



RED TAIL **REVIEW**

477th FIGHTER GROUP · JD ELMENDORF RICHARDSON, AK · AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND

Commander's Comments



477th Fighter Group Warriors

Season's greetings and welcome to the December UTA! I hope you all had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and enjoyed a little bit of time off.

The holiday season means different things to different people but it gives us an opportunity to celebrate with friends and family and being thankful for what we all have.

I am thankful to be your Commander, to be part of a great team of Airmen and thankful for the hard work everyone in the 477th has contributed to this year.

Your dedication and professionalism has brought to close another successful year in 2015. I look forward to an eventful, rewarding, and productive 2016.

Although the holidays are a time of celebration, the season can be a difficult time for some. That's why it's so important for commanders, First Sergeants, supervisors and fellow Airmen to communicate, stay connected and watch out for each other.

For those who might be having a difficult time during the holidays, we urge you to reach out to a friend, supervisor or a co-worker who you can trust.

There are people here to support you, people who will listen to you and not judge you, people who can help you if you need them.

As this is the season of giving, we have various ways to help our community and give back to those that support us.

One way is through The Angel Tree program. The tree is set up in the foyer of the 477th FG Headquarters and is an avenue to provide those who are less fortunate this holiday season. Additional information and POC's about the Angel Tree can be found in the news brief section of the newsletter.

I appreciate the sacrifices that you and your family make every day in serving our nation. Congratulations on an incredible 2015, and we look forward to a successful 2016. Happy holidays and season's greetings to all.

Col. David Piffarerio
Commander



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Alaska Reservist presented decoration for Nepal relief efforts

By Tech. Sgt. Dana Rosso
477th Fighter Group Public Affairs

An Alaska Reservist was presented with a commendation medal for her work while supporting earthquake relief efforts in Nepal during a ceremony in the Courtyard of Heroes at the Pacific Air Force Headquarters Oct. 16.

"I deployed as the Joint Air Component Coordination Element Public Affairs officer in early May," said Maj. Ashley Conner, 477th Fighter Public Affairs officer. "The JACCE staged out of Thailand, but a small group of us went forward to Nepal with the 36th Contingency Response Group."

Conner and Staff Sgt. Melissa White made up the Air Force Public Affairs team that went to work documenting the relief efforts, facilitating interviews and building relationships with partner nations.

Then on May 12 a second 7.3 magnitude earthquake hit just more than two weeks after a 7.8 magnitude earthquake devastated the nation.

The JTF had established a flightline aid station to receive injured Nepalese citizens that were transported to the airport from remote villages on U.S. Marine Corps MV-22 Ospreys and UH-1Y Huey helicopters.

"When I arrived I saw children being treated for head injuries and other children being consoled while their parents received care. As a mom of two little girls, it was one of the hardest things to see," said Conner. "There were at least seven military photographers already

documenting the activities, so I put down my camera and asked where they needed help."

The medical team lead sent Conner to the litter carry line to assist carrying patients from the aircraft to the medical tent.



"The first woman we transported was an elderly woman who had lost her leg in the earthquake. She was turned toward me on the cot and was chanting. At one point she reached up to touch my face. I couldn't think of anything to say besides 'You are going to be okay,'" said Conner.

"My grandmother saw these photos and said 'if I had been in that woman's situation, seeing your face would have been comforting.' That sentiment really hit home for me. Women, Peace and Security places importance on the need for women in relief and recovery operations to address the specific needs of women and children. My role and involvement that night was very small and there were many others who had a much greater impact, but I hope in some small way that my interaction -- whether through the women I helped that night or just my daily presence at the airport -- that I was able to have a positive impact on others during this operation."

"The Air Force and the Department of Defense see the intrinsic value of women's roles in supporting areas affected by natural disasters," said Col. David Piffarerio, 477th Fighter Group commander. "Maj. Conner is a consummate professional and represented the U.S. military well in her support to the relief efforts in Nepal."



The Angel Tree program, is run by the Salvation Army to provide gifts to children of all ages that would not otherwise receive them.

This is a great program that provides holiday gifts to children who wouldn't normally receive them.

Gift-giving participants choose a tag from the tree in the FG HQ foyer, purchase a new gift, and return it unwrapped.

In Anchorage, all of the toys collected through the Angel Tree program are distributed during the community-wide Christmas assistance program called GIFT.

During GIFT, toys are displayed by age groups, and volunteers assist parents in choosing one gift per child (ages infant-14). Other communities have their own locally scheduled distribution events, either hosted by The Salvation Army or held in collaboration with other organizations.



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