

THE CARGO COURIER

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Mission provides \$1 million in care

By Lt. Col. Dale Greer
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

BEATTYVILLE, Ky. — Marita Moore came bearing gifts.

The Beattyville resident arrived here at Lee County High School June 20 with trays full of homemade cookies, brownies and fudge. It was her way of saying “thank you” to the Air National Guardsmen and U.S. Navy reservists who set up health-care clinics in four Eastern Kentucky communities last month to train while serving local residents with no-cost medicine, dentistry and eyeglasses.

A Navy dentist extracted 12 of Moore’s teeth in one sitting so she can have dentures made and restore her smile. She’s been needing them for a long time but didn’t have the money to pay for care.

“I’m just really grateful for what they did for me,” Moore said, her eyes filling with tears. “I lost my insurance a few years ago and can’t afford to go to the dentist. Last year, my husband had a stroke, so we’re trying to bounce back. But it’s been hard.”

Moore was so pleased with her care that she brought in eight other family members for dental work, eye exams and glasses.

“This clinic has been a Godsend,” she said. “The community needed it, and I thank God for their help.”

Moore is one of 2,662 patients who received over \$1 million worth of no-cost health care at the four clinics from June 15 to 24 as part of a mission called Operation Bobcat.

During those 10 days, doctors, dentists, optometrists and medics from the Air National Guard and Navy Reserve performed 11,275 procedures and handed out 1,457 pairs of no-cost prescription eyeglasses, according to U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Amy Mundell, the mission’s officer in charge.



Lt. Col. Dale Greer/KyANG

Lt. Col. Darin Jacoby, a flight surgeon from the Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Airlift Wing, talks with a patient about his medical history at a health-care clinic at Lee County High School in Beattyville, Ky., June 24.

Services included medical screenings and sports physicals, dental cleanings and extractions, eye exams and single-prescription eyeglasses made on site by a U.S. Navy mobile optical lab. Clinics operated at high schools in four medically underserved communities — Booneville, Beattyville, Irvine and Jackson — with patients being seen on a first-come, first-served basis.

Neither insurance nor identification were required, explained Mundell, a medical administrative officer with the Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Medical Group, which served as the lead military agency.

“The primary purpose of Operation Bobcat is to provide military medical troops

with crucial training in logistics and field operations so they’re better prepared to respond to real-world emergencies, conflicts or disasters,” Mundell explained. “At the same time, they provide direct and lasting benefits to the residents of Eastern Kentucky.”

“Servicemembers get hands-on readiness training with deployable equipment that enhances their capabilities when mobilized, and local residents get access to high-quality health care at no cost to the individual. That’s a win-win scenario for everyone.”

To read the full article and view the photo gallery, visit www.123aw.ang.af.mil

Airmen return from overseas July 4th

By Maj. Allison Stephens
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

More than 60 members of the 123rd Airlift Wing received an Independence Day welcome when they returned home July 4 after completing a four-month deployment to the Persian Gulf.

The Airmen, who arrived here aboard Kentucky Air Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft, were greeted by a crowd of more than a hundred family and friends.

For 1st Lt. Nick Anderson, the homecoming was especially heartfelt. The first-time deployer was reunited with his infant daughter, who was only 12 days old when he left for the overseas mission in February.

“Making sure my family was supported weighed heavily on me during the deployment, but knowing I was coming home to them gave me strength,” he said. “This deployment was a lot of hard work, but all of our training and preparation paid off.”

Dad, mom and daughter said they plan to spend the rest of the holiday relaxing together.

“I look forward to telling them about my experiences and hearing about all the things I missed.”

The group of returning Airmen operated from an undisclosed air base while deployed, flying troops and cargo across the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, which includes Afghanistan and the Middle East. A second group of about 60 Airmen returned home from the same mission on July 6.



Lt. Col. Dale Greer/KyANG

A boy reunites with his father during a homecoming ceremony here July 4. More than 60 Airmen from the wing returned to Louisville on Independence Day, marking the end of a four-month deployment to the Persian Gulf in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

The wing began deploying its Airmen to the Persian Gulf area last fall, activating approximately one-third of the wing’s troops to serve on tours ranging from two to six months. Several dozen members of the wing remain deployed worldwide supporting a full spectrum of mission such as logistics, maintenance, human resources, security forces, public affairs and finance. They are expected to return later this summer.

“This is a proud day for our wing,

and I’m grateful to have these Airmen home,” said Col. Jeff Wilkinson, wing commander. “In addition to being away from their families, many of them had to leave their civilian jobs to deploy. I thank their families and their civilian employers for their support.”

The deployment marks the seventh time in the past 16 years that the wing has sent aircraft, aircrews and maintenance personnel to support operations in the U.S. Central Command AOR.

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We welcome your feedback. Please contact the Public Affairs Office directly if you have suggestions for articles or photography. Our office is located in Room 1160 of the Wing Headquarters Building, 1101 Grade Lane, Louisville, KY 40213.

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