

ASG-A Newsletter

AREA SUPPORT GROUP – AFGHANISTAN

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3 OCTOBER 2018

NEWS YOU CAN USE

■ The ASG Newsletter has hyperlinks! Hover over a link and hit the CTRL button to go directly to the website or email.

■ October events at Bagram Airfield include a performance by the Harlem Globetrotters. Details are in the monthly MWR calendar on SIPR. Email don.f.baumgartner.naf@mail.mil for details.

■ According to the BAF Provost Marshal, avoid these common infractions to prevent a ticket:

1. Avoiding speed bumps
2. Running stop signs
3. Parking within 25 feet of dumpster / recycle bin
4. Vehicle unattended

For more details, visit usfora.afghan.swa.army.mil/baf/des/pmo.

INSIDE

• Find out what legal services are available to you 4

• Schedule your NFL shout-out 4

• Need free electrical inspection or repair? Call Task Force POWER 5

• Rabbi ministers Jewish faith in Afghanistan 7

Bagram Snapshot 8

Mayor says fellowship makes Fenty Family successful 9

Malaria threat is real

11 cases in CJOA in 2018, 350K in local population in 2015

By JON MICHEAL CONNOR
USFOR-A Public Affairs

Although Afghanistan is an arid region, malaria still exists.

Just in 2018, 11 cases have been diagnosed in Combined Joint Operations Area Afghanistan—seven U.S. service members, two contractors, and two coalition members, according to Maj. Melissa Riester-Hartsell, health protection officer for U.S. Forces-Afghanistan.

This does not include personnel who may have been diagnosed elsewhere after leaving Afghanistan.

Those figures are significant considering there have been 28 malaria cases for the total Army in 2018, compared to 13 last year.

And for those persons who believe malaria is not a threat in theater, Riester-Hartsell said in 2015 there were 350,044 confirmed cases in the local

SEE 2018, PAGE 11

Did you know?

Doxycycline has the added benefit of preventing other types of infections -- like rickettsiosis, and leptospirosis -- diseases personnel may acquire while deployed to Afghanistan

Incinerators give Soldiers back to RS Mission



Courtesy photo

By ADRIANE ELLIOT
USFOR-A Public Affairs

Ensuring U.S. Soldiers are able to support their Afghan and Coalition partners in counterterrorism operations is a critical component of Area Support Group-Afghanistan (ASG-A).

“That’s why we’re here—to provide the base life support services to the men and women who need it. Then they can then focus on the mission of preventing terrorist

safe havens in Afghanistan,” said ASG-A Commander Col. Jacob Peterson.

Peterson commands what is essentially a civilian garrison organization that provides everything from billeting, laundry and food service to public works and quality of life support. Those services are provided to more than 35,000 personnel—U.S. military, DOD Civilians, contractors and Coalition Forces—

SEE DWYER PAGE 6

Contractors urged to follow law, obtain visa stamps

ASG-A Public Affairs

U.S. contractors working in Afghanistan are required to obtain visa entry stamps within 72 hours of arriving in country.

If contractors do not obtain their entry stamps in a timely manner, not only does it become difficult and potentially expensive to obtain an exit stamp to leave the country, but

they could be in violation of Afghan law.

The U.S. Afghanistan Bilateral Security Agreement, signed Sept. 30, 2014, is a mutual agreement reaffirming the long-term strategic cooperation between the two countries. Article 3 states “It is the duty of members of the force and of the Ci-

SEE VISA OFFICE, PAGE 3

“We respect our Afghan partners and their laws. The Bilateral Security Agreement reflects that understanding between our countries.”

Col. Jacob Peterson
ASG-A Commander

This is your newsletter! Own it!

Hello and welcome to the ASG Newsletter. If you're reading this, you've flipped the page and want to see what's inside.

This edition is full of facts and figures, shout-outs and nods, and stories that show how the work you're doing every day is making a difference to the Warfighter, to U.S. National Security and to our great nation.

My job as editor is to produce a newsletter with information you should know during your deployment. It should be informative, reliable and accurate. But most of all, it should be something you WANT to read.

Are you still with me?

What I mean is that you have a say in what fills the pages of your newsletter. Perhaps you want to read features about people with interesting stories in the CJOA; or maybe a trivia column; or a historical column titled "This Month in

"This newsletter should have information you should know during your deployment. It should be informative and entertaining. But most of all, it should be something you WANT to read."

History," or maybe commentaries on important topics back home.

How about a monthly column on Afghan history and culture? It really is important to know what is outside the wire as many of us don't get the opportunity to venture out.

My point is, it's your call. You just have to contact me and let me know what you have in mind.

Being an Army veteran and now DOD civilian, I understand the general concerns of uniformed personnel and civilians. That will guide me down the road, but I do want to hear what you have for ideas too.

A newsletter serves many purposes. It relays information from the commander to personnel—requirements, policies and procedures, announcements and other useful information. A newsletter also entertains and builds morale.

As your ASG public affairs officer, I take that mission seriously and want to do what I can to make your deployment satisfying. Call me at DSN 318-481-6673 or email centcom.bagram.usfor-a.mbx.asg-pao@mail.mil I look forward to hearing from you.

Adriane Elliot
ASG Public Affairs

Send in your name suggestions

Names are important.

A product's brand or name gives consumers a perception about that product whenever they hear or see it.

Take Nike. The swish symbol gives the feeling of movement and speed. It works!

The ASG Newsletter won't have the world renowned success and fame that Nike enjoys but we, too, need a brand—a name—that works.

According to Forbes Magazine, the top characteristics of successful brands include uniqueness, passion and knowing your target audience.

We are looking for a name that represents our readers and the community they are a part of.

Send your name suggestions to centcom.bagram.usfor-a.mbx.asg-pao@mail.mil.

ASG-A Online



www.facebook.com/AreaSupportGroupAfghanistan/posts (Scroll down and click "Continue Browsing")



AreaSupportGroupAfghanistan@SupportArea



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/asg-afghanistan/>



Visit www.army.mil and search for Area Support Group Afghanistan

ASG Newsletter

AREA SUPPORT GROUP – AFGHANISTAN

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ASG Commander..... Col. Jacob Peterson

ASG Public Affairs Officer..... Adriane Elliot

Man on the Street

What is your NFL favorite team and why?



**Army Sgt. 1st Class
Seth Henderson**

"Seattle Seahawks, because I'm not the number 12 fan, not this year."



**Army 2nd Lieutenant
Angelina Sobel**

The Patriots, because that's my father's favorite, and that's how we were raised."



**Marine Sgt.
Ernesto Georgi**

The Buccaneers, because I'm from Florida. And growing up, I had good memories of the Bucs."



**DOD Civilian
Shane Markel**

Detroit Lions, because they let you down just enough to keep hope alive ... so they can break your heart later in the season."



**Army Spc.
Alexes Anderson**

Denver Broncos, because they were my team on the Nintendo 64."



Photo by Don Baumgartner

(From left) NCOIC Sgt. 1st Class Michael Richmond and Provost Marshal Capt. Callie Kiaunis of the 506th Military Police Detachment, Washington Army National Guard, prepare to unfurl their unit colors during a Sept. 25 transfer of authority ceremony at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. The ceremony was hosted by Area Support Group Afghanistan (ASG-A) Commander Col. Jacob Peterson. The 506th replaces the 156th Military Police Detachment, who redeployed to West Virginia Sept. 27. "I am honored to serve, and proud that my Soldiers have the opportunity to support such an essential element of the warfighting mission here in Afghanistan, said Kiaunis."

Visa Office open Sunday to Thursday

Continued from Page 1

vilian component to respect the Constitution and laws of Afghanistan and to abstain from any activity inconsistent with the spirit of this Agreement..."

"We respect our Afghan partners and their laws, and the Bilateral Security Agreement reflects that understanding between our countries," said Area Support Group Afghanistan Commander Col. Jacob Peterson.

The Visa Stamp Office hours of operation are Sunday to Thursday from 1000 to 1300 for entry stamps and 0900-100 for exit stamps. The office is closed Friday and Saturday.

Contractors who have not obtained an entry stamp or who have questions about the visa stamp process should email cent-com.bagram.usfor-a.mbx.asg-des-visa-stamp@mail.mil.

THE LEGAL LEDGER



Legal services available for troops, eligible Civilians and contractors

Do you have a legal question about something personal? The U.S. Forces Afghanistan Legal Assistance Office (LAO) at Bagram Airfield can help.

Our mission is to enable Service members and eligible Civilians to remain “in the fight” by meeting their personal legal needs.

The LAO is divided into four main areas of focus:

Sexual Assault

I am the LAO attorney and the Special Victims’ Counsel (SVC) for Afghanistan. The SVC represents victims of sexual assault and other sexually related crimes. The SVC supports the victim from the time a possible crime is reported or discovered until completion of the case, and sometimes beyond. SVCs act as buffers between the victim



and the other parties in the case and enjoys complete confidentiality in all communications. The SVC is also able to receive restricted and unrestricted reports of sexual assault and assist the victim in finding available services.

Military Admin

The second focus involves assisting clients with military administrative problems. We can help in drafting rebuttals for Financial Liability Investigation for Property Loss and General Officer Memorandums of Reprimand.

We also work with Soldiers to resolve Army specific administrative issues like OER and NCOER rebuttals and Bars to Continued Service.

Divorce, Custody, Realty

A third area of focus is meeting the civil legal needs of all service members and eligible DOD Civilians, with priority of service to service members.

I provide full spectrum legal services, including civilian issues like divorce, child custody, Service Members’ Civil Relief Act issues, landlord-tenant law, contract review, and real estate transactions.

Legal problems rarely get better with time, so be sure to contact me before your problems get worse.

Power of Attorney, Notary

The final area of assistance that we provide is drafting Powers of Attorney, notarizing documents, and providing weapons affidavits (for shipping antique weapons).

Our paralegal, Spc. Jacob Robinson, provides the bulk of these services. These notarial services are available to all U.S. service members, eligible Civilians and contractors.

LAO hours of operation are 0900-1730, Monday to Saturday. Other times are available by appointment. We are located in Bldg. 14892 – follow the signs down DC Street from Disney Road. Or call DSN 318-481-8543 / 3352. Email me at stephen.m.beaty@mail.mil or Spc. Jacob Robinson at jacob.a.robinson27@mail.mil.

*Capt. Stephen Beaty
Chief of Combined Joint
Task Force Client Services*



Schedule a shout-out for your favorite NFL team

ASG-A Public Affairs

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Benjamin Hegard (left) stationed at Bagram Airfield sends a shout-out to Family and friends in San Diego and to the Los Angeles Chargers Sept. 26.

Hegard is one of several service members at Bagram Airfield who recently recorded shout-outs that will be aired in stadiums throughout the season on NFL Jumbotrons. To schedule a shout-out, email centcom.bagram.usfor-a.mbx.asg-pao@mail.mil.

Have an idea for a story? Want to send in your own submission? Email centcom.bagram.usfor-a.mbx.asg-pao@mail.mil today.

TF offers free electric review, repair

A mismatched bulb/ballast caused overheating and resulted in fire damage at Bagram Airfield.

Task Force
POWER photo



By ADRIANE ELLIOT
ASG-A Public Affairs

Combat-related hazards are not the only perils of operating in a war zone, according to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Andrew Brand.

Deficiencies in facilities that were constructed without long-term consideration of electric regulations have resulted in serious injury and even death, he said. Brand is an electrical engineer and the on-site program manager of the congressionally mandated Task Force POWER (Protect Our Warfighters and Electrical Resources), headquartered at Bagram Airfield (BAF).

SEE FREE ELECTRIC, PAGE 12

DOD report: Sexual assaults decreasing

By JON MICHEAL CONNOR
USFOR-A Public Affairs

The latest DOD Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military, 2017, stated that reporting by active-duty service members increased by nearly 10 percent from the year before, and sexual assault reporting increased by 88 percent within DOD since 2012.

"DOD considers the large increase in reporting an indicator that service members continue to gain confidence in the military's response system.

In contrast, between 2012-2016, the prevalence of sexual assault (2016) shows a decrease by an estimated 50 percent for men and by an estimated 30 percent for women," said Nichelle Fails, U.S. Forces Afghanistan SHARP lead sexual assault response coordinator at Bagram Airfield (BAF).

The goal of the Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program is to reduce and eventually eliminate sexual harassment and assault in the workplace and off duty.

"Combined, the increase

in reporting and the decrease in occurrence of sexual assault provide evidence that the military is making progress in its efforts to eliminate these crimes," said Fails. "While these results are a favorable indicator, much work remains in understanding, preventing and responding to this destructive behavior."

The report stated that rates of sexual assault have "decreased significantly" in the past 10 years. In 2016, an estimated 14,900 active-duty service members experienced a sexual assault. This is a stark contrast to 34,000 active-duty service members believed to have been assaulted in 2006.

While the numbers are promising, Fails urges personnel to stay vigilant and stay educated. According to a 2018 Command Climate Survey for the Area Support Group Afghanistan (ASG-A), a number of participants did not know the difference between restricted and unrestricted reporting.

Fails said this is not uncommon Army-wide but she'd like for personnel to know their options.

She said the biggest difference between restricted and unrestricted reporting is:

Restricted

- No command involvement
- No investigation
- Military members & dependents over age 18

Unrestricted

- Command is involved
- Investigation conducted
- DOD personnel, including contractors

Fails said the Army approved a one-year pilot program—January 2017 – January 2018—to allow DOD civilians to file restricted.

"We are currently awaiting the results from Headquarters, Department of the Army, to renew or discontinue the program," Fails said.

During a Sept. 14 SHARP training session, ASG-A Commander Col. Jacob Peterson urged attendees to take the training seriously.

"We attend SHARP training every year, but we need to do more than attend. We need to absorb what we're learning. Then we need to have the courage to intervene and act when a situation presents itself," said Peterson. "People's lives are destroyed by sexual assault. If we are truly one team, we can't sit idly by and not stand up for one another."

Quick Links

[Army Criminal Investigation Command \(CID\)](#)

[Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

[Fact Sheet Policy](#)

[Fact Sheet: FY17 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military](#)

[Fact Sheet: DOD Retaliation Prevention and Response Strategy](#)

[DOD Instruction 6495.02](#)

[DOD Instruction 6495.03](#)

[DOD Instruction 6400.07](#)

[DOD Safe Helpline / Live Chat](#)

Source: www.sapr.mil

Dwyer to reduce solid waste volume 20:1

Continued from Page 1

who are contributing to Resolute Support (RS) throughout the Combined Joint Operations Area-Afghanistan (CJOA-A).

RS is the NATO-led, non-combat mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF). The ANDSF assumed nationwide responsibility for Afghanistan's security following the conclusion of the previous NATO-led International Security Assistance Force mission. Its purpose is to help the Afghan security forces and institutions develop the capacity to defend Afghanistan and protect its citizens in a sustainable manner.

Peterson, who is also the deputy commander of Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan, said, "We and our 41-nation allies understand the significance of this moment in time. This coalition—its people and their leaders—are committed to the success of the government in Afghanistan."

And every individual and organization has its part. For the Bagram-based ASG-A, doing the work that frees up military manpower takes place 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Hundreds of miles south of Bagram in one of the nation's most dangerous and heavily contested regions lies Helmand Province, home to the ASG-managed Forward Operating Base (FOB) Dwyer.

At FOB Dwyer, the 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment conducts the security and ground defense area mission at the remote base. They also conduct daily escort detail for contractors who provide land waste management at Dwyer.

Currently, local national contractors take solid waste and dispose of it by burying it in nearby landfills—the oldest and most common method of orga-



In January, Dwyer will bring online four solid waste incinerators, which will burn up to 300 pounds of trash an hour, or 3 to 5 tons per day, reducing the environmental footprint and returning Soldiers to their mission.

Courtesy photo

nized waste disposal around the world.

Thousands of pounds of Dwyer's solid waste is transported to the landfill daily.

But early next year Dwyer will transition from land disposal to a more eco-friendly and mission focused solution.

"In January, we're going to bring online four solid waste incinerators, which will burn up to 300 pounds of trash in an hour, about 3 to 5 tons per day," said ASG's Robert Lee, the FOB mayor at Dwyer.

Lee called the move to high-temperature incineration a significant event for the environment, public health and for the RS mission.

Incinerators can reduce waste volume up to 95 percent and decrease the solid mass of the original waste by 80 percent.

He said this will not eliminate the need for a landfill completely, but it will reduce the amount of land needed. For

smaller countries, this is important as landfills take up large amounts of space and produce undesirable byproducts.

"These advanced combustion systems will run on continuous operation and reduce solid waste volume by a ratio of 20 to 1," said Lee.

"It's going to reduce the environmental footprint on the land and minimize the spread of disease and stray animal nuisance, thus improving life, health and safety for the more than 1,500 people on the FOB. "But most importantly," he said, "when the ASG begins management of the incinerators, we will be giving back a whole platoon of warfighters who can actually do what they're supposed to do."

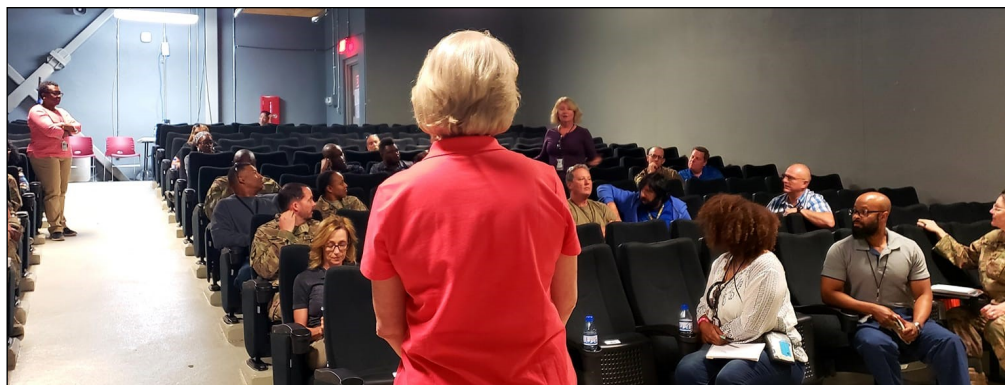
They will no longer have to serve as security details for the waste management contractors, but can provide their expertise to Resolute Support," he said. "This is really a win-win for everyone."

DOD-EC FEEDBACK

Dianne Hibbs, DOD Expeditionary Civilian (DOD-EC) program manager, visited Bagram Airfield to get feedback on the DOD-EC program Sept. 11. For information about the DOD-EC program, visit <https://www.cpmos.osd.mil/expeditionary>.

To provide program feedback,, email USFOR-A J1 at centcom.bagram.usfor-a-j1.mbx.civ-hr-a1@mail.mil.

Photo by Adriane Elliot



Rabbi ministers Jewish faith in Afghanistan

By **JON MICHEAL CONNOR**
USFOR-A Public Affairs

In a country where the predominant religion is Islam, the gospel and music of Judaism are being shared. Army Chaplain (Capt.) and rabbi David Becker is on a special six-week temporary duty to minister to deployed military personnel, DOD civilians and contractors in Afghanistan.

Becker explained his marching orders came from the Army's Chief of Chaplains office, the supervising office of the Chaplains Corps. Heading the corps is Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Paul Hurley, who has been in that position since May 2015.

"They sent a rabbi to theater to travel around this country to be specifically catering to Jewish Soldiers, which I've had the opportunity to do," Becker, who has ministered at BAF, Kandahar Airfield and Kabul.

Becker estimates there's less than a dozen rabbis on

active duty in the Army, making his selection an honor.

Back home Becker is a pulpit rabbi and has served as a vice principal in Jewish day schools for the past 18 years.

These fulltime schools function to provide children of Jewish parents with both a Jewish and a secular education in one school.

And he is a four-year veteran assigned to the 640th Aviation Support Battalion, Combat Aviation Brigade, 40th Infantry Division, Army National Guard at Joint Training Base Los Alamitos, California.

This trip allowed him to merge both worlds in a different setting than back home.

"I have the opportunity to activate my patriotism and love for my country, which is deep and vast, along with my absolutely unfathomable spirit for Judaism and my fellow Soldiers in an environment where they would not necessarily get to have that opportunity," said Becker. "Coupled with those feelings, it's unlike any mission that I've ever experienced outside of the Ar-



Photo by Jon Micheal Connor

Army Rabbi Chaplain (Capt.) David Becker tells a story during Simchat Torah Oct. 1.

my. It fills me with a sense of awe and appreciation for the Army, for my country and for my God."

Of great importance this time of year is Yom Kippur -- also known as the "Day of Atonement" when special

prayers are made for repentance. It is the holiest of all Jewish holidays. It is a time of reparation to account for one's sins and a renewal of spirit to improve in life.

SEE RABBI PAGE 10



Photo by Master Sgt. Capricia Turner

Army Rabbi Chaplain (Capt.) David Becker conducts a Shabbat service Sept. 14 as part of his trip to minister to those of Jewish faith deployed to Afghanistan.

Bagram Snapshot:

a day in the life of the people and happenings at Bagram Airfield . To view, download and share these and other photos, visit the ASG Flickr Page at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/asg-afghanistan/>

Hundreds of personnel at Bagram Airfield participated in the Chameleon 5K Color Run Aug. 25. The event was hosted by the 455th EFSS IAP. Participants included hundreds of service members, Civilians, Coalition forces and contractors who are contributing to Resolute Support, the NATO-led, mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. Check the monthly MWR Calendar on SIPR for a list of upcoming activities.

Photo by
Adriane Elliot



Photo by 1st Lt. Vernicia Janet Ford

Senior leaders of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Resolute Support Sustainment Brigade participated in the Army Combat Fitness Test Aug. 14 on Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Master Sgt. Amy Prince participates in the dead lift event attempting to lift 280 pounds



Photo by Adriane Elliot

Department of Defense Expeditionary Civilian Derek Duncan (right) was presented the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal, NATO Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Wartime Service and Civilian of the Month certificates by Area Support Group-Afghanistan Commander Col. Jacob Peterson (left) during a Sept. 17 ceremony at Bagram Airfield.

Fenty mayor calls camaraderie key to success

By **ADRIANE ELLIOT**
ASG-A Public Affairs

A demanding battle rhythm is the norm for U.S. personnel at Forward Operating Base Fenty.

And so is the camaraderie that team members share, said Department of the Air Force Civilian and FOB Mayor Otha Carter.

Carter is one of several Areas Support Group Afghanistan (ASG-A) personnel assigned to the base in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province.

Jalalabad is the capital city of Nangarhar, where Osama bin Laden held a strong position during the 1990s.

Taliban insurgents have staged attacks against Afghan government forces in the area and incursions by Pakistani military forces have been reported in the neighboring border between Afghanistan

and Pakistan.

"This environment promotes fellowship and good relationships," said Carter. "We are the closest thing that we have to family here, so we try to look out for each other and take care of one another."

"We have movie nights and watch war series, dramas, thrillers and action movies," said Carter. "We get the popcorn going, we put on our rally hats and have trivia night, make grilled cheese sandwiches and just try to make the best of being deployed and away from our Families back home. We joke and laugh a lot, and we need that. It makes the time go by."

He said this fellowship translated into a recent mission success.

When another ASG-A FOB, Dahlke, urgently needed tents, the Fenty team bypassed the lengthier process of requesting funding and a contract work order and went to work

themselves.

He and team members deconstructed two Alaskan tents that were not being used at Fenty.

If that sounds insignificant, Carter begs to differ. He said the tents, which weigh several hundred pounds each, had to be emptied of the dozens of bunks and furniture before they could be broken down, cleaned, folded and rolled onto pallets to be sling loaded to Dahlke.

"More importantly, it might have taken a month or two to get funding approved so the contractors could do it, and it would have cost an estimated \$10,000," he said.

Carter said that's not just an example of ASGs mission success, "but it really speaks to how we pull together when there's a need."

The primary mission of ASG-A team members throughout the Combined Joint Operations Area Af-

ghanistan is to provide base life support services to more than 35,000 U.S. service members, DOD Civilians, contractors and Coalition forces who are committed to the Resolute Support mission.

Resolute Support is the NATO-led mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, who assumed nationwide responsibility for Afghanistan's security following the conclusion of the previous NATO-led International Security Assistance Force mission.

At Fenty, ASG-A team members are supporting several military units, including a security force assistance brigade. "We make sure the Warfighters have the fundamental things they need on base," said Carter. "That relieves them of that stress and they can focus on their mission outside the wire."



Employees deconstruct, clean and sling load an Alaskan tent to a nearby FOB. Pulling together is what Fenty mayor Otha Carter says makes the time go by.

Courtesy photos



Rabbi visit blessing in disguise for Christian

Continued from Page 7

The holiday comes to an end with the blowing of the shofar, or hollowed-out ram's horn.

Becker did as such during one of his services. As is tradition, special food was provided after the service as part of the celebration.

One tradition calls for dipping apples in honey, in hopes of bringing in a sweet new year.

Another important holiday was Sukkot, also known as the Festival of Booths, which runs seven days in late September.

"It reminds us of the great comfort the Jewish people experienced while traveling in the desert. God provided for everything in a forlorn environment," Becker explained.

Today, Jewish people build booths outside their house, for example, spending time in them, especially during meals, Becker said.

The booths are symbolically considered to be God's shelter providing believers' every need, not only in Biblical times but current times too.

"So you will find that the Jewish year is a recreation, through its festivals and holidays, of the Jewish experience in the desert as they traveled for 39 years throughout the desert," Becker said.

Accompanying him is Army Master Sgt. Capricia Turner, an 18-year veteran. She is a religious affairs non-commissioned officer, 38th Infantry Division with the Indiana National Guard.

The pairing seems a bit odd at face value as Turner is of Christian faith. As it turns out, this mission has been a "blessing in disguise."

"I think it's very interesting and again I go back to it as a Christian. We learn that this is how Jesus worshipped," Turner said. "And I enjoy seeing and learning the different scriptures that people of the time would have worshipped and read. And, it's a lot of fun."

This is Turner's first trip to Afghanistan.

"I think it is very interesting as a Christian... We learn that this is how Jesus worshipped."

"One of the main things really have been preparing his services, preparing our air movement requests, and getting sent around the country accommodating his religious needs, as well as making sure we're abiding by those needs for other Soldiers," she said. Turner feels fortunate to

have had this opportunity to serve with a rabbi chaplain in Afghanistan.

"[This was] an opportunity to reach out and have this experience that I never had before, with a chaplain I never had before, and a faith group that I never had before," Turner said. "I wouldn't trade it for anything."

This trip, Becker said, has been like no other.

"People are absolutely floored I'm here ... that the Army cares enough to provide a rabbi for their needs. And I come with a whole wealth of goodies, food, and ritual experiences," he said. "I put my whole heart and soul into building up our Soldiers."



Photo by Master Sgt. Capricia Turner

Shown is a Sept. 22 selfie taken by Master Sgt. Capricia Turner, religious affairs NCO, Indiana National Guard, with Army Rabbi Chaplain (Capt.) David Becker in Kabul.



Photo by Master Sgt. Capricia Turner

Army Rabbi Chaplain (Capt.) David Becker conducts a Shabbat service Sept. 22 in Kabul during his trip to Afghanistan.

2018: At least eight malaria cases manifested after redeployment

Continued from Page 1

population in Afghanistan.

Still, personnel throughout the CJOA question whether the threat is real and have concerns about the side effects of the medication.

“One of the specific misconceptions is that doxycycline and malarone cause nightmares, but this has not been proven,” Riester-Hartsell said. “There are sometimes misconceptions about the side effects of the malaria medications.

She said the misconceptions are often fueled by rumor or misinformation, and that the side effects of all malaria medications prescribed are mild (stomach irritation and sun sensitivity), particularly when compared to the effects of the disease.

Symptoms of the disease can include fever, tiredness, vomiting, headaches and, in severe cases, even death. Symptoms may begin up to 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

According the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, personnel should seek medical help if any side effects develop like persistent and severe headaches, blurred or double vision, abdominal pain and persistent nausea or vomiting.

What some people may not know is that there are some additional benefits from taking this medication.

“Doxycycline has the added benefit of preventing other types of infections -- like rickettsiosis, and leptospirosis -- diseases personnel may acquire while deployed to Afghanistan,” said Riester-Hartsell.

“There is also a misconception that there is a time of year or location (elevation) where malaria medications are not required. We have discovered mosquito populations at elevations up to 8,200 feet and recovered mosquitos from April to November,” Riester-Hartsell said.

“So, anyone could get malaria, almost anywhere, at any time if they stop taking their medication in Afghanistan.”

Deployed personnel, and the indigenous people in the area around Jalalabad -- located in the Nangarhar Province in eastern Afghanistan -- have an increased risk for acquiring malaria because of the topography, said Riester-Hartsell.

“The topography is characterized by the convergence of a network of rivers and streams fed by the runoff from the Hindu Kush mountain range, along with extensively irrigated farmland, and higher annual rainfall than some of the other regions in Afghanistan,” she said. “The abundant water creates more breeding ground for mosquitos which are the vector (carrier) of the malaria parasite.”

As it turns out, Afghanistan is somewhat different compared to other deployed areas in Southwest Asia regarding malaria.

“There is no risk of malaria in Kuwait and medication is not required for tours there,” Riester-Hartsell said. “However, if personnel are going into a malarious country from Kuwait--like Afghanistan--or are leaving a malarious country and traveling through Kuwait, they [still] must take preventive medications.”

And in Iraq, she said current malaria risk is now considered non-existent and medication is not required.

Equally important are the preventive measures taken upon redeployment.

Returning personnel must continue to take doxycycline for 28 days after leaving Afghanistan. The last two weeks of those 28 days they must take the medication primaquine, Riester-Hartsell said.

For personnel taking malarone, they will continue taking it for one week after departing Afghanistan; then take primaquine for two weeks after the malarone is finished.

“The reason for the primaquine is that it kills the liver stage of the parasite. Malarone and doxycycline kill the parasites that may be in the blood, but the parasites that hide in the liver won’t be affected,” she explained.

“In 2018, there have been at least eight cases of returning personnel coming down with malaria once they got home, because they did not take their primaquine.”

For more information on malaria, contact Preventive Medicine at DSN 318-481-1294 or Bagram Public Health at DSN 318-481-9749.)



Photo by Staff Sgt. V. Michelle Woods

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ABOUT US: Area Support Group Afghanistan (ASG-A)



The Area Support Group Afghanistan (ASG-A) is headquartered at Bagram Airfield and **ENABLES READINESS** by providing base life support to more than 35,000 personnel—U.S. military, DOD Civilian, contractor and Coalition forces—throughout the Combined Joint Operations Area Afghanistan.

ASG-A base life support services encompass everything from billeting and food service to public works and quality of life.

Our mission here is critical to the Warfighter and we take pride in providing standardized and effective services, facilities and infrastructure in support of NATO Resolute Support's Train, Advise and Assist Mission.

Free electric service gets facilities up to code

Continued from Page 4

The Area Support Group-Afghanistan, also headquartered at BAF, has approval authority for all Task Force POWER requests throughout the Combined Joint Operations Area-Afghanistan (CJOA-A).

Brand and 15 two-man teams of journeymen and master electricians inspect and repair electrical system deficiencies all over the country.

"Our job is to make sure service members and the personnel who support them have safe work and living environments, so they can complete the mission," he said. "It's their job to keep us safe outside the wire. It's our job to keep them safe from faulty electric infrastructure when they're inside the wire."

Electrical deaths

Brand said although it is rare, personnel in theater have been electrocuted by faulty grounding, unlisted material that fails, or faulty installations.

In the early 2000s, several deployed Soldiers were fatally electrocuted in the CENTCOM theater, prompting congressional hearings and the DOD Inspector General investigations that resulted in Task Force POWER.

From May 2015 to September 2018, Task Force POWER has inspected 9,310 facilities covering

more than 6.5 million square feet and conducted more than 198,000 repairs.

"We would not be here if there was not a need," said Brand, who listed hastily constructed facilities, counterfeit material, and the misuse of U.S. appliances on 220 Voltage outlets in some locations as some of the most common offenders.

"The problem is very few people know we exist. They don't know what a good resource we are so we're trying to get on everyone's radar and make sure they know how to contact us," said Brand.

And if you submit a support request, you don't have to worry about funding.

Free of charge

"There is no bill—no cost for labor or materiel. We have already been paid with USFOR-A funding and our services are available to every U.S. Soldier in the CJOA," he said.

One of the more popular services the team offers is getting facilities up to code so they can be put online and maintained by the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), a program that uses civilian contractors to augment the Army force structure. Currently, getting facilities up to code is the largest portion of the task force workload.

Task Force POWER also con-

ducts third-party inspection for quality assurance.

"That means we can come in and inspect LOGCAP or other electrical work and verify the work has been performed to theater standards," he said.

Jurisdiction

Task Force POWER is the authority having jurisdiction for the CJOA, so "if we find deficiencies in facilities maintained by LOGCAP, we contact them and they fix deficiencies on the spot."

Some CJOA locations, including NATO bases, do not have LOGCAP, making Task Force POWER an even more critical option.

Starting in February, the task force is expected to hire 20 additional laborers, allowing them to take even bigger jobs. All task force personnel are U.S.- and Euro-certified contractors.

Anyone can submit a support request, but Brand urges people on ASG-supported bases to work through their ASG site managers to submit a request.

"And you don't need to be an electrician to know that something doesn't look or feel right," said Brand. "Call and let us decide. That's what we're here for."

To submit a request, contact your ASG site manager/FOB mayor, or send TF POWER an email directly at DLL-CEHNC-TFPOWER@usace.army.mil.

'It's their job to keep us safe outside the wire; it's our job to keep them safe ... when they're inside the wire.'