Billets are listed under the category code 90GS. Officers can contact their detailee directly for information on GSA billets.

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COVER: An Afghan baby looks
up at his mother as an Egyp-
tian pediatrician examines
him. The Egyptian Field Hospi-
tal on Bagram Airfield sees Af-
ghan people at no cost several
times per week. The full story,
pg. 8. *Photo: Air Force Staff
Sgt. Daniel Bellis*

BACK COVER: An Afghan
girl in Khowst Province shyly
watches from a distance as
Soldiers and Sailors from the
Khowst Provincial Reconstruc-
tion Team drop off school sup-
plies. *Photo: Senior Airman
Christine Collier*

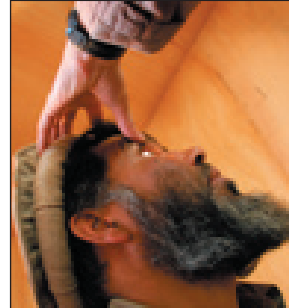
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U.S. Soldiers train Polish combat lifesavers

Story and photo by Spc. Micah Clare
4th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan – “Cze?! Dzie? Dobry!” Hearing “Hello, good morning” in their own language was a comforting sound to the tent full of Polish Soldiers attending the class, especially since it was being taught by an American.

Even though these were the only Polish words he remembered from his own ancestors, Army Sgt. Philip Kozacka, a health-care specialist from Ambulance Platoon, Company C, 782nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, was still able to break the ice and get the four-day course off to a good start.

To familiarize them with U.S. military medical procedures and equipment, 15 incoming Polish Battle Group medics and combat lifesavers were given a special medical course here.

The Polish contingent, which was integrated into Task Force Fury’s battle space in Paktika Province in May, is supported by and work alongside American forces, Kozacka said.



Polish Maj. Mark Pierkarski, a military field surgeon, works to stop the bleeding on an electronic medical mannequin during a training course at Forward Operating Base Salerno.

The medics are no different, and in the event of an emergency, will need to know our way of doing things, he said.

“While certain medical procedures like calling in nine-lines (medical evacuations) are a (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) standard, others are not,” he explained. “For instance, they might have a different idea about which casualties should get treated first. Out here, everyone needs to run off of the same standard of care so that we’re on the same page at all times.”

To learn the Coalition standard of care, the Poles went through many different familiarization classes such as proper wound-management techniques, execution of UH-60 Black Hawk medevacs and loading or off-loading casualties from an ambulance, said Paul Stevens, medical simulations training senior instructor.

In one such class, they were able to practice wound-management drills with the training team’s “sim man,” a life-sized, electronic mannequin complete with a pulse, realistic breathing and gushing blood.

“This was especially good because of how realistic it was,” said Polish Maj. Mark Pierkarski, military field surgeon. “We’d never trained with something like this before.”

During the final exercise in wound management, the Poles were sent into a completely dark room with sound effects from a war movie playing, and by the light of their flashlights, had to treat the “sim man.”

They did exceptionally well, Stevens said. “By far, they exceeded my expectations.”

Showing them new ways of doing things was what the course was all about, Stevens said.

“We’re just melding what we have to teach them with what they already knew,” he said.

While the Polish soldiers had quite a bit of prior medical training, it was mainly civilian training, Kozacka said.

“Most had a civilian (emergency medical technician) background,” he explained. “This course was able to help them push the limits of what they’d been taught and get over some preconceptions.”

Several medical procedures and equipment taught in the course were entirely new to the Polish Soldiers, such as the Army’s hemorrhage-control bandages, as well as chest-needle decompression and on-the-spot intravenous therapy for blood loss and dehydration, he said.

“Until now, these things had been completely out of their scope of practice,” Kozacka said.

Another important aspect of the training was the non-medical combat lifesavers will be able to take what they learned and pass it on to their comrades in the field, said Spc. Joseph Zoller, a medic from Ambulance Platoon, Co. C, 782nd BSB.

“In the absence of medics, it’s important to have people who know what to do,” he said. “A lot of these procedures may seem like common sense, but there are some basic things people easily forget to do that can save lives.”

After this course, saving Polish and American lives is something the Polish medics will be much better prepared to do, Kozacka said.

“By knowing the standardized medical procedures, they’ll be able to save seconds, minutes and more,” he said. “Everything moving smoothly makes things much easier.”

TF Pacemaker prepares for Afghan winter

By Army Sgt. David Roscoe
Task Force Pacemaker Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHARANA, Afghanistan – Task Force Pacemaker, 864th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), Soldiers are preparing for winter by adapting facilities in Regional Command-East.

Afghan winters can be harsh and difficult. Temperatures can drop to -15 degrees Fahrenheit with cold winds, snow, ice and heavy rain. This is an intense change in climate for Soldiers who just experienced summer temperatures of 95 degrees or higher. The need to winterize equipment and living quarters is a necessity to ensure the welfare of Soldiers.



Spc. George Hart, 76th Engineer Company, performs electrical wiring inspections during winterization projects on an outpost. *Courtesy photo*

“Winterization allows the task force to maintain a positive operational presence during the bad winter months,” said Army Capt. Eric Parthemore, 864th ECB, Headquarters and Support Company commander. “It also provides comfortable working conditions and a safer working environment for the task force’s Soldiers.”

Many Soldiers assigned to Task Force Pacemaker are now living in hard shelters known as K-Spans. The K-Span living quarters are well insulated and most are equipped with heaters, providing a warm sanctuary for cold nights.

“The positive effects of this winterization project will be witnessed by all of our Soldiers and the outlying FOBs that we service,” said Army Capt. Jorge Mendoza-Casillas, 864th ECB, Alpha Company commander. “In the past, Soldiers around Afghanistan have endured harsh winters in remote areas. While we try to predict quickly descending weather, this area of the world is known for its unpredictability. We are trying to get teams to these remote areas and provide all Soldiers, to include all Coalition forces, a winter plan, materials and expertise to modify their living conditions in order to manage the bitter winters here.”

Some of the tasks that come along with winterization efforts include installing back-up and replacement power generators, installing and repairing wooden floors, testing electrical circuits, stocking the FOB’s fuel supply, installing and replacing sand bags and preparing the engineering equipment for winter weather.

“Mentally, Soldiers can focus on their mission and stay motivated,” said Army Capt. Jason King, 864th ECB 585th Engineer Company executive officer. “It’s hard to be motivated when you’re cold or your equipment doesn’t want to work because of the cold Afghanistan winter temperatures. Physically, it’s a no-brainer; a cold-weather injury should always be avoided whenever possible. So the importance is simple; it’s the right thing to do to ensure Soldier welfare.”

Maintainers lead way for greater airpower capability

By Air Force Capt. Michael Meridith
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – F-15E Strike Eagle maintainers here became the first in the Air Force to implement a new inspection process that promises greater airpower capability throughout Afghanistan.

Shortly after becoming the first deployed F-15 unit in the Air Force to return to full operational capability following the Air Force’s fleet-wide grounding of the aircraft, the 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron began the new “400-hour phase” inspection process. Phase inspections are among the most comprehensive maintenance actions performed on Air Force aircraft.

“Previously, each of our aircraft went into

a five-to-seven-day phase inspection for every 200 flight hours,” said Air Force Maj. Jennifer Hammerstedt, squadron commander. “Engineers at [the Air Logistics Center at] Warner-Robins Air Force Base, Ga., looked carefully at all the data after years of analysis and testing and were able to extend it to 400 hours.”

While the 400-hour standard wasn’t slated for implementation until early 2008, maintenance leaders here asked the Air Force to approve an earlier adoption for Bagram. “We’re at the tip of the spear and we wanted the extra [flying] hours to meet our mission demands,” said Hammerstedt.

Thanks to the new standard, maintainers are not only able to keep the Strike Eagles in the air longer – which Hammerstedt said “ultimately equates to lives saved on the ground,” but they are also able to reinvest the time savings back into a key area: training.

“When I was back at home station, I didn’t get as much of a chance to be hands-on during phase,” said Airman 1st Class Darwin Gellizeau, 455th EMXS. “Now I have the chance to get more involved and to learn more.”

That point was echoed by Air Force Staff Sgt. Charles Knotts, the phase dock chief, who added, “It means we’ll need less manpower, have a lot more flexibility and it will free us up to refocus on other critical programs.”

With the first phase inspection under the new standard complete, Hammerstedt is pleased by the results and excited about the future. “Our Air Force has taken the initiative to look at a very long-standing process and ask, ‘How can we do this smarter and better?’” she said. “With the amount and length of sorties we fly – that means a huge plus in combat capability.”

Construction, progress

Story and photos by
Senior Airman Dilia DeGrego
*Combined Joint Task Force-82
Public Affairs*

SALANG DISTRICT, Afghanistan—Members of the Bagram Provincial Reconstruction Team visited here to assess the construction of the area's latest district center.

Bagram PRT engineers visited the site of the district center and new Afghan National Police headquarters, near Salang High School, to determine the current dimensions of the cleared site.

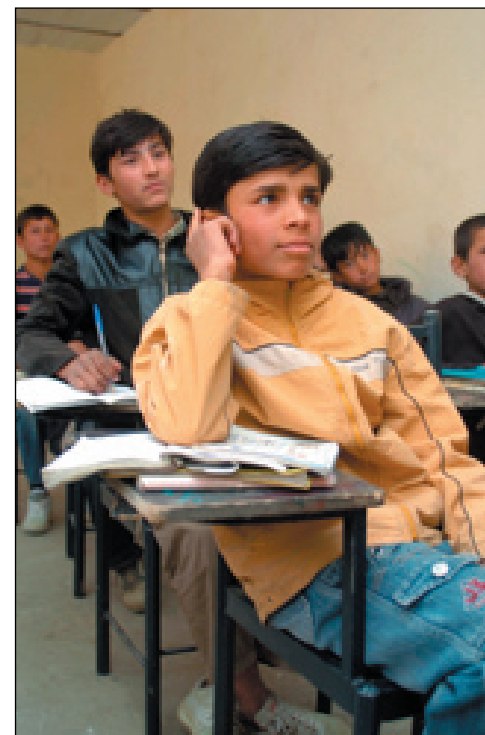
Upon completion of their assessment, PRT engineers discovered adjustments were needed to ensure there was enough room for all three buildings, as well as a new volleyball court for the school.

The team discussed the adjustments with site contractors and the district director of education. Based on their findings, the team gave the district center contractor approval to start building.

"[The visit] was a partial success in that we finalized the location of the new district center and the contractor was released to build the facility," said Air Force Capt. Harry Jackson, Bagram PRT engineer. "The district education director would not accept the fact that



Hafizullah Samim, Salang High School math and English teacher, teaches mathematical limits. The students and teachers were presented with school kits during a visit from the Bagram Provincial Reconstruction Team.



continues in Salang District

we have a limited space to build in and every meter counts. The compromise we struck with him could jeopardize the construction of the ANP headquarters.”

Once complete, the district center will serve as a town office and will house district leadership. It will be used to hold town meetings where local elders can present the needs of their people to their government.

“The current facility rented for the district center is a small five-room building with a leaky roof,” Jackson said. “It definitely does not project an image of a government that can meet the needs of the people. Also, most of the time the district court is co-located in or next to the district center. The new district center can provide a place for the court to meet as well.”

The groundbreaking of the new ANP headquarters is dependent on the building of the district center and may have to be postponed due to lack of space. If construction goes as planned, the new ANP headquarters will provide a more modern and secure working area for ANP officers.

“The current ANP headquarters is also in rented facilities which are in equal disrepair,” Jackson said. “The new ANP headquarters will include all of the required facilities for an efficient and professional police force.”

“We are very excited to get the new headquarters,” said Afghan Col. Mohamad Naim, Salang police chief. “Right now our officers don’t have a good place to work. Once it is built, there will be a more secure place for them to work from. It will also provide a place where the people will know where to come to if they need our help.”

The two projects have been on the books for at least two years, Jackson said. In fiscal year 2007, Combined Joint Task Force-82 made it a priority to complete all the required district centers for each province.

“The requirements were generated by the Parwan government based on a standard for the district-center functions required by the Ministry of Interior,” he added. “The standard facility design that is used in each site was provided by the Afghanistan Stabilization Program, a division of the Ministry of Interior.”

Additionally, during their visit, Bagram PRT members distributed more than 500 school kits and more than 50 teacher kits.

“We appreciate the student and teacher supplies very much,” said the Salang High School headmaster. “They are very happy.”

Construction will continue on both the district center and the new ANP headquarters for the months to come.



An Afghan construction worker piles rocks on the back of a truck for use in the building of Salang’s newest district center. The Bagram PRT visited the construction site to assess the progress of the project.



Above: The Salang High School principal distributes backpacks with pens, pencils and notepads to students. The school kits were donated to the school by the Bagram PRT.

Left: Students listen to their teacher during a math class at Salang High School.

An Afghan woman steps through a doorway leading to the Egyptian Field Hospital on Bagram Airfield. The hospital has its own entry control point. Egyptian, Afghan National Army and U.S. Soldiers guard the entry and search patients.



WITH OPEN ARMS: *Egyptian medics care for Afghan people*

**By Air Force Staff Sgt.
Sarah Gregory**

American Forces Network – Afghanistan

When the gates open at 9 a.m. there is already a crowd of women and children waiting patiently to process through the security checkpoints before heading into the clinic.

It's Tuesday, a female patient day at Bagram's Egyptian Field Hospital, and it promises to be a busy one. On an average female day, the hospital staff sees upward of 450 patients, but there was a time when almost no women sought medical care.

When the first rotation of Egyptian medical providers arrived in July 2003, the hospital, especially the gynecology clinic, didn't see many patients.

"Now we have many female cases, including births, so their traditions are evolving," said Egyptian Army Maj. Tarek Salah Eldin, liaison officer. "It

was obvious when we first came here that we saw only males, but now we have 500 cases or more of just female patients. They feel more comfortable and are coming more freely to us; this is the evidence of our success."

The hospital divides their week by gender: Monday and Wednesday are reserved for male patients and Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday for females. Typically, the clinic treats 300-350 patients per male day and more than 400 during the female days.

Afghan traditions dictate that women are responsible for taking care of the children, including providing medical care.

Today a woman has brought her seven-year-old daughter to the pediatric clinic for a routine blood transfusion. Because of a bone-marrow disease similar to leukemia, the girl needs weekly transfusions, which she had been

traveling to Pakistan with her mother to receive before the Egyptians set up the hospital.

"To be able to get her blood transfusions whenever she needs them is wonderful," said the mother. "It was too difficult and expensive to keep up the trips to Pakistan. She's my only daughter and it was hard to see her in pain so I'm grateful [for the hospital]."

The Egyptian Field Hospital is just one branch of Task Force Med, which includes Air Force, Army, Korean and Jordanian medical personnel. With two operating rooms, a dental lab, pharmacy and blood and X-ray labs, the field hospital staff can provide full-range care for Coalition forces as well as Afghans.

"Our mission is to provide medical care to local nationals and Coalition forces without discrimination to sex, religion or color," said Egyptian Army Col. Tarek Mostafa Kamal, Egyptian

Field Hospital commander. “If the Coalition forces can’t have their treatment or medications provided by Task Force Med for whatever reason, they can come to us and we can serve them here – whatever they need.”

In the past four years, the doctors and nurses have treated more than 350,000 Coalition members and local nationals. The commander credits that number to the reputation of professional work performed by his doctors and nurses.

“Our work speaks about us,” Kamal said. “Recently we found out that we were well-known even in Pakistan when some doctors there advised patients to come to the Egyptian hospital at Bagram.”

In addition to the pharmacy and labs, the hospital offers 15 doctors and 25 nurses providing care in specialties

such as pediatrics, orthopedics, internal medicine, surgery, anesthesiology and tropical medicine.

“There are five Egyptian field hospitals over the world – three in the Sudan, one in Lebanon and one here in Afghanistan,” said Kamal. “We only take the best medics we have in Egypt to send to the field hospitals.”

While the Egyptian medical staff is proud of its capabilities and the reputation it has created, staff members know they won’t be in Afghanistan forever – at some point the Afghans will have to learn to provide their own medical care.

“We are proud to be here with the Coalition forces to provide the medical care to the local nationals,” said Kamal. “The people are really in need of these medical services. We hope that one day the Afghan people can count on themselves to provide everything they need

for their own medical care. And for us, our mission will be accomplished when they can do this.”

In order to bring that goal of medical independence to reality, the hospital along with the Joint Operations Center and Task Force Med, are planning a medical training clinic for the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police.

“The Coalition forces will not stay here forever so we have to teach the Afghan people to depend on themselves,” Kamal said.

Until then, the doctors and nurses open the clinic each day with a sense of purpose and dedication to their craft.

“I feel that I can help people very well. I don’t care about the place I’m at as long as I’m helping people,” said Egyptian Army Lt. Col. (Dr.) Ehab Fahm, ophthalmologist.



Top: A little girl receives her routine blood transfusion. Before the Egyptians set up the hospital in 2003, the girl’s mother took her to Pakistan for medical treatment.

Center: An Afghan man is screened for far-sightedness by an ophthalmologist.

Right: An Egyptian Soldier calls to the waiting crowd for the next patient in the Egyptian Field Hospital’s pediatric clinic. Many of the children here are treated for chronic blood disorders and malnutrition. *Photos: Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel Bellis*



Above: Two Afghan brothers pose for the camera in the Egyptian Field Hospital's inpatient clinic. The boys were victims of a mine strike, but the hospital staff expects a full recovery for both. The hospital has a 30-patient ward.

Left: An Egyptian dentist works on an Afghan man while an image of King Tut, a sign of home, hangs overhead. All treatment and medication at the Egyptian Field Hospital are free for Afghan people.

Below: An Afghan interpreter (left) assists a pharmacist in the Egyptian Field Hospital's pharmacy. *Photos: Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel Bellis*



Afghan Police partner with Airmen to help villagers

Story and photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Mike Andriacco
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

KAPISA PROVINCE, Afghanistan – The Afghan National Police have worked to better their country with the help of some Airmen here.

ANP and Air Force Office of Special Investigations Expeditionary Detachment 2405 special agents regularly partner on a broad range of missions related to humanitarian assistance and security.

“We usually meet up with the ANP several times a week for medical engagements and humanitarian-assistance drops,” said Special Agent Chris Williams, EDET 2405 superintendent.

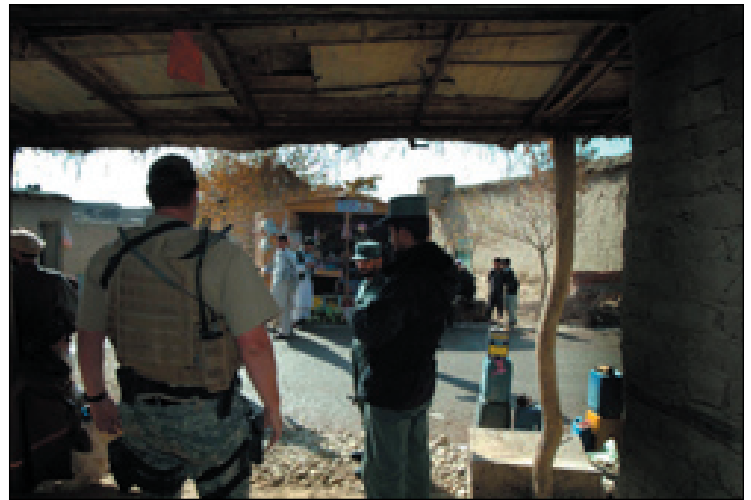
A medical engagement is a mission where members of the base medical team go to local villages to provide assistance to Afghans in need of medical care.

The ANP often provides additional security for the Airmen involved in these kinds of missions, and also provides an example to their fellow countrymen of the strong partnership between U.S. forces and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

That kind of example is important as an Afghan villager may be more likely to share potentially life-saving information with a fellow countryman – and Airmen can’t always be there.

“We have a great working relationship,” Williams said. “[The ANP] are our eyes and ears for things going on outside [Bagram].”

Through its work with U.S. forces, the ANP is fostering trust



Afghan National Police members help provide security during a medical engagement. The ANP is an essential partner in efforts to provide improved services and infrastructure to Afghanistan.

and goodwill between the villages and their Coalition neighbors, as well as helping to bring security and stability to the region.

“I am very thankful that your military left your beautiful country and families to come over here and risk your lives for the peace and security of Afghanistan,” said a local ANP commander.

Joint effort: ANSF help treat more than 2,100 civilians

Courtesy of Combined Joint Task Force-82 Public Affairs

KANDAHAR/KAPISA PROVINCES, Afghanistan – Afghan National Security Forces, advised by Coalition forces, brought medical and humanitarian assistance to Afghan civilians in Kandahar City, Kandahar Province and Tag Ab Valley, Kapisa Province.

The ANSF-led forces treated more than 2,100 villagers, including approximately 1,500 women and children, during the two-day village medical engagement. Common complaints among the villagers were muscular-skeletal pain, upset stomach and basic flu-like symptoms.

“Most of the people who come here have problems that are preventable or easy to treat if detected early,” said a Coalition medical officer. “We can give advice to local caregivers and provide them with the ability to receive the care needed that will make them feel better.”

“An astonishing fact is that the amount of females treated outnumbered males by a ratio of three to one,” said a Coalition Soldier. “This indicates a sub-

stantial increase in the sense of trust the Afghans have for the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the government’s commitment to provide a bright future for Afghan citizens.”

“I’m very pleased with the outreach mission because it will bring hope to Kandahar residents and strengthen their interest in the [government],” said Brig. Gen. Sardar, Afghan National Civil Order Police commander in Kandahar Province.

“This has been a huge accomplishment,” said Sardar. “Many Afghan villagers have been provided with medical care that they otherwise would not have been able to afford.”

In addition to the medical care provided, the ANSF-led forces distributed clothing, food, hygiene items and approximately 100 radios to attendants identified by village elders as those who need them the most.

“The security and assistance you bring for our villagers is a gift,” said a Kandahar-area village elder. “Many thanks and blessings for the assistance you bring to our villages.”



Afghan citizens receive de-worming treatment during a medical engagement provided by Afghan National Army commandos, in conjunction with Coalition forces, near the Tag ab Valley, Kapisa Province.

Guardian gets new commander

By Army Sgt. Jim Wilt

Combined Joint Task Force-82 Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Combined Joint Task Force-82's Task Force Guardian held a change of command ceremony here.

In front of TF Guardian servicemembers and their canine counterparts, Army Col. Charles A. Tennison replaced Army Col. James W. Gray as commander of the military police task force in Afghanistan.

"The Guardians, under Jim [Col. Gray], provided exceptional law and order, detainee and combat operations over the past year," said Army Maj. Gen. David Rodriguez, CJTF-82 commander. "Jim Gray provided superb command leadership in every measurable area."

While the ceremony was held to recog-

nize the change of leadership in the task force, the leaders gathered there focused on the servicemembers who serve in the task force.

Within the next three months, the majority of servicemembers who make up Guardian will be training replacements as they too move on from Afghanistan.

"The outgoing Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and civilians of the task force have done a superb job working tirelessly both inside and outside the walls, waging a silent battle against the enemy," Gray said.

"As my time comes to a close on this trip, I'm gratified to know that Task Force Guardian has done its part in this noble campaign."

The servicemembers of TF Guardian have patrolled the roads here and helped train Afghan National Security Forces.

"This was not a 'gimme' mission by any stretch; responding to death scenes, indirect fire attacks, armed standoffs and the like," Gray said, referring to the task force's law- and-order mission in the Bagram security zone.

"You've helped build capacity within the Afghan National Army to establish a professional detention capability and you've provided the full spectrum of military police support throughout the theater and done so magnificently," he added.

In command now, Tennison said he feels confident in the ability of his newly acquired task force.

"I am extremely confident in the professional competence and total dedication of every member of the task force team to achieve mission success while continuing to improve our fighting position every day," he said.

Counter-IED training lanes dedicated to fallen ROK Soldier

Story and photo by Senior Airman Christine Collier

American Forces Network - Afghanistan

BAGRAM AIRFIELD – Joint Task Force Paladin members and Republic of Korea Soldiers came together to dedicate Bagram Airfield's new counter-IED training site in memory of a fallen ROK Soldier.

ROK Staff Sgt. Yoon Jang-Ho, an interpreter assigned to the 100th Engineer Group, was killed by a suicide bomber while working at an entry control point at BAF on Feb. 27.

"If Staff Sgt. Yoon could be with us today, he would surely ask that we not honor his heroism," said Army Col. Scott Henry, JTF Paladin commander, during the dedication ceremony. "He would say that he is not a hero. No, Sergeant Yoon would shake his head and say, 'No, I was only doing my job, my duty.' Then he would name a dozen other Soldiers he believed deserved special recognition instead. So, today, we honor Sergeant Yoon in the name of all Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines serving in Afghanistan."

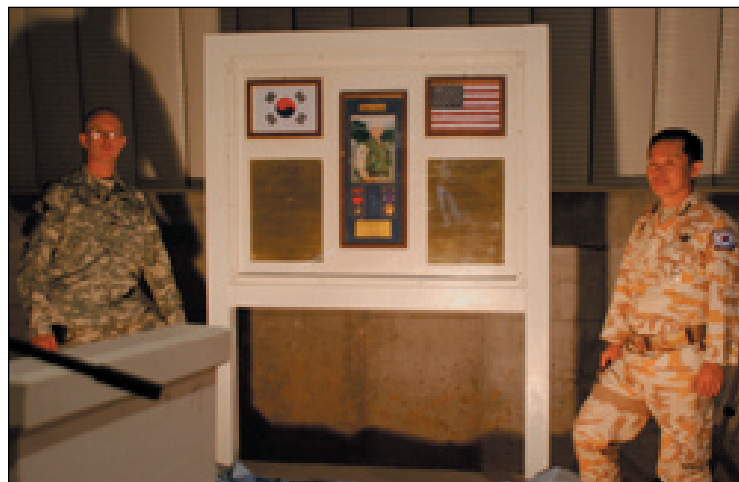
Col. Jang Soo Jeong, ROK Forces Support Group commander, also had a few words to say about the Soldier who gave his life in support of the efforts in Afghanistan.

"I certainly consider it very meaningful to be able to dedicate such a facility in the name of Sergeant Yoon," Jeong said. "I hope his noble, self-sacrificing spirit will radiate its light throughout the land of Afghanistan and help her establish hope and peace."

Although Yoon contributed to many missions at BAF, the counter-IED mission was one of the missions he considered most important.

"[Yoon's] devoted service in many operational-facility construction projects and participation in Provincial Reconstruction Team missions helped our efforts to accomplish our mission here successfully," said Jeong in his speech. "It is known that this counter-IED training center was the very project in which Sergeant Yoon worked on during most of his time on Bagram Airfield."

"Although this occasion is somber, it's also great in the respect that we actually have a facility that we can teach units that are



Army Col. Scott Henry, JTF Paladin commander, and Col. Jang Soo Jeong, ROK Forces Support Group commander, unveil the Staff Sgt. Yoon Jang Ho Counter-IED Training Lanes monument during a dedication ceremony. Yoon was killed by a suicide bomber at an entry control point at Bagram Airfield in February.

here in Afghanistan to survive and operate in an IED environment," said Army Lt. Col. Nicholas Scopellite, JTF Paladin director of training.

Henry and Jeong unveiled the Staff Sgt. Yoon Jang Ho Counter-IED Training Lanes monument during the dedication, a tribute to Yoon that displayed both the American and Korean flags, along with the Purple Heart he was awarded. The unveiling was followed by a moment of silence for the sergeant.

"All the servicemembers of the ROK Force Support Group and people of the Republic of Korea will never forget the noble sacrifice of Sergeant Yoon and never submit to terrorist acts, but surely continue the humanitarian-support activities for peace and stability of Afghanistan," said Jeong.

The running of the **HERD**



Soldiers start a 24-hour run at Forward Operating Base Fenty, to commemorate a bloody day in the history of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, when it lost 48 Soldiers on Nov. 8, 1965, in Vietnam.

Story and photo by Army 2nd Lt. Monika Comeaux
173rd Brigade Support Battalion Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan – “On the 8th of November, the angels were crying as they carried his brothers away ... There were few men left standing that day,” sings the country duo Big & Rich in their ballad commemorating the fall of 48 American Soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade in 1965 in Operation Hump, war zone D, in Vietnam.

Forty-two years later, members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, other servicemembers and civilians deployed here honored the fallen Soldiers of Operation Hump by participating in a 24-hour relay.

The event celebrated unit cohesion, teamwork and esprit de corps. Participants ran along a nearly three-and-a-half mile route lined by miniature American flags and passed a bayonet, which is depicted on the unit patch of the 173rd ABCT, to one another in lieu of a baton. The event was made even more special by having a Vietnam veteran, Rick Petersen, from the facility engineer team participate.

“I think it is a great idea. I think it is great that everybody is going to come out here and support one another. It is great for camaraderie,” said Army 2nd Lt. Kate Fullenkamp, a quartermaster officer and platoon leader of “3-5-1” Platoon of Company A, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne).

Her platoon entered two, seven-person teams. There would have been more volunteers, but mission requirements did not allow all of her Soldiers to participate.

“We had more than seven people who wanted to do this, but we picked the best seven,” said Army Pfc. Ikechuku Odi, a combat engineer with Road Clearance Patrol 4, Co. A, 70th Engineer Bn.

Ever since they found out about the race, the engineers ran two laps every day when they didn’t go outside the wire in preparation for the challenging race. When Odi heard about the race, he thought “We are going to win this.”

“Our tactic is simple: Run as fast as you can,” he said, after completing his first lap in a little more than 22 minutes.

“Some people are out here for the physical aspect ... But there are people that are out here because it is fun and you enjoy it and you will always remember it, for sure,” said Fullenkamp.

The rules of the run were pretty simple.

“Basically it is a 24-hour relay with seven-man teams. One runner must be running at all times,” said Army 1st. Sgt. Drake Sladky, Co. C, 173rd BSB, one of the masterminds behind the event.

According to Sladky, the idea of organizing another run after running a 10-kilometer race shortly after the 173rd’s arrival to Afghanistan was cherished by many. Originally they were aiming for New Year’s Day, but then they received a disc containing the music video, ‘8th of November,’ from James Bradley, a member of the 173rd Association. “We knew that we had to do some sort of race in commemoration of that date,” Sladky explained.

“We were really lucky; we started early and got sponsors ... The 173rd Association sent the race T-shirts. Niles Harris, [the Vietnam veteran who was the inspiration for the country song and was injured on Nov. 8, 1965], sent about 200 autographed T-shirts,” said Sladky.

Some of the shirts ended up as prizes, but the majority were sent to subordinate units deployed to other forward-operating bases and unable to participate. Prizes included name-brand golf clubs, shirts and hats. No team went home empty-handed.

The winning team completed a total of 51 laps, covering, ironically, 173.4 miles in the 24-hour period, and consisted of: Army Staff Sgt. Luis Rivera, Army Pfc. Ikechuku Odi, Army Pfc. Vincent Fiorillo, Army Pfc. Joshua Contryman, Army Sgt. Eric Chappel, Army Sgt. Bradley Edmonds and Spc. Tin Tran – all combat engineers.

Odi was right when he thought his team was going to win. On Nov. 9, perhaps the angels were smiling a little as his team carried their prizes away.

Photos From the Field



Above: The sun sets over the Hindu Kush Mountains and City of Screams in Bamyan Province. This scene sits just outside Kiwi Base, home to approximately 100 New Zealanders who run the Bamyan Provincial Reconstruction Team. *Photo: Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel Bellis*



Left: A Soldier from Battle Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, takes a retinal scan of an Afghan man as part of a biometrics system implemented in Afghanistan. *Photo: Army Staff Sgt. Justin Holley*



A UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter lands on the roof of a house in the village of Yakachina, Kunar Province The helicopter carries Army Lt. Col. William Ostland, 2nd Battalion 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, commander, a group of leaders from the province and Afghan military officials. Photo: Army Staff Sgt. Justin Holley



Have a photo you'd like to see in
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