



Volume 2, Issue 8

“WINGS OF VICTORY!”

AUGUST 2008



Photo by Jim Hughes

Illesheim, Germany - More than 150 Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment and 412th Aviation Support Battalion march into an aircraft hangar during a welcome home ceremony the night of Aug. 6 at Storck Barracks. These Soldiers just completed a 15-month deployment to Iraq.

‘Quick Strike’ relieves ‘Gunslingers’ in Iraq

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The Soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment “Quick Strike” officially

assumed the Attack Reconnaissance mission for Multi-National Corps – Iraq from their sister unit, 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment “Gunslingers” at a ceremony here Aug. 18.

Both units hail from Illesheim, Germany and fly the AH-64D Longbow Apache attack helicopter for U.S. Army Europe’s 12th Combat Aviation Brigade. During the majority of their upcoming rotation to Iraq, the incoming 3-159th will serve as part of Task Force 34, headed by the Minnesota National Guard’s 34th Combat Aviation Brigade.

Because most of its parent brigade, the 12th CAB, has been deployed since

last summer, 3-159th has prepared for the deployment largely on its own. Battalion leaders say the unit relied heavily on lessons learned by the outgoing 2-159th to prepare for challenges in Iraq.

“We did a lot of valuable training at home station,” said Lt. Col. Brian Dillon, the commander of 3-159th. “But certainly the best and most important training we’ve received has been here in Iraq, working with our sister battalion (during a two week relief in place).”

During their 15 months in combat, the ‘Gunslingers’ flew more than 23,000 hours.

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Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – An AH-64D Longbow Apache crew, 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, prepares to take off on a mission.

Check out
what’s
inside ...



FLIGHT SURGEON, Page 4



BACK AGAIN, Page 7



KATTERBACH GIFTS, Page 11

Griffin 06 Sends ... finishing with excellence

Soldiers and Families of Task Force XII

In case you haven't noticed, there are strangers roaming the hallowed halls and flight lines of Task Force XII.

The Soldiers of Task Force 34 are beginning to filter in; ready to assume the vital mission that you have owned and performed so magnificently these past 15 months.

Col. Clay Brock, his staff and subordinate battalions will soon be here in full force. I think I speak for the entire Griffin team when I say, "We are thrilled to have you here!"

For the past several weeks, I've challenged you numerous times to "run through the tape." The tape is in sight ... and from what I can see, you are still running strong.

Perhaps you were inspired by the heroes of these past Olympic Games – more likely, I think, it's that you yourselves are heroes and professionals. Whatever the case, I couldn't be more proud of you all.

Just over a year ago, as we said goodbye to Task Force Mustang, I laid out my primary goals for you:

1. Successfully accomplish all missions – You've done this and then some. Your job has been long, complex and dangerous; you've moved effectively throughout this theater and have never dropped a mission. Throughout it all, your mission accomplishment and readiness rates are unprecedented and simply amazing.



2. Establish and maintain a reputation of mission focus and professionalism for Task Force XII in this theater – Again, you've surpassed my expectations. Our leaders in theater, Europe and in Washington have noticed and noted your accomplishments many times over.

3. Lead in reenlistments – In June you were the first brigade in U.S. Army Europe to achieve our retention goals – in all categories – for the fiscal year. More than 1,000 of you have re-affirmed your commitment to service in this fine Army, and still more of you are already planning

to do so.

4. Most importantly, I wanted to bring you all home – We have not lost a single Soldier to accidents, negligence or enemy fire. That is simply awesome – Thank you.

Our unparalleled success is directly linked to the support from our Family Members, Rear Detachment Soldiers and our great Ansbach-Illesheim Community. A Soldier's ability to concentrate on the mission without worrying about problems at home is critical to accomplishment of this mission. Congratulate and thank your Families, friends and neighbors ... they are as much a part of our success as you are.

My final challenge to you for this deployment is to give your replacements all that you can to make them as successful as you have been. Show them what you have done right and what you have done wrong.

The Griffin legacy ultimately hinges on the success of Task Force 34. I am confident that you will give it your all and prepare them well for their difficult mission.

Man for man, woman for woman, you are the finest Soldiers I have served with in my 27 years as an Army officer. It continues to be my greatest privilege and honor to serve with you all.

"Wings of Victory!"
Col. Timothy Edens
Commander, Task Force XII

Command Sergeant Major's Corner

Hi Gang,

I hope this note finds you happy and healthy.

Like the Roman legions of ancient times your Warriors are headed home ... and the last leg of the march seems endless. Exhausted and worn from the rigors of combat in Iraq, your Warrior is looking forward to the hard-earned reward of being home again.

We fight for freedom, but seem to get very little of it for ourselves. Soon the day we can kiss our special somebody any time we want will be here. Soon the day moms and dads can hug and play with their children will be here.

If you want to see happiness in its purest form, look into the sun-burned face of your Warrior as he enters the hangar doors after the long journey from Iraq. His or her eyes are searching for you; and once you're found nothing else matters except for the final word that signals the end of a 15-month separation – "dismissed!"

You can see love and happiness in those wonderful eyes. You can see the long and hard days of work etched in that weather-beaten face. You can feel the joy from that smile radiate from the tired eyes of your warrior. That is hap-

piness at its best. Yes we are so eager to be with Family and to catch up on all that lost time.

It will be so hard not to drink too much, eat too much or act like a darn fool, giddy with happiness at being home again.

We want life to be normal again and for us to be a Family again. That won't happen if we abuse everything we do and get our hands on; that just creates new bad habits. We've earned the right to celebrate; but we can't let one night of partying ruin 15 months worth of hard work.

Whatever you do, enjoy the tender seconds of each others' smiles, the music of each others' laughter. Fill the hours of your day talking softly to one another, sharing every precious moment. Hug and kiss your little ones till they giggle and laugh and fall asleep in your arms. Bathe yourself in the love of your reunited Family. Hold each other tight, and love each other as powerfully as you can.

Please help guide each other, remind yourselves constantly what is important ... and that's your Family.

P.S.
Gang you have done wonderful, and Col. Edens and I are so very proud of you. Your Warriors have accomplished much



in Iraq and have changed the course of history in this country. Hold your heads up with pride, it hasn't been easy for any of us but you did it with more class and dignity than any other unit I have ever been associated with.

Thank you for all your hard work!

Wings of Victory!
CSM H. Lee Kennedy,
Command Sgt. Maj., Task Force XII

'Voodoo' finds its way back to Iraq

Louisiana National Guard troops begin second tour

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - It's technically the battalion's second deployment in the past five years. The first began in December 2003 - in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II. During that stint they worked just across the street from their current location on Joint Base Balad.

But ask any member of the Louisiana National Guard's 1st Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment and they'll tell you this is deployment number three.

The battalion, organized in Iraq as Task Force Voodoo, left Balad in February 2005. In

August, they began the fight of their lives - brought on by Hurricane Katrina.

"That lasted about six months for us," said Slidell, La. native, Capt. Timothy Cleighton. "We count Katrina as a deployment, even though it was six months long. It was much tougher than our combat deployment."

The unit was mobilized to provide aviation support to the hurricane victims - many of whom were friends and neighbors of the Soldiers in the unit. For those critical six months, 83 National Guard aircraft and 40 active duty helicopters flew thousands of hours to help a state get back on its feet.

Cleighton, the commander of Company B, was one of many in the battalion personally affected by the storm.

"I had roughly an inch of water in the house, I didn't have 10 feet like some of the guys," he said. "It was pretty tough for a lot of our guys. Probably 75 percent of the people I knew had damage."

"A lot of these guys were directly affected by the devastation," said Task Force Voodoo Command Sgt. Maj. Myron Creecy. "They were able to understand that they had a pretty big task - knowing that their homes were under 10 feet of water, they did what they had to do to get their Families to safety, and then went on to



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - A UH-60 Black Hawk, assigned to 1st Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment, takes off for a passenger travel mission Aug. 7.

perform a vital mission."

It's an experience that, coupled with the previous deployment, has created a battle-ready group of veteran aviators, says the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Patrick Bossetta, a New Orleans native whose own home and businesses were lost.

The majority of the unit, about 70 percent, has remained unchanged since 2003.

"We have a group of aviators with a lot of experience, and we've got some young guys," he said. "But our core group has seen every mission set, both doctrinal and un-doctrinal."

The majority of TF Voodoo hails from Louisiana, but there are several Soldiers from the Florida National Guard. In Iraq, they come together to form an aviation task force that performs a full spectrum of utility aviation missions.

At Balad, the battalion flies air assault and general support missions, such as passenger travel and cargo. A separate

company works from Basra, in southern Iraq, providing general aviation support.

The pilots who've been here before say the mission hasn't changed much, but after only a month back in theater, it's still important to continue learning.

"You have to fight over-confidence," said Bossetta. "Sometimes guys think they've been there and done it, but they have to understand that things change in a few years. We've opened our eyes to a different way of flying."

"Knowing where to land and finding the places on the map is important, but you have to be ready for the new things," added Creecy, a native of LaPlace, La. "I think we have the right personnel who understand that the mission has changed and that we have to change with that mission."

TF Voodoo is scheduled for nine months in Iraq - a welcomed change from their first 14-month deployment.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - Sgt. Sara Hernandez, from Inverness, Fla. (top), and Sgt. Bobby Hodges, from Gainesville, Fla., UH-60 Black Hawk crew chiefs for Company C, 1st Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment perform aircraft maintenance Aug. 7.

3-159th takes on role as TF XII's new attack battalion

Continued from Page 1

These 2-159th aviators also flew nearly 2,500 combat missions in support of troops on the ground throughout Iraq.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - 3rd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment Commander, Lt. Col. Brian Dillon (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. John Sundermann unfurl their unit colors during a transfer of authority ceremony here Aug. 18.

"The 'Gunslinger' call-sign is known and respected from Ramadi to Al-Amara and from Mosul to Basra," said Col. Timothy Edens, the 12th CAB Commander.

"They have set the standard by which those who follow will be measured."

"It's not about the number of hours flown or the ordnance we've expended, it's about the support we've provided to the Soldier on the ground," said Lt. Col. Kevin Christensen, the commander of 2-159th. "To any (attack reconnaissance battalion), the ultimate accolade you can



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment Commander, Lt. Col. Kevin Christensen (left) and 1st Sgt. Edgardo Cuadrado furl their unit colors during a transfer of authority ceremony here Aug. 18.

achieve is the respect of the ground commanders that you support."

During the ceremony Dillon thanked the Soldiers of the 2-159th and promised to build on their legacy.

"We'll continue to learn as an organization, and we'll never stop looking for ways to improve our support to Soldiers on the ground," he said.

TF XII Soldier awarded 'Flight Surgeon of Year' for impact on Army aviation medicine

Story by Sgt. Brandon Little

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – It's not uncommon for leaders to feel that their Soldiers are among the best in the military. They express appreciation for their Soldiers' know-how and abilities through gratifying speeches and award recommendations.

Leaders of the 412th Aviation Support Battalion felt that way about Capt. Abigail Raez, a flight surgeon for the battalion. They just knew she was one of the best and brightest in the Army.

This time, the Army agreed – Raez was recognized as being one of the best in aviation medicine as she received the Theodore Lyster Flight Surgeon of the Year award during a ceremony held Aug. 8.

"Winning this award is a great honor, but I know there are plenty of doctors out there who probably deserve this award more than me," said Raez, who hails from Gautier, Miss.

"(Raez) is definitely one of the best amongst her peers and it's a real honor to have her working with us," said Lt. Col. Sam Hamontree, the commander of 412th ASB. "Even long before she received this award, I was constantly getting emails telling me about the great job she's doing; she's an unsung hero who takes care of everyone from Soldiers to



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Capt. Abigail Raez, a flight surgeon in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, listens to a patient's heartbeat during a flight physical.

Iraqis."

This award is given each year to the flight surgeon or aero-medical physician assistant who has made the most significant impact on Army aviation medicine; the person must be nominated by a fellow flight surgeon, an aviator, or someone in his/her chain of command.

"I nominated (Raez) for this award because of her outstanding rapport with all the physicians, physician assistants and medics," said Maj. Frederick Harris, the Task Force XII medical surgeon and Raez's supervisor. "She has become very proficient in every aspect of aviation medicine in a short amount of time."

Raez's nomination had to compete with submissions for several hundred other Army flight surgeons all around the world; nominees come from both active duty and reserve components.

It was a little surprising that she won, but there's no doubt that she deserved to win, said Harris, a native of Bethesda, Md.

Raez has been a flight surgeon since 2002 but this is her first time providing

direct medical care in a deploying unit.

"I was really nervous about deploying, and I didn't know what to expect, but I had great leaders and peers to help guide me in the right direction," said Raez. "Everything I have accomplished would not have been possible without all the help of the doctors and Soldiers I work with here."

As a flight surgeon, she is charged with helping to ensure Task Force XII flight crews are in good health and that they meet all medical standards. She also

helps provide medical care to Soldiers on sick-call, and those with appointments, as well as maintaining and updating health care plans for every Soldier in 412th ASB.

"In addition to her duties here, Raez volunteers at the Air Force hospital here and she has also gone to (the International Zone) to help out at the trauma center there," said Hamontree, who hails from Canyon, Texas. "The health care she has provided from here to Baghdad has just been topnotch."

During this deployment, Raez also studied for and passed the exam to get her emergency medical board certification.

"She went temporary duty to Chicago to take the oral portion of the board exam," said Harris. "This is a great accomplishment because oral boards, for a specialty like emergency medicine, can be a nightmare."

With all of these accomplishments, it's not surprising that Raez is considered one of the best in her career field, said Hamontree.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Lt. Col. Sam Hamontree (left), the commander of 412th Aviation Support Battalion, presents Capt. Abigail Raez with the Theodore Lyster Flight Surgeon of the Year award during a ceremony Aug. 8.



TASK FORCE XII

WINGS OF VICTORY

For the latest news and photos...

Photo by SPC Khanh Quach



www.12cab.army.mil

A Special Thank You from the Task Force XII Public Affairs Office!



Thank you for all the great photos and story ideas you have provided. In addition to the 12th CAB website, all of our products can be accessed by the TF XII shared folder for a few more weeks, but they will be available again in Germany after redeployment.

For more info, please contact us at:
DSN - 483-2079



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

Gen. David Petraeus, Commander of Multi-National Force – Iraq (second from right) is escorted to the Task Force XII area of operation for an overview of the unit’s mission over the past 15 months.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

Gen. David Petraeus, Commander of Multi-National Force – Iraq (center), stands with a group of Task Force XII Soldiers during a visit Aug. 23. Petraeus also gave each of these Soldiers coins for their hard work.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

Multi-National Corps - Iraq Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Allen (fourth from left) poses for a picture with the top enlisted Soldiers of each battalion in Task Force XII during a brief visit to Joint Base Balad. Allen also thanked each of the leaders for the hard work being done by them and their Soldiers.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

Multi-National Corps - Iraq Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Allen (center) talks with the top enlisted Soldiers of each battalion in Task Force XII during a brief visit to Joint Base Balad.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

Gen. David Petraeus, Commander of Multi-National Force – Iraq (right) listens as 12th Combat Aviation Brigade Commander, Col. Timothy Edens gives an overview of the unit’s mission over the past 15 months Aug. 23.

TF Ready prepares to leave Iraq

Battalion lives up to name; proves ‘ready’ for any task

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – If ever there was an organization that has had to live up to a nickname, it’s the 5th General Support Aviation Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment led “Task Force Ready.”

The missions they perform fall under the general support umbrella, but include air assaults, VIP support, medical evacuations, cargo, air traffic services and an assortment of air and ground maintenance.

TF Ready Commander, Lt. Col. Jack Bone, says it’s more than just a nickname; they really are “ready” for anything.

“That’s a lot of stuff in one battalion, we pretty much covered the gamut,” said Bone, a native of Clarksville, Tenn. “We never did any attack aviation missions, but probably would have if they’d asked us to do one.”

During their 15 months in Iraq, the task force has taken several different forms as the mission requirements have changed. A battalion that is typically manned at around 500 Soldiers grew to 951 at one

point during the deployment.

In addition to the companies assigned to the Katterbach, Germany based 5-158th, TF Ready also included two companies from Fort Campbell, Ky, and grew to include Soldiers and aircraft from their sister battalion, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, when that battalion was called away to different mission in the midst of the deployment.

“We didn’t even come together completely as a task force until we were (in theater),” said Bone. “Putting all those parts and pieces together so late in the process, we’ve asked a lot. We couldn’t have done that without great Soldiers.”

In addition to the battalion’s fleet of UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, which performed multiple missions, TF Ready was also the parent organization for the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade’s only CH-47 Chinook Company, Company B, 5-158th, or “Big Windy”.

“We did a whole bunch of air assaults and a bunch of moving pallets,” said Spc. Kyle Gregory, a Chinook mechanic



Courtesy Photo
JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – A UH-60 Black Hawk pilot, assigned to 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment’s Task Force Ready, looks out for a fellow Black Hawk flight crew while scanning the terrain over Iraq during a mission.

from Cocoa Beach, Fla., assigned to Big Windy. “I think our unit has flown about four or five times more than we would have in the rear.”

In total, the air crews assigned to TF Ready have flown more than 30,000 hours in support of Multi-National Corps - Iraq, says the battalion commander.

And despite a successful

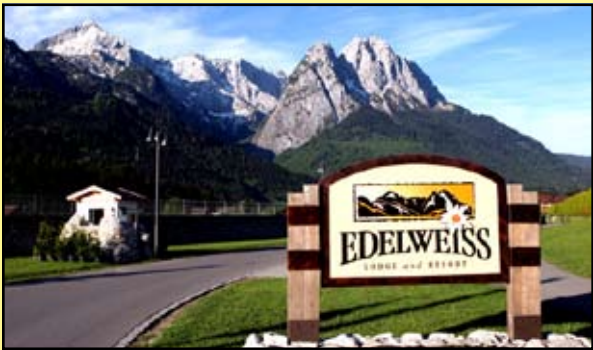
deployment that saw 100 percent mission accomplishment and almost 200 percent of the battalion’s retention goals met with less than 30 days left, TF Ready is ready to go home.

“Fifteen months is a very long time,” said Bone. “We’re all ready to go home to our Families and our lives, but that’s not going to stop us from doing our mission.”

12th CAB Vacation Raffle

Want to win a dream vacation? Enter the Welcome Home Vacation Raffle, and you could win one of three special vacations for you and your Family. Tickets are now available for purchase. The winning raffle tickets will be announced during the Welcome Home Ceremony scheduled for Nov. 14 at Katterbach Kaserne. All Soldiers, Family members and friends of the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade are encouraged to attend the ceremony.

Edelweiss (Green Ticket) = \$5



- Two nights for two guests
- Two Swedish full body massages
- A \$500 value
- Transportation not included
- Booking based on winners discretion and availability
- Children can be added for a small additional fee.

Greece (Blue Ticket) = \$5



- Two nights/three days for two guests
- Accommodations for two
- All inclusive (flight, hotel, food)
- A \$650 value
- Trip must occur between October to mid-November or between April to mid-May

EuroDisney (Purple Ticket) = \$10



- Accommodations for up to two adults and two children
- One night hotel stay and two days in the park (park admission, and hotel fee, breakfast provided)
- A \$1000 value
- Transportation not included
- Booking based on winners discretion and availability

The proceeds from the raffle will go toward covering the costs of the Welcome Home/Holiday Ball. Winners do not have to be present at the ceremony. Remember, you can’t win without buying a ticket. Contact your unit representative today for ticket information.

Leaders have organizational day to reward Soldiers

Story by Sgt. Brandon Little

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – It’s only natural for Soldiers’ morale to begin to lower as the strain of a deployment takes its toll on them physically and mentally, and it’s up to their leadership to help provide these Soldiers with an outlet to keep their hopes and spirits high.

Leaders in Company B, 412th Aviation Support Battalion joined together to help their Soldiers relax and show them how much they appreciate all their hard work and sacrifice by coordinating a unit Organizational Day Aug. 2.

“We organized this event so we could have all of our Soldiers here together one last time before our early redeploying Soldiers leave,” said Maj. H. Craig Demby, the commander of Company B. “We wanted to say thank you for a safe and successful deployment to those Soldiers who are leaving; and keep up the good work to our Soldiers staying until the end.”

The unit’s organizational day kicked off with Company B coins being presented to all the Soldiers during a brief ceremony.

“Our leaders are always trying to show us how much they support us, and giving us coins was just another way for them to say thank you,” said Pfc. Curtis Lee, an

aircraft structural repairer in Company B.

After the coins were handed out, the real fun began with a barbecue and some H2O horseplay to give the Soldiers a breather from their long work days and high-tempo aircraft maintenance, said Demby, who hails from Aberdeen, Md.

“This get-together was a nice break from working 12 and 13 hour days, and it really helped us blow off a little steam,” said Lee, a native of Yonkers, N.Y.

A home-made dunking booth, filled with ice-cold water, also proved to be an effective tool to help these Soldiers blow off some steam and get a little pay back at their leadership in the process.

Most of the leaders in Company B took a turn in the booth, and for a small donation, Soldiers got the perfect opportunity to get a little revenge on their squad leaders and platoon sergeants, said Demby.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Command Sgt. Maj. Jorge Soriano, the top enlisted Soldier in 412th Aviation Support Battalion, takes a dip in the ice-cold water of a dunking booth during a Company B Organizational Day held Aug. 2.

the time when the deployment starts to wear Soldiers down, and this event was exactly what these Soldiers needed to help improve their morale,” said 412th ASB Command Sgt. Maj. Jorge Soriano, one of the participants in the dunking booth. “It’s all part of Esprit de Corps and keeping our team strong.”

In addition to taking aim at Demby and Soriano, Company B Soldiers also got the opportunity to help the 412th ASB commander, Lt. Col. Sam Hamontree, take a dip in ice-cold water.

“It’s a good thing these Soldiers are better mechanics than they are throwers,” said a drenched Hamontree.

“Falling into that cold water was pretty refreshing, and I think I might have gotten a little more enjoyment out of it than they did,” said Soriano, who hails from Chula Vista, Calif.

The festivities didn’t end with the dunking booth; the Soldiers also got the opportunity to participate in a Halo, an X Box video game, tournament.

“I’m sure that all the Soldiers had a good time today and this event was a tremendous morale booster,” said Demby. “We don’t always get to spend time with our Soldiers, so we like to have things like this to let our Soldiers know we appreciate all their hard work and to remind them to finish the deployment strong.”



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Lt. Col. Sam Hamontree, the commander of 412th Aviation Support Battalion, jokes with a Soldier from Company B, 412th ASB while sitting on their home-made dunking booth during a Company B Organizational Day held Aug. 2.

Do you have questions about your reenlistment options, or any retention questions in general? If so, please contact your unit Career Counselor or Retention NCO, listed below, for more information.

Task Force XII Senior Career Counselor	SGT Bercher	483-2444
MSG Organ	1-244th AVN	
483-4161	SFC Howard	483-2601
HHC Task Force XII	3-159th AVN	
SSG Ruffin	SGT Warren	483-2444
483-4071	1-214th AVN	
412th ASB	SGT Leon	382-4415
SGT Britton	3-58th AOD	
483-7072	SGT Wacker	467-4983
5-158th AVN	12th CAB Rear Detachment	
SSG Lemon	Career Counselor	
483-2687	SFC Britton	467-4869
3-158th AVN		
SSG Olivo		
822-7581		
2-159th AVN		

TF XII 5K Freedom Run



When: Sept. 5 at 0500
Where: Westside MWR Building parking lot
Who: Anyone who would like to participate
Why: To congratulate TF XII Soldiers for an outstanding deployment
Included: Fun, Refreshments and a water-point with ice
Prizes: There are 550 t-shirts available. Top male and female runners will receive a plaque

A moment with the Chaplain



Being thankful for blessings we get each day

By Chaplain (Maj.) David Waweru

If you're like me, you may have had some concerns when you learned about this deployment. Although this was not my first deployment to Iraq, being a chaplain in an aviation brigade worried me.

The news of personnel and equipment loss had been in the news as we prepared to deploy. As a brigade we all went through a tough time when we lost two of our own members at Grafenwoehr even as we trained to deploy.

These kinds of issues worry everybody - and chaplains are no exceptions. John Wayne once said *"Courage is being scared to death, and saddling up anyway."*

Fourteen months have passed, and like you, I have prayed many times in private and at the chapel. We can now see the light at the end of the tunnel getting brighter and brighter as the days go by and very soon we will be back home, taking some leave and spending time with our loved ones.

God has protected us as individuals and as a Griffin Family. We have had no casualties and no equipment loss; we have been very successful in our missions; we have had tremendous support



from our loved ones and from strangers who we will never meet.

The gospel of Luke tells the story of 10 lepers who went to Jesus to be healed. Jesus sent them away to show themselves to the religious officials, and while they were on their way they were healed. Only one went back to thank Jesus. "Were there not ten of you?" Jesus asked. "Where are the other nine?"

It so happened that the only one who went to say thank you was also a foreigner. The other nine were so happy and excited that they forgot to go back and say thanks.

We don't have to wait until Thanksgiving to say "Thank you!" Thankfulness is an attitude we should have at all times. Sometimes we credit ourselves for all the successes and forget who enabled us to achieve success.

Think about what God has done for you and your loved ones ... then bow your head and say thank you!!

Although we have not lost any Soldiers from Germany during this deployment, some of our Griffin Families have suffered some losses. We pray for them and support them in their difficulties. The act of giving thanks is not limited to times when things are going our way; listen to what prophet Habakkuk said about thanks giving:

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vine; though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food; though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls; still I will rejoice in the LORD. I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights.

God bless you all, and may you have a safe journey home!

Ask the JAG ... about redeployment issues

By The Task Force XII Legal Office

Legal Redeployment Issues: Taxes, POAs, Claims, and War Souvenirs

Taxes: Income taxes for 2007 were due 15 April 2008. However, Soldiers deployed to a combat zone have 180 days from the date of return, plus one day for every day they were in the combat zone between 1 January 2008 and 15 April 2008, to file.

Combat zone personnel receive an automatic extension to file their returns. However, if they wish to receive the economic stimulus payments in 2008, they must file their 2007 income tax returns in time for the IRS to process them before the end of the year.

To ensure a stimulus payment is made this year, the return should be filed no later than Oct. 15.

If a return cannot be filed and processed before the end of 2008, the pay-

ment can be claimed as a credit on the 2008 tax return that is filed in 2009.

File as soon as possible to get your refund and to become eligible for your 2007 stimulus check. If you delay filing past Oct 15, you will still get both, but your stimulus check will get rolled-up into your 2008 taxes. File now!

Powers of Attorney: After return from deployment, it is in your best interest to retrieve POAs given to your agent to avoid any unauthorized uses. If you cannot retrieve the POAs, you should sign a revocation. Go to the legal office upon return for a revocation if necessary.

Claims: While deployed, you may have had personal property lost or damaged as a result of your service. The US Army Claims Service may reimburse you for loss or damage to certain items, so long as your negligence did not contribute to the loss or damage.

other lawful means that are authorized under certain conditions to be taken out of theater.

They are common enemy military items that have little or no value and are kept as mementos of war time service.

Examples of war souvenirs: helmets, head coverings, uniforms, uniform items, canteens, compasses, rucksacks, pouches, knives and bayonets other than those defined as weaponry.

How do you take something home? You must submit the item along with a request to have the item returned to you as a war souvenir.

Use DD Form 603-1 to make requests. The completed DD Form 603-1 is submitted to the reviewing officer. Each company commander or officer in the rank of O-5/LTC or above is designated as a reviewing officer.

Reviewing officers will present their war souvenir requests to any other qualified reviewing officer in the same grade or above.

Please feel free to stop by the Task Force XII Legal Office and we will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

See you in Germany!



The Soldiers of the Task Force XII Staff Judge Advocate office.

12th Combat Aviation Brigade Formal



Who: Soldiers and Spouses of 12th CAB
When: Thursday, November 20



Where: Furth Stadthalle

Tickets Info

- On Sale Soon!
- Prices TBD by 12th CAB Raffle proceeds
- Reduced ticket prices for E6 and below



Attire

- Soldiers-Class A or Dress Blues w/ Bow Tie
- Civilians-Formal Attire

Lodging

- Hotel rooms available in the local area by going to www.booking.com

Also includes

- Presentation of TFXII OIF 07-09 video yearbook



** Formal precedes a three-day weekend **

Welcome Home Ceremony



Soldiers, Families and friends of the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, you are cordially invited to attend a ceremony, **Nov. 14 at Katterbach Kaserne**, to officially welcome home the brave warriors of 12th CAB from a 15-month long deployment.

Ceremony Schedule

- 10:00 - Pass in Review with LTG Hunzeker, Commanding General of V Corps
- 11:30 - Unveiling of “*Launch, Recover, Launch*” by James Dietz
- 11:45 - Recognition of “Heroes of TF XII”- Soldiers and Family

Fun for the Family

- Dream Vacation raffle ticket drawings
- Live music
- Food and drinks

TF XII Commemorative Print, “Launch, Recover, Launch”



- 100 copies still available; \$70 per print
- Prints can be purchased through unit representatives listed below:
 - HHC – SGT Aneliese Diaz-Xiong, LTC Bowery
 - 2-159th ARB – 1LT Brian Vega
 - 3-158th AHB – MAJ Terry Rodesky/CPT William Connors
 - 412th ASB – MAJ Brian Lofton
 - 5-158th GSAB – CPT Joshua Hawkins
 - Rear D – CPT Brian Stickney (5-158 Rear Detachment), Ms. Annette Francis (12th CAB Command Group)
- Prints available at the welcome home ceremony Nov. 14 Boyd’s Framing and Art on hand for framing options- Mr. Boyd will offer those picking up or purchasing a print on 14 November a 30-40% discount on custom framing, with a variety of choices of matting, framing material, and the option to frame your print with a unit coin or patch
- James Dietz on hand to sign and personalize prints at the Welcome Home Ceremony

Teen helps her Family cope with mom's deployment, pursues music career dream

Story by Sgt. Brandon Little

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – As children, many of us had dreams of becoming superheroes, rocket scientists or even astronauts. Over the years, you may have come to realize that you lack the superpowers needed to become a superhero, and a fear of heights probably changed your thoughts on space exploration.

Other aspirations, like being a professional ball-player or a musician, may be a little more “down-to-earth” but require years and years of practice and commitment to achieve.

Salina Boodoosingh's dream, ever since she was a little girl, was to one day become a famous recording artist - and her parents have always pushed her to never give up on her dream.

Now, at the age of 19, Salina is beginning to make great strides toward her recording dreams, but she has done so in the absence of her deployed mother.

While her mother, Sgt. Kimberly Boodoosingh, who hails from Portland, Ore., has been serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom for the last 14 months, Salina has been experiencing the highs and lows of competing in talent shows and helping her father raise her five siblings in Katterbach, Germany.

“I was concerned about deploying at first because it's (quite a load) for my husband, having to take care of six children but Salina has really

helped out,” said Kimberly, a human resource specialist in Task Force XII. “They honestly make what I do here easier because I'm not worried about things falling apart at home.”

“I'm really proud of how mature Salina has been about her mother being gone,” said Dave Boodoosingh, Kimberly's husband. “She's been helping me out a lot with her siblings.”

This is the Boodoosingh Family's first deployment, and it's the longest time Kimberly has been away from her Family. So with mom away, and Salina being the oldest, she was forced to take on more responsibilities.

“In addition to helping her dad out with her brothers and sister, Salina's also juggled

house-hold chores and having a summer job,” said Kimberly.

“It's been very hard for us having our mom gone for so long because we love and miss her so much,” said Salina. “But we're all very proud of her for being so brave and serving our country.”

Having her mother deployed, and taking on extra responsibilities, didn't distract Salina from trying to accomplish her childhood dream.

“My dad inspired me to become a singer by helping me practice and by buying me my first Mariah Carey CD; she's my favorite singer,” said Salina. “My mom has always believed in me and had faith in me.”

“I know Salina can do whatever she wants when she puts her mind to it,” said Dave. “I think it's great that she's trying to pursue her dream.”

Nearly three months ago, Salina also took the first steps toward pursuing that dream when she entered a talent show in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

“Her performance in the talent show didn't go so well, and she was really disappointed,” said Kimberly. “I told her not to get discouraged when things don't work out the way she planned, and keep striving for excellence.”

Things like that can be good for her, and help to build character; but it's important for her to continue to believe in herself, said Dave.

That certainly proved to be the case when Salina decided to enter the “Best of the Best” talent show in Katterbach, Germany, July 19. She faced tough competition, but Salina won first place in the adult vocalist category.

Along with a \$250 prize, Salina got her first taste of stardom when she was interviewed by the American Forces Network after her victory.

After her talent show victory Salina flew to the U.S. to take another step closer to her dream with an audition for “American Idol.”

Salina may have encountered a few bumps along her road to achieving her dreams, but she hasn't given up because she believes dreams do come true.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Sgt. Kimberly Boodoosingh, a human resources specialist in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force XII, holds a picture of her six children waiting with her husband, Dave Boodoosingh, back in Katterbach, Germany.

Don't forget to update your new DD Form 93

A new law that took effect July 1 allows Soldiers the flexibility to distribute their \$100,000 Death Gratuity to 10 different individuals in \$10,000 increments. Soldiers can elect to give the death gratuity to anyone they want including Family, friends, or even coworkers.

The Army will notify a spouse when a Soldier elects someone other than the spouse to receive any part of the death gratuity. This is done by sending a “Spousal Notification” letter. Spousal notification is required for Soldiers who are legally separated or pending a divorce but still married. However, the Army will NOT tell the spouse who the Soldier elected to receive the death gratuity, or how it is distributed. The Army WILL tell the spouse only that the Soldier elected

to give a portion of the death gratuity to someone other than him/her.

Married Soldiers should include their spouses in the process from the very beginning to ensure they are aware of their Soldier's intent. Discuss your decision with your spouse and tell them why you made the choice you did. All Soldiers should review their DD 93 with their Family, or any other recipient.

The old DD Form 93 (AUG 98 version) does not allow Soldiers to clearly tell the Army their true intent as required by the law that took effect on 1 July 2008. ALL Soldiers must complete a new DD Form 93 (JUL 08 version).

What is Death Gratuity?

The death gratuity is a one-time, non-taxable payment of \$100,000 to help sur-

vivors deal with the financial hardships that accompany the loss of a Soldier.

It is a lump sum payment to the survivors or other individuals identified by the Soldier prior to death while on active duty or within 120 days after release from active duty if the death is due to a service-related disability.

What is the intent of the \$100,000 Death gratuity?

To help survivors deal with the financial hardships that accompany the loss of their Soldier.

Is the \$100,000 Death Gratuity in addition to the SGLI?

Yes, death gratuity is separate from the \$400,000 (maximum amount if elected) SGLI. The amount of SGLI does not affect the \$100,000 death gratuity.

12th CAB Families come together to help Iraqi citizens

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – You could probably argue that the Families of the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade have given enough. Saying goodbye to a spouse or parent for 15 months, while living in a small German community thousands of miles from home, is no small sacrifice.

But last December, after Iraq’s scorching hot summers and hard-packed sand had given way to bone-chilling winds, near-constant rain and mud, Staff Sgt. Max Bunhey asked the Ansbach community to dig

a little deeper. “It was a little cold out there,” recalls Bunhey, who works in the brigade’s unit movement office. “I saw Iraqi kids running around the fence line, some with no shoes or jackets; so I thought maybe we could start collecting some donations from back home.” Bunhey, from Santa Ana, Calif., asked his wife, Lilianna, and daughters, Monica and Christina, to put together a box of children’s coats and shoes. He says he thought it would be a good way to teach his daughters a lesson in giving.

“My kids were really excited knowing they were doing something to benefit kids who were less fortunate,” he said. “They started talking to friends and Family members in their schools and Family Readiness Groups,” he added. “The word went out and the people in the community opened up their hearts and the donations started pouring in.”

As the packages arrived, Bunhey began taking them to civil affairs Soldiers who handed out the gifts during humanitarian aid missions near Joint Base Balad.

“We’re always grateful for the supplies we get, and we can always use more,” said Spc. Joshua Link, a Myrtle Beach,



JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – An Iraqi boy clutches a stuffed animal that was donated by the Ansbach military community in Germany.

S.C. native in Company A, 404th Civil Affairs Battalion. In all, Bunhey says, the community sent more than 300 boxes of shoes, coats, toys and clothing.

“My wife ran out of storage space, so she went to the rear detachment, and they were kind enough to lend her office space in the brigade headquarters building until the FRG’s could box it up,” he said.

As more people got involved and the operation outgrew its humble beginnings, Lt. Col. Rick Crogan, the 12th CAB Deputy Commander, asked the brigade chaplain’s office at Camp Taji to help out.

“The out-pouring of compassion was phenomenal within the (Ansbach) community,” said Crogan. “(The Bunhey Family) and other volunteers

worked very hard to ensure those items made it to Iraq.”

“We gave out boxes to military transition teams, civil affairs and even our sister unit chaplain’s office in 1st Sustainment Brigade to deliver to a local community,” said chaplain’s assistant, Sgt. 1st Class Amonty Cochran.

As Bunhey and the rest of the 12th CAB prepare to redeploy, he says the impact of the donations has probably benefited his Family more than any of the Iraqis who received the gifts.

“My wife and kids were shocked to see the generosity of the communities,” he said. “The Family members who gave, and the FRG’s who spread the word and boxed the donations made a big impact on us all.”



JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Staff Sgt. Max Bunhey, a 12th Combat Aviation Brigade unit movement noncommissioned officer, carries boxes of gifts to be given to local Iraqis Aug. 16. The packages were sent as part of a humanitarian aid donation from the Ansbach military community in Germany.

Retention Corner

By Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Organ

As Task Force XII completes its 15-month deployment, I would like to personally thank each of you for your contributions to our Army; a special thank you to all those Soldiers that have reenlisted during the deployment. As a task force, more than 1,000 soldiers have reenlisted ... that’s outstanding!

Soldiers have reenlisted for a variety of reenlistment options as well as reenlistment bonuses. When you get back home, I would ask that if you reenlisted for a bonus, please make sure you received your bonus and if not contact your career counselor. Soldiers who reenlisted for assignments and schools need to double check to ensure they have the right report dates and/or school dates; any issues regarding those dates must be worked through your career counselor.

If you are a Soldier who has been under stop loss and wish to move your ETS

date up before the stop loss end date, or extend up to 120 days, you have that option. I would encourage all Soldiers in this category to take advantage of that time and use the Army programs in place to ensure a smooth transition into civilian life.

All Soldiers leaving the Army must see the reserve component counselor - keep in mind that all Soldiers have a military service obligation of eight years from the time you joined - so stop by and see what options are out there for you. A few of the options you could qualify for are retraining, enhanced college tuition benefits and MOS reduction.

Lastly, if you need to contact a career counselor back in Germany, our future offices are under renovation; the community retention offices will be located above the Katterbach DFAC on the second floor. Yes, there really is a 2nd floor. Just enter the DFAC on the side door



The 12th CAB Retention Team

next to Burger King, and go up stairs. We should be occupying the office late November. Until then, anyone needing assistance can contact Sgt. 1st Class Britton at 467-2072.

On the Home Front



Photo by Jim Hughes

Family and friends react to getting the first glimpse of the returning warriors of the 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment and 412th Aviation Support Battalion as they march into an aircraft hangar during a welcome home ceremony the night of Aug. 6 at Storck Barracks.



Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation regiment stand in formation during a welcome home ceremony Aug. 23. These Soldiers are returning to Family and friends in the Illesheim community after completing a 15-month deployment in Iraq.



Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation regiment walk into an aircraft hangar before a welcome home ceremony Aug. 23. These Soldiers are returning to the Illesheim community after completing a 15-month deployment in Iraq.



Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Sgt. Victor Alejandro, a Soldier in 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, shows off the keys to his brand new 2008 BMW 128i. The car was a gift from his wife Sheila upon his return from a 15-month deployment to Iraq.



Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Family and friends react to getting the first glimpse of the returning warriors of the 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment as they march into an aircraft hangar during a welcome home ceremony held Aug. 23 at Storck Barracks. These Soldiers are returning after completing a 15-month deployment in Iraq.



Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert Jonson, a Soldier in 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, is elatedly greeted by his wife, Elidia, and his children after a welcome home ceremony Aug. 23. Jonson just returned from a 15-month deployment to Iraq.

The Griffin Brigade Chronicles

History of USAREUR's 12th CAB (Part 12)

Story by Lt. Col. Charles R. Bowery Jr.,
Executive Officer for Task Force XII

Our last slice of Griffin history takes us back to 2005-2006 and the last deployment for the 12th Aviation Brigade. In 2005, the Griffins deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) VI, and they operated in two separate locations. Lt. Col. Bryan Hoff, the current brigade S3, served as executive officer and S3 for the 3-158th Storm Riders.

TF Griffin was headquartered in Bagram and served as the aviation brigade for CJTF-76. It was comprised of battalion Task Forces Sabre and Storm.

TF Sabre was headquartered by 2-6 CAV from Illesheim and supported Regional Command East (RC-East) and the command group for CJTF-76 in Bagram and Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan in Kabul.

TF Storm was run by 3-158th Aviation and supported RC-South in Kandahar, including elements of 173rd Airborne Infantry Brigade; a Joint Special Operations Task Force; Canadian special operations and conventional forces; British conventional forces and Dutch Special Operations Forces as well as the Afghan Army.

The yearlong deployment moved fast with continual deliberate operations supporting ground maneuver element air assaults to defeat of Taliban and Al Qaida. TF Griffin operations facilitated the destruction of over 2,000 Taliban and anti-Afghan forces while aviation assets personally destroyed over 450 enemy forces including 26 with UH door guns. Unfortunately, the deployment also marked the loss of the aircraft and crews of Big Windy 25 and Wild Mustang 22 - both CH47s.

The current Storm 3, Maj. Jeff Gloede, commanded "Big Windy," F/159th Aviation:

We deployed to Afghanistan after just 12 months home from OIF I. Fortunately, the core of the company was intact and experienced. Big Windy was attached to 2-6 Cav (now 3-159th ARB) as its bat-

talion level headquarters to make up TF Sabre. Once operations were established at Bagram, the company supported the eastern sector of Afghanistan to include Kabul and Afghan/Pakistan border. The company flew 8,000 hours and operated five refuel sites along with the 2-6 Cav fuel/ammunition section.

The Chinook helicopters from the task force proved to be true work horses. Often escorted with UH or AH aircraft the task force provided significant support in form of ring routes, VIP movements and air assault operations. Retention more than met their goal as Big Windy carried a significant portion of TF Sabre's retention mission. The Soldiers of Big Windy stayed motivated and proved their true warrior mettle by not letting a mission fail through maintenance or lack of training.

Another current member of the brigade S3 team, Maj. Nate Ginos, also commanded Griffins during OEF VI:

I was called forward two weeks early to OEF by the J-3, Col. Preysler, to augment a struggling J-3 Air cell as the CJTF-76 aviation operations battle captain and TF Griffin liaison officer. While working for the J-3 I was responsible for receiving, prioritizing and sourcing all requests for TF Griffin rotary wing aviation assets.

In addition to working with air requests I also worked aviation current operations, advising the staff and relaying launch directives to TF Griffin. In July 2006, I moved from Bagram to Kandahar to join TF Storm as their HHC Commander.

In addition to making sure the staff sections had what they needed to succeed on a day to day basis I had all 4 FARPs in RC South under my command. My fuel platoon was augmented by the platoon from D/133 AVN to have the manpower required to run FARPS at FOBs Qalat, Tarin Kowt, and Garesh. In addition to my duties as company commander I quickly integrated

with D/133 and progressed as a CH-47D Pilot.

When the 12th Aviation Brigade returned to Germany, in the spring of 2006, transformation was in full swing.

The 1st Infantry Division had moved to Fort Riley, Kan., leaving the 4th Brigade headquarters in Katterbach. The 11th Aviation Regiment had inactivated in 2005, leaving 6-6 Cavalry attached to 4th Brigade as our attack battalion. The 2-1 GSAB Fighting Eagles, then under the leadership of Lt. Col. Zero, our current Rear Detachment Commander, moved aircrews and helicopters to Fort Riley for the creation of the new 11D Combat Aviation Brigade.

The 12th Aviation Brigade and its OEF units, 3-158th, Big Windy and 2-6 Cavalry, returned and reintegrated. The Storm Riders and Big Windy made their unit moves from Giebelstadt to Katterbach, and the colors of 5-158th GSAB moved from Giebelstadt as well.

The summer of 2006 was busy on a variety of fronts. In the midst of their move from Giebelstadt to Katterbach, the crews of Big Windy conducted contingency operations in Cyprus for several weeks, moving personnel and supplies in and out of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon.

August 6, 2006, a beautiful Bavarian summer day, an activation ceremony marked the formal beginning of the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade. And the rest, as they say, is history!

It has been my sincere pleasure to recount for the Griffin Family the illustrious history of our Brigade and its battalions. I hope you all have enjoyed it, and have gained some perspective on the achievements of U.S. Army Aviation over the years. See you back in Germany!



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