

IRON STRONG DAILY

PAGE 1



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Aviation: asset to the battlefield

**Story and photo by
Pfc. Alisha Nye
14th Public Affairs Detachment**

When most people think of aviators, it often seems they think of two things: 70's style sunglasses and those guys who fly planes. What they don't think about is everything that goes into running an aviation asset, especially in the military.

Maj. Beau Tibbitts, brigade aviation officer and Air Defense and Airspace Manager chief, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, said there is a great deal that goes into running a military aviation asset and the responsibilities behind doing so increase exponentially in a deployed environment.

"As the brigade aviation officer, I coordinate and integrate all rotary wing assets of the brigade and try to get helicopters involved in the fight," Tibbitts said. "As the ADAM chief, we have systems set up to de-conflict, integrate and synchronize all the airspace, from unmanned aerial vehicles to Air Force fast movers and helicopters."

These two roles encompass not only a great deal of equipment, but also a great deal of organization on the part of both Tibbitts and his staff.

"I have a team in the tactical operation center; (there we) have a system called the Tactical Airspace Integration System which is tied into all the radar systems," Tibbitts said.

"We have a sentinel radar here, too, that provides an airspace picture that actually gives me live feed tracks, almost like you would see in any civilian airport."

With this system, Tibbitts and his staff in the TOC can identify where aircrafts are located and move them as necessary in support of ground troops.

"We can find out where the Apaches are at even if we don't have voice communications and then, through BFT or other means, we can move them so troops have contact," Tibbitts said. "We can move aircraft to our advantage around the battlefield."

The equipment in the TOC isn't the only responsibility Tibbitts and his small workforce have, however.

"I have enough people to run the TOC, but we have (also) assumed the sentinel radar, which is permanently located here on FOB Warhorse, as an additional duty," Tibbitts said. "I have a warrant officer (whose) job is not only to maintain our systems – tactical airspace integrator and air defense systems integrator – but also our sentinel."

Normally, this is a job performed

See *Aviation* on Page 3



Spc. Jesse Sandhorst and Sgt. Kevin Smith, air traffic controllers working at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, work together to help coordinate the take-off of two Blackhawk helicopters only minutes before the landing of two Apache helicopters at a passenger's terminal at FOB Warhorse.

November 2008

Sexual Assault Prevention - I.A.M. Strong

Everyone deserves to work in and be a part of an environment that is safe. The threat of sexual assault detracts from that safety. Sexual assault represents a fundamental breakdown in Army values, and destroys our family's cohesion. A Soldier who will sexually assault another Soldier cannot be trusted to protect his or her battle buddy on the battlefield. Acts of sexual assault undermines the warrior ethos and the code of conduct and we – as an Army – will not tolerate it!

The new I. A. M. Strong campaign challenges our Soldiers and leaders to take responsibility for what is happening around them and to take dramatic action to “Intervene, Act and Motivate” (I.A.M.) to prevent sexual assault. I challenge leaders to energize their current sexual assault prevention programs and to integrate the messages and programs of I. A.M. Strong into their prevention programs. It is the responsibility of our Soldiers to stop sexual assaults before it starts and take steps to make sure their battle buddies avoid situations where such assaults can occur.

All of the members of TF Iron should respond and correct sexually offensive language and gestures that create an environment friendly to abuse. We will foster a culture of camaraderie and trust that eradicates sexual assault. As Soldiers we are obligated to do for our Brothers and Sisters.

Under I. A. M. Strong, leaders are responsible to immediately train their Soldiers to demonstrate personal courage and to

***INTERVENE** when they see a threat of sexual assault to their brother or sister in arms. **ACT** and stand up for others, no matter the time or place. Do what's right. Prevent Sexual Assault.*

***MOTIVATE** each other to prevent Sexual Assault and to live the Army Values and become advocates within our units and communities.*

All Soldiers must understand that they must report sexual assault incidents. They can do so, without fear of reprisal. Soldiers who are assaulted will receive the help and treatment that they deserve.

I am committed to having an aggressive sexual assault program to help minimize and eliminate sexual assault from our ranks. I expect leaders at all levels will show the same emphasis and support for this program as I do.


Hertling
Iron 6

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Aviation from Page 1

by four people but is currently the responsibility of just one. The sentinel radar system is not the only additional aviation duty that has fallen on the shoulders of Tibbitts and his staff.

"Since most movement around here is via helicopter, we have a passenger's terminal that falls into our lane," Tibbitts said. "So we also have the job of running that passengers terminal as well as moving all the Soldiers around the battlefield."

The importance of everything

Tibbitts and his staff do is far from insignificant, including the unseen Soldiers who work in a tower controlling air traffic.

"We're basically in charge of people's lives," said Spc. Jesse Sandhorst, an air traffic controller who works under Tibbitts. "We have to make sure the aircraft are safe."

Sgt. Kevin Smith, an air traffic controller who works alongside Sandhorst, agreed and stressed the importance of air traffic controllers to pay attention to detail.

"You have to pay attention," Smith

said. "Because the one time you don't, you can cost someone his life."

Despite the amount of complicated equipment Tibbitts and his team are responsible for operating and maintaining, and the weight of the extra responsibilities that fall on their shoulders, all have said they love their jobs.

"I love what I do," Smith said.

"To me, this is the whole point of being a brigade aviation officer," Tibbitts said. "And being an expert in rotary wing assets, to me, makes it that much more fulfilling."

Mosul company donates supplies, time to renovate school

**Story by 3d Armored Division
Multi-National Division - N PAO**

A local contractor in Mosul recently donated all the equipment, supplies and manpower to renovate the Al Abier Kindergarten in Mosul.

The project, which was originally going to be funded by the Iraqi government, was recently completed by the contractor at no charge.

Improvements were made to both the interior and exterior of the facility.

"This project not only benefits the children and faculty, but is a great sign when local businesses can contribute and help the community move forward," said Maj. Jonathan Simmons, civil affairs officer for the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment.



Courtesy Photo

A local contractor recently renovated the Al Abier Kindergarten in Mosul, Iraq. The project was originally going to be funded by the Iraqi government, but the contractor completed the project at no charge.

Iraqi Army brings school supplies to Mosul youth



Col. Salah Adeziz, executive officer, 7th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division, talks with students while he gives them school supplies on a good-neighbor mission at Al Sahabh School in Mosul, Iraq.

**Story and photo by Spc. Cynthia Teears
11th Public Affairs Detachment**

Soldiers from the 7th Brigade, 2nd Division Iraqi Army, visited students at the Al Sahabh School in Mosul to hand out supplies and book bags.

"We need to protect the future of Iraq," said Col. Salah Adeziz, executive officer, 7th Bde., 2nd Div., Iraqi Army. "This is a very important thing that I wanted to do now with the Coalition Forces. For our students, we hold nothing back to support them with supplies, food, anything that we can do. They see the IA and the Coalition Forces working together, it will make a good future for the children to see that."

This visit was the fourth trip the Soldiers made to the school as the Iraqi Security Forces continue to visit with area residents and local schools to build stronger relationships in the communities where they work. During this trip, they handed out the supplies and bags to 400 students at the boys and girls primary school.



(AP) Over and over, Barack Obama told voters if they stuck with him “we will change this country and change the world.” They did, and now their expectations for him to deliver are firmly planted on his shoulders. Many supporters greeted his victory with euphoria.

Impatient for a new American era and overcome by a black man’s historic ascension to the White House, they took his achievement for their own — weeping, dancing in the streets, blaring happy horns into Wednesday morning.

But campaign rhetoric soon collides with the gritty duties of governing, and hard realities stand in Obama’s way.

The youthful president-elect appears to know this. His victory speech emphasized humility far more than his fabled confidence, with remarks heavily leavened by references to the difficulties before the nation.

He declared “change has come to America” and closed with his “yes we can” campaign slogan, but not before speaking of the certainty of setbacks. “The road ahead will be long,” Obama warned. “We may not get there in one year or even one term.”

Atop Obama’s challenge list is the global and domestic turmoil that he inherits. None of it is his own

making, but it will shape his presidency before he lifts one finger.

The worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. Two wars in unstable, hostile lands. Other foreign hot spots such as Pakistan and Congo, nuclear standoffs with North Korea and Iran. A warming planet.

Then there are high health care and energy costs, sunken home values, wiped-out retirement and investment accounts. A federal deficit that is exploding as the nation throws money at its economic problems, sure to crimp Obama’s ability to spend his way to solutions.

He also faces challenging political realities.

Obama has a largely liberal voting record and owes a debt to the left wing of the Democratic Party, which mobilized millions on his behalf. These folks embraced his promises to end the Iraq war, move toward universal health care coverage and address harsh terrorist interrogation practices.

But Obama also appealed to the broader electorate as a pragmatist who pledged virtually party-blind government. He will have to decide whether it is better to disappoint the more liberal troops out of the gate or wait until later.

“A lot of people are not going to be happy in the first

two years,” said Democratic strategist Joe Trippi.

Matt Bennett of the center-left group Third Way said that Obama is for centrist ideas such as middle-class tax cuts and seems likely to wait on contentious goals such as overhauling the U.S. health care system.

“We do believe him when he says he’s a moderate,” Bennett said. “We think that’s how he’s going to govern.”

Even after nearly two years in the spotlight, little is understood about the 47-year-old first-term senator’s approach to leadership. His resume: community organizer, eight years as state legislator, and less than four as U.S. senator.

As a lawmaker, he has displayed a knack for working with Republicans on a handful of favorite issues. But he has devoted most of his time in the Senate to running for president. Unlike the past seven presidents, he was never a governor or vice president. And unlike John F. Kennedy, the last senator to move directly to the presidency, Obama has not commanded troops in wartime.

Personally, he’s a bit of an enigma, too.

He did lead his campaign, a huge, nearly billion-dollar operation. Throughout, he showed himself to have a detached, cerebral decision-making style that can sometimes seem out of sync with his natural charisma.

He also showed himself to be a highly disciplined, CEO-style manager. The leak-proof, tightly managed and orderly Obama operation mimics the Bush White House, and flows from “No Drama Obama” himself — a man so focused that he didn’t give himself a day off from working out, even the morning after winning the presidency.

In keeping with his measured demeanor, Obama did nothing flashy his first day

as president-elect, keeping to breakfast with his family and a thank-you visit to campaign workers.

All that said, he’s got plenty of things in his favor.

First and foremost, he was elected exactly the way he wanted to be — in an electoral landslide. He took not only traditionally Democratic states, but once-solid Republican territory too. That allows him to claim, credibly, a broad mandate for his ideas.

So the Democrats who run Capitol Hill, for all their savvy in the ways of Washington and potential disagreements with their president, might think twice about clashing too aggressively with him. On a more practical level, they will not want to risk missing out during the midterm election cycle two years from now on Obama’s eye-popping fundraising skills.

Further, the much-vaunted technological side of Obama’s campaign means he could appeal directly to voters around recalcitrant lawmakers, using e-mail, text messages, Facebook and other tools.

Still, Obama’s honeymoon with the public — both anxious and hopeful — could be fragile.

One of the many revelers who spontaneously flocked to the White House after Obama’s win, chanting, screaming and waving signs like, “Why Wait? Evict Bush Now,” summed it up.

“I came down here to make a prayer ... that we’ll be able to change the nation and the world,” said Hollis Gentry.



BASEBALL



(AP) Age is no issue for Greg Maddux when it comes to fielding his position. The 42-year-old pitcher won his record 18th Gold Glove on Wednesday while outfielder Shane Victorino of the World Series champion Philadelphia Phillies was among five first-time winners in the National League.

Slick shortstop Jimmy Rollins joined Victorino from the Phillies, winning for the second consecutive season. The New York Mets also had two winners: outfielder Carlos Beltran and third baseman David Wright, both of whom repeated.

"Winning a Gold Glove is a tremendous honor for me in what was already an amazing season," Victorino said. "I take a lot of pride in playing defense and to get the recognition of the managers and coaches around the league is a great compliment."

Other first-time honorees for defensive excellence were St. Louis catcher Yadier Molina, San Diego first baseman Adrian Gonzalez, Cincinnati second baseman Brandon Phillips and Pittsburgh outfielder Nate McLouth.

The Houston Astros, who committed 16 fewer errors than any other major league team, did not have a winner.

Rawlings has presented Gold Gloves annually since 1957. Managers and coaches vote on players in their own leagues before the regular season ends, but they may not select members of their own teams.

American League winners will be announced Thursday.

Pondering retirement after 355 wins, Maddux has been the NL recipient for pitchers every year since 1990 with the exception of 2003, when Mike Hampton interrupted the streak.

"I can't imagine winning two, much less 18," Wright said. "But I think it goes to show you how much pride he takes in winning."

Last year with the Padres, Maddux snapped a tie with third baseman Brooks Robinson and pitcher Jim Kaat for the most Gold Gloves.

Maddux spent most of this season in San Diego before an Aug. 19 trade to the Los Angeles Dodgers. He struggled in seven starts down the stretch for the NL West champions, going 2-4 with a 5.09 ERA to finish the year 8-13 with a 4.22 mark overall.

The four-time Cy Young Award winner may have lost a yard on that pinpoint, tailing fastball, but his reflexes are still quick as a cat's on the mound. At 6 feet, 170 pounds, his simple windup has always left him in perfect fielding position after each pitch.

"I've seen some balls hit pretty hard right back at him," Wright said. "Those kind of reactions at 42, you just don't see that."

Maddux worked four innings out of the bullpen during the playoffs and the Dodgers were eliminated by Philadelphia in the NL championship series. He filed for free agency after the World Series.

Victorino moved from right field to center this season to replace Aaron Rowand, a 2007 Gold Glove winner for Philadelphia before signing with the San Francisco Giants.

McLouth's award capped a breakout season for the 25th-round draft pick in his first year as a full-time starter. A bright spot for the last-place Pirates, he showed off his strong arm

in the July All-Star game at Yankee Stadium by throwing out a runner at the plate to keep the score tied in the 11th inning.

"I am thrilled," said McLouth, the first Pirates player to win a Gold Glove since shortstop Jay Bell in 1993. "I worked especially hard on my defense from the beginning of spring training and I'm glad all that work paid off with this award. The Pirates have a long list of past winners like Roberto Clemente, Bill Mazeroski, Tony Pena and Andy Van Slyke. I'm especially honored to be included on that list."

All three NL outfield Gold Gloves went to center fielders.

"I take a lot of pride in being a complete player," Beltran said. "Even on the days when I don't get a hit, I feel I can make a difference in the field."

Phillips lost out to Arizona's Orlando Hudson last season despite leading the NL in fielding percentage, which he did again this year.

"I think this thing here is the best thing that ever happened to me," Phillips said.

Winning the Gold Glove raises Phillips' salary next season by \$250,000 to \$5 million. The award earns Beltran a \$100,000 bonus, while Gonzalez, Maddux, Molina, Rollins and Wright get \$50,000 bonuses.



CHINA

(TimesOnline) The most senior Chinese official to visit the self-ruled island of Taiwan in decades arrived this morning in the island to a red-carpet reception worthy almost of a visiting head of state.

That welcome underscores the determination of the island's new president, Ma Ying-jeou, who took office less than six months ago, to preside over a new warming of ties across the narrow straits that divide the island from the Chinese mainland.

China's Communist rulers, who claim the island as sovereign territory and have threatened war should it declare independence, have adopted a similarly cordial tone to try to reduce the chances of conflict and to recognise President Ma's shift away from the confrontational policies of his predecessor.

Wang Yi, head of China's Taiwan Affairs Office, said: "The hard ice between the two sides has already been shattered, the road has already been opened. This will go down as a great event in the history of relations across the Straits."

Security was tight at the main international airport outside the island's capital, Taipei, for the arrival of Chen Yunlin, head of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS). The negotiations are held between two quasi-government bodies – ARATS and the Straits Exchange Foundation – to avoid any hint of a formal recognition by either side of the other's government. China regards Taiwan as a renegade province while Taiwan has called itself the Republic of China since Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) Generalissimo fled the mainland after the losing the civil war to Mao Zedong's armies in 1949.

Thousands of police were deployed at the airport and at the Grand Hotel that dominates Taipei and have erected barbed wire barricades as well as large nets to catch any eggs that could be hurled by protesters opposed to Mr Chen's visit.

The pro-independence Taiwan Society North has offered rewards of 1,000 New Taiwan dollars (15 pounds) to protesters who succeed in hitting Mr Chen's body with eggs and as much as 10,000 dollars (150 pounds) for anyone who can target his face.

Three days of negotiations will begin tomorrow and the two sides are expected to sign a raft of agreements building on landmark talks – the first in years – after President Ma took office when a deal was reached on regular direct flights between the former foes.

The talks will focus on economic issues and will avoid touching on sensitive political topics. A pact will be signed enabling the direct flights to cease the current practice of transiting through the air space of a third territory, cutting the length of a flight from Taipei to Shanghai to 67 minutes from 150.

President Ma has repeatedly tried to reassure the public that the talks do not mark a concession to Beijing and the island's sovereignty will not be compromised. But he said any protests must be legal and peaceful. "It is not such a bad thing to let Chen Yunlin understand Taiwanese views."

The island's main opposition party, concerned that the island's government is becoming too close to China said it would begin a three-day protest outside the parliament building in Taipei later on Monday and expand the demonstration on Thursday. A few days ago protesters in the southern city of Tainan pushed a visiting Chinese official to the ground, outraging Beijing.



NIGERIA

(AFP) Southern Nigeria's main armed group MEND said Wednesday it had freed a Lebanese hostage from his kidnappers two days after his abduction.

"A commando unit from the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) today, Wednesday, November 5, 2008 at about 1700 Hrs conducted a successful rescue of Mr Melad Nasari as promised, from deep inside the bush where he was confined by his abductors," said a MEND statement.

"During the course of the operation, they heard the frantic shout for help from an individual who introduced himself as Mr. Patrick Akorodu, a manager with Zenith Bank Omoku branch in Rivers state.

"He said he was a victim of the criminal gang that abducted the Lebanese national," the statement added.

Both men were in the safe custody of MEND and were now en route to a drop off zone where they would be handed to contacts from the state security service.

Nigerian police said on Monday unidentified gunmen had kidnapped a Lebanese engineer in southern Nigeria's oil hub of Port Harcourt.

MEND, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, claims to be fighting for a greater share of the oil revenue for the local population in southern Nigeria.

It is the country's most prominent armed militant group and has distanced itself from the abduction and offered to rescue the Lebanese from the kidnappers.

"This assistance is purely a goodwill gesture and does not affiliate us with the (Nigerian) government in any way," said MEND on Monday.

In the past three years, Nigeria has seen a spate of kidnappings both of local and foreign oil workers and of relatives of prominent politicians, often by criminal gangs seeking a ransom, but sometimes also for political ends.

Since the beginning of 2006, militant attacks have cut Nigeria's oil output by more than one quarter. Production currently stands at between 1.8 and two million barrels a day against 2.6 million barrels a day two years ago.