

Attorney's work reaches around the world

By Master Sgt. Darlene Foote
SSG Public Affairs

MAXWELL AFB, GUNTER ANNEX, Ala. — While many people don't mind spending several hundred or even thousands of dollars on a vacation at a resort location, not many are willing to dish out that kind of money to go somewhere to live in bare bone conditions and work without pay.

However, that is exactly what Maj. Stephen See, Deputy Staff Judge Advocate at Standard Systems Group did—not once, but three times. His most recent trip happened this past June.

According to Major See, who serves as a youth minister for his church, Mozambique, which borders Zimbabwe and Zambia, is rated the third poorest country in the world.

"In addition to providing them the critical assistance they needed, one of our goals was to simply let them know that God loves them and that people care about them and their well-being," said the seven-year Air Force veteran.

Over the last three years he has spent nearly a combined two months working in Zimbabwe and Mozambique building wells, distributing supplies, working at AIDS clinics and teaching the Bible to local citizens. His feat was even more difficult because of communication barriers.

Because there are 26 to 30 different languages spoken in the region, just relaying that message proved quite challenging at times. At least two interpreters were required at all times just to have a conversation.

"My interpreter would translate what I said into Portuguese, and another would translate the Portuguese to the tongue of whom I was trying to communicate," said Major See.

The team of five spent nearly three



Major See greets several Muslim Kotis by greeting them with "Salam Alakuhm," an Arabic greeting he learned while deployed to Oman.

weeks with the Koti people, in the Northern Coastal town of Angoche, Mozambique, meeting with their leaders to share a message of hope. The predominately Muslim people were appreciative of the team's work.

According to Major See, the trip was a success, and the groundwork was laid for other teams to come in and provide the same kind of support and compassion that they were able to give.

"This trip was quite rewarding especially at those moments when we really connected with the people, despite the language differences," he said.

However, Major See's dedication to people and getting the job done doesn't stop there—he is also making a dif-



Major See travels in a "dow" off the Mozambiquean Coast. The small sailboat, designed hundreds of years ago, is still the primary way to reach the islands.

ference in the Air Force. He was just named the 2004 Air Force Outstanding Young Military Service Lawyer by the American Bar Association, Young Lawyer Division.

The annual award recognizes the legal contributions of one JAG under the age of 36 from each uniformed service, based on demonstrated excellence in job performance, proven leadership ability and service to the community. Additionally, Major See was named the AFMC 2003 Kuhfeld Award winner, an award given to the most outstanding active-duty JAG in the grades of captain or major.

"The Air Force, as a whole, and Gunter, in particular, are incredibly lucky to have an officer and attorney like Stephen See," said Major Susan Turley, the SSG Staff Judge Advocate. "He is a truly dedicated and talented leader and JAG. Yet, he's also one of the most humble, nicest people I've ever met. While he's done great things for the JAG Corps and the Air Force so far, I expect even better things from him in the future."