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JUNE 29, 2012

DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS



*Happy
4th of July*

New Jersey Guardsman chronicles images of Afghanistan

Story by Donna Clementoni, JerseyMan Magazine

A 177th Fighter Wing's war correspondent and U.S. Air Force technical sergeant reflects on his recent tour of duty in Parwan Province, Afghanistan as a country that is equally "harsh and beautiful."

Tech Sgt. Matt Hetch's six month assignment found him stationed at Bagram Airfield, 30 miles from the capital city of Kabul.

As a public affairs non-commissioned officer, Hecht was deployed from the 177th FW, New Jersey National Guard, as part of a two man team - he partnered with a guardsman from the Ohio National Guard - who operated from the northern Afghanistan air base. Their mission was a continuous 7 day a week, 12-14 hour a day effort. The guardsmen acted as the base's official photographers,



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht takes photos from a security tower on Nov 12, 2011 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Joe Harwood)



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht

in addition to writing news stories, filming video documentaries, arranging tours, providing on air broadcasts and completing community relations assignments.

While the American military are "in residence" on this foreign soil, they individually and collectively do what they can to make a difference. Though Hecht's main assignment was with an intelligence squadron, he had the freedom to cover human interest stories as well.

One event he captured was the operation of the "Cat in the Hat Language Arts Center", which was situated at Bagram Airfield.

Run by the U.S. Army, it brings together members of the military, who are teachers in their civilian life, to volunteer to teach young students English.

Interestingly, the idea was brought forward at the request of the Afghan elders who had hopes that their children could have the ability to become doctors or lawyers, opportunities that their generation wasn't exposed to. The first classes were attended by segregated students of 21 boys and 19 girls.

"It makes you realize what we have, here," said Hecht. "What we (Americans) see is the Taliban. (But) the people of Afghanistan, in the local towns, want security and education."

After a much deserved break, which Hecht is using to "debrief" and catch up on lost time with his wife, Robynn, this JerseyMan will return to the 177th Fighter Wing to resume his duties as a full time public affairs representative and will continue to document the next deployment from his unique perspective behind the lens.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht



Department of Veterans Affairs New Jersey Health Care System
Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation
New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) Program is Proud to Present:

Annual Homecoming Event For Veterans, Families, & Friends

Meet & Greet with Members from:

Outreach	Department of Labor
Mental Health	OEF/OIF/OND Team
Social Security	War Related Illness &
Eligibility	Injury Study Center
Vet Centers	Department of Military &
Veterans Benefits	Veterans Affairs
Volunteer Services	G.I. Go Fund

Date: Saturday, July 7, 2012
Time: 3 p.m. (activities begin)
Place: Jackal Stadium on the Campus of
Montclair State University

3-5:30 p.m. – Vendors
5-6:30 p.m. – Picnic
6:30 p.m. – Baseball: NJ Jackals vs.
Newark Bears

*Special Events: Raffle for prizes & evening fireworks!

Prizes/Food/Surprises for the Whole Family
For FREE baseball game tickets for Veterans, please contact:
June Mayer, OEF/OIF/OND Program Manager, 973-676-1000, x2369

National Guard Joint Training Center Sea Girt Avenue MILITARY BAND CONCERT

Monday Evening
2 July 2012

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Just bring lawn chair(s) and/or
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for military on Center. Public
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than military marching music.*



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The New Jersey State Library presents Alex Lang ROME: The Eternal City

JULY 17
noon to 1 p.m.



Alex Lang will take us to Rome through photographs. We'll explore the remains of ancient Rome, examine the artistic and architectural works of renaissance and baroque Rome, and discover Mussolini's plans to re-make Rome according to the ideals of fascism.

All are welcome; RSVP is appreciated.
Contact Cindy Warrick at cwarrick@njstatelib.org
or 609-278-2640 ext. 172.

The State Library is located at 185 West State Street in Trenton.



U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Steven Ferrari poses with his family at his promotion ceremony at the Lawrenceville Armory June 29. Ferrari, seen here with his wife, Tracy, center, and his two sons, Steven, left, and Nicholas, right, was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in front of family, friends and colleagues. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, DMAVA/PA)



New Jersey first lady Mary Pat Christie announces the New Jersey Heroes Heart of a Hero Scholarship Program at the New Jersey National Guard Armory in Riverdale, June 22. Walmart is providing \$100,000 for the scholarship program. (Courtesy Photo)



Sea Cadet Lt. Debbie Treacy (third from left) and 10 cadets, assigned to John T. Dempster, Jr. Division, based at 50th Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey National Guard, volunteer in area beautification at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Lawrenceville, N.J. June 28. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Wayne Woolley, 444th MPAD)

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