

A-10C

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Annual winners

# MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing

**Maintenance  
improves  
with A.G.E.**

**SFS at  
Manas**

Air Force Reserve Command  
442nd Fighter Wing online

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January 2007

## Airmen in Afghanistan: more than flying

By Maj. David Kurle  
442nd Fighter Wing public affairs

There's a lot happening in the War on Terror that doesn't make the front page.

For more than four months I had the honor of serving in Afghanistan, along-side our wing's pilots and maintainers, as part of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing.

I traveled extensively, covering Air Force stories across the country, from the volatile regions in the South, to the relatively peaceful provinces in the north.

I met hundreds of Airmen – active-duty, Guard and Reserve – serving their country (and the world), conducting their missions with professionalism, honor and compassion.

What may surprise some people is the variety of missions the Air Force is conducting there and the massive impact these activities are having on a country torn apart by 30 years of war.

Of course, Airmen are doing what the Air Force is known for – flying combat sorties.

A-10 pilots and maintainers ensure that firepower and ordnance is brought to bear when and where the forces on the ground need it.

Without the aid of artillery, ground forces depend on timely, accurate and effective close air support – and the U.S. Air Force delivers, I saw it first hand.

A-10s from Whiteman and from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, supported four offensives this summer, rooting out terrorists and Taliban extremists from places where they'd been holed up for four years. These four offensives, more than anything, accounted for the increase in Taliban activity over the summer – not a supposed resurgence of extremism that was widely reported in the media.

And the A-10 isn't the only plane in action over Afghanistan.

C-130s, flown by Air National Guardsmen fly missions every day, delivering food, water, ammunition and other supplies to U.S. forces on the ground. The airdrop mission in Afghanistan is vital to re-supplying remote outposts of Soldiers and Airmen scattered throughout the country. In fact, C-130 airdrops have not been conducted on this scale since the Vietnam War.

But some of the most amazing missions are taking place on the ground.

Because the Army is stretched between Iraq and Afghanistan, it relies on the Air Force for manpower to conduct embedded training team and provincial reconstruction team

missions, which directly affect the rebuilding of Afghanistan.

Airmen on the embedded training teams work every day with the Afghan National Army to mold it into an effective fighting force that can sustain and support itself – the aim is to get Afghans to protect and serve their own citizens.

Six Air Force-led provincial reconstruction teams perform security, lead reconstruction efforts, assess humanitarian needs and promote good governance by serving as advisors to the governors in the provinces the teams are assigned to.

The PRTs assess the needs of Afghans, advise the provincial governors on the best way to address those needs and manage the funding to make it happen.

One team I covered, facilitated the construction of a bridge over a river that connected a village of more than 1,000 families to health care, education and jobs. By building that bridge, the PRT opened a new world to those Afghans, who are now less susceptible to the propaganda disseminated by Taliban extremists.

Another PRT runs a trade school – teaching Afghans marketable skills and turning them into electricians, mechanics and textile workers. This provides Afghans with an opportunity to re-build their own country, while making a decent living at the same time.

One event during the deployment defined for me, personally, why we went into Afghanistan, and why we need to continue our efforts there.

On Father's day, one of our C-130 transport crews, medically evacuated a 12-year-old girl from Herat, in Western Afghanistan. Suffering from a broken collar bone, broken back and head injuries, she was one of the lucky ones, four other girls were killed and 10 more wounded when Taliban extremists blew up their school while it was in session.

It's the type of atrocity this enemy would commit here in the U.S., if it weren't for Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines there, taking the fight to the enemy.

All of the U.S. and international military forces in Afghanistan are working toward the same goal: To keep Afghanistan from ever again being a safe haven for the kind of people who would blow up a school for little girls or commit acts of terror in our country.

As we continue to provide security for Afghanistan, the birthplace of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, it's important to remember that Afghans make progress every day and that there are Airmen there making sure they can continue.



**Maj. David Kurle, the 442nd Fighter Wing chief of public affairs accompanies a patrol of Danish Army and Icelandic Defense Force troops near Chagchuran, Afghanistan, in June. Airmen deployed to Afghanistan are doing more than flying to secure that country's future and defeat terrorism.**

# MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing

'Inside \* Inside \* Inside \* Inside'

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Charge-of-quarters

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call toll free from off-base, dial (800) 260-0253 and  
press seven after the prompt.

**COVER PHOTO: Tech. Sgt. Tony Johnson, 442nd Maintenance Squadron Aerospace Ground Equipment technician, peers into the inner workings of a light-all as he works to repair it. For more on the AGE shop turn to the story on pages six and seven. (Photo by Master Sgt. Bill Huntington)**



# T 442nd Fighter Wing Tip of the Spear

## SENIOR AIRMAN AARON BERRY 442ND AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

Senior Airman Aaron Berry, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron is the assistant crew chief on aircraft 117.

While deployed to Afghanistan for three months in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he launched and recovered aircraft for daily combat missions flown against anti-coalition extremists fighting United States and coalition ground troops. These combat sorties directly resulted in saving the lives of numerous ground troops.

During a critical mission, he was able to complete the aircraft turn and also change out an aircraft taxi light. The effort saved a much needed sortie.

Working as an alert crew chief, Airman Berry was responsible for assisting aircrews and launching aircraft during alert scrambles, often with the entire operation taking place in as little as seven minutes from engine start to take off.

He assisted engine shop personnel on several engine inspections and 100-hour servicing and was responsible for the daily inspections and servicing of aircraft 114 to ensure it was ready for every mission. Aircraft 114 was the high flyer for the entire AEF cycle with more than 900 hours flown. For his outstanding efforts Airman Berry received a commander's coin from the commander of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing at Bagram Airfield.

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# Warthog: The Next Generation

## Air Force unveils new A-10C

By 2nd Lt. Mary Pekas  
355th Wing Public Affairs

**DAVIS-MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz.** — The A-10C Thunderbolt II made its official roll-out debut here Nov. 29, revealing its transformation and its enhanced capabilities under the Precision Engagement program.

The Precision Engagement program will offer the A-10 the most significant modifications it has ever received in its 30-year history, making it a more capable and survivable attack fighter, according to Maj. Dan Walls, in charge of conversion training operations in the 355th Training Squadron.

“Precision Engagement increases the lethality, survivability and standoff of one of the most respected and recognized attack aircraft in the world,” Major Walls said. “(This) ushers in a new era in the A-10 story.”

The A-10 will receive numerous enhancements, including a full integration of sensors, data link and targeting pod, allowing the A-10C to identify and strike targets from higher altitudes and greater distances without sacrificing accuracy. This integration will also enhance the aircraft’s communication capabilities.

The cockpit will undergo modifications under the program with the introduction of two new multi-functional color displays and a hands-on-throttle-and-stick interface. These enhancements translate into increased situational awareness for the pilots and the ability to perform most tasks without removing their hands from the throttle or stick.

As a result of this upgrade, the A-10C is projected to remain operational into the end of the 2020s, well beyond the plane’s initial expected lifespan, Major Walls said.

At the roll-out ceremony, Col. Kent Laughbaum, 355th Wing commander, introduced the arrival of the upgraded jet by talking about the history of the A-10. He ended by citing several of the technological advancements made to the A-10C and its future.

“We’re going to see at least another generation of the A-10 at (Davis-Monthan),” he said. “It’s an exciting day for Davis-Monthan and the A-10 community.”

Guests and media took the opportunity to see the newest modifications up close as A-10C pilots and maintainers showed them around the aircraft and the cockpit.

The 442nd Fighter wing is slated to receive the upgrade, but as of December, no money has been budgeted, according to Col. Robert “Steve” Arthur, the wing’s commander.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ALESIA GOODIC

**Airmen at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. welcome a newly modified A-10C Thunderbolt II during a roll-out ceremony Nov. 29. The A-10 has been modified with precision engagement technology to create the new and improved A-10C. The enhancements include full integration of sensors, multi-functional color displays and a new hands-on-throttle-and-stick interface. The 442nd Fighter Wing's A-10s are scheduled to receive the precision-engagement upgrade in the future, but as of December, no funding has been set aside for the wing's aircraft, according to Col. Robert "Steve" Arthur, the 442nd FW commander.**

# Wing's recruiters earn AFRC awards

By Maj. David Kurle

The 442nd Fighter Wing's recruiters rounded up some honors at the Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service banquet in Washington D.C., Nov. 2.

The top in-service line recruiter gold medal was awarded to Master Sgt. Jerry Hancock. As the in-service recruiter at Whiteman Air Force Base, Sergeant Hancock is a familiar face to many former 509th Bomb Wing members looking to keep connections with the Air Force when leaving active duty.

He has worked to place these prior-service Airmen with the 442nd and other AFRC units nationwide as traditional reservists and individual mobilization augmentees. Sergeant Hancock was also awarded two silver medals for superior achievement as a recruiter.

Sergeant Hancock's recruiting teammate, Tech. Sgt. Ryan Noorlander, garnered a gold medal as the top non-prior service recruiter in the command. Staff Sgt. Stacey Edwards, from the 442nd Medical Squadron, also received an award as an honorary recruiter for her efforts in recruiting three people into the Air Force Reserve.

Whiteman's Reserve recruiters were fourth in AFRC in the percentage of recruits compared to their goal in Fiscal Year 2006 and second in 10th Air Force, gaining 144 recruits against an adjusted goal of 102.



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

**Above: Tech. Sgt. Ryan Noorlander discusses Air Force Reserve opportunities with students at a Kansas City aviation school. Below: Then Tech., now Master, Sgt. Jerry Hancock points out Reserve benefits to a potential 442nd Fighter Wing recruit. Both recruiters and a 442nd Medical Squadron staff sergeant recently earned top Air Force Reserve Command recruiting awards.**



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON



# Quiet im

By Staff Sgt. Tom

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# Guardians of hope

## SFS Airmen guard Manas, rebuild lives

By Tech. Sgt. Leo Brown

Thirteen Airmen from the 442nd Security Forces Squadron deployed to Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan in March to provide security for military members going to and returning from Afghanistan.

When the Airmen came home to Whiteman AFB, Mo, in September, they returned having accomplished their mission, and brought back a host of unusual and humbling experiences.

While these Airmen worked with active-duty, Guard and Reserve members to cover duties at the base's visitor's center and the flight line, and patrolled areas outside the base, they also spread good will, visiting with local people to experience their culture and help with various projects.

Staff Sgt. Bryan Byler, a 442nd SFS fire-team member and a Greene County, Mo., deputy sheriff, said, "you see and appreciate the stuff we have here. I encourage anyone to (deploy). It was a good experience for me. I'd go again. You see a different culture and it's always appreciated when (the locals) thank you and pat you on the back."

Master Sgt. Louis Vallejo, a 442nd SFS squad leader and a Kansas City, Kansas, police sergeant, agreed.

"I encourage everyone to deploy at least once," he said. "You see two totally different cultures and see how another culture lives."

The Airmen said the local area around the base, including the village of Oktobersky, with a population of approximately 500, was, in Sergeant Vallejo's words, "very economically depressed. Their economic structure was very poor, but they know how to survive."

The Airmen said that some of the images standing out in their mind are outhouses, horse-drawn carts, Soviet-era vehicles from the 1940s and 1950s, as well as goats and sheep being herded.

"There was almost no indoor plumbing," Sergeant Byler said. A toilet, most of the time, was simply "a hole in the ground."

"Culturally, the people were nomads," said Senior Airman Gabriel Martin, a 442nd fire-team member and a senior at the University of Central Missouri (UCM) majoring in criminal justice.

So it was not unusual, he said, to see many people living in tents.

The Airmen also said the food, in general, was very appetizing, although there were some surprises. Sergeant Byler said he ordered steak off a menu at one establishment only to find that the meat, in his words, "just looked different."

After trying it, Byler said he thinks he was dining on horse. He said he asked his interpreter about that possibility and the interpreter responded, "It's quite possible."

Regardless of cultural and historical differences, the Air-

men said the locals welcomed them with open arms.

"They appreciated us and were very good to us," Sergeant Vallejo said. "We did a lot of community service," he said, which included building a playground at an orphanage, refurbishing a gymnasium and raising money for various appliances.

The Airmen were able to help the local community by joining the Manas Air Base Outreach Society, which is staffed by military members deployed at the base.

The Airmen said their work at the base was, fortunately, uneventful, but interesting.

In addition to seeing U.S. military members passing through Manas, the Airmen saw French, Spanish, South Korean and Afghan troops, along with members of the United States Marshals Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Secret Service.

When they arrived at Manas, approximately 80 percent of the security forces were made up of Guardsmen and Reservists, the Airmen said.

However, six months later, approximately 80 percent of the security forces were active-duty Airmen. Regardless, the 442nd Airmen said everyone worked well together.

"We meshed well," Sergeant Byler said.

No matter how smooth their work went, the Airmen said being away from loved ones and boredom was difficult to face.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TECH. SGT. DAN HEISER

**Staff Sgts. Robert Orton and Bryan Byler (back row) and Tech. Sgt. Daniel Heiser (center) playing with local kids during one of the visits to remodel the Oktoberski school gym near Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan .**





PHOTO COURTESY OF TECH. SGT. DAN HEISER

“Just keep your spirits up and don’t let certain things get you down,” Sergeant Byler said. “You’re stuck on the base, you see the same movies, you can only play so many games of pool. Don’t let it bring your spirits down.”

The Airmen said the wonders of modern communication helped relieve some of the stress and boredom. They were able to speak with family members about twice a week by phone, had e-mail availability daily and standard mail took roughly 10 days.

The Airmen said they were very proud of their family members for how they handled the deployment.

“It was hard for my wife,” Sergeant Byler said. “It was hard for me, but harder for her. I’m real proud of her. She got a lot of support from her mom and dad.”

Loved ones supporting each other was crucial, according to the Airmen.

Airman Martin’s fiancé, “took (the deployment) well. You have to make sure families stay close together. Christina and my parents helped each other a lot.”

Despite any difficulties, the three Airmen agreed that they would deploy again.

“It was one of the best experiences I’ve had,” Sergeant Vallejo said.

**Above: Senior Airman Jonathan Gray, at the Manas Air Base main gate entry control point, checks the security status of Staff Sgt. Edwin Crampton upon his return from an off-base patrol.**

**Below: At the Oktoberski orphanage near Manas Air base, Staff Sgt. Edwin Crampton gives gift bags to orphans during 'Kyrgyzstan National Kids Day'.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF TECH. SGT. DAN HEISER



PHOTO COURTESY OF MISSOURI COMMITTEE FOR ESGR

## ESGR AWARD

*B/E Aerospace's Lenexa Business Unit, Lenexa, Kan., received the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve "Above and Beyond" award. This award is given in limited numbers and presented annually by each ESGR Committee. It is designed to recognize those employers who have gone above and beyond the legal requirements for granting leave for military duty.*

*The company provided pay differential for Captain McAfee's civilian salary and also provided family support to his spouse and children while he was deployed to Iraq. The Missouri Committee for ESGR praised B/E Aerospace as an ideal employer by showing outstanding support for the Guard and Reserve.*

*Pictured are Doug Billings, Human Resources manager B/E Aerospace Inc., Brig. Gen. E. Tracy Bequette, Chairman, Missouri Committee for ESGR, Capt. Ross McAfee, 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron and Sebastien Ramus, also with B/E Aerospace Inc.*

## 'AGE' -- continued from page 7

Leroy Sharbono, a master electrician as a civilian, is happy to say why.

"We are surrounded by professionals," Sergeant Sharbono, said. "Active-duty personnel are only together for maybe three years; tops. We work with our associates, many for our entire military careers."

It's a sentiment that co-worker Tech. Sgt. Richard "Buck" Roberts agrees with.

"I've been with the 442nd 20 years this month and a technician since 1989," Sergeant Roberts said as he worked with one arm up to his elbow in a fuel tank. "The AGE shop is full of great guys who do their jobs with little direction required."

As far as what drew many of these technicians to what appears a satisfying career field, Sergeant Roberts said it best. "These are transferable skills," he said. "I don't fly airplanes at home, but I do have a car and it breaks down. We don't know everything about anything, but we do know a little about most everything."

Mammoth, box-shaped, motor-driven devices are spread

throughout the facility and the workers labor over the green machines.

In some ways it's reminiscent of the way one might recall a garage from a generation ago. As you look about the room, smiles are seen, laughter and occasional quiet conversations are heard, but a general feeling of contentment surrounds these 15 ambitious pros.

One thing missing from that distant memory to this one is the absence of oily shop rags scattered about, grease-grooved wrenches and supply company wall calendars that typically fit that old stereotype.

No, this shop is uncluttered and well ordered; looking more like television cooking-show queen Rachel Ray's kitchen than a nerve center for repair of all things unattached to an airplane.

It's a point of pride for Sergeant Rogers and so are his troops. He's quick to point that out.

"These guys are the unsung heroes of the flight-line," he said. "We have not only supported our planes in the 442nd, we've supported air shows, Air Force One and other dignitaries. I mean we can support any aircraft, so you see our versatility."

**442ND FIGHTER WING ONLINE**

**PHOTOS - STORIES - INFORMATION**

**[www.442fw.afrc.af.mil](http://www.442fw.afrc.af.mil)**

# 442nd Fighter Wing's Annual Award Winners



The 442nd Fighter Wing announced its annual award winners for 2006 on Dec. 3.

Upper left, non-commissioned officer of the year is Tech. Sgt. Justin Johnston, from the 442nd FW Safety Office.

Upper right, Airman of the year is Senior Airman Bradley McCurdy, from the 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron.

Lower right, first-sergeant of the year is Master Sgt. Larry Washington, from the 442nd Mission Support Flight.

And, lower left, senior NCO of the year, Master Sgt. Gary Washington of the 442nd Security Forces Squadron.



*Tech. Sgt. Tony Johnson,  
442nd Maintenance  
Squadron Aerospace  
Ground Equipment  
technician, repairs a  
light-all in the AGE shop.  
For more on the Ser-  
geant Johnson and the  
AGE shop, turn to the  
story on pages six and  
seven. (Photo by Master  
Sgt. Bill Huntington)*

*DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
442ND FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
931 ARNOLD AVE.  
WHITEMAN AFB MO 65305-5070*

## **TO THE FAMILY OF:**



**"We are at war and need every Airman  
combat ready and in the fight."**

**- Secretary of the Air Force, Michael W. Wynne  
and**

**Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. T. Michael Moseley  
in December's Letter to Airmen**