



IRON EAGLE TIMES

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“Iron Eagles receive 1st aircraft”



MEDIA EVENTS

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*Soldiers share story from
life-saving response*

*Carson choppers spinning up
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ALSO

**4th CAB Activation
Ceremony**

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**Bambi Bucket
Training**

**2-4 GSAB
Activation
Ceremony**



4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office



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“Iron Eagles receive 1st aircraft”



4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division receives first UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Jan. 20, 2013. The helicopters are the first to arrive to the new combat aviation brigade.

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



4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division puts their first UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters in the hangars at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Jan. 20, 2013. The helicopters are the first to arrive to the new combat aviation brigade.

Roaring booms of powerful helicopter engines announced the arrival of the first 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters at Butts Army Airfield, Jan. 20.

In addition to the three Black Hawks, the unit's first three CH-47 Chinook helicopters arrived Jan. 22. The 4th CAB currently has six of each aircraft and are expecting to have more than 100 helicopters when fully operational.

Capt. Joshua Meyer, commander, Company A, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 4th Avn. Reg., 4th CAB, coordinated getting the helicopters to Fort Carson. He and his Soldiers worked through the weekend to make sure there was a smooth transition when the helicopters arrived.

"It's a big deal for us because it marks the arrival of the CAB here at Fort Carson," said Meyer. "A lot of people from the company, battalion and brigade have been working hard for the last six months. It means a lot to the Soldiers because they're going to be working on and flying (the

helicopters). They have been very busy working to meet the requirements so that these aircraft can arrive; establishing and validating our systems and procedures for maintenance and flight operations. We are looking forward to flying them and maintaining them at the company level."

With the new helicopters, the brigade can start working toward full activation and completing its mission to provide attack aviation, air assault, heavy lift and medical evacuation aviation operations in support of 4th Inf. Div. and other division-sized units, said Maj. Jason S. Davis, brigade executive officer and acting brigade commander, 4th CAB.

The 4th CAB consisted of only 50 Soldiers when Davis arrived in June and now has more than 970 Soldiers. He said the brigade is projected to be completely manned and activated, including subordinate units, in April 2014.

"We are ahead of schedule in a lot of areas, and areas that we face challenges in are going to be areas that any unit faces in the Army today,

with funding and facilities," said Davis. "I am really pleased with the progress we've made.

"We've gotten a great number of people in ... (who are) ready to work and they dive into whatever their task is," he said. "They start building the systems and processes that we need."

In addition to the arrival of new Soldiers, aircraft and equipment, training for the brigade is vital to becoming mission ready.

Upcoming preparation includes basic Soldier training, such as weapons qualification, Soldier tasks and drills and other skills that troops need to be proficient at, said Maj. George A. Hodges, operations officer, 4th CAB, 4th ID.

To house the brigade's equipment and Soldiers, new structures are being built at Butts Army Airfield. The Directorate of Public Works is working to get the CAB's building contracts approved and built. The biggest of the CAB's construction projects is a complete renovation of Butts Army Airfield.

The CAB is getting five hangars, a new brigade headquarters building, runway and apron, control tower and barracks, said Maj. Eli Adams, an Omaha District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project manager at Fort Carson. He said there are currently nine authorized projects out of 27 proposed construction projects. All projects are expected to be complete by 2020.

Adams said the structure that stands out most to him is the first hangar to be completed for the Aviation Support Battalion. Most of the projects are proposed to be net zero developments.

"The need is there to rebuild that airfield," said Adams. "The facilities that we provide will be top quality and will be a great contribution to Fort Carson. Our teams of engineers, who are working with the contractors, are highly professional. The CAB has a lot to look forward to with the facilities that they are going to get and when they see the work completed, it will be a transformed Butts Army Airfield."

4th CAB Soldiers worked quickly to get their first helicopters into the hangar and are continuing to work on them to make sure all preventive maintenance, checks and services are done, so they can be ready to train and perform missions.



4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division receives first CH-47 Chinook helicopters at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Jan. 22, 2013. The brigade receives three Chinooks.

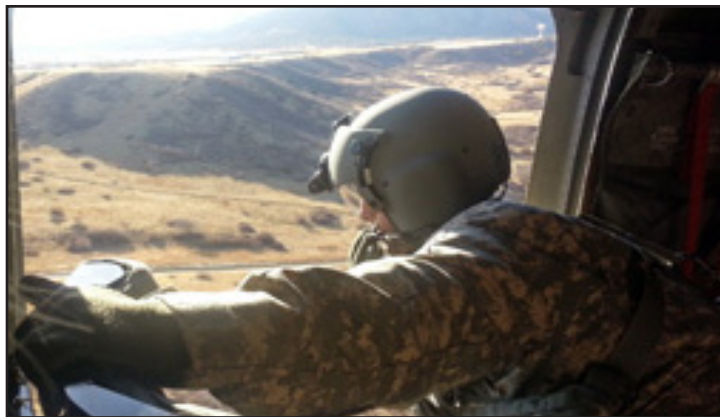


Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Josh Mattimore

Staff Sgt. Francis W. Bagley, Chinook crew chief, Company B, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division observes the his area of responsibility as a crewmember flying over training areas of Fort Carson, Colo., Feb. 14.

Aviators prepare to fly

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

From seasoned pilots to fresh out of flight school, aviators with 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, certified on Readiness Level Progression training at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Feb. 7.

RLP training is given to new, uncertified pilots and annually to certified pilots to test their aircraft proficiencies.

There are three levels of the training. RL3, uncertified, involves pilots, accompanied by a senior instructor pilot, doing basic maneuvers and learning to fly in formations with other helicopters. Level PAGE 8

two involves mission-oriented training and RL1, certified, is where pilots can fly without instructor pilots and are considered ready for missions.

RLP training teaches pilots to be safe whether they are in a garrison environment or combat zone. They learn to fly according to Army regulations and Federal Aviation Administration standards, said Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Dowdy, battalion standardization officer and brigade senior CH-47 Chinook pilot, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th CAB.

"This is the foundation for all new pilots and is the most important training throughout their military

career," said Dowdy. "This training sets the stage for the pilots for the rest of their careers. RLP training is serious and significant, because if we don't do a good job on their training; it could possibly fail them later down the line."

Six 4th CAB pilots and multiple flight engineers are training with aviators from 21st Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat) from Fort Hood, Texas. In addition to RLP training, they will qualify the senior pilots to instruct High Altitude Mountain Environmental Training, which is required to fly in the mountainous terrain surrounding Fort Carson.

"I have been instructing here for two weeks and training has been great," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jess McGee, Chinook instructor pilot and HAMEST instructor, 21st Cav. Bde. (Air Combat). "The pilots that we are training are doing well above average."

The pilots and their crew members' morale and motivation are high and ready to train."

"This training helps us get on our feet," said Capt. Sean Pearl, commander, Company B, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. "Our standardization and instructor pilots require the HAMEST qualification, and we need the 21st Cav. to train them. This will allow us to become self-sufficient and be able to train our own."

New pilots are required to attend RLP training because they are arriving to the CAB from flight school and are only RL3 certified. They are receiving RLP training for the first time, and are taught slowly through each readiness level. They also have not flown any helicopters since flight school and have always been accompanied by an instructor pilot. During RLP training, they will be re-evaluated on everything they learned in school.

"I'm a little nervous about going through RLP because I have not been on the flight controls since flight school in October," said 1st Lt. Manuel Ledezma Vera, CH-47 Chinook pilot, Company B, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. "I'm not too nervous though because the warrant officers training us have thousands of hours of experience. This is a very technical job and this is excellent training that supports it."

Certified pilots and pilots switching to a



Photo by Sgt. Jonathan C. Thibault

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jess McGee, middle, Chinook instructor pilot and HAMEST instructor, 21st Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat), Fort Hood, Texas, goes over the pre-flight checklist of the Chinook engines with Chief Warrant Officer 2 Josh Mattimore, left, Chinook pilot, Capt. Sean Pearl, right, commander, both from Company B, 2-4 nd GSAB, 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div. at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson.

different type of helicopter are also required to go through RLP training upon arrival to a new duty station to show they are proficient in the aircraft they are going to fly.

These pilots are given a fast-paced type of training as opposed to the slow training method given to new pilots.

"I was originally trained to be a Chinook pilot," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Josh Mattimore, Chinook pilot, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. "I have been flying UH-72 Lakota helicopters for the last three years. This training is important since I have not flown Chinooks in a while. I wouldn't want to do it any other way."

After more pilots are RLP certified, CAB personnel will be able to certify their own pilots. Once more helicopters and pilots arrive; the brigade hopes to pick up missions that will help support Colorado Springs, such as high-altitude rescue missions and missions to help put out wildfires, called Bambi bucket missions.



Chef Thomas E. Schaefer, left, Fort Carson director of culinary training accreditation certification and ACF certified chef, discusses the layout and dish presentation with Chief Warrant Officer 2 David Geier, right, brigade food service advisor, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division in the dining room of the Elkhorn Catering and Conference Center on Fort Carson, Colo., Feb. 20.

Cooks earn college credit

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

Mouthwatering aromas of delicious gourmet foods fill the air as the cooks of 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, create meals and learn to make new cuisine, as part of an accreditation program for cooks on Fort Carson.

The cook accreditation program was proposed a year ago by Fort Carson Installation Food Service in collaboration with Pikes Peak Community College and the American Culinary Federation.

4th CAB had one warrant officer from the senior class and five enlisted cooks from the junior class that are the first cooks from the unit to go through the program.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 David Geier, brigade food service advisor, 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div., has been in Army food service for 16 years.

"The accreditation program gives Soldiers the opportunity to earn their culinary degree and earn college credit for their job skills learned throughout their military career," said Geier. "This program is



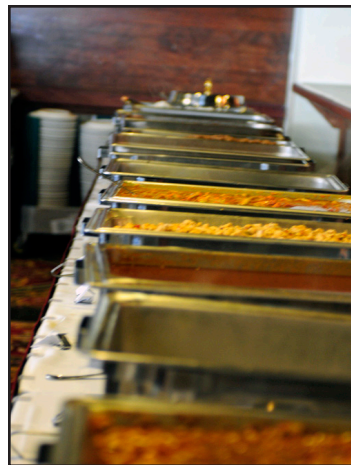
Pfc. Angela Williams, food service specialist, Headquarters Support Company, 404th Aviation Support Battalion, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, folds napkins for the accreditation lunch-in at the dining room of the Elkhorn Catering and Conference Center on Fort Carson, Colo., Feb. 20.

a great opportunity for food service personnel who want to go above and beyond to become more culinary experts."

Since October, 4th CAB cooks have attended classes and earned up to 12 credit hours toward culinary degrees by taking classes before or after their normal work hours. They are given written and practical exams. The culinary arts accreditation luncheon at the Elkhorn Feb. 20 was their first practical exam.

"This program will raise the standards for cooks and propel their culinary skills to another level," said Staff Sgt. Malcolm Mahogany, battalion senior food service noncommissioned officer, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th CAB, 4th ID. "The cooks will not only better serve the dining facilities, but will also gain tangible skills outside of the Army."

The program is based off the curriculum used by PPCC, which is accredited by the ACF. All senior cooks are members of the ACF, the largest organization of professional chefs. Chef Thomas E. Schaefer, Fort Carson director of culinary training,



The accreditation lunch-in food line at the dining room of the Elkhorn Catering and Conference Center on Fort Carson, Colo., Feb. 20.

accreditation and certification, and an ACF certified chef, is a volunteer who instructs the senior and junior cook accreditation classes, as well as the Fort Carson Culinary Arts Team.

"The cooks in this program are learning everything a person would learn in a culinary school," said Schaefer. "I proposed this program a year ago and hope to build it into a program used across the Army, to allow Soldiers to get college credit for the skills they have learned."

IFS, PPCC, ACF and Fort Carson cooks hope to build the program into a three-part program that will earn the cooks an associate degree in culinary arts and are currently proposing internships at local restaurants and resorts.



Spc. William Hurth, aviation operations specialist, Headquarters and headquarters Company, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, is instructed step by step on the combat survivor radio locator radio by Matthew P. Leib, CSEL instructor, at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Jan. 30, 2013. Hurth is one of the first Soldiers from the brigade to receive CSEL training.

Aircrew training saves lives

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

Flight crews learned to use a high-tech piece of equipment that could save their lives in the event their helicopter goes down, during classes at Butts Army Airfield Jan. 28-31.

The Combat Survivor Evader Locator class was the first held for Soldiers of 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, since the PAGE 12

unit received the radios.

"The purpose of this training is to provide instruction to Soldiers regarding the loading, upgrading, maintenance, troubleshooting and functions of the CSEL equipment," said Matthew P. Leib, CSEL instructor.

The equipment serves as a radio and beacon and allows pilots and crew members to

"Knowledge is power,
and knowing how to work
your equipment can save
your life one day."

- Spc. Darrius Day



Spc. Darrius Day, aviation operations specialist, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, tests the functions of the combat survivor evader locator radio at Butts Army Airfield hangars on Fort Carson, Colo., Jan. 30, 2013.

communicate with headquarters in areas where other radios wouldn't work. The 4th CAB received about 150 CSEL radios and 10 sets of CSEL loading equipment.

The first three days of the class were for flight

operation Soldiers, who are in charge of maintaining and loading information into the CSEL equipment. The last two days trained the pilots, crew chiefs and crew members to properly troubleshoot and use the functions of the CSEL radios.

"This is my first time dealing with CSEL equipment," said Spc. Darrius Day, flight operations, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div. "Getting the hands-on training with the CSEL equipment has taught me a lot in just three days."

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Lee E. Kokoszka, battalion tactical operations officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg., will eventually oversee all the battalion's CSEL training for pilots, crew members and flight operations.

"This training is a key tool to help us enable pilots, crews and crew chiefs to facilitate their own recovery," said Kokoszka. "The training is a good thing, because our guys get hands-on training which enables us to learn from the base level and all the way up."

The CSEL is not like the survival radios of the past; it needs constant upgrade and maintenance. The training on it is necessary, because, if used properly, CSEL is a critical factor in personnel recovery, and is a proven lifesaver, Leib said.

"If all the crew chiefs and pilots know how to use the CSEL equipment; the survival rate jumps up a couple of notches," said Day. "Knowledge is power, and knowing how to work your equipment can save your life one day."

The equipment is critical in helping rescue downed Soldiers quickly.

"The CSEL equipment allows us to find individuals faster, where their location is and what kind of situation they are in at the time," said Kokoszka.

The initial CSEL class taught by Leib consisted of flight operation Soldiers and 30 pilots. Future classes for the 4th CAB will be taught by the Soldiers and pilots who completed this iteration of CSEL training.



Steven L. May, left, air traffic controller specialist instructor, evaluates Staff Sgt. Joshua Burnell, Spc. Joseph Arigo, Pfc. Zachary Jellins and Pfc. Jason Dopler from F Company, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Jan. 25, 2013. The Soldiers are learning to become certified control tower operators.

Air traffic controllers learn to call shots

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

Quick thinking, auctioneer-like speaking ability and high awareness skills were needed for four air traffic controller specialists from 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, who were the first from the new unit to train to be certified as control tower operators at Butts Army Airfield, Jan. 25.

The Soldiers, all from Company F, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 4th Aviation Regiment, attended the training program designed to train

first-time air traffic controllers and recertify or rate control tower operator card holders.

First-time controllers train for 154 days, in which the students must attend class at least four hours a day and recertifying CTO card holders train at their own pace until program requirements are met. Certification for air traffic controllers is required by the Federal Aviation Administration.

"The specific purpose of this training is to educate air traffic controllers to take this training they are receiving here at Butts Army Airfield to

a tactical environment anywhere in the world," said Greg Bean, air traffic control specialist lead instructor.

"Soldiers will use this knowledge of sequencing and separating aircraft on a regular basis. We are giving Soldiers a solid training program to build knowledge out of the FAA regulations, along with Army regulations."

The hardest part of the course is to know the layout of the airfield that the controller is working on, said Bean. He said each runway, taxiway, piece of pavement and grass area has a name; controllers have to know all these names to properly direct aviators to get them safely to their correct locations.

Bean and the three other instructors have a 100-percent success rate qualifying controllers.

Staff Sgt. Joshua Burnell, air traffic controller noncommissioned officer in charge, Company F, is the team leader for the course. An air traffic control specialist for five years, Burnell is a CTO card holder and is recertifying while supervising his Soldiers.

He said a controller's job is the safe, orderly and expeditious flow of air traffic. Burnell said all of his Soldiers are doing well progressing through the program and retaining the knowledge regarding rules, regulations, airspace and the layout of airfield.

"I love being an air traffic controller and it is the greatest thing that has ever happened to me, because you get to hear the pilots say 'thank you,'" said Burnell. "When pilots are flying around, they can't always see everything. We make traffic calls trying to save lives. It's a rewarding job because everyone gets to go home safely."

After the 154-day training program, the Soldiers will take the training they learned and use it to set up airfields in tactical environments and teach other air traffic controllers assigned to 4th CAB.



Air traffic control tower at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., Jan. 28, 2013. The tower controls all air traffic for BAFF.

“Aviators train for wildfires”

CH-47 Chinook Pilots of 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, fill a Bambi Bucket to get certified on the equipment outside of Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., April 4, 2013.

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



Staff Sgt. Gilbert J. Richmond, standardization instructor, 2-4 GSAB, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, inspects the Bambi Bucket and instructs pilots on its specifications on Fort Carson, Colo., April 4, 2013.

Spish splash -- Colorado Springs wildfires could be getting a bath. Pilots of the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, were conducting Bambi Bucket training on Fort Carson, April 4.

A Bambi Bucket is a specialized bucket that carries about 2,000 gallons of water, suspended on a cable carried by a helicopter for aerial firefighting. When the helicopter is in position, the crew opens the release valve to battle the fire below.

Officials with 4th Inf. Div. and the Fort Carson Fire Department were working together to receive approval of the Bambi Bucket mission, so the 4th CAB can assist with firefighting efforts in the Colorado Springs area.

"These missions would give 4th CAB the capability to help other agencies fight wildfires," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Dowdy, battalion standardization officer and senior CH-47 Chinook pilot, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div. "4th CAB

could help reduce or prevent the loss of lives and property damage due to wildfires."

"We hope to get a positive interaction from the surrounding communities and support them the best way we can," said Capt. Sean Pearl, commander, Company B, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg. "We have three crews training for this mission and will train future Chinook crews as they arrive to 4th CAB."

The CAB Soldiers could be a strong reactive force in preventing and fighting wild fires in Colorado.

"Due to our training, we would be able to react quicker than most agencies and our helicopters can get into areas that most aircraft cannot," said Dowdy. "The ability to respond quickly to these emergencies makes 4th CAB versatile and allows our Chinooks to perform at various locations worldwide."

"We are currently discussing protocols with Colorado Springs firefighting agencies to better



Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Dowdy, battalion standardization officer and 4th CAB's senior CH-47 Chinook pilot, 2-4 GSAB, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, explains how Bambi Bucket training will go for the day at a Butts Army Airfield hangar on Fort Carson, Colo., April 4, 2013.

facilitate our mission to best fit their needs," said Pearl.

The aviators hope to get the Bambi Bucket missions to get more flight training and prevent the spread of future wildfires. "It is a fairly simple mission because our CH-47 Chinooks are designed to carry external loads, such as the Bambi Bucket," said Dowdy. "This mission would provide 4th CAB aviators a real-world mission that cannot be done through simulation and also make a positive impact on the surrounding civilian population."

Fort Carson and the 4th Inf. Div. can only deploy military resources to support firefighting efforts when requested by the National Interagency Fire Center and approved by the Secretary of Defense. At that point, Fort Carson's support would be coordinated through U.S. Northern Command, located at Peterson Air Force Base. NIFC can only request Department of Defense support after all other local, state and federal resources have been exhausted.



CH-47 pilots of the 2-4 GSAB, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, deploy water from a Bambi Bucket on Fort Carson, Colo., April 4, 2013.

Reception Company helps Soldiers in-process



Sgt. Alisha Kaiser, day two noncommissioned officer, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, goes over the day two in-processing packet with Spc. Roderick Farley, automated logistical specialist, 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div. at the brigade's reception building on Fort Carson, Colo., Feb. 20, 2013.

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

When Capt. Peter M. Matthews, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, arrived, there were six soldiers in the brigade and no system was in place for in-processing inbound personnel.

This issue for Matthews and other incoming soldiers prompted brigade leaders to set up a Reception Company in April 2012, which has now received and in-processed more than 1,100 soldiers into the unit.

"It is not usual for a brigade to have its own Reception Company, but for a new unit standing up

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it is a necessity," said Matthews. "We identified this problem and put together a group of soldiers into a functional Reception Company to produce fully in-processed soldiers."

Most soldiers get fully in-processed when they arrive to a post, but because the CAB is standing up, more in-processing at the brigade level is needed due to lack of personnel in certain key leader roles, Matthews said.

At 4th CAB's reception, some soldiers are still dealing with personal issues such as moving, financial problems and child care. The reception staff makes sure soldiers are accommodated and problems are resolved as much as possible before they report for duty.



Maj. Jason S. Davis, brigade executive officer and acting brigade commander, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, gives a briefing to new soldiers arriving to the brigade at the CAB's reception building on Fort Carson, Colo., Jan. 8, 2013. Davis explains about the phases of the unit and answers questions by new soldiers.

The Reception Company, 4th CAB, soldiers also work to maintain a functional sponsorship program to welcome incoming soldiers and address issues about six months before they arrive.

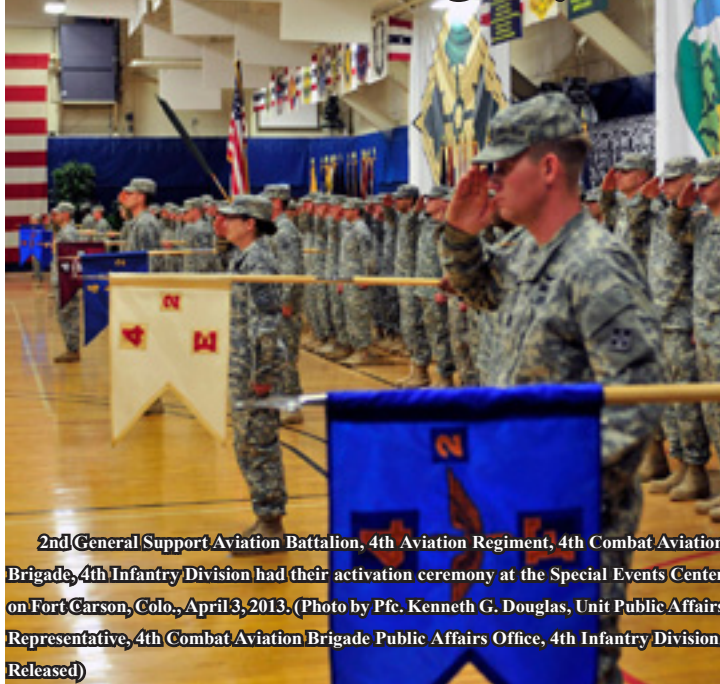
"Sponsorship is important," said Staff Sgt. Tracie Higdon, sponsorship noncommissioned officer in charge, Reception Company, 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div. "We let incoming soldiers know what to expect when they arrive, address issues before they arrive and orient them to the surrounding areas."

The Reception Company also gives jobs to soldiers within the unit who do not currently have equipment or ability to do their military jobs.

"It's a great thing that we are being allowed to do this job," said 1st Sgt. L.T. Whittle, senior enlisted leader, Reception Company, 4th CAB. "The Reception Company puts together soldiers from different military occupational specialties and allows them to learn other jobs."

The 4th CAB Reception Company will remain active until all 2,700 soldiers arrive, units are activated and subordinate units are capable of in-processing their own soldiers. Whittle said he thinks the Reception Company will dissolve into the CAB a couple of months after all expected soldiers have arrived.

"2-4 GSAB continues aviation legacy"



2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division had their activation ceremony at the Special Events Center on Fort Carson, Colo., April 3, 2013. (Photo by Pfc. Kenneth G. Douglas, Unit Public Affairs Representative, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office, 4th Infantry Division/Released)

MEDIA EVENT: DIVISION

Story and photo by Spc. Nathan Thome
4th Infantry Division Public Affairs Office

A blue guidon, which was sheathed for two years, was unfurled in front of Soldiers and their Families during the activation ceremony for 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, at the Special Events Center, April 3.

During the ceremony, Lt. Col. Tyler Smith, commander, 2nd GSAB., 4th Avn. Reg., 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, and Command Sgt. Maj. Rickey Davis, senior enlisted leader, 2nd GSAB, assumed command and responsibility of the troops in the newly-reactivated unit.

"Today is a historic day for the division's combat aviation brigade. It's one step closer to being a fully-formed and recognized unit," said Brig. Gen. Ryan Gonsalves, deputy commanding general for maneuver, 4th Inf. Div. and Fort Carson. "Many here today may not know that the 4th Inf. Div. CAB has a storied history, particularly recently, flying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, as well as Operation Enduring Freedom; defending the nation and supporting every mission they were called on to execute."

After uncasing the battalion colors, Gonsalves presented the flag to Smith, recognizing him as the newest leader to assume command of the aviation Soldiers.

"Family and friends of the 'Mustangs,' it is with great humility and honor that we activate the 2nd (GSAB), 4th Avn. Reg., whose historic roots are no stranger to the 'Iron Horse Division,'" said Smith. "This battalion has been activated within this division on three previous occasions; initially in 1963, again in 1982 and 1996; today marks that fourth activation, and represents the rebirth of that long and storied relationship."

The activation ceremony not only marked a new beginning for the aviation Soldiers, but also reignited the spark for retired Soldiers previously assigned to the unit.

"While the people and equipment have changed, the mission remains the same," Smith said. "This ceremony honors not only the skilled Soldiers and leaders that stand before you, but honors a legacy to the tradition of Army aviation. Today we have a representative for that legacy, (retired) Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tim Wilkerson, also

known as 'Blackjack 17' during his time in Vietnam, in Company A, 2nd Bn., 4th Avn. Reg., (in) 1968-1969.

"We're proud that he was able to be here today, for he represents not only the historic roots of this battalion, its first combat action, but also the legacy of aviation branch," added Smith. "It is men like Tim Wilkerson who earned the ground forces' trust, not through word, but through action. We are proud of his legacy, built by combat-proven warriors, and it is with full resolve that this organization stands ready to honor that warrior spirit."

Unit officials invited Wilkerson to be a part of the activation ceremony.

"It's a tremendous honor, the reception here is just beyond belief," said Wilkerson. "I'm just so proud of you guys, proud of what you're doing, and I'm proud to see us continuing, that's what we're here for."

Wilkerson spoke with the aviation Soldiers, telling them stories of when he was an aviation Soldier and wishing them luck in their missions.

"Just keep doing what you're doing, keep the pride in the unit and what you do," Wilkerson said.

As the ceremony came to a close, Smith told his Soldiers what he planned to accomplish during his time in command.

"I'm privileged and honored to be standing up this unit, the Soldiers who have been here for 15 months standing it up have done a fantastic job of setting the groundwork," said Smith. "This organization is a trained organization that's ready to go out and support the Soldiers of 4th Inf. Div. My goals for the unit are simply to be prepared to deploy to combat, and train so that we are ready to deploy where needed by the 4th Inf. Div."

<http://csmng.com/2013/04/11/2nd-gsab-continues-aviation-legacy/>



Dr. Greg Cope, director of transformation course, briefs the soldiers and families of the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, about the transformation course at Glen Eyrie in Colorado Springs, Colo., April 25, 2013.

Couples improve communication

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

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"These are ridiculous statistics. I believe that [marriage] retreats can help people learn how to communicate well and know how to juggle their military and home life, which will make them better soldiers with stronger families," said Roman,

brigade chaplain, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

"My goal in the military is to help create people [who] are responsible enough to take care of their families, to teach them to communicate and love each other," said Roman.

During a 60-day campaign, Roman has provided relationship guidance to 220 couples, 150 single soldiers and 64 families through the course of 20 retreats. The 220 couples were counseled during marriage retreats at Glen Eyrie Big Horn Lodge in Colorado Springs, April 25.

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Besides the retreat classes, couples got to engage in teambuilding activities conducted on Glen Eyrie's Transformation Course.

Dr. Greg Cope, transformation course director, uses the course to teach couples to communicate through experiences performed on each obstacle of the course.

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Staff Sgts. Mindy and Theo Nalezynski, both from Company D, 2nd General Aviation Support Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div., both said they benefited from attending the retreat.

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Staff Sgts. Mindy and Theo Nalezynski, both from Company D, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, climb the rock wall at the transformation course at Glen Eyrie in Colorado Springs, Colo., April 25, 2013. Couples were tied together and told to carry a cup of water while trying to climb up the rock wall.

understanding of the opposite sex, and it helps us get away from the office for awhile," said Theo Nalezynski. "These activities help us understand how important it is to communicate."

Roman plans to continue ramping up his programs despite the challenges of a shrinking budget, noting money issues will not hinder the programs because he can hold them anywhere. His goal is to show soldiers that the Army and the 4th CAB leadership care about them and their families.



Rahn McCullough, product management air traffic controller net trainer, trains soldiers of F Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, to use the ATNAVIC radar system at Reserve Center on Fort Carson, Colo., May 8, 2013

Controllers use radar to direct aircraft

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

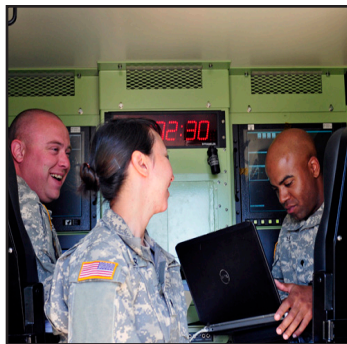
Air traffic control specialists trained on the Air Traffic Navigation, Integration and Coordination System at Butts Army Airfield, May 14.

The ATNAVIC system is a tactical radar system that provides a rapid air traffic control response for conditions — such as radio failure at the tower and inclement weather with no visibility, which affect pilots' ability to land without equipment — that

prevent the air traffic control tower from working effectively.

The soldiers from Company F, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, find the equipment useful.

"In situations in which aircraft have low visibility due to weather, and the tower has bad radio reception, we can get the aircraft on a safe approach using the ATNAVIC system," said Staff



Specialists Brian Kearney, left, Sandra Miller, middle, and Ezekiel Lee, right, air traffic controller specialists, F Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, run diagnostics for the ATNAVIC radar system at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., May 14, 2013.

Sgt. Samuel Siegar, radar management supervisor, Company F, 2nd GSAB.

The soldiers also appreciate the system's portable nature.

"The ATNAVIC system is very mobile, perfect for tactical environments and can be set up anywhere. All you need to set it up is a runway and a tower," said Spc. Anthony Willis, air traffic controller, Company F, 2nd GSAB.

The system is also easy to set up, with appropriate training.

"The system can be set up by four highly-trained people in one hour," said Rahn McCullough, product management air traffic controller net trainer. "Although I haven't seen it done in that time, it is still a rapid assembly and effective piece of equipment that can be used by air traffic controllers."

Company F had seven air traffic controllers go



Spc. Nathaniel Harden calibrates a scope to get the line of sight of the Air Traffic Navigation, Integration, and Coordination System (ATNAVIC) radar system's antenna at Butts Army Airfield on Fort Carson, Colo., May 14, 2013.

through this training for the first time, and one that was already certified.

Siegar was the only ATNAVIC certified air traffic controller to go through the training.

"I have been certified for six years on this type of radar system," said Siegar. "There (have) been three software version updates in the last two years. I needed this training to keep me up to date on all the changes in the system."

The Company F first-time ATNAVIC trainees also found this training useful to their job.

"Getting certified on the ATNAVIC system allows air traffic controllers to become rated on radar systems," said Willis. "We become more well-rounded air traffic controllers. We can use this knowledge when we get out of the Army and want (to do air traffic control) as civilians."



Sgt. Rhyse Lapham, AH-64D Apache systems repairer, Company B, 404th Aviation Support Battalion, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, judges the sack race event for the fourth graders of Prairie Heights Elementary School in Pueblo, Colo., May 17, 2013

Soldiers mentor children

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

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Spc. Cheyenne Vandenberg, power generation equipment repairer, Company B, 404th Aviation Support Battalion, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, takes a surprised dip in the dunk tank after a elementary student nails the dunk tank's switch with a ball at Prairie Heights Elementary School in Pueblo, Colo., May 17, 2013. Forty-one soldiers from 404th ASB volunteered to help PHES faculty members with their school carnival.

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Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Stall, senior enlisted leader, 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, talks to the cooks of Company E, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Inf. Div., during their Connelly Active Army Field Kitchen Competition evaluation on Fort Carson, Colo., June 4, 2013.

Cooks compete for Field Connelly Award

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

Motivation, dedication and desire was the fuel that fed the fire in which the cooks used to prepare an exceptional meal during an evaluation for the Connelly Active Army Field Kitchen Competition on Fort Carson, Colo., June 4.

Fourteen cooks from Company E, 2nd General

Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, competed for the Connelly.

The cooks had three weeks to prepare for the competition. Usually, they have a few months to prepare for a competition. Even with the short amount of time, they volunteered to compete for the Connelly award.

"Mentally, we had to be prepared for this competition because we had a short amount of time

to get everything ready," said Sgt. Jarrell Fielder, food service noncommissioned officer, Company E, 2-4 GSAB. "Once the mental part is out of the way, everything else is physical."

The cooks worked many hard, long hours to set up the site for the Connelly.

"I get up at 2:30 a.m. to get ready for work," said Pfc. Maurice McMullen, food service specialist, Company E, 2-4 GSAB. "We start work at 4 a.m. and stop working as late as 9 p.m. On average, we (have) worked 16 to 19 hours a day to prepare for this."

Though the days were long and fast paced it helped to build their confidence in the future.

"We only had three weeks to prepare," said Pfc. Rosa Schick, food service specialist, Company E, 2-4 GSAB. "I am pretty impressed in what we have accomplished in that amount of time. We have done a good job."

The cooks found innovative ways to overcome the short amount of time and limited resources to complete their mission to be able to compete.

"Our leadership figured out the budgeting

and acquired the equipment that we needed to compete," said McMullen. "They were determined to be contenders in this year's competition."

The competitors that competed for the first-time enhanced their skills and knowledge throughout the course of the competition.

"The cooks get an extreme amount of training and knowledge," said Fielder. "This is McMullen and Schick's first time being trained on this equipment and competing on this level. I am very impressed on how well they are doing and how quick they soaked up the knowledge."

Winning the Connelly would earn great accolades for the 4th CAB cooks and an enormous sense of accomplishment.

"Since we are a new unit, this would show that we have come a long way in a short amount of time," said Schick. "It means a lot to me because most of the points for the competition come from the field kitchen that McMullen and I worked on. This means I (would) play a large role in winning this competition."



Sgt. Elizabeth Moore, sanitation sergeant, Company E, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, answers evaluation questions asked by Chief Warrant Officer 5 Principio Texidor, FORSCOM Food Advisor, during a Connelly Active Army Field Kitchen Competition evaluation on Fort Carson, Colo., June 4, 2013.

Bambi-bucket drops on Black Forest fire

A high-angle photograph showing a Bambi bucket, a large orange and black aerial water bucket, suspended in the air. A thick stream of red water is being poured from the bucket onto a fire burning in a forest. The fire is visible as a bright orange and yellow glow in the upper right corner. The surrounding area is filled with thick, grey smoke that obscures much of the forest floor. The trees are mostly green, but some are charred and blackened. The overall scene is one of a firefighting operation in progress.

Pilots and crew members of the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, go into the thick smoke to release water onto the burning fires during their bambi bucket mission at Black Forest, Colo., June 12, 2013.

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



CH-47 Chinook helicopter pilots and crew members with the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, refill a helicopter bucket for another run to extinguish fires during a firefighting mission at Black Forest, Colo., June 12, 2013.

Smoke-clouds rose hundreds of feet and numerous aircraft swarmed through the Colorado Springs air, as helicopter crews worked tirelessly to help contain the fires at Black Forest, Colo., June 12.

Pilots and crewmembers from Companies A and B, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, have continuously dropped water from bambi buckets on the Black Forest fires.

A bambi bucket is a specialized bucket that carries approximately 400 to 2,000 gallons depending on its size, said Maj. Michael Hale, executive officer, 2-4 GSAB. It is suspended on a cable, carried by a helicopter, to deliver water for aerial firefighting. The bucket has a release valve on the bottom, which is controlled by the helicopter crew. When the helicopter is in position, the crew releases the water to extinguish the fire below.

Once authorized, 2-4 GSAB responded quickly and worked long hours to extinguish the forest fires.

"We started fighting the fires on Tuesday," said Cpt. Sean Pearl, commander, Company B, 2-4 GSAB. "We've had crews dropping buckets from sunrise to sunset every day since then. We will continue support as long as we are needed."

The CAB's role in the Black Forest firefighting mission was to dump bambi buckets on spot-fires to safeguard houses and buildings within the burning areas, said Lt. Ryan Martin, Black Hawk pilot, Company A, 2-4 GSAB.

"We have been told to do precision drops to protect a lot of homes and structures," said Martin. "We began the mission doing aerial drops to stop the fire from spreading until there were bigger aircrafts available."

Pilots and crewmembers believe they are making an impact, and take personal pride in helping the surrounding communities affected by the fires.

"I've been in the Army for 20 years, and have done a lot of combat missions," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Suiter, flight engineer, Company B, 2-4 GSAB. "This type of mission is important to me, because this allows us to help local families and show we don't just fight abroad. We can also fight to save lives here."

Colorado Springs and Black Forest residents showed support to the helicopter crews for helping save their communities from the fires.

"One of our pilots was doing a bambi bucket fill near a golf course," said Martin. "After making multiple drops, large crowds were gathering on the golf course with banners that had 'thank you' written on them."

4th CAB's UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopter crews have been training on the bambi buckets since March, which has made them well prepared for the fire season. Throughout 4th CAB's support to civilian authorities, there were 914 missions, dropping 689,970 gallons of water.

"I am impressed with how well our air crews are doing," said Maj. Michael Hale, executive officer, 2-4 GSAB. "They have become extremely proficient in these tasks in a short amount of time. They can do whatever is needed of them in fighting these fires."

Flying conditions for the "Iron Eagle" air crews were very dangerous, and many factors affected how well they could navigate around the fires to extinguish them.

"Communication, inconsistent visibility, and aircraft congestion have been the biggest obstacles of maneuvering through the fires," said Pearl. "Shifting and gusting winds cause the bambi bucket to drift a lot. Our great crews help guide us to make our drops precise."

The 4th CAB continues to fight the fires until told to cease their efforts. They are prepared to fight the fires until they are 100 percent contained.

"I think this is why we are in the Army," said Pearl. "We are here to serve the American people. It is heartbreaking to see all these homes destroyed by this fire. We will do everything we can to stop this from happening. I plan to carry out our mission until all fires are out or until told to stop."



Pictured is an area on fire that pilots and crew members with the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, are extinguishing during a firefighting mission at Black Forest, Colo., June 12, 2013.

Fort Carson's 4th CAB activates

Brig. Gen. Michael Bills, left, deputy commanding general for the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, presents the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade's colors to Col. Robert T. Ault, right, brigade commander, during an activation ceremony at Fort Carson, Colo., July 2, 2013.

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



Kristi Ault, left, wife of U.S. Army Col. Robert T. Ault, brigade commander of the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB), 4th Infantry Division, and Audrey Duchatelier, right, wife of Command Sgt. Maj. Antoine J. Duchatelier Jr., senior enlisted adviser for the 4th CAB, give apples and whiskey to the color guard as part of a long time Army tradition, during the CAB's activation ceremony on Founder's Field at Fort Carson, Colo., July 2, 2013.

A combat aviation brigade has not been built from the ground up in 25 years," said Maj. Jason Davis, brigade executive officer, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. "4th CAB has a solid foundation to build upon."

Two years after the CAB was deactivated at Fort Hood, Texas, the unit colors were unseathed in the presence of soldiers and their families, during the activation ceremony for 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div., at Fort Carson's Founders Field, July 2.

The new commander, Col. Robert T. Ault, brigade commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Antoine J. Duchatelier Jr., senior enlisted leader, assumed command and responsibility of the troops in the newly reactivated brigade.

"Today at Joint Task Force Carson, this combat aviation brigade is being reformed, organized and transformed into one the Army's most modernized aviation brigades," said Brig. Gen. Michael Bills, deputy commanding general, 4th Inf. Div. and Fort Carson. "This is no small task, standing up a

brigade, especially an aviation brigade."

"In preparation for future missions, these leaders and soldiers, pilots, maintainers and logisticians will fill new aircraft and execute a very aggressive training plan," said Bills. "This will build combat power and capacity that will provide this division the aircraft integration it needs. I am confident that this leadership team and the soldiers standing before us will rise to the challenge; to continue the tradition of excellence that their unit has stood for so long."

After uncasing the brigade colors, Bills presented the flag to Ault, recognizing him as the newest leader assuming command of the brand new brigade on Fort Carson.

"The leaders and soldiers of 4th CAB on the field today are committed to building the most professional and effective combat aviation brigade in the Army," said Ault. "In addition, we embrace the opportunity to be part of, and build the bigger team of, the Fort Carson and Front Range Community as

an active responsible partner in making the Front Range better for our presence."

The activation ceremony and unfurling of the brigade colors marked an important milestone of the 4th CAB legacy, serving as a visible reminder the brigade is back in service to the Army and nation, Ault said.

"The activation of the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade provides 4th Infantry Division, the Army and our nation with additional capabilities and depth," said Ault. "The CAB will provide vital training and operations support to the 4th Infantry Division. It will also ease the frequent deployments for Army pilots of the 12 existing CABs, and positively bolster the local Colorado economy."

The 4th CAB looks forward to working with the community, said Ault. The 4th CAB assisted the community with fighting the Black Forest fire even before its formal activation.

"Iron Eagles' are proud to work alongside the Colorado Springs community, and we showed that through our support to the local civilian authorities during the Black Forest fire," said Ault. "4th CAB completed over 900 bambi-bucket drops, dumping over 690,000 gallons of water in support of the Black Forest fire."

Ault talked about his expectations for his aviation soldiers and what they should expect from him.

"In order for our organization to function properly, leaders and their soldiers need to work as a team," Ault said. "Teamwork is essential to making the CAB successful. A helicopter doesn't fly by itself – it takes a dedicated team of professionals such as: maintainers, crewmembers, refuelers and operations soldiers. It is that collaborative energy that makes us so valuable to the Division."

Ault also talked about the values that every 4th CAB soldier should live by while they are in the CAB.

"The three pillars of the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade through the years have been and will remain: commitment, teamwork and a warrior spirit born of professional competence and personal



Col. Robert T. Ault, commanding officer of the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB), 4th Infantry Division, makes his remarks during the CAB's activation ceremony at Fort Carson, Colo., July 2, 2013.

character," he said.

Davis, who served as the officer-in-charge of the group building the 4th CAB until Ault's arrival, commented on the brigade's growth since first arriving at Fort Carson.

"We have made incredible progress since we started last spring, thanks to our junior leaders spread throughout the formation," said Davis. "We are very fortunate to have Col. Ault here as the brigade commander – a proven combat leader, experienced in both ground and air operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; he brings a wealth of knowledge and a true warrior spirit to our unit."

As the ceremony came to a close, Ault told his soldiers what goals he wants the unit to complete, and how they can get there together, during his time in command.

"4th CAB is a leader-centric organization that brings exponential value every day," said Ault. "Our Nation's friends will find no greater ally than the 4th CAB, and our enemies will find no greater foe."

Soldiers share story from life-saving response

Posted: Apr 12, 2013 8:08 PM by Matt Stafford
Updated: Apr 13, 2013 2:53 AM

Everything happened quickly Sunday afternoon in Roy Benavidez Park in Colorado Springs. Two men were shot. Both of those men should be okay, but one of them had critical injuries when they left the scene with emergency crews.

"We heard just multiple gun shots," says Spc. Ian Carman with the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. He was getting into his car when the noise from the gun shots caught his attention.

While waiting for emergency crews to arrive, people nearby ran to help; five of them were soldiers at Fort Carson, including Spc. Carman. News 5 got to speak with four of those soldiers; they remember every detail of what happened that Sunday afternoon.

"I darted out," said Pfc. Daniel Hinojoza with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th ID. "Didn't even close the door."

"Everybody that was running to it was in the military; you could just tell," said Spc. Anthony Willis with the 4th CAB, 4th ID.

They got there quickly and assessed the scene.

"I went to the one with the most injuries and started helping, doing what I could," said Pfc. Hinojoza.

"It was just a mess," adds Spc. Carman. The soldiers noticed quickly that one of the men was in far worse condition.

"He was hit over 18 times; twice in the face," said Spc. Willis.

Spc. Willis and Pfc. Philip Hawkes with the 3rd BCT, 4th ID were two of the first people on the scene, and Pfc. Hinojoza and Spc. Carman were right behind them.

"He (the victim) was just mentioning how he wasn't ready to go and he wanted us to do what we could to help him, and we reassured him we'd do what we could," said Pfc. Philip Hawkes.

"Pfc. Hawkes took off his shirt and applied it to his (the victim's) chest," said Spc. Willis.

There was also Spc. Daniel Garcia, a medic with the 4th BCT, 4th ID. He wasn't able to make it to our interview Friday, but gave critical care and instructions to the others at the scene on Sunday.

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"He (Spc. Garcia) started throwing things at us from his med-pack and we just used what we could," said Pfc. Hinojoza. They were also using items from home, like belts for tourniquets.

As for the other four soldiers aside from Spc. Garcia, there's a mechanic - Pfc. Hinojoza, a missile tech - Pfc. Hawkes, and two air traffic controllers - Spc. Carman and Spc. Willis. They're not medics, they just used the training that all soldiers receive.

"The Combat Life Saver Course," the four soldiers we spoke with said almost collectively.

"Those skills are invaluable," said Spc. Willis. However those soldiers didn't expect to have to use their life saving skills at home.

"Being an air traffic controller, I didn't even really expect too much to use it in the battlefield either," said Spc. Willis.

Regardless, Spc. Willis and the others remembered them; they saved one man's life and helped another.

After local paramedics arrived on scene those crews took over.

It was a few days before the soldiers got an update on the victims' conditions.

"I've been wondering this entire week," Spc. Carman said.

Finally they each got a phone call on Thursday; it was from the wife of the man they saved.

"She just called to thank us," said Pfc. Hawkes. It's hard to put into words what that phone call meant to them. They just want to wish good luck to his recovery.

"Glad you made it, buddy," said Pfc. Hinojoza.

"Yeah, real glad you made it," adds Spc. Willis.

"That's all there is to say right there," said Pfc. Hawkes.

Colorado Springs police are still looking for two suspects in this investigation. They describe them as two black males in their 20s, possibly in a maroon mini van. The van might have been a Dodge. If you have any information, please call the Colorado Springs Police Department at 444-7000 or Crime Stoppers at 634-STOP (7867).

http://www.koaa.com/news/soldiers-share-story-from-life-saving-response/#_

Carson choppers spinning up for firefight

JAKOB RODGERS • Modified: April 20, 2013 at 12:00 am • Published: April 20, 2013

A new batch of heavy-lift, twin-rotor helicopters at Fort Carson aim to douse wildfires on the post before they grow into wind-whipped infernos.

Pilots with the post's new 4th Combat Aviation Brigade — a 113-helicopter unit being assembled at Butts Army Airfield — began training this month to use 2,000-gallon buckets to fight fires across the post's training ranges.

The flights come as soldiers and airmen across Colorado Springs begin ramping up aerial training exercises in preparation for the fire season.

This week, airmen with the 302nd Airlift Wing — an Air Force Reserve C-130 unit at Peterson Air Force Base — are expected to seek their annual certifications for dropping retardant near wildfires in the coming months.

For years, the C-130 unit represented the lone aerial military firefighting force in the Pikes Peak region.

While Fort Carson's newest helicopters now stand ready to respond to any blaze on post, myriad challenges remain before they can be called to fight fires outside Fort Carson's gates, said Scott Campbell, assistant El Paso County fire marshal.

The challenges are particularly difficult along the tinder-laden Front Range, where the fire danger is highest.

"This is in its infancy," Campbell said. "We're just taking the baby steps right now."

The "Bambi Bucket" crews Five Fort Carson helicopter crews manning twin-rotor CH-47 Chinooks will be trained to haul the 2,000-gallon bucket, known as a "Bambi Bucket," said Chief Warrant Officer Jimmy Valencia, a Chinook pilot instructor.

Pilots for some of the brigade's UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters could also be trained to drop water over wildfires, he said.

The crews — each consisting of two pilots and two crewmen — began training in early April by dipping the bucket into a reservoir and dumping it in another reservoir on post.

Chinook pilots are accustomed to ferrying loads suspended by a similar 80-foot cable.

The hulking aircraft often carry Humvees or supply loads during missions at similar elevations in Afghanistan.

"That's normal business for us," Valencia said. "The only difference is we have to work timing with our guys in the hole to try to drop all that water exactly where we want it."

Valencia has deployed to Afghanistan twice. Each time, the controls began "mushing" in the thin air — a problem exacerbated by Afghanistan's high temperatures.

He expects the same problems over Colorado wildfires.

The post has three reservoirs big enough to support the aircraft during a fire, Valencia said. Even then, the crews plan to fill their buckets to 80 percent capacity — a load that, at 8 pounds a gallon, weighs nearly 13,000 pounds.

In the summer, when higher temperatures make the air less dense, that capacity should decrease.

Looming hurdles While the helicopters can douse fires on post, it remains to be seen when those pilots can attack fires elsewhere in the county.

Helicopters with the post's departed 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment previously ran such missions. But mismatched communications systems and a lack of firefighting policies are likely to prevent Army pilots from fighting fires off the post.

"It's basically a safety issue," Fort Carson Fire Capt. Peter Wolf said. "They talk on two different types of radio frequencies sometimes."

Helicopter units at other bases across the U.S. — such as at Camp Pendleton in California — arrange memorandums of understanding with firefighting fire agencies and the U.S. Forest Service, said Kim Christensen, the National Interagency Fire Center's deputy assistant director for operations.

Often, those helicopter units only respond to fires immediately off-post, when civilian helicopter resources have been tapped, she said.

For fires off-post, Fort Carson helicopters would most likely be called upon for immediate response, when flames endanger life or property, Campbell said.

No such agreements between Carson and the county have been written, Campbell said, and issues such as payments for each flight have yet to be formalized.

"We've got some direction, and they've had very, very high-level discussions about this, but there is no consensus yet," Campbell said.

The complexity compounds when flying along the Front Range, where firefighters must coordinate with U.S. Forest Service crews who often order their own aircraft, he said.

He offered no timeline for when an agreement might be signed.

"The guys (pilots) are capable — they'll pick the water up, and they'll go sling it where we need to," Campbell said. "It's not that side of it."

"It's just making sure that we're getting all the other ends buttoned up — the extraneous things, so that we don't run them into something or get them somewhere where we don't need to be."

<http://gazette.com/article/153813>

Soldier's selflessness motivates team in Warrior Games

Story and photo by Spc. Nathan Thome
4th Infantry Division Public Affairs Office

FORT CARSON, Colo. – Staff Sgt. Spencer Anderson remembers the day when two 155 mm rounds went off less than 10 meters outside his Humvee's door.

"I saw a flash of light and then I woke up I guess a couple minutes later," he said. "When I came-to, we were under a small arms attack."

On Jan. 21, 2007, Anderson and his team members directed suppressive fire from where the flashes were coming.

"The whole engagement seemed like a long time, but it was probably less than 10 minutes," he said. "Time seems to slow down in things like that."

A medic with 1st Battalion, 319th Field Artillery Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Anderson sustained a head injury and other internal injuries. Anderson didn't let his injuries limit him, though.

For three years, Anderson went through cognitive therapy, developing his short-term memory skills while in the Warrior Transition Battalion in Germany. Last year, he earned his spot as a flight medic with Company C, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

From May 11-17, Anderson will represent the Army in the 2013 Warrior Games in cycling, seated-volleyball and the 100- and 200-meter sprint.

Designed to introduce injured service members and veterans to paralympic sports such as archery, cycling, shooting, sitting-volleyball, swimming, track and field, and wheelchair basketball, the Warrior Games encourages wounded warriors from all of the services to get physically active.

Anderson said that injuries are not an excuse, but a focus point to be better at whatever passion a person chooses after being hurt.

"Rule your injury; don't let your injury rule you," said Anderson. "(Injuries) should be a tool to use to further something that you want to do. I use it to become a better cyclist. It gives me something to focus and harness my energy toward."

Anderson's outlook has been an inspiration for other wounded warriors in the Warrior Transition Battalion. That, coupled with his performance, earned him the nomination of captain for the Army cycling team.

"In the four years that I have known him, he has always led from the front, and provided tons of motivation to the people that are around him," said Sgt. 1st Class PAMELA

Smythe, Company B, WTB. "I have seen him countless times, reach a hand out and help that person who needs help and encouragement to make it up a big hill during a ride, or that hand cyclist that needs that little push to keep going."

Many feel that Anderson is the definition of team, constantly caring for others over himself. When soldiers from the newly activated 2nd GSAB arrived at Fort Carson, Anderson lent his expertise, helping them set up medical operations procedures.

"My first impression of Anderson was, 'Wow,'" said 1st Sgt. Raymond Cardenas, senior enlisted leader, Company C, 2nd GSAB, 4th Avn. Reg., 4th CAB, 4th Inf. Div. "He reached out to me after he found out I was going to be stationed here. He single handedly setup the standard operating procedures for the battalion on medical operations. He did that on his own prerogative and never took credit for it. He made something out of nothing."

Smythe said that with Anderson's leadership they will place well in the games.

"He brings an ample amount of leadership to our team as the captain," Smythe said. "Across the board, we have a really strong group of riders this year, and that is because of what he does for us."

Anderson said his goal for the Warrior Games is to put as many Army guys on the podium as possible for cycling.

"I don't care if I make the podium or not, it makes no difference to me," he said. "It is about the team; it is about making sure I get as many people from my team on the podium."

Anderson's competitive drive won't let him quit no matter what.

"It doesn't matter what your injury or illness is, you can be productive and part of the team, and you can overcome whatever it is you are facing," he said. "You can still do great things for the Army or good things for your life."

Read more: <http://www.dvidshub.net/news/106084/soldiers-selflessness-motivates-team-warrior-games#UYFocbWsiSo#ixzz2S4O970pD>

Man of God and Army Proud

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COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. -

Staff Sgt Samuel Harris, Sam to his friends is a busy man at Fort Carson. He's with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Fourth Combat Aviation Brigade. Sam is a Supply Sgt. He tells me, "I love this job." Two tours of Iraq and ten years in the military has made him Army Proud.

He's also proud of the other hat he wears every day. He's Pastor Samuel Harris of the House of Refuge Christian Center in downtown Colorado Springs. Pastor Harris tells me, "We're about serving our community, serving the people of God." He puts 100 percent in his soldiering and ministering his flock, "I was taught if you give respect, respect will come back. If you do good, good will come back." Pastor Harris and his church worked hard to help feed bodies and souls during the Waldo Canyon wildfire.

Sgt Johnny Hall works with Pastor Samuel at the church and at Fort Carson. He told me about his boss, "He's been an inspiration to me. I strive to be exactly like him. He's a hero because on a daily basis he is a leader in the Army and a leader as a Pastor."

I asked Sam if he feels he's a hero or a role model. With a big smile he told me, "To call myself a role model, no. I'm going to stay Sam and enjoy my life." That's why Samuel Harris is a Wear Red Friday Hero.

You can nominate your own hero. Go back to our main page, scroll down the right side and you'll see the section where you can nominate someone.

<http://www.krdo.com/news/SSG-Samuel-Harris/-/417220/19818422/-/ajjxhz/-/index.html>