

# IRON EAGLE TIMES



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4th Combat Aviation Brigade

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**"4th CAB's 'Mustangs'  
save 1,026 people"**

## ALSO

Iron Eagles' first field  
exercise

Black Forest Parade

Downed aircraft  
response training





## 4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

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# ***“4th CAB’s ‘Mustangs’ save 1,026 People”***

Staff Sgt. Jose Pantoja, a flight medic with Charlie Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, carries Mike Daniels, right, an evacuee, up a hoist onto a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during a flood rescue and recovery operations in Boulder, Colo., Sept. 16, 2013. Colorado and Wyoming National Guard units were activated to provide assistance to people affected by massive flooding along Colorado’s Front Range.



Story and photos by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office





**Sgt. 1st Class Keith Bart, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crew chief with Charlie Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, carries an animal to safety during flood rescue and recovery operations in Boulder, Colo., Sept. 16, 2013**

BOULDER, Colo. – Heavy rains, low visibility and even complete darkness did not stop air crews from 4th Infantry Division from rescuing more than 1,000 people in Boulder County, Colo., Sept. 14-16.

Aviation crews from 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, assisted with rescue and recovery operations due to massive flooding, near Boulder, Colo., in support of the Colorado National Guard.

Besides the sheer number of people rescued, they also have flown for more than 130 hours, saved 378 family pets and performed 43 hoist missions.

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This is the second time this summer 4th CAB has provided support to civilian authorities. The first time the brigade helped was during the Black Forest fires. Soldiers are working side-by-side with civilian agencies and the Colorado National Guard to provide assistance where needed.

The Colorado National Guard is supporting flood operations in five counties in Colorado, said Lt. Col. Mitch Utterback, state interagency and liaison officer, Colorado National Guard.

They are glad that 2nd GSAB, 4th Aviation Regiment is supporting their effort to help Colorado residents.



**Zach Freundlich, with the San Juan Interagency Hotshots crew based in Durango, Colo., helps unload animals and evacuees off a U.S. Army CH-47 Chinook helicopter assigned to the 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg., 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div., during flood rescue and recovery operations in Boulder, Colo., Sept. 16, 2013.**

"2-4 GSAB gave an immediate response," said Utterback. "They showed up in late (Friday) afternoon and ended up rescuing 45 people. They did the first night of the rescue effort in night vision goggles. They helped rescue more than 500 people the following day. This is only three months after they supported the firefighting efforts at the Black Forest fire."

Utterback said there are estimated 20-30 local and federal agencies involved in the rescue and recovery operations for the Boulder floods. The Guard and the CAB work well with those agencies.

"The interoperability between the Colorado

National Guard and 4th CAB to work with multiple agencies is flawless, because of the ability of 2nd GSAB, 4th Aviation Regiment, to respond quickly to emergencies," said Utterback. "I don't believe I've seen that from any other aviation units in the Army."

The brigade leadership attributes much of that to their experience dealing with the Black Forest fire.

The quick response was in part due to preparation during the activation of the unit, said Maj. Eric Carlson, operations officer, 2nd GSAB, 4th Aviation Regiment.



Civilians with the National Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, help unload animals and evacuees off a U.S. Army CH-47 Chinook helicopter assigned to the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, during flood rescue and recovery operations in Boulder, Colo., Sept. 16, 2013.

"A lot of the after action reports from the Black Forest Fire were implemented, which helped a lot," Carlson said.

Residents of the local area also appreciated the brigade's presence.

It is very heartwarming to have military support in this time of crisis, said Monique Whitener, volunteer for the Lyons Fire Department.

"When we saw the military convoys and aircraft come in; it was the most emotional feeling of relief," said Whitener, who lives in Lyons, Colo., which was severely affected by the floods. "I broke down in tears. They (military) have done so much for us. We had no way of getting our firefighters and elderly out of an area and the helicopters got them out."



A view of state infrastructure destroyed by heavy rains, with some areas receiving as much as 18 inches in a 24-hour period during a flood rescue and recovery operations in Boulder, Colo., Sept. 16, 2013.

Whitener said that in some areas the floods have widened rivers from 20 feet to as much as a 1,000 feet, which has caused them take different paths. Some of the changes have caused the paths to go directly through towns, causing people to be cut off from main roads. She said this why the helicopters are a huge asset to their rescue efforts.

"We are glad to have the helicopter units here," said Whitener. "It helps all the agencies come together so well, and makes it very fortunate for the amount of people we are bringing in each day."

The sentiment was also echoed by the people stranded at Camps Cal-wood and Balarat Saturday, where 85 fifth-grade students from Fireside Elementary and the Denver public school

system had been since Sept. 11.

"We were so excited to see you guys," said Lori Bright, volunteer parent, Fireside Elementary. "First helicopter that came, we all ran down to the lower pastures to watch."

Micheal Lehman, National Forest Service, was assigned civilian helicopter crew members to help with the 4th CAB's Chinook helicopters.

They helped load passengers and their gear. They said they were happy to support the military with their mission.

"It's nice to have (4th CAB) here," said Lehman. "Without the National Guard or 4th CAB, we would not have been able to rescue 500 people in one day. The helicopters and their



Second General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, finishes their rescue and recovery mission in Boulder, Colo., Sept. 19, 2013. Second GSAB, 4th Aviation Regiment, took a celebratory flyby to say "thank you" to the Colorado National Guard and all the emergency agencies that were involved in the flood rescue operations.

hoist capabilities got the job done. It great to see all these agencies come together for great cause to such a devastating incident."

The brigade also wanted to express appreciation for the local community in helping them accomplish the mission.

"The Boulder Municipal Airport has been very supportive with ramp space and billeting," said Carlson. "The local community has been very supportive of our efforts."

Second GSAB, 4th Aviation Regiment is continuing to conduct rescue and recovery operations until all civilians are accounted for, or until told to cease their mission.



Gerry Dooley, team leader, Living Works Organization, teaches Fort Carson soldiers and leaders about suicide intervention and prevention during their Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training at Provider Chapel on Fort Carson, Colo., July 10, 2013.

## 4th CAB hosts suicide intervention class

Story and photos by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

FORT CARSON, Colo. - Soldiers have a new tool to help intervene and prevent suicides in their units after completing a five-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training at Provider Chapel, July 10.

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The training, hosted by the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, was available to soldiers from every unit on Fort Carson.

"Over the years, suicide related deaths in the military have taken a toll on our armed forces, and our soldiers deserve as much help as we can

provide," said Staff Sgt. Christine Mangus, brigade chaplain's assistant, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

ASIST is a program taught by Living Works, an international organization that teaches many different suicide intervention classes and has been helping the Army for 24 years.

"In 1989, the U.S. Army V Corps invited Living Works to deliver ASIST to the European Command in Germany as part of the Army's 'Fit to Win' health program," said Gerry Dooley, team leader, Living Works.

Living Works partnered with Army Materiel Command and Applied Physics Laboratory, Johns Hopkins University, in 2002-2003 to develop ASIST-R, a post-training reinforcement program.

"This was a pilot test of a virtual simulation skills retention program for the Department of Defense. Army G-1 formally confirmed ASIST as the suicide intervention-training program for the Army in 2009," Dooley said.

"It's a program that has helped people for the past 30 years," he said. "This program was designed to try and understand the needs for a person at risk of suicide. We teach the trainers certain skill sets to help them interrupt thoughts of suicide and embed a better state of well-being in a person."

As part of a new pilot program, Joint Task Force Carson soldiers were the first to receive certification with the latest version of the ASIST training, known as ASIST 11.

The program focused on developing trainers, who must progressively teach to stay certified, said Mangus.

"We learn to listen to the reasons for suicide, try to get them to talk about their reasons for living and bring them to a safe place where they are not going to hurt themselves," said Mangus. "We have too many people committing suicide. This training prepares soldiers to teach intervention of suicides and how to handle situations involving suicides at their unit. Trainers must teach three classes within the first year of certification. Then, soldiers must teach at least one class per year after that to stay

certified."

Dooley said the overall goal of the training will be to eliminate stigmas that some soldiers view as negative when trying to receive help for mental disorders and help prevent suicide entirely.

"The military has its own culture or sense of community that influence stigmas of getting help," said Dooley. "When you institute a program like ASIST, it takes a while to work, but you do get a cultural shift and change. It starts with a small attitudinal shift, which becomes a cultural shift and ultimately a community shift. Those stigmas will then become less of an influence."

Dooley has been teaching these suicide intervention classes for 27 years and recalls a success story because of the skills he has taught.

"In 1991, a woman came in one day who lost her partner to suicide," said Dooley. "Her partner even talked about suicide, and she didn't know what to say. After the suicide of her partner, she went into a deep depression. After going through this program, she was able to release a lot of the guilt that she felt towards herself and came to terms with roles that she was responsible for in her relationship. Within a few months, she returned back to work. Ever since, she has called me to let me know that she is all right."

Fort Carson soldiers and leaders will have more chances to go through the course and pass on those skills learned from the program to their units.

"Sometime in October, 4th CAB will host another ASIST training session," said Mangus. "I am one of 30 Fort Carson soldiers that are ASIST 10 certified. At a date to be determined, me and the other certified soldiers will get a chance to take a one-day class to get our certification upgraded to ASIST 11."

"This is the best training that I've seen regarding suicide intervention. The soldiers that go through this course will provide skills and become better caregivers, who can be utilized by their units to help reduce suicides," she added.





CH-47 Chinooks from 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division participated in a research demonstration for the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Front Range District Office outside of Canon City, Colo., July 16, 2013.

## Aviation units conduct research demos

Story and photos by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

CANON CITY, Colo. - Specialists from the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Front Range District Office, worked hand-in-hand with Fort Carson flight crews during a research demonstration outside of Cañon City, July 16.

Soldiers with 4th Combat Aviation Brigade and 1st Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, helped the BLM team collect data to assess the use of the lands by the military for

High-Altitude Mountainous Environmental Training.

"We have a team of specialists, called the interdisciplinary team, which ranges from marine biologists, wildlife biologists, archeologists, geologists, reality specialists, recreation specialists and range specialists," said Steve Craddock, Royal Gorge Field Office realty specialist.

The demonstration gives the specialists a firsthand account of the effects that aircraft have on the surrounding environment.



UH-60 Black Hawks from 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division participated in a research demonstration for the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Front Range District Office outside of Canon City, Colo., July 16, 2013.

"Our purpose is to expose every resource specialist to the sounds, wind and visual impact as the helicopters land, take off and go in between the landing zones," said Craddock. "This allows them to come up with a complete analysis of the environmental impact on the areas being used for training."

The collection of data from the research demonstration is being used to develop a proposal to allow Army aviation units to conduct HAMET training in surrounding areas.

"We have had casual short-term agreements with Fort Carson aviation units, which allowed them to use 28 landing zones for HAMET training," said Keith Berger, Royal Gorge Field Office manager. "A more in-depth, long-term agreement is needed with the arrival of 4th Combat Aviation Brigade. If the new proposed agreement is approved, there could be up to 43 landing zones that Fort Carson and Army aviation units could use."

Assessments from the research demonstration will be gathered, and a proposal will be put into consideration by this fall, said Berger.

"After data has been analyzed from all the specialists and a community survey has been

done, a decision for the land use will be made," said Craddock. "The decision depends on many variables and a variety of proposals could be made."

Additional landing zones will help Fort Carson flight crews train more efficiently and safely, said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael S. Madura, Division G3 Air, 4th Infantry Division.

"Having more landing zones will allow aviation units to be more spread out during training," he said. "This keeps flight crews safe and able to perform a multitude of different training to prepare them for different situations in a mountainous environment."

HAMET training is vital training that prepares flight crews from Fort Carson and the Army to get specialized skills, he said.

"HAMET training saves lives and better prepares flight crews deploying to areas that are mountainous, such as Afghanistan," said Madura. "It has (been) proven to reduce incidents over the years. From my 24 years of experience as a pilot who has flown at high altitudes and in mountainous environments, a flight crew has to experience those conditions personally to make them more proficient in maneuvering in those types of terrain."

# *“Iron Eagles conduct first field exercise”*

**Soldier assigned to the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, directs a CH-47 Chinook helicopter pilot while Soldiers with 10th Special Forces Group secure a Humvee to be sling-loaded to a different site during their field training exercise near Fort Carson, Colo., July 25, 2013.**



Story and photos by  
Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation  
Brigade Public Affairs





**Soldiers assigned to the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, sling-load gear with a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during the brigade's first field training exercise, near Fort Carson, Colo., July 25, 2013.**

FORT CARSON, Colo. – Thumping sounds of helicopter blades kicked up swirls of dirt as soldiers directed 4th Combat Aviation Brigade aircraft to sling-load equipment as part of a field training exercise on Fort Carson, Colo., July 25.

The 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th CAB, 4th Infantry Division, conducted their first FTX for the CAB, July 22 -26.

The 4th CAB's overall purpose for the training exercise is to test the brigade's readiness for deployment and improve on what it needed, said Capt. Robert Detienne, assistant operations officer, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg.

"We are learning many things that will help us develop plans for future training exercises," Detienne said.

The CAB's training covered both basic soldier skills and military occupational specialty specific training.

"The training exercises were concentrated on the soldiers' individual training," said Detienne. "The training consisted of nine-line medevac, land navigation, first aid, and MOS field training."

2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. started from scratch in prepping for their training exercise.

"We started from ground-zero," said Detienne. "Besides individual experiences that everyone has had, we worked hard as a staff ... to figure out what we need to work on to be ready to deploy."

Sling-load training was the main collective training performed by the battalion's Chinook and Black Hawk companies.

"Most of the soldiers are doing the sling-loads for the first time," said Sgt. David Fagan, petroleum supply specialist and sling-load instructor, Company E, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg.. "We started training heavily on the sling-loads for the past two days before the actual training exercise."



**A CH-47 Chinook and UH-60 Black Hawk from 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg., 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div., fly back to Butts Army Airfield after sling-load training, during the brigade's first field training exercise, on Fort Carson, Colo., July 25, 2013.**

All sling-loads that were performed were executed perfectly," he said "I am very proud of how well the soldiers executed their mission tasks."

Company E soldiers prepared for two weeks prior to the FTX.

"The soldiers trained diligently with soldiers from 10th Special Forces Group Support Battalion," said Capt. Faith Neubauer, commander, Company E. "They are really excited about this exercise."

Iron Eagle soldiers were trained to prepare many types of equipment in short periods of time.

"I just recently went through a weeklong class prior to the FTX," said Fagan. "The soldiers got a more condensed class on sling-loading to prepare equipment for a sling-load in five to 30 minutes, depending on type of equipment."

The experience gained in the FTX provided a strong foundation for the CAB to build from in future exercises.

"The training we received from the field exercise helps to establish a baseline for the CAB," said Detienne. "This training was important,

because you have to know where you are to get to where you want to be. This is why we started with individual tasks. In September, we will conduct another field exercise based on more collective tasks."



**Soldiers with the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Avn. Reg., 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div., and Group Support Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), secure a storage container, to be sling-loaded to a different site, during the brigades first field training exercise, near Fort Carson, Colo., July 25, 2013.**



Wounded veteran cyclists ride almost 400 miles from Chicago's Soldier Field to Detroit, during the 2013 Ride 2 Recovery Great Lakes Challenge, Aug. 23-29, 2013. R2R helps injured active duty service members and veterans improve their health and wellness through individual and group cycling. (Photo by Tiffini Skuce, Ride 2 Recovery photographer)

# Wounded Warriors bike 400 miles helps Soldiers

Story by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

CHICAGO -- Wounded Warriors from all branches of the U.S. military rode bicycles almost 400 miles, from Chicago to Detroit, during a Ride 2 Recovery Challenge, Aug. 23-29.

Joint Task Force Carson soldiers from Fort Carson Warrior Transition Battalion and 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division joined more than 200 riders in the challenge ride, which took six days to complete.

Sgt. 1st Class Keoki Smythe, Warrior Transition Battalion, has participated in the rides for the last three years. His love of riding started when he attended one of the challenge rides in California.

"I signed up for the challenge at a Warrior Transition Battalion in Europe," said Smythe. "My first ride ever on a bike was a 500-mile challenge ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles, and is the most difficult of all the challenges. It was a very difficult ride for a first-time rider."

Smythe said the challenge rides are

therapeutic and mentally healing for wounded warriors.

"It's low-impact exercising, and I'm in a competitive sport like I used to be," said Smythe. "I am riding with peers that have similar or other types of injuries due to combat or other reasons in the military. During the rides, you are relating to people with similar issues. I believe military members have a hard time talking about things, and these rides allow them to talk to each other."

David Haines, chief of operations, R2R, who coordinates many of the programs, talked about why they do the rides.

"The ride provides a challenge to wounded warriors because it's an obstacle. If you tell a healthy person to do 300-450 miles in a week; they'll tell you that you are crazy. These wounded warriors are no different, but they learn to fight

against other obstacles in their lives, whether it's mental or physical," added Haines.

There were many first-time challenge riders who found the first few days of the ride difficult. One first-time rider, Jose Miranda, former Navy, who lost a limb on an aircraft carrier, used a recumbent hand-cycle during the ride.

"My bike had technical issues the first and second day of the ride," said Miranda. "It's been a great challenge so far with a large amount of miles to cover. I am not used to going this far, and [was] unprepared to go this fast."

Ride 2 Recovery challenge rides take a physical and emotional toll on riders, and teaches them to be resilient and determined.

"Physically, I was exhausted," said Miranda. "When I was leading the group, there were times I wanted to move out of the way and let someone else lead, but I felt like the group was depending on me, so I kept on going. Mentally, I wanted to stop. I still have a lot of self-doubt but I'm still moving forward."

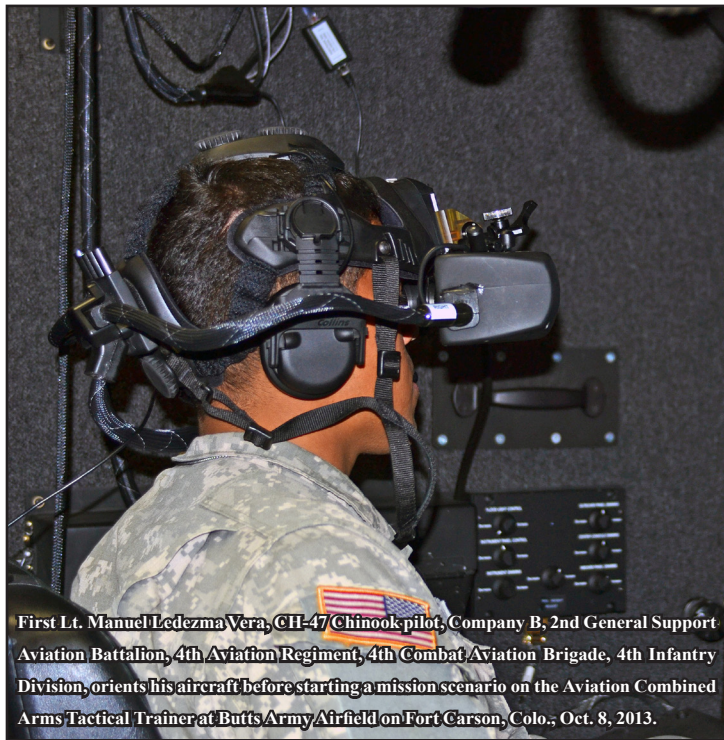
Experienced riders found new ways to challenge themselves during the ride.

"The way you find more challenges is by getting out there and helping others make it through the challenges," said Smythe. "A person can learn to help other riders who are having trouble climbing hills by riding beside them and pushing on their back to get them up the hill. Another way for an experienced rider to challenge themselves would be to volunteer to do extra miles after the ride is over for the day."

At the end of the ride, many riders had a different view of themselves, and gained a sense of triumph.

"I feel very accomplished," said Miranda. "I see what I am capable of doing now. It's motivating within itself to just keep going even [when] I was tired. The hardest part of the ride was believing in myself. I wanted to quit at times, but now I know I can do it. I plan to keep on doing challenges for as long as I can."

# 4th CAB pilots train economically



**First Lt. Manuel Ledezma Vera, CH-47 Chinook pilot, Company B, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, orients his aircraft before starting a mission scenario on the Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Oct. 8, 2013.**

Story and photos by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

FORT CARSON, Colo. – During a time of furloughs and a government shutdown, pilots from 4th Infantry Division are conducting cost-effective training at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Oct. 9.

Pilots and air traffic controllers from 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Inf. Div., are conducting training on the Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer.

AVCATT is a flight simulator that allows pilots and air traffic controllers to conduct a multitude of mission scenarios.

"This trainer allows six aircraft to do simulation flights at one time," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Dowdy, senior Chinook pilot, Company B, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. "Mission parameters can be set for weather, time of day, enemy contact, and visibility, and allows for major collective missions."

The brigade is utilizing the AVCATT to minimize the limitations of training during the shutdown, without expending the fuel and man hours needed for actual flight missions.

"There is no substitute for training in an actual aircraft, but this training is as close as it gets" said Dowdy. "The simulators were already paid for, and it costs the Army nothing for us to train. We are getting quality training, and are able to teach our pilots and air traffic controllers, without having to use fuel during the government shutdown."

Although the shutdown has affected training, new pilots are still getting essential training to help prepare them for domestic missions and wartime tasks.

"We have paired experienced pilots with new pilots in the AVCATT training," said Dowdy. "We

are trying to bridge the gap of flight experience and awareness of our pilots. The shutdown has affected some of the training, but we won't let it stop the vital training of our pilots."

AVCATT is an interchangeable simulator that allows different types of aircraft to be simulated.

"Each modular can be changed from one aircraft to another in about 30 minutes. Some of the aircraft setups are Apaches, Black Hawks and Chinooks," said Dowdy. "Currently, we have four modulators set up for Blackhawks, and two modulators setup for Chinooks. The ability of each modular to be changed quickly (allows) us to do a variety of different mission sets."

2nd GSAB's air traffic controllers are also receiving AVCATT training to sharpen their skills.

"With the low amount of air traffic during the shutdown; our air traffic controllers are keeping their skills sharp through this simulator training," said Staff Sgt. Joshua Burnell, terminal platoon sergeant, Company F, 2nd GSAB. "The training allows the running of up to four different air traffic towers. They are able to simulate different amounts of aircraft, based on the level of the controller."

Even if the shutdown persists, 4th CAB plans to use training such as the AVCATT to keep preparing its Soldiers.

"We plan on simulating bigger collective training exercises using this equipment," said Dowdy. "We want to implement a tactical operating center, with all the personnel that we would use in a real life scenario. This training will allow us to keep doing zero cost training, and keep our soldiers' flight operation aptitudes intact."



# ***“Black Forest parade honors 2nd GSAB”***



**2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, was honored as part of the grand finale of the Black Forest Parade, held in Black Forest, Colo., Aug. 17, 2013. This year's annual parade was held to promote community togetherness and honor heroes of the Black Forest wildfires.**

**Story and photos by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office**



A local resident drives his refurbished tractor in the Black Forest Parade held in Black Forest, Colo., Aug. 17, 2013. The tractor was damaged during the Black Forest fires in June, and was recently brought back to life the day before the parade.

BLACK FOREST, Colo. — Army heroes were celebrated by a city recovering from a devastating wild-fire that started in early June during the annual Black Forest parade, in Black Forest, Colo., Aug. 17.

This year's Black Forest Parade was a very special one, because it's honoring the heroes who saved our city, said Sharon Conley, Black Forest parade coordinator.

The soldiers from 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, appreciated the recognition.

"It was a phenomenal opportunity for 4th CAB to be honored at the parade, especially for 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg.," said Lt. Col. Tyler Smith, battalion commander, 2nd GSAB. "It was great to spend some time with the Black Forest community. PAGE 24

It was nice to connect with the people we helped, and it was a chance to share pride in what we all have accomplished."

2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg., was featured in the parade because of the work they did during the Black Forest fires. They dropped thousands of gallons of water from bambi buckets on spot-fires to safeguard houses and buildings within the burning areas.

The parade, which was sponsored by the Black Forest Community Club, provided relief and a chance to thank first responders of the wild fires.

"We just wanted the Families of Black Forest to have a good time and be able to see some of the heroes of the Black Forest fires," said Eddie Bracken, BFCC President, and this year's chairman. "They deserve it after their suffering and

devastating losses from the fires."

More than 90 agencies participated in the parade to help support the Black Forest recovery effort and inspire community bonding.

"About one-third of the agencies were home-grown local agencies, and the other two-thirds were from outside organizations and businesses," said Conley. "The Black Forest community is a private community. The parade allows them to come together, celebrate and enjoy each other's company."

A lot of work and volunteers went into setting up and ensuring safety at the parade for the residents of the city.

"Coordinating parade entries according to their themes and taking last minute entries down to the

very morning of the parade kept me very busy," said Conley. "We have to prevent conflicting themes that involve cars, animals and people.

"We didn't want horses fighting with llamas," she said. "We didn't want children to get trampled or run over trying to get candy that parade participants were throwing to the crowd. We take a lot into consideration when coming up with the lineup of the parade."

Black Forest residents were very proud to honor and have 4th CAB soldiers participate in the parade.

"Over the years, we have been supported very well by Fort Carson," said Bracken, with a heavy sigh as he blinked back tears. "No one knows how much it means, and how important it is to our community, to have these military members here. We have a large community of retired veterans in this area and the continuing support of the military is much appreciated."

The parade's grand finale ended with the marching of a small group of soldiers led by Smith and Command Sgt. Maj. Rickey Davis, senior enlisted leader, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. They marched proudly to the cadence of the roaring cheers from the Black Forest parade attendees.



Participants line up for the Black Forest Parade held in Black Forest, Colo., Aug. 17, 2013. 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, was honored as part of the grand finale of the parade.



# ***“Soldiers practice downed aircraft response skills”***

**Soldiers from the 759th Military Police Battalion direct a UH-60 Black Hawk (Medevac) from 4th Combat Aviation, 4th Infantry Division, to practice hoisting up an injured soldier during a downed aircraft simulation on Fort Carson, Colo., Aug. 6, 2013.**

Story and photos by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office



FORT CARSON, Colo. -- Securing a landing zone, hovering above an extraction point and repelling down to hoist a casualty were all second nature to soldiers who conducted a joint training exercise for a downed aircraft simulation on Fort Carson, Colo., Aug. 6.

Soldiers from the 759th Military Police Battalion, and 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, took part in the training.

“It was a culminating exercise,” said Lt. Col. Tyler Smith, battalion commander, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. “We were able to coordinate with 759th MP Bn. to exercise our air assault capability, coupled with their desire to train some of their elements on aerial reaction capabilities. It was a great training opportunity for us to incorporate our battalion and other units.”

The 759th MP Bn.'s mission was to conduct a ground search, secure and rescue, during a downed aircraft scenario.

“It was a great experience for the soldiers to learn all the basics, such as: deploying and extracting from an aircraft, medevac training, and pilot rescue,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Heberer, battalion commander, 759th MP Bn. “This exercise helped us train more than 150 soldiers on aircraft operations and gave us the chance to train our dog handlers.”

Company C, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg., did gradual training to become proficient on hoisting casualties of a downed aircraft and Soldiers said it was the highlight of the joint training exercise.

“The hoist training we’ve done has been on anything dealing with aircraft emergencies, hand-and-arm signals, and learning how to run the cable up and down,” said Staff Sgt. Neil Schmidt, flight paramedic, Company C. “We start by using something like a cinder block, and then move on to actual people. When we did the hoist during the

exercise, it was only a 30-foot hoist. We can do up to 250-foot hoist into a confined area.”

Hoist training for this collaborative exercise began months ago by well-trained flight paramedics from Company C, said Smith.

“This unit might have just started, but there is not a single soldier doing the hoisting operations who hasn’t done it down range or in another organization,” said Smith. “The soldiers we have doing hoists have an expansive amount of experience with these types of operations. We will set up our standard operating procedures and become even more efficient than we already are.”

Also, hoist training provides valuable life-saving assets to units during deployments, said Smith.

“Once preflight-ready, the medevac flight crew can be ready in nine to 15 minutes,” said Smith. “They are always racing to the sound of the guns. There could be enemy or not, could be dusty or not, could be a hoist or a landing, and the scope of injuries can be vast. The hardest part that a medevac flight crew has is they’re constantly training to be ready for anything.”

The training conducted for the exercise gives the units many deployable assets and makes a large impact on the capabilities of the other units of Fort Carson.

“It’s a great first step for us to demonstrate to the Fort Carson community that we are eager to be integrated into their training, and serve as an arm for their training as they prepare for their ground force missions,” said Smith. “We are here to provide extra flexibility and add that third dimension for the brigade combat teams. We are excited to work with all Fort Carson teams and enjoy bringing them the gift of aviation.”

The 759th MP Bn. soldiers said the training was successful and look forward to working with 4th CAB in the future.



"Lt. Col. Smith and his battalion have been true professionals," said Heberer. "It's been a joy to work this battalion. We've learned a lot from them about their aviation tactics, plans, and how they execute. I believe they learned about how we work such as:

our ground tactic plans and how we use our military working dogs. This exercise has established a growing friendship between our two units for the next couple of years."



Soldiers from the 759th Military Police Battalion secure the area for a UH-60 Black Hawk (Medevac) from 4th Combat Aviation, 4th Infantry Division, after an injured soldier was hoisted, during a downed aircraft simulation joint training exercise on Fort Carson, Colo., Aug. 6, 2013.



Soldiers from the 759th Military Police Battalion carry a litter to a CH-47 Chinook from 4th Combat Aviation, 4th Infantry Division, during a downed aircraft simulation on Fort Carson, Colo., Aug. 6, 2013.

# Aircrews complete flood rescue missions

Story by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault  
4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

FORT CARSON, Colo. — Air crews flew out of Boulder Municipal Airport, Boulder, Colo., for the last time Sept. 19 after six days of non-stop flood evacuation and rescue missions.

A rescue fleet of seven helicopters and 77 soldiers including pilots, crewmembers, maintenance personnel and fuel handlers from 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, began evacuating flood victims Sept. 14.

Although aviation crews evacuated more than 1,028 people, 338 Family pets, and performed 43 hoist missions, they were not paying attention to numbers.

"When you are out there, this mission you are given is the mission you concentrate on," said Staff Sgt. Jose Pantoja, flight medic, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. "We weren't looking for numbers. We were looking for whoever needed to be rescued and saving lives. However, we were amazed when we were told how many we did rescue."

Flight medics and crewmembers recall the selflessness of Colorado flood evacuees.

"There were people who didn't want to leave until their neighbors left first," said Pantoja. "The selflessness they portrayed made us want to work harder and faster to get everyone evacuated, even if it would take us all day."

Pilots and crewmembers had to depend on each other a lot when flying in the mountains for the evacuation missions.

"It's a team effort that takes critical back and forth communication," said Capt. Sean Pearl, CH-

47 Chinook pilot and commander, Company B, 2nd GSAB. "Pilots have to be real steady on the controls and crewmembers have to make distance calls. These factors are crucial when you have about a 100 feet worth of blades spinning front to back. They were spot on making sure [pilots] are clear of objects."

Air crews said conducting evacuation missions hit them more emotionally than some of their experiences with overseas deployments.

"I've deployed and helped people of other countries," said Pantoja. "It felt great to help them, but it's a different feeling when you're helping fellow Americans. The photos and videos don't show the true picture of the devastation of the floods in the mountains. These people, Americans, had to leave their homes; it hurt me to see them hurting. The look of relief on their faces after being rescued validated why we are here, and it drives us."

Mountains make it very challenging to evacuate people, but the pilots and crews have been training in similar terrain to prepare for these kinds of missions, said Lt. Col. Tyler Smith, UH-60 Black Hawk pilot and battalion commander, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg.

"Our pilots have done a lot of training to be comfortable flying in mountainous environments," said Smith. "The high altitudes limit the power of the aircraft, and every pilot gets to experience that lag in power during training. As a commander and pilot, because of training we did, I had no concerns that my pilots would make the right decisions."

Even though operations have ceased for 4th CAB, soldiers were still amped up and ready to help the surrounding Colorado communities with the flood epidemic.

"The soldiers of our organization are a



**Air Force Col. Daniel Miller, Title 10 deputy to dual status commander, Joint Task Force Centennial, recognized the 2nd GSAB air crews for the work they did during the Colorado floods and awarded the Colorado National Guard Achievement Medal to Smith and 1st Sgt. Damion Vaughn, Company A, 2nd GSAB, at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Sept. 20.**

mission-focused group that wants to be part of the action and love to help out," said Smith. "My only fear was that it would be hard to pull the soldiers off the mountain after they started the mission, just like the Black Forest fire missions. These guys would fly till their eyeballs fell out, if it meant helping the community."

The day after operations ceased, Air Force

Col. Daniel Miller, Title 10 deputy to dual status commander, Joint Task Force Centennial, recognized the 2nd GSAB air crews for the work they did during the Colorado floods and awarded the Colorado National Guard Achievement Medal to Smith and 1st Sgt. Damion Vaughn, Company A, 2nd GSAB, at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Sept. 20.