

RED TAIL FLYER

332d Air Expeditionary Wing, Balad Air Base, Iraq



*Airmen,
Soldiers
say
farewell to
comrade*

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THE WING COMMANDER WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU



Brig. Gen.
Robin Rand
332d Air
Expeditionary Wing
Commander

As a service for Balad Airmen, the 332d Air Expeditionary Wing operates the Commander's Action Line.

The line is a way for Balad Air Base members to get answers to questions or express concerns about life on the base. Brig. Gen. Robin Rand, 332d AEW commander, gives action line queries his personal attention. The *Red Tail Flyer* will publish those items that are of general interest to the Balad Air Base population.

In addition to using the commander's action line, Balad Airmen are asked to remember their chain of command when dealing with problems and concerns.

The action line can be reached via e-mail at 332.redtailflyer@blab.centaf.af.mil. People using the action line should include name, unit and phone number in case additional information is needed and for a timely response.

Weather outlook

Today	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
116/84	114/82	117/84	118/84	115/82	114/82	114/82

RED TAIL FLYER

Brig. Gen. Robin Rand
332d Air Expeditionary Wing
Commander

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The crimson used throughout the publication alludes to the original Tuskegee Airmen of the 332d Fighter Group.

The Tuskegee Airmen were the first African Americans to be trained as WWII military pilots in the U.S. Army Air Corps. They were known as the Red Tail Flyers because of the crimson paint scheme on their aircraft's tails.

<http://www.balad.afnews.af.mil/library/redtailflyer/index.asp>

Airmen, Soldiers say farewell to comrade in Iraq

by Lt. Col. Bob Thompson
332d Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

Honored as a true hero, leader and friend, Air Force Master Sgt. Brad A. Clemmons was remembered by Airmen of the 332d Air Expeditionary Wing and Soldiers of Logistics Support Area Anaconda here Aug. 24.

During the memorial service, Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Stan Giles, 732d Expeditionary Mission Support Group chaplain, asked the standing-room-only crowd of about 400 to pray for Sergeant Clemmons' family and the families of all explosive ordnance disposal technicians who serve in harm's way.

"Nearly 20 years ago," Chaplain Giles said, "Brad entered perhaps the most dangerous of all career fields. He became an instructor in the most dangerous of all professions and then volunteered to come to work in the most dangerous of all neighborhoods here in Iraq."

Sergeant Clemmons, 37, of Chillicothe, Ohio, died Aug. 21 while he was traveling as part of a convoy just outside of Taji, Iraq. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart.

According to the citation read by Col. Duane D. Lamb, 732d Expeditionary Mission Support Group commander, Sergeant Clemmons distinguished himself by meritorious achievement as a team leader, Weapons Intelligence Flight, 732d Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron.

"...he was on a convoy mission using his explosive ordnance expertise to perform forensic analysis and intelligence collection on two reported improvised explosive devices," Colonel Lamb read. "Upon returning to...Taji, his vehicle was struck near the rear by an improvised explosive device hidden in the road. Sergeant



Photo by Airman 1st Class Andrew Oquendo

Airmen and Soldiers held a memorial service here Aug. 24 for Air Force Master Sgt. Brad A. Clemmons, a veteran explosive ordnance disposal technician. From the tools of his trade, the memorial symbolized the sergeant who was killed Aug. 21 when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device near Taji, Iraq. Below, a moment of silence is observed during the memorial.

Clemmons gave his life in the defense of our nation and for the freedom of the Iraqi people."

"Sergeant Clemmons fulfilled a critical role," said Lt. Col. Frank Freeman, 732d EMSG deputy commander. "He led his team in collecting crucial evidence and post blast analysis of the number one killer in Iraq – IEDs."

The primary job of an EOD team is to disarm, or what they call "render safe," bombs of all types. Usually, the teams dispose of the explosives in a controlled detonation at the scene or at a secure range.

Sergeant Clemmons was deployed from the 354th Civil Engineer Squadron, Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska and had come to Iraq to find ways to defeat the roadside bombs.

"Sergeant Clemmons was a great teacher," Colonel Freeman said. "His purpose was to inform others to keep them safe from harm."

Chaplain Giles visited Sergeant Clemmons when he first arrived in Iraq about 9 days prior to the incident.

"EOD is a very tight team," Chaplain Giles said. "It was clear that Brad was a leader and a lover of his team, his people, his family, his mission and his country."

"One of his best qualities was his leadership," Colonel Freeman said. "He led from the front, back and middle. He was a people person and his team loved him too."

"His team couldn't wait to get back out after the incident," Colonel Freeman said. "Because they know, that is what Sergeant Clemmons would want them to do."

"When there is sudden death, it is human nature to ask, 'Why?'" Chaplain Giles said. "We ask, 'What if?' These are understandable questions, but there's no answer for them."

"In times of war, we see human nature at its extremes," the chaplain said. "We see it at both its absolute worst and absolute best. Today, we honor one of the best. Brad was a true hero, a hero who put service before self and died in the line of duty."



Midnight ride takes different turn

Airman receives Purple Heart after IED blast

By Senior Airman Kerry Solan-Johnson
332d Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

Just north of Abu Ghraib, Air Force Staff Sgt. Lewlyn Lippert removed his night vision goggles for just a moment – eye fatigue was setting in from the blazing green glow – and checked his mirrors, glancing back at the 30 vehicles trailing behind him during a red-eye convoy Saturday night.

Sergeant Lippert, assigned to the 70th Medium Trucking Detachment, was the lead vehicle in a convoy from Baghdad to Al Taqaddum, a route he was so familiar with he said “I knew the roads better than those in my hometown.”

When his eyes slid back to the road, he saw it: an improvised explosive device and a pressure cord strung across the road from ditch to ditch.

Sergeant Lippert immediately jerked the steering wheel left, and his truck barreled toward the ditch. It was Sergeant Lippert’s only chance to avoid the full impact of the IED.

“I knew (the explosion) was coming; I wasn’t going to miss that pressure cord,” the Yankton, S.D., native said. “I just braced myself and waited for the pop.”

Sergeant Lippert’s front tires snagged the cord, and the roadside bomb detonated, perforating the truck’s metal cab, peppering Sergeant Lippert’s face with shrapnel and shattering the bones in his hand. When Sergeant Lippert looked over at his passenger, a Soldier he was training in convoy tactics and who had taken the brunt of the blast, he was slumped over, out cold.

“For a minute, I thought he was dead,” Sergeant Lippert said. “I saw blood on my hands, in the truck, and was sure it was his.”

When the truck rolled to a stop in the ditch 50 meters away from the blast site, Sergeant Lippert dove out of his truck headfirst, and the Soldier, a member of the 57th Transportation Battalion, tumbled out behind him.

As Sergeant Lippert reached out with his right hand to help the Soldier, it was then he first realized he was injured.

“I didn’t even feel the pain. All the blood in the truck was actually mine,” he said.

Within an hour, Sergeant Lippert was taken to the Air Force Theater Hospital here, the central military medical hub in Iraq. The hospital’s staff of about 375 medics, doctors and nurses cares for an average of 700 patients a month.

Once in their care, the medical staff repaired the damage to Sergeant Lippert’s hand. Doctors foresee the only lasting damage as the possibility of Sergeant Lippert’s knuckle fusing.

Waiting at the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility on Monday for an aeromedical evacuation mission out of Balad AB, Sergeant Lippert was presented with the Purple Heart from Brig. Gen. Robin Rand, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing commander.

“Airmen like you impress me,” General Rand told Sergeant Lippert during the presentation. “Your story makes me proud to serve alongside Airmen serving today, and proud to be in the Air Force.”

Looking back, Sergeant Lippert said he wishes his timing was better.

“If I had taken the NVGs off just a few seconds later, I would have seen the (IED),” he said. “You just never think it’s going to be you.”



Staff Sgt. Lewlyn Lippert

2,000 hours



Photos by Senior Airman Kerry Solan-Johnson

Lt. Col. Anthony Franzel, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing safety office, flew his 2,000th hour while flying a combat mission over Iraq on Aug. 18. Left: Colonel Franzel taxis in his F-16 after the mission. The F-16 Fighting Falcon flies close air support missions, drops bombs and strafes ground targets for troops in contact with anti-Iraqi Forces.

Maintainers, logisticians wow multi-MAJCOM evaluators

by Lt. Col. Bob Thompson
332d Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

Without missing a beat during combat operations here, maintainers from the 332d Expeditionary Maintenance Group and logisticians from the 332d Expeditionary Mission Support Group received high marks from a multi-major command staff assistance visit team Aug. 15-19.

Sent by Headquarters U.S. Central Command Air Forces, the team's purpose was to promote safe and effective combat operations and to evaluate three primary areas: aircraft maintenance, munitions and weapons operations, and logistics support.

"Operating at the tip of the spear under the most difficult

“

The determination of our Airmen to get the job done no matter the challenge is inspiring.

– Col. David Reynolds,
332d Expeditionary
Mission Support Group
commander

”

conditions in the USCENTAF (area of responsibility), the 332d EMXG consistently generates quality aircraft to meet an increasingly demanding air tasking order," Lt. Col. Kevin J. Fitch, chief of the evaluators, wrote in his report Aug. 19. "Numerous aircraft pre/post flight inspections observed by the...team were virtually flawless."

The maintainers work around the clock to provide

combat-ready aircraft and munitions for two squadrons of F-16 fighter jets, a squadron of C-130 cargo aircraft, a squadron of Predator unmanned aerial vehicles and a HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter squadron.

"This is one of the first times a wing has ever been inspected during combat," said Brig. Gen. Robin Rand, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing commander. "I am very proud of these two groups and everyone in the wing because every Airman here had an impact on this and they did a great job."

The evaluators described the 332d Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Weapons Section, and the 332d Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron Munitions and Armament Flights as "the catalyst for mission success." The report noted that despite operating under combat and harsh environmental conditions as well as less than optimal facilities, "these proud Airmen are dedicated to providing munitions and weapons in support of combat operations."

Noted by the evaluation team to be "accomplishing excellent logistics sustainment," the 332d Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron is averaging a "remarkable four days" to get mission essential replacement parts for the aircraft maintainers.

"Despite climate, facility and environmental challenges, (the) young Airmen are extremely motivated and it is evident they take personal pride in accomplishing their part in providing expeditionary combat airpower," the

Making the honor roll

Sixty-two Tuskegee Airmen were put on the "Honor Roll" by the multi-major command staff assistance visit team Aug. 15-19. Chosen from aircraft maintenance, munitions and weapons operations, and logistics support, these Airmen were recognized by the evaluators as superior performers.

The 332d Expeditionary Maintenance Group had 29 maintainers stand out during the visit:

Capt. David Frush, 332d EMXS
Senior Master Sgt. David Shows, 332d EMXS
Master Sgt. Jerry Nemitz, 332d EMXS
Master Sgt. Keith Avery, 332d EMXS
Master Sgt. Jose Rodriguez, 332d EMXS
Master Sgt. Curtis Sanders, 332d EAMXS
Tech. Sgt. William Bateman, 332d EAMXS
Tech. Sgt. Greg Taylor, 332d EMXG
Tech. Sgt. Walter Anderson, 332d EMXS
Tech. Sgt. Robert Hinshaw, 332d EMXS
Tech. Sgt. Colin McDonald, 332d EAMXS
Tech. Sgt. Collin Baulch, 332d EMXS
Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Dean, 332d EMXS
Tech. Sgt. Randy Sweitzer, 332d EMXS
Tech. Sgt. John Brannon, 332d, EMXS
Tech. Sgt. John Young, 332d EAMXS
Staff Sgt. Erica Toole, 332d EMXG
Staff Sgt. Greg Austin, 332d EAMXS
Staff Sgt. Jason Daldrip, 332d EAMXS
Staff Sgt. Zachary Benton, 332d EMXS
Staff Sgt. David Lenzie, 332d EMXS
Staff Sgt. Jesse Arguello, 332d EAMXS
Senior Airman James Gitzen, 332d EAMXS
Senior Airman Pierre Pangelinan, 332d EAMXS
Senior Airman Jonathan Lynn, 332d EMXS
Senior Airman Billy Smith, 332d EMXS
Senior Airman Michael Rogers, 332d EMXS
Senior Airman Eric Bryan, 332d EMXS
Senior Airman Jason Ashcraft, 332d EMXS

Thirty-three Airmen represent the best of the 332d Expeditionary Mission Support Group:

Capt. George Vandevere, 332d ELRS
1st Lt. Javier Rodriguez, 332d ELRS

Master Sgt. Jacques Deverson, 332d ELRS
Master Sgt. Marlene Roussin, 332d ELRS
Master Sgt. Brent Chapman, Det. 1, 332d ELRS
Master Sgt. Samuel Louie, 332d ELRS
Tech. Sgt. Kent Kundert, 332d ELRS
Tech. Sgt. David Edwards, 332d ELRS
Tech. Sgt. Reginald Hickmon, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. William Ryan, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. Ruth Alverson, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. Bernadette Tauvela, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. Jessica Martinez, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. Joshua Willden, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. Christopher Sones, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. Richard Mitchell, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. Azael Ramirez, Det. 1, 332d ELRS
Staff Sgt. Johanna Achey, 332d ELRS
Senior Airman Christopher Hansen, 332d ELRS
Senior Airman Jason Valledor, 332d ELRS
Senior Airman Robert Minor, 332d ELRS
Senior Airman Errol Gibbs, 332d ELRS
Senior Airman Jacob Anderson, 332d ELRS
Senior Airman Casualla Long, 332d ELRS
Senior Airman Amber Brooks, 332d ELRS
Airman 1st Class Lawrence Elledge, 332d ELRS
Airman 1st Class Danae Palacios, 332d ELRS
Airman 1st Class Jonathan Cardin, Det. 1, 332d ELRS
Airman 1st Class Vincent Sterrett, Det. 1, 332d ELRS
Airman 1st Class William Travis, 332d ELRS
Airman 1st Class Christopher Force, 332d ELRS
Airman 1st Class Louis Manor, 332d ELRS
Airman Duncan Hilsabeck, 332d ELRS

evaluators wrote.

"The determination of our Airmen to get the job done no matter the challenge is inspiring," said Col. David L. Reynolds, 332d EMSG commander. "The team work between our flights in the logistics readiness squadron and between the mission support group and the maintenance group is directly

responsible for these outstanding results."

Two of the wing's organizations were highlighted in the report as "honorable mentions." The maintainer's Armament Flight Database caught the evaluator's attention because it ensures 100-percent accountability for

— See STAFF, page 6

AF's largest deployed rescue squadron now in Iraq

by Senior Airman Kerry Solan-Johnson
332d Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

A one-of-a-kind operation in Iraq is now the largest unit of its type in the world, making the 64th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron the largest combat search and rescue unit since the Vietnam conflict.

The squadron bolstered their assets to accommodate an expanded mission, adding five additional HH-60G Pave Hawks to their inventory, which nearly tripled the squadron's number of aircraft. Crews, consisting of aircrew, pararescue and combat rescue officers known as the "Guardian Angels," grew in number from five to 12, and the squadron's manning doubled to support the mission.

Before the expansion, the 64th ERQS solely supported the combined Air Forces component; their business relied on the misfortune of downed aircrews. Now with added aircraft and crews, they provide combat search and rescue support to Special Operations Command Central, which plans special operations in Iraq.

What these additional missions mean

to the squadron is a bigger role in combat while maintaining the current combat search and rescue capability.

The squadron is on high-alert status and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Additional manning, however, means there are enough crews to pull day and night shifts, without pulling a crew out of bed, said Lt. Col. James McElhenney, 64th ERQS commander. "These crews mean we have the flexibility to support all of our customers," the colonel said.

The special operation forces-designated component of the 64th ERQS will allow for a faster response time as crews stage at forward areas to support SOF missions.

Staff Sgt. Jason Parker, an aerial gunner with the squadron, believes the expansion is a force enabler for the 64th ERQS.

"The more people we have, the better," said Sergeant Parker, who is deployed from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. "It means more work, but the extra help is better for flying and accomplishing the mission."

The integration of additional Airmen and aircraft took six weeks from the initial request of forces to their arrival at Balad Air Base.

"We worked closely with our home unit to determine what would meet the need," said Colonel McElhenney, who is deployed from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. "It definitely takes the right combination of people and aircraft; you can't use one without the other."

The Air Force, designated by the Defense Department as the lead service for combat search and rescue missions, provides the Defense secretary's office with military planning options for personnel recovery.

Airmen from the 64th ERQS comprise the only CSAR unit in the country. They are a highly-specialized field, made up of an extremely small community of highly-trained professionals who save the people no one else can reach, Colonel McElhenney said.

"It's all part of our mission," said Maj. Kyle Cowherd, 64th ERQS Pave Hawk pilot. "We come in the dark, alone and unafraid, to deliver life."



Photo by Senior Airman James Croxon

Members of the 64th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron cover a HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter here Wednesday. The 64th ERQS recently expanded their mission, making them the largest combat search and rescue unit since the Vietnam conflict.

From STAFF, page 5

more than 2,000 special equipment loaders and vehicles across 14 locations. Also, the maintainers use the database to schedule and perform all required inspections on the equipment 14 days prior to assigned due dates.

Not to be out done, the logistics plans and aerial port team received an honorable mention from the evaluators for the combined passenger and cargo movement operations. By creating a seamless

team from various wing operations and setting up a standardized process, the logisticians "slashed delivery time 30 percent."

Working together, the 332d ELRS logisticians have moved nearly 141,000 passengers and about 85,750 short tons of cargo from January to August 2006, averaging about 55 missions a day.

"While areas for improvement were identified by the team," Colonel Fitch wrote in the report, "... it was clear these professionals are making continual improvements and adding to the 332d AEW's distinguished history."

Small-diameter bomb ready for war on terror

Four major acquisition programs – developed in parallel – have come together to provide Air Force F-15E Strike Eagle crews with a revolutionary capability that combines accuracy and reduced collateral damage.

Military and civilian employees in seven locations worked together developing the four new capabilities: a small-diameter bomb, advanced display core processor, joint mission planning system and the operational flight program software, better known as Suite 5. The final, combined product, which includes four additional smart weapons stations, was delivered to Air Force pilots at Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, last month, eight weeks ahead of schedule and \$26.9 million under budget.

The key capability delivered to warfighters is the GBU-39 250-pound small-diameter bomb – a munition capable of raining pinpoint precision explosions on enemy targets from 60 miles away while minimizing collateral damage.

In July, the first F-15Es were fitted with a training version of small-diameter bomb racks with electronics that allow jets to drop simulated bombs.

Little Rock Airmen train Romanian maintainers

Members of the 373rd Training Squadron, Detachment 4, are providing first-of-its-kind training for Romanian air force maintainers with a custom-made program at the C-130 Center of Excellence.

Det. 4 members built training classes specifically for the Romanians, and then four separate classes of international students ran concurrently, a first for the Air Force.

This international training has been in the making for more than a year. In September 2005, members of the 373rd TRS, along with representatives from Air Force Security Assistance Training, traveled to Romania to assess the Romanian air force's training needs. The Romanian air force has four C-130Bs and will receive their first C-130H in September.

After going to Romania for an initial training needs assessment, the Little Rock team returned and began to build the classes necessary to train the Romanians in preparation for receiving their new aircraft. Det. 4 has had international students in the past, but taught from established curriculum. Never before was a course built to meet such specific needs.

Combat controller dies in Afghanistan

An Air Force combat controller from Hurlburt Field, Fla., died Aug. 19 when his vehicle came under hostile fire in Afghanistan's Uruzgan Province.

Senior Airman Adam P. Servais was working side-by-side with the Afghan National Army as part of a special operations forces team when his convoy was attacked by extremists.

Airman Servais was a native of Onalaska, Wis., and joined the Air Force in 2002.

In a statement released by the Servais family, Adam was remembered as enthusiastic and proud of his role as a combat controller.

Airman Servais graduated from advanced skills training Sept. 24, 2004, and was then assigned to the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron. This was his second deployment since joining the Air Force.

Repatriation



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Linda Miller

Servicemembers present arms as a Pacific Command team transfers the remains of an American servicemember from a C-17 Globemaster III during a repatriation ceremony at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, on Aug. 11. The remains will be identified at the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command.



Senior Airman Adam Servais

Despite violence, civil war remains at bay

Iraq is experiencing some localized sectarian strife, but is not embroiled in a full-blown civil war as reported by some news media, a senior coalition officer said Tuesday.

"In my judgment, we are not in a situation of civil war," said British Royal Marine Lt. Gen. Robert Fry, deputy commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq and the senior British military representative in Iraq. He spoke to Pentagon reporters via a satellite connection from his Baghdad headquarters.

General Fry acknowledged a "very intense sectarian conflict" in Iraq and said violence is mostly occurring in an area that includes Baghdad and its environs and reaches 40 miles or so north to Baqubah.

He said a collapse of central government and large-scale population migrations are hallmarks of civil wars. Iraq is not in a civil war because the Iraqi government is intact and functioning, with its elected leaders busily addressing pressing national issues. General Fry also explained there is no mass movement of Iraqis milling about the land or leaving the country.

Most of Iraq is stable, the general pointed out, noting 14 of the country's 18 provinces experience little or no violence. He also cited the Iraqi police takeover of security duties in Muthanna province at the end of July as another positive step. Japanese military engineers that had worked in the province were able to be sent home.

Soldiers find, disarm 7 explosive devices

BAGHDAD – Iraqi army and Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers discovered and destroyed seven improvised explosive devices Monday in and around Baghdad.

Iraqi army soldiers found and disarmed an improvised explosive device at approximately 10 a.m. in an area south of Baghdad.

An explosive ordnance team from 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, destroyed the device.

In another incident, Soldiers from 2nd BCT located an IED on the side of a road southeast of Iskandariyah at approximately 9:30 a.m. An EOD team detonated the 152mm round.

Soldiers from 8th



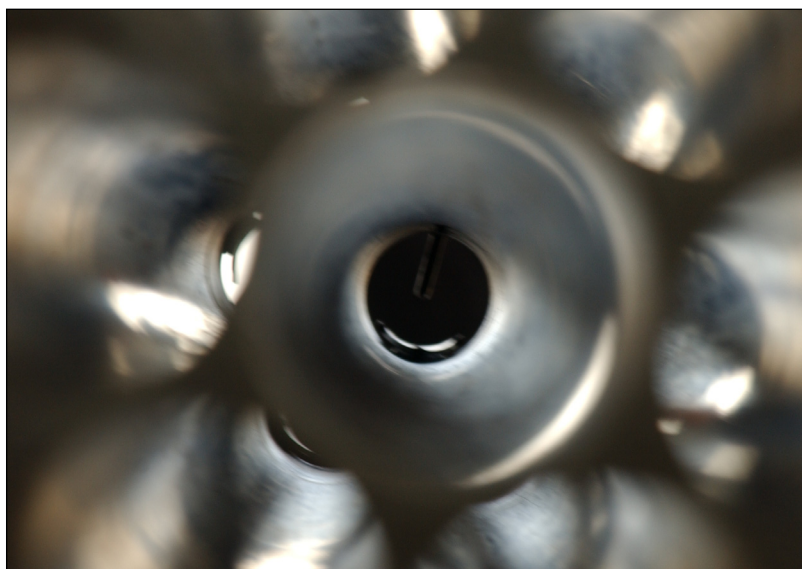
Photo by Navy Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jackey Bratt.

Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., found a roadside bomb consisting of a 122mm mortar round partially buried in a main thoroughfare of Ameriyah at approximately 11:20 a.m.

The device was removed and destroyed by an EOD team.

Landing Zone
Iraqi Army Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division brace themselves against the wind as a helicopter approaches to pick them up Aug. 16 following a visit to a village outside Mujahida.

Courtesy of MNFI news release



Know what this is?

If you can identify this object, send an e-mail to 332.redtailflyer@blab.centaf.af.mil. Tech. Sgt. David Case, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing safety office, was the first person to correctly identify last week's picture below, which was the side decal of a pickup truck commonly seen around base.

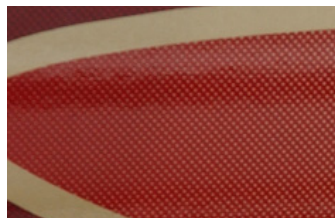




Photo by Senior Airman Kerry Solan-Johnson

Senior Airman Ralph Mendoza preps an LAU-131 rocket launcher before loading it with rockets. As the No. 2 man of a three-person team, Airman Mendoza preps the pylons and hangers for munitions.



Photo by Senior Airman Kerry Solan-Johnson

Staff Sgt. Daniel Johnson inspects GBU-12 and GBU-38 bombs before loading them on an awaiting F-16. A three-Airman crew can arm the jet in less than an hour.

Arming Falcons

by Senior Airman James Croxon
332d Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

Transforming an F-16 from an airplane to a Fighting Falcon takes weapons. To make sure the weapons systems work as needed, takes maintenance. Airmen assigned to two different flights but sharing the same Air Force specialty code, ensure weapons make it to the wings and work when the pilot pushes the fire button.

Weapons flight

When an F-16 rolls into a hardened aircraft shelter with empty pylons, it usually means the pilot found his foes and ended their day. For weapons flight Airmen, an unarmed F-16 means they have work to do.

The 332d Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Weapons Flight is the last stop a munition makes before it is employed by the pilot. Flight members load weapons on the aircraft and maintain the firing systems, turning the F-16 in a lethal weapons system.

According to Master Sgt. Jona Bowen, 332d EAMXS Weapons Flight Chief, the flight's primary task is reloading the Fighting Falcons when they return from mission.

A three-Airman team loads, and occasionally unloads, the weapons on the jets. Each team member (known as the No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 man) has a specific role and each depends on the other two to get their job done.

The No. 1-man is the team leader. This Airman, usually the senior ranking, is responsible for the process, checking the finished process and testing the weapons systems from the cockpit.

The No. 2 man preps the pylons for munitions. This Airman also assists the No. 3 man in securing the weapons to the wings.

The No. 3 man drives the "jammer," the vehicle used to hoist bombs and missiles to the wings.

This Airman works closely with the No. 2 man.

The jets typically take off with AIM-120 missiles, GBU-12 and GBU-38 bombs, 20mm high explosive ammunition, flares and, depending on mission needs, 2.75-inch rockets.

"We are allotted about two-and-a-half hours to arm the jets," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Johnson, No. 1 man. "Here we can usually get the job done in about 40 minutes because we typically only need to reload a few of the weapons stations."

The difference between arming aircraft here and arming them at home station is the hardware.

"At home station we typically load practice munitions," said Senior Airman Ralph Mendoza, 2-man.

"Here everything is live and ready to be put to use. The rockets we load light up an area for ground forces. I don't get to load those at home very often."

The weapons flight also maintains the weapon firing systems. If a problem is found, they troubleshoot, repair and test it, focusing on getting the aircraft airworthy as quickly as possible.

"If a weapon doesn't work correctly, it really gets to us," said Staff Sgt. Jared Rinderer, No. 3 man. "Fortunately, that seldom happens. Instead, we get to feel the satisfaction of knowing the work we put into loading a weapon was translated on the battlefield as mission success."

Armament flight

The 332d Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron Armament Flight maintains the F-16's armament system. This system is composed mostly of suspension equipment: pylons, launchers, adapters and other equipment used to hold bombs and missiles in place and allow them to be released and fired. They are known as alternate mission equipment, or AME.

The flight also maintains the universal ammunition loading system used to load the 20mm Gatling gun, which pilots use to strafe ground targets or shoot down air-to-air threats. The universal ammunition loading system has more than a thousand moving parts, linked together to form the belts and catches that handle each bullet. From a distance, the loading system resembles a giant, reticulated insect on wheels. All that complexity is needed to load and unload the six-barrel gun.

Maintaining the universal ammunition loading system is "the bread and butter of what we do here," said Master Sgt. Jose Rodriguez, 332d Armament Flight chief. "It's fairly common for a UALS to require increased maintenance due to their high use in the combat environment. If it can't be repaired on the flightline it comes back to us. Repairs can take anywhere from a few hours to a few days."

The armament flight Airmen are also the experts on the F-16's 20mm gun. According to Sergeant Rodriguez, the maintenance proficiency on the gun system is very lengthy process and requires tedious and time consuming hands-on work.



Photo by Senior Airman James Croxon

Senior Airman Jean Jackson repairs a wing rail from an F-16. The 332d Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron Armament Flight is responsible for the maintenance of the hangers and pylons the F-16 carries its weapons on.



Photo by Senior Airman James Croxon

Tech. Sgt. Hosea Goldsmith consults the technical orders for the repair of a wing rail used to hold the AIM-120 missiles used by the two F-16 squadrons.

The gun is housed under multiple panels on the left side of the aircraft. The system is both mechanical and electrical and much more complicated than bullets, a trigger and barrels. Despite these challenges, the flight has achieved a 100-percent gun fire rate, Sergeant Rodriguez said.

In addition to the full assortment of AME carried by the aircraft when they arrive, the flight has many extras in storage to quickly replace damaged equipment.

"The flight is in charge of maintaining several hundred pieces of AME and nearly a dozen UALS," Tech. Sgt. Walter Anderson said. "There is a constant rotation of scheduled maintenance to be done as well as the unscheduled maintenance."

The flight keeps ahead of the constant maintenance with 24-hour operations split between day and night shifts. The 15-person flight is nearly split evenly between active duty and Guard. More than a third are senior airmen or below.

"The heat is probably the biggest challenge," Airman 1st Class Sam Fairchild said. "It gets to be over 120 degrees in the work area, but it's worth it to know the work I do is one of the most important parts of the mission."

"This is the most rewarding thing I've done in my career so far," Senior Airman Jean Jackson said. "I've been able to work on equipment here I probably would never have seen back home, like the LAU-131 rocket launcher. It's a lot of responsibility knowing the mission is counting on my work, but it's worth the stress and heat when the mission succeeds because of it."

Caring

for the little victims



by 2nd Lt. Lisa L. Kostellic
332d Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

A medical technician at the Air Force Theater Hospital here never expected to be caring for children while deployed.

Although she was well prepared for her deployment by her home station, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, Staff Sgt. Tasha N. Dillon has never worked with children in her profession before.

Sergeant Dillon, who works in the cardiology clinic at Wilford Hall Medical Center, said it was her own children that made her role easier. She has four: step daughter, age 10; daughter, 10; daughter, 3 and son, 1.

According to the hospital's patient administration division, the staff has treated 40 Iraqi children ages 3 months to 15 years old in the past six months. Most were

injured from the blast of an improvised explosive device or a mortar attack and about 15 percent were from gunshot wounds.

Sergeant Dillon said the average ages of the children she's cared for since May are 5 to 8. From what she and other hospital staff members have learned from the children's family, the targets were not the children, but specific relatives.

About half the children who have come to the hospital during her deployment are accompanied by a parent or adult family member who also needed medical care Sergeant Dillon said.

When the children arrive for treatment, they are sometimes frightened, but they know the doctors and nurses are trying to helping them, she said.

"This has been going on for so

long. They've lived in this type of environment all their lives so they know what's happening," Sergeant Dillon said.

Care and attention is something that the hospital staff members and volunteers are anxious to provide the children the moment they are brought to the hospital.

"Once they get here and we hear about it, we go see them," Sergeant Dillon said. "They feel the love. It takes away from the feeling of being afraid."

Although Sergeant Dillon hasn't had a lot of interaction with the children's families, she has received gratitude and appreciation from the few she's been able to communicate with.

"You only get one chance to interact with the family when they come here to pick up the kids, and they just want to leave — to take

the kids home, but they have said things like thank you, we love you, America is good, you are good," Sergeant Dillon said.

When the children leave after no more than a few weeks of recovery, Sergeant Dillon finds herself longing for a final chapter.

"It's good to know that they get back to their family, but I still wonder what happens to them," Sergeant Dillon said. "It's difficult. I want to know the end of the story, but I never will."

Maj. John Ginnity, director of patient administration division operations, said tracking the children and their families isn't easy.

"The villages don't have phones so you can't call a family to tell them their relative is at the hospital. Even if you could, they don't speak English," Major Ginnity said.

Regardless of the final chapter, the hospital staff members and volunteers are committed to providing the best care for anyone who is brought to the hospital.



T U S K E G E E A I R M E N O F T H E W E E K

AIRMAN KYLE PARSONS

Unit: 332d Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron

Air Force Specialty: Fire protection apprentice

Home station: Luke AFB, Ariz.

Family: Mother, Nancy Parsons

Years in the Air Force: 2 years

Deployments: 1

On-duty contribution at Balad: Airman Parsons was the first firefighter on the scene of a generator and fuel storage fire, extinguishing both while preventing it from spreading to nearby housing and supply buildings. He also cared for a heart attack patient by assisting medical staff who attribute the patient's survival to Airman Parson's treatment.

Off-duty contribution at Balad: Volunteered more than 15 hours to the Air Force Theater Hospital. He also covers crew positions for on-duty personnel to attend classes and special functions. He is attending a math preparation class to prepare for a College Level Examination Program test.



Photo by Senior Airman Kerry Solan-Johnson

Uniform Tips



Do

Headphones and earbuds are authorized while working at a computer but not while walking about or driving.

Additional guidelines can be found in 332d Air Expeditionary Wing Instruction 36-2903, *Dress and Personal Appearance Standards*, section 2.



Don't



Photo by Capt. Pierre Allegre

Col. Duane Lamb, 732d Expeditionary Mission Support Group commander, prepares to toss a soccer ball to Iraqi children from an Army HH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. On Tuesday Colonel Lamb will relinquish command of the group responsible for all Airmen serving in-lieu-of missions in Iraq to Col. Lawrence Jackson.

COMMENTARY BY CHAPLAIN (CAPT.) PIERRE M. ALLEGRE

Treating everyone with **D**ignity **R**espect

He begins each day with prayer at 5:30 a.m. at the Tuskegee Chapel, thanking God for his many blessings and praying for the safety and well-being of the nearly 1,400 Airmen he is responsible for at more than 60 forward-deployed locations throughout Iraq.

Col. Duane A. Lamb, 723d Expeditionary Mission Support Group commander, leaves Balad Air Base at the end of August after a 6-month tour of combat duty. His mission was to provide operational and administrative command and control to combat Airmen serving with the Army

and Marines at locations throughout Iraq.

Colonel Lamb has visited more than 40 forward bases, traveling by Blackhawk, some fixed-wing aircraft and by convoy to some of Iraq's most dangerous areas. During these visits Colonel Lamb encountered more than 300 mortar and rocket attacks and direct fire, small arms and improvised explosive device attacks.

Those under his command train Iraqi soldiers, conduct civil affairs, and mentor and train Iraqi civilian police officers, construct roads, and build schools and courthouses. A total of 20 differ-

ent missions fall under his command.

"There couldn't have been a better blessing at the end of my career than to be given another command with the task of supporting Airmen in a combat zone and planting the seeds that will help the Iraqis grow a democracy," Colonel Lamb said.

During his visits to the forward bases, Colonel Lamb decided to take a chaplain with him. I recently accompanied Colonel Lamb and four of his 732d EMSG personnel on a trip to Kirkush, an Iraqi army training base with about a dozen Air

Force in-lieu-of forces attached there. During this visit, Colonel Lamb pulled soccer balls, wrapped teddy bears and candy packages from his bag and, coordinating with the Blackhawk pilot, dropped them out the chopper's door to the cheering children a few hundred feet below.

Whether air dropped or hand delivered, Colonel Lamb made it a habit to deliver toys and candy and other gifts sent from churches, individuals and organizations back home to the children on or near the bases he visited.

See COLONEL, page 14

This & That

COLONEL, from page 13 —

“Besides the fact that I love kids, my point is to show kindness to the Iraqi people, especially to the children, to plant the thought that Americans are not bad people. It’s the children who will one day be taking over this country,” Colonel Lamb said.

The colonel’s only regret about his tour in Iraq is that he wasn’t home to celebrate the birth of his first grandchild.

Colonel Lamb has also been a tremendous blessing to the chapel program at Balad AB. From the beginning of this rotation, his electric lead guitar riffs were a highlight at the 11 a.m. Protestant Contemporary worship service, and in June he was asked to provide the music for the 9 a.m. Sunday Catholic Mass. He was

reluctant to do so at first because of his unfamiliarity with the Catholic Mass, but eventually gave in

Chaplain (Maj.) Jim Decker, the Catholic priest for the 332d AEW, said that when the Catholic Choir was temporally without an accompanist, Colonel Lamb came to their rescue.

“Not only is he an awesome musician, but a wonderful man of God. He has deep joy in his heart and made everyone around him the better for it,” Chaplain Decker said.

During his tour, Colonel Lamb has become one of the most popular and respected leaders among both enlisted Airmen and officers. His leadership philosophy is simple: treat everyone with dignity and respect, be straightforward



Courtesy photo

Col. Duane Lamb plays guitar with Senior Master Sgt. Jay Hammond during a church service. Colonel Lamb played for both the Protestant and Catholic services.

and honest, and enforce standards. six months and move back to
Colonel Lamb plans to retire in Tuscaloosa, Ala.



Balad Religious Schedule

Catholic Services

Daily Mass

5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Tuskegee Chapel

Saturday

4:30 p.m. Reconciliation

Tuskegee Chapel

5 p.m. Mass

Tuskegee Chapel

Sunday

9 a.m. Sunday Mass

Tuskegee Chapel

11 a.m. Sunday Mass

AFT Hospital Chapel

Confessions available by appointment

Protestant Services

Saturday

7 p.m. Liturgical Service

Tuskegee Chapel

Sunday

9:30 a.m. Traditional Service

AFT Hospital Chapel

11 a.m. Contemporary Service

Town Hall

2 p.m. Church of Christ

Tuskegee Chapel

2 p.m. Gospel Service

AFT Hospital Chapel

5 p.m. Traditional Service

Tuskegee Chapel

7:30 p.m. Traditional Service

AFT Hospital Chapel

Wednesday

8 a.m. Liturgical Morning Prayer

Tuskegee Chapel

8 p.m. Midweek Contemporary Worship Service

Tuskegee Chapel

Other Services

Sunday

3:30 p.m. Orthodox Prayer Service

Tuskegee Chapel

7 p.m. Latter Day Saints Sacraments

Tuskegee Chapel

8 p.m. Latter Day Saints Sunday School

Tuskegee Chapel

Friday

7 p.m. Friday Shabbat Service

Tuskegee Chapel

Study groups

Sunday

8 p.m. Parenting Children

Tuskegee Chapel

Monday

8 a.m. Parenting Children

Tuskegee Chapel

9 a.m. and 8 p.m. Parenting Adolescents

Tuskegee Chapel

8 p.m. Women’s Bible Study - Beth Moore

Tuskegee Chapel

Tuesday

7 p.m. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Tuskegee Chapel

8 p.m. Song of Solomon

Tuskegee Chapel

8:30 p.m. Catholic Discussion Forum

Tuskegee Chapel

Thursday

4 p.m. 40 Days of Purpose

Tuskegee Chapel

7 p.m. Marriage Enrichment

Tuskegee Chapel

Friday

10 a.m. Renovation of the Heart (Basic Christianity)

Tuskegee Chapel

7:15 p.m. Marriage Enrichment

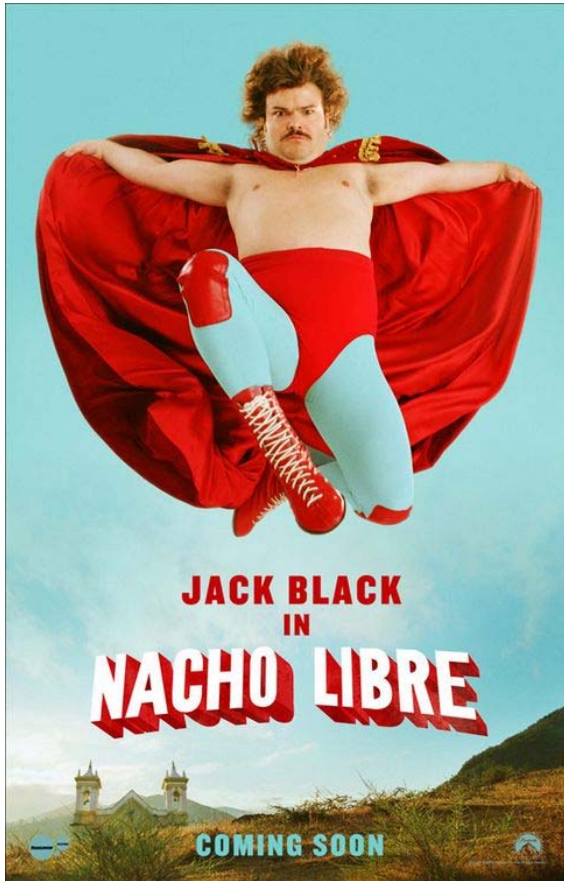
Tuskegee Chapel

8 p.m. Renovation of the Heart (Basic Christianity)

Tuskegee Chapel

For more information on worship opportunities or needs, call 443-7703. For the after-hour duty chaplain, call 443-3320.

Sustainer Theater



Today
2 p.m. - Cars
5 p.m. - Snakes on a Plane
8 p.m. - World Trade Center

Saturday
11 a.m. - Nacho Libre
2 p.m. - Snakes on a Plane
5 p.m. - World Trade Center
8 p.m. - Snakes on a Plane

Sunday
2 p.m. - Garfield: A Tail of Two Kitties
5 p.m. - World Trade Center
8 p.m. - Snakes on a Plane

Monday
5 p.m. - Snakes on a Plane
8 p.m. - The Lake House

Tuesday
5 p.m. - Snakes on a Plane
8 p.m. - The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift

Wednesday
5 p.m. - Nacho Libre
8 p.m. - Snakes on a Plane

Thursday
5 p.m. - Cars
8 p.m. - Snakes on a Plane

Sept. 1
2 p.m. - Waste Deep
5 p.m. - The Lake House
8 p.m. - Invincible

Snakes on a Plane

Samuel L. Jackson, Nathan Phillips

A ruthless assassin unleashes a crate full of lethal snakes aboard a packed passenger jet over the Pacific Ocean in order to eliminate a witness in protective custody. The rookie pilot and frightened passengers must band together to survive. Rated R (language, sexuality, drug use, terror, violence) 106 min

Nacho Libre

Jack Black, Hector Jimenez

Nacho is a man without skills. After growing up in a Mexican monastery, he is now a grown man and the monastery's cook, but doesn't seem to fit in. Nacho cares deeply for the orphans he feeds, but his food is terrible – mostly, if you ask him, a result of his terrible ingredients. He realizes he must hatch a plan to make money to buy better food for "the young orphans, who have nothing" (and if in doing so Nacho can impress the lovely Sister Encarnacion, that would be a big plus). When Nacho is struck by the idea to earn money as a Lucha Libre wrestler, he finds that he has a natural, raw talent for wrestling. Rated PG (rough action, crude humor) 91 min

The Lake House

Sandra Bullock, Keanu Reeves

An independent-minded doctor who once occupied an unusual lakeside home begins exchanging love letters with its newest resident, a frustrated architect. When they discover that they're actually living two years apart, they must try to unravel the mystery behind their extraordinary romance before it's too late. Rated PG (language, disturbing image) 98 min

World Trade Center

Nicolas Cage, Michael Pena

In the aftermath of the World Trade Center disaster, hope is still alive. Refusing to bow down to terrorism, rescuers and families of the victims press forward. Their mission is driven by the faith that under each piece of rubble, a person may be found. This is the true story of John McLoughlin and William J. Jimeno, two of the last survivors extracted from Ground Zero and the rescuers who never gave up. It's a story of the heroes of that time in the story of the United States, when buildings would fall and heroes would rise. Rated PG-13 (intense/emotional content, disturbing images, language) 129 min

Schedule courtesy of 332d Expeditionary Services Squadron

Synopsis courtesy of www.AAFES.com