



KEYSTONE Aviation

A Special Mission

Bravo Company, 1/150th supports
joint Special Forces training



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KEYSTONE

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On the Cover:

Iraqi special forces rush into a Black hawk helicopter following a joint air-insertion training exercise Oct. 2. Soldiers from the Pennsylvania National Guard's Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 150th Aviation Regiment, supported the training exercise. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew Jones)

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A Special Mission

Story and Photos by Sgt. Matthew E. Jones

Members of Company B, 1st Battalion, 150th Aviation Regiment, assisted U.S. and Iraqi special operations forces in a joint training exercise Oct. 2.

This was the third in a series of three exercises involving the aviators from the 28th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Keystone.

The training mission started as a real mission would, with a thorough briefing. The aviators and crew reviewed the landing zone would be, the aircraft's landing direction, a timeline, landing formation, maps, routes, contingency plans.

First Lt. Thomas Kivlen, a platoon leader in Co. B from Plainsboro, N.J., started the briefing by stressing the importance of the training. "The stuff we are doing here directly relates to what those soldiers may have to do in the future," said Kivlen. "This will directly help prepare for future missions and assaults."

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Danielle Wolak of Reading Pa., one of several pilots who participated in the training missions, said the training was especially gratifying for her. "I was here in 2003 when everything was starting and now I'm here near the very end," said Wolak, a



Above: Four Black Hawk helicopters from the Pennsylvania National Guard's Company B, 1st Battalion, 150th Aviation Regiment, prepare to land during a joint air-insertion training exercise Oct. 2 in Iraq. The exercise was the third in a series of three.

Below: Iraqi special operations forces exit a Black hawk helicopter during the mission.



Pennsylvania National Guard Soldier. “It’s nice to know that we’re helping them take back their country and we’re training them for what they’re going to need to do when we’re gone.”

Warrant Officer Kyle Braun, a Pennsylvania National Guard member who actually calls Indianapolis home, echoed his fellow pilot’s sentiments. “For future operations, they can do this on their own,” said Braun, referring to the Iraqi forces. “When we leave, they should be able to do their own air assaults and support their own operations.”

The pilots agreed that the transition process is already well underway. According to Wolak, her unit has not been operating completely independently. “We do everything hand-in-hand with the Iraqis,” said Wolak. “Everything is in



Iraqi special operations forces wait for a Black Hawk helicopter to land following a joint air-insertion training exercise Oct. 2. Soldiers from the Pennsylvania National Guard’s Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 150th Aviation Regiment, supported the training exercise.

coordination with IA and IP, so they know what is going on,” she said, referring to the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police.

According to Wolak, the joint mission was just another stepping stone toward Iraqi independence. “Today’s goal was to go out and get the Iraqi special (operations) forces trained and return safely,” Wolak concluded. “And we completed that goal.”



Keystone Clerks Rescue Soldiers After Crash at Balad

Story and Photos by Sgt. Neil Gussman

Pfc. Dennis Lucas of Gratz, Pa., and Spc. Nathan Montgomery of Chester, W.Va., both clerks in the motor pool of Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment, 28th Combat Aviation Brigade, helped perform first aid on victims after a Black Hawk helicopter crashed at Joint Base Balad Sept. 19.

Spc. Michael S. Cote, 20, of Denham Springs, La., was killed in the crash and 12 others were injured.

On that night, Montgomery and Lucas were in the containerized housing unit they shared preparing to return to Contingency Operating Base Adder the following morning. According to Montgomery, at roughly 8 p.m. he and Lucas heard a loud boom. Since there had been thunderstorms in the area during the preceding days, they first thought the noise was thunder. “We kept seeing rain and lightning and no thunder,” Lucas said. “So we thought this was the thunder.”

Montgomery went outside to smoke a cigarette and saw a man run up to the fence opposite their CHU and yell for help. He said he was the pilot of a helicopter that just crashed. Montgomery yelled for Lucas. “I was in flip-flops,” Lucas said, “so I put on sneakers and ran.” They ran to the fence, ripped a section of the fence from the ground, crawled under it and followed the pilot to the crash site.



Pfc. Dennis Lucas (left) and Spc. Nathan Montgomery

dier died in Lucas’ arms. Lucas held him while he died.”

After Cote was taken from Lucas, he continued to assist with getting other Soldiers clear of the wreckage. Montgomery stayed with his Soldier.

“He is a sergeant and crew chief of the Black Hawk,” Montgomery said. “He has a wife and two boys. The boys play soccer. I know all about his family. I know their names. The thing I want to know the most is how he is doing. He was fading at the end, starting to lose consciousness. I want to know if he made it.”

According to Montgomery, the EMS crews had to cut through a fence to get to the crash site and all of the patients had to be carried 150 yards to the vehicle. Montgomery was at the front of the litter for three patients. “I never was the lead guy on the litter in training, but I remembered what to do,” he said.

According to Montgomery, other witnesses said the pilot did an amazing job to get the Black Hawk down in the one open field in the entire area.

“There were (shipping containers) and CHUs and fences all around and he got it down in the one open area,” he said. “There were surgeons on scene in (physical training) gear. People just ran to the scene. The last guy out was a really big sergeant with a broken leg who had to be cut from the wreckage.”

“I felt like I was a passenger in my own body,” said Lucas. “I was calm the whole time. I knew what I was doing and I did what they trained us to do in (Combat Life Saver training). I thought the whole thing took about 20 minutes but it was an hour and a half.”

Lucas believes the training made the difference in how he and Montgomery reacted compared to others at the scene. “Some people ran up to the crash then stopped. Others just watched. I never ran so fast in my life as that hundred yards from the fence to the wreckage and I just went to work. Army, Marines, Air Force people all worked together to help.”

“The CLS training really kicked in,” said Montgomery. “We didn’t think. We just knew what to do. The pilot yelled for help. We were there so we went. Anybody would have done the same. I tell you what though, these guys are burned into our heads.”



KEYSTONE VIGNETTES



Sgt. Joy Haley, a local network manager in the 28th Combat Aviation Brigade, repairs a broken computer and printer at Camp Adder, Iraq.

Haley, a proud native of Pittsburgh, Pa., is attached to the 28th through the Pennsylvania National Guard's 128th Brigade Support Battalion. At home, she has a different occupation.

"I know it's kind of unusual given my size (5 feet and less than 100 pounds) but back home I am a corrections officer at the Allegheny County Jail," said Haley. She met a corrections officer who encouraged her to give it a try.

When Haley returns home near the end of 2009, she wants to catch up on the things she has been missing with her family. "My husband Mike, who is a transmission mechanic, and I have five children, three of which are my stepchildren," said Haley. Her children range in age from four to 22. "A year is a long time away from home," she said. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew Jones)



Sgt. Steven Gabriel, a native of Kane, Pa., is a motor transport operator assigned to Company A, 628th Aviation Support Battalion.

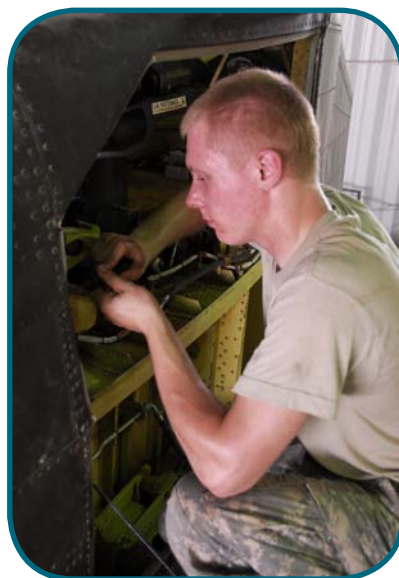
Gabriel is a logger and he harvests wood for Seneca Resources, cutting the timber which is then shipped to the mills. He enjoys bowling and is a member of a local bowling league. Gabriel also spends his free time hunting and riding four wheelers.

After he returns home from deployment, Gabriel plans to take a trip to Disney-world in Florida with his wife and family. He also plans to take some time off to relax before returning to work. (Photo by Sgt. Andy Mehler)

Pvt. Jessie Harbold, 20, of Suffield, Conn., recently enlisted in the Army National Guard and is on his first deployment to Iraq with Task Force Keystone. He is a mechanic both in and out of the Guard working as a CH-47 Chinook aircraft maintenance technician.

At home he worked as an automotive technician. His passion is Classic '60s muscle cars. He currently owns a 1968 Chevrolet Chevelle 350 fully restored in Burgundy with a black leather interior.

Harbold hopes to work as an aircraft repair technician after deployment. (Photo by Sgt. Neil Gussman)



Sgt. Tova Faust, a CH-47 Chinook helicopter mechanic, logs onto a computer during her secondary assignment as the sergeant in charge of the computer and phone trailer at Camp Adder, Iraq.

The Denver native is attached to the 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment. During the deployment she is taking online courses with the Metropolitan State College of Denver majoring in communications theory.

Following the deployment, she plans on moving to San Diego, entering ROTC and becoming an Army helicopter pilot.

Faust previously deployed to Iraq with the Colorado National Guard's 2/135th in 2006 and 2007. Following that deployment she moved to Florida where she joined her current unit, the 1108th Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot, based out of Gulfport, Miss.

When she is not being a soldier or student, Faust is a beauty consultant and enjoys participating in and coaching rhythmic gymnastics. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew Jones)

SECTION SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNICATIONS

"You can talk about us, but not without us"

Story by Master Sgt. Kevin Rowland, Capt. Alexander Quintinilla, 1st Lt. Matthew Myers

The 28th Combat Aviation Brigade's communications section (S-6) consists of individuals from several different units, many of which had never met before January 2009. Of the 18 Soldiers attached to the S-6 only five of them are organic to the unit. Despite this, there is a noticeable cohesion within the section. Much of that has to do with them hitting the ground running when the mobilization for their unit's deployment to Iraq began.

As soon as the main body arrived at Fort Sill, Okla., for mobilization training there was a need for share-point and shared-drive technology, and an influx of help desk tickets kept the section busy throughout the whole train-up period. While making sure the brigade headquarters could perform its regular duties, the S-6 shop was also preparing the mission readiness exercise site for operation. There, the Command Post Platforms were set up so that each of the battalions could operate the radios within their operation centers.

Tactical satellite radios were utilized for the first time in order to communicate with the Forward Arming and Refueling Point in Texas. Blue Force Trackers were installed to keep track of helicopter locations and as a means to communicate with the pilots. The radio personnel were brand new to aviation and had never seen the VRC 100 HF radio, but that didn't stop them from setting that up and preparing it for primary communications with the pilots.

Prior to leaving Kuwait, the Brigade was told that it would be going to Tallil and not to Balad, Iraq, where they had originally planned to deploy. Instead of moving into a TOC that was completely functional with computers, phones and radios, this TOC was practically empty. Network lines had to be run. Computers, phones and radios had to be placed in specific locations. This is the point of the deployment when the section became a true team. The Soldiers regularly worked 12 to 16 hours each day with no time off for a month, running more than 400 network lines and setting up more than 180 computers and 80 phones. Several Soldiers were also working outside of their military occupational specialty to accomplish this mission. After the majority of these systems were placed the, shop began 24-hour operations in the TOC.

The 28th CAB signal community, led by the brigade S-6, received the unique opportunity to be the first to deploy and utilize the WIN-T Increment 1 tactical communications equipment in support of Operation

Iraqi Freedom. Signal Soldiers from the brigade shop, as well as each battalion S-6 section and a large portion from Company C, 628th Aviation Support Battalion, spent numerous months prior to deploying putting in many extra hours becoming technical experts on the newly fielded equipment. Once in country, each assemblage was quickly put into action, providing a robust tactical network that operated in conjunction with the emplaced strategic network. The brigade S-6 and 28th CAB network operations teams (NETOPs) worked tirelessly to maximize the benefits of the cutting-edge technology and overcome the challenges of newly fielded equipment, maintaining a successful operational rate exceeding 95 percent.

One of the highlights of the deployment that exemplified the cohesiveness and cooperation of the brigade S-6, 28th CAB NETOPs, and battalion S-6 sections was when the entire Multi-National Division-South tactical network migrated from one satellite to a new satellite. This highly technical changeover was executed nearly flawlessly through excellent communication, teamwork, and technical skill from the highest levels of command down to the operators working the satellite transportable terminal. The proficient and professional conduct by all teams involved had a profound operational impact in that the bandwidth freed up by the timely migration was able to quickly be reassigned to numerous Predator drones in need operating in Afghanistan. This endeavor is a testament to the proficiency maintained by the Soldiers throughout the duration of the deployment.

Much of the communication support performed by the signal Soldiers is done behind the scenes. The operations and maintenance of 15 physical servers and eight virtual servers allows the brigade to share information, improve situational awareness and maintain command and control of all elements. These servers provide basic services such as file sharing, printing, backup-and-restores services and more complex services such as allowing the commanders and Soldiers to obtain an automated view of friendly activity and supply movement; plan fires, receive situation and intelligence reports and view the airspace.

The S-6 section has become a serogate family which has made the deployment a little easier to bear. Although they are from different units you would not know it now, as they are now one cohesive unit.



A Humorous Reflection

Story and Photo by Sgt. Neil Gussman

Sgt. Jason Guge, who is serving in Iraq as a Black Hawk helicopter mechanic in Company D, 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment, became a minor Internet star recently.

On Sept. 5 Guge created a humorous page on the popular social networking site Facebook devoted to the physical training belt, a highly reflective belt worn by everyone at night at Contingency Operating Base Adder, and throughout Iraq, for safety purposes. Of course, Guge is not the first Soldier to find humor and irony in the wearing of the fluorescent adornment in a hostile zone, but he is the first to give Facebook users a place to exchange pictures, opinions and jokes about the glowing band.



In the first month after Guge created the page, he managed to attract more than 1,000 followers. By doing this, he effectively passed the threshold at which Facebook assigns a dedicated URL to a page, acknowledging his page is popular enough for its own address: www.facebook.com/ptbelt.

Fans can come to the site to talk about their views on the wear, care and sometimes adoration of their mandatory waist band.

There is a PT belt creed for the truly devoted, a PT belt historical timeline, a PT belt prayer and Guge's personal favorite, a picture from the HBO series Band of Brothers with the World War II heroes clad in PT belts.

In addition, there is a PT belt adoption application, lost belt amber alerts and fashion advice for those who want to dress their fluorescent best.

facebook.com/ptbelt



Pickup Volleyball

Sgt. 1st Class Dale Shade organizes coed pickup volleyball games every Friday night, starting at 7 p.m. at the House of Pain volleyball courts at Camp Adder.

He said he chose the sport because it can be played by both highly skilled and amateur participants. "I basically just wanted to do something involving physi-

cal activity as a weekly MWR event for the 28th CAB Soldiers here," said Shade. "I thought volleyball was the most universal of the different sports and activities that I'm into."

Shade and others are always willing to lend a hand to those who need it, but in addition to the competition, the light-hearted play makes it accessible and fun for everyone.

Sgt. Angela Johnston of the 28th Combat Aviation Brigade Headquarters Company said "It's fun. We laugh and joke and just have a great time."

The turnout usually consists of mostly 28th CAB HQ Soldiers, but civilians, Ugandan guards and troops from other branches have made appearances as well, and of course, it is open to everyone at Camp Adder who would like to participate..

If you would like to attend, send an email to Shade at dale.shade@iraq.centcom.mil.

Keystone MWR Events at FOB Delta

Submit your events to TFKeystone@gmail.com

Sgt. Victor Hernandez

Salsa Lessons
9-11 p.m. Weds. nights

Latin Night DJ
8-11 p.m. Fri. nights

At The Theater

Classes and Tutoring with
Sgt. Geneshan Harichandran
at the Education Center
Math classes, preparation for
the JAST and ACT
and more

P 90X Exercise Class
by CW3 Tim Lelie

Every day!

6 a.m.
2 p.m.
8 p.m.



It's time to follow up with legal assistance

For Soldiers who sought legal assistance services for family or civilian-related matters: With our transfer-of-authority dates fast approaching, we want to ensure Soldiers who initiated legal matters through our office have the opportunity to resolve the matters or receive guidance on how to proceed once we redeploy. Such legal matters may include divorce, custody, child support or financial issues. Some of these issues, especially divorce, include timelines that must be followed in order to complete the process. If you have any questions on how to proceed, contact JAG immediately at (318) 833-5840.

Points of contact for legal assistance are Staff Sgt. Patty Lundsted and Sgt. 1st Class JoAnn Tresco.

Keystone MWR events at Camp Adder

Financial Peace University

Financial Peace University is a life-changing program that teaches you how to make the right decisions with your money. You'll be empowered with the practical skill and confidence needed to achieve your financial goals and experience true financial peace!

When: Fridays, 4 Sept 09 @1900 Hrs
(13 weeks)
Where: Post Chapel

Who: Anyone who desires to improve their financial situation with some time proven principles

Cost: Normally this will cost \$100 per person but you are receiving this course **ABSOLUTELY FREE!**

Guaranteed: To save you money and make you money if you follow these principles!

POC: Chaplain (LTC) Douglas Compton
28 CAB, Brigade Chaplain 833 - 5865

Submit your events to
TFKeystone@gmail.com

South Side Salsa

Organized by SFC JoAnn Tresco
with DJ WO1 Jesse Lonon

Saturdays at bldg. 713,
behind Warriors DFAC

Lessons from 2000-2100
Music starts at 1930

Volleyball with
SFC Dale Shade

Fridays at the
House of Pain
volleyball court

1800-2100

28th CAB Game Nite
Building 713 w/ CPT
Suzanne Williamson

Rummy, Spades,
Pinochle, Dominos,
Chess, Scrabble...

Weds. 2000-2200

Beyond Narnia
with SGT Neil
Gussman

MWR Library
Mondays at 2000

[ngussman@
gmail.com](mailto:ngussman@gmail.com)

Tallil Dead Poets
Society with SGT Neil
Gussman

MWR Library
Tuesdays at 2000

[ngussman@
gmail.com](mailto:ngussman@gmail.com)

Power Yoga by Dave Kocian

Tuesday, Thursday
1800 at The House of Pain

Saturday
0900 at the South Gym

Sunday
1600 at the South Gym

Please bring a mat, blanket or towel
for floor exercises.

POC: david.e.kocian@us.army.mil



Salsa Night

EVERY
MONDAY
WEDNESDAY
FRIDAY

6PM - 2000 - 2345

FEATURING
28TH CAB'S
DJ Garcia
DJ Almonte

JD
Fresh Designs

Weight Watchers – Momentum Plan
NOW on COB Adder

Mondays - 1900
Warrior Medical Training Site Classroom
Bldg 307, Across from the Post Office

Wednesdays - 1030 and 1900
Bldg 7449D, Rear Door

POC: SFC JoAnn Tresco, DSN 833-5840

Filipino & Okinawan Martial Arts

HOUSE OF PAIN FITNESS CENTER
SUN. & TUE 1900 - 2000

POC: Glen Valencia
glen.valencia@us.army.mil

Tallil's 1st Latin Dance Competition
"SO YOU THINK YOU CAN SALSA?"

Friday, October 16th
Memorial Hall
1930 hrs

POC: SGT MONICA BARNES
MONICA.BARNES@IRAQ.CENTCOM.MIL

REGISTRATION DEADLINE
EXTENDED TO: 10 October
2009

