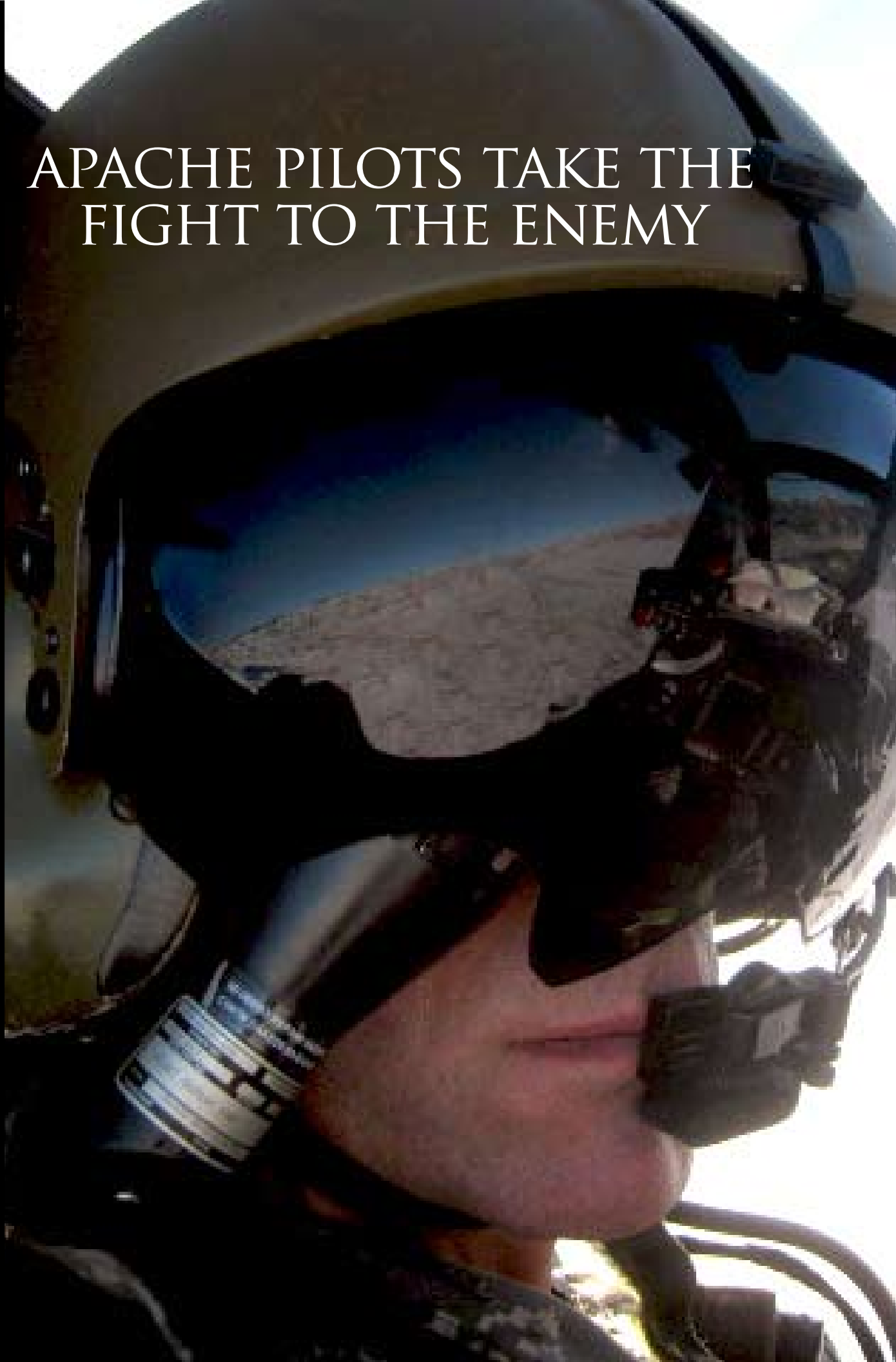




FALCON FLYER

APACHE PILOTS TAKE THE
FIGHT TO THE ENEMY



February 2010

FLIGHT SCHEDULE - FEB 2010



Spec. Monica K. Smith

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Soldiers from Task Force Hippo work to attach a blade to the body of a Mi-17, Jan. 7 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.



CW1 Robert Kenny

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Soldiers from Task Force Knighthawk receive addition forward arming and refueling point training.



Spec. Jose Villa

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CORRECTIONS: In the January 2010 issue, TF Viper's transfer of authority ceremony took place at FOB Salerno and two photos were not properly attributed: Photo 4 on page 26 and photo 3 on page 27 both were taken by Sgt. Scott Tant of TF Brawler.

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COVER PHOTO

The Afghanistan landscape reflects off the helmet of Chief Warrant Officer 5 Chris Batt, standardization officer for Task Force Falcon, Dec. 25 as he flies an Apache in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Full story on page 10



Black Hawks from Task Force Falcon land at Forward Operating Base Shank, Jan. 18

FALCON 6 SENDS...

Col. Don Galli
CAB Commander

Hello from Bagram! It's amazing to think we've been in Afghanistan for almost three months already. Our Soldiers quickly acclimatized to the thin mountainous air and began the hard work of gaining and maintaining the support of the Afghan people in our mission to defeat the insurgency. We have been extremely successful in providing premiere air-ground integration to our ground forces and coalition partners.

Our victories have not been limited to the battlefield. In a country where children can fall prey to the insurgency, education can be the long-term solution to defeating the extremists. In that spirit, last month a few of our Soldiers from A Co., Task Force Knighthawk, took it upon themselves to gather school supplies to give to children anxious to further their education. The fight in Afghanistan is multifaceted, and it will take both lethal and non-lethal measures to win. The generosity of the Soldiers of A Co., to the people in Afghanistan will have a more lasting effect than many things we will do here.

The Marne Air Brigade is truly becoming a coalition of nations and partners. We are already working with the French (TF Lafayette) and the Polish (TF White Eagle). During this past month, we welcomed TF Hippo from the Czech Republic Air Force and soon, we will begin working with the South Koreans as well. These aviation units from other countries provide invaluable assets and skills to the Marne Air Brigade. They also symbolize that this is truly an international effort to help the Afghan people and defeat the enemies of Afghanistan. This coming month, we will begin one of our most important missions, by joining forces with the Afghan National Army Air Corps (ANAAAC). The goal is to train them and ultimately transfer responsibility for all aviation operations to the ANAAAC. This is an enormous responsibility that TF Falcon Sol-

diers have accepted with pride and will accomplish with the utmost professionalism.

Two National Guard units have become a part of the Falcon Brigade as well. The Delaware Army National Guard's A Co., 3-238, will augment our air movement capabilities across the battlefield and provide us with more versatility in Regional Command - East. The Alabama and Georgia National Guards', A Co., 1-169, brought twelve medium lift Chinooks to the fight and they have been conducting full spectrum combat operations to include air assault and air movement operations of personnel, equipment and supplies.

Since our arrival in theater, TF ODIN-A and TF Dark Knight joined TF Falcon. Task Force ODIN-A, which stands for "Observe, Detect, Identify, Neutralize - Afghanistan" provides long duration surveillance through the use of unmanned aerial systems like the Warrior-A and Hunter. Their aircraft furnish timely, actionable intelligence to ground commanders, making ODIN-A the unit of choice to interdict the IED network before the devices can be emplaced.

Task Force Dark Knight, the 321st Military Intelligence Battalion out of the great state of Texas, conducts full-spectrum intelligence collection operations throughout Regional Command - East and the Joint Area of Operations.

Both ODIN-A and Dark Knight have proven to be essential elements in the success of TF Falcon.

I am consistently inspired by the work that I see being done by all of our Soldiers and units here in Afghanistan. I am at the same time humbled by all that our Dog Face Soldiers are doing and proud of what I know the Marne Air Brigade will accomplish. I am equally proud of our most important partners in this mission - our families who continue the hard work of keeping the home fires burning. We could not successfully complete our mission without your love, prayers, letters, packages and encouragement. You are the backbone of the Marne Air Brigade and for that I thank you.

Marne Air! Rock of the Marne!
Falcon 6



Spc. Monica K. Smith

The Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations Lt. Gen. James Thurman (fifth from left) stops to pose with leaders from Task Force Falcon after meeting to discuss future operations Jan. 12 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

FALCON 7 SENDS...

Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley
CAB Command Sergeant Major

Greetings once again from Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Time continues to pass quickly and it's really hard to believe we are one fourth of the way through our tour. The bad winter weather we expected has thus far avoided us and we are enjoying daily temperatures in the 50's. The daily flight schedule continues to grow and our maintainers are doing a fantastic job keeping our aircraft flying.

The Christmas holiday period was tough on everyone but thanks to the unbelievable amount of support from our friends and families back home we were able to soldier through. I can't thank everyone enough for all the cards and care packages that were sent to our Soldiers.

I would like to welcome the newest members of the Task Force Falcon Team. The first is Col. Schwarz and the Soldiers of TF Hippo, 232nd Helicopter Squadron from the Czech Republic. They will be providing utility helicopter support to TF Falcon flying their MI-171

Helicopters. The second unit is Company A, 3-238 "Misfits" of the Delaware Army National Guard. Captain White, 1st Sgt. Olechny and their Soldiers will become part of TF Knighthawk and fly VIP/General Support missions in their UH-60A/L Aircraft.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the below listed Senior Noncommissioned Officers who were selected for promotion to Master Sergeant. Their hard work and dedication set them apart from their peers with only 8% of those eligible for promotion being selected. Hopefully we will see some of these outstanding NCO's appointed to First Sergeant very soon!

SFC(P) Matthew Osborne – TF Talon
SFC(P) Spencer Foster – TF Knighthawk
SFC(P) Earl Gordon – TF Lighthorse
SFC(P) Candace Ford - TF Workhorse
SFC(P) Dempsey Walker – TF Workhorse
SFC(P) Karen Hughes – TF Workhorse
SFC(P) Torino Deguzman – Home Detachment

Marne Air! Rock of the Marne!
Falcon 7



Spc. Monica K. Smith

Task Force Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley (right) appoints Master Sgt. Jerry Cowart to first sergeant, Jan. 1, at Bagram Airfield.

SIGHT & PICTURE



Staff Sgt. Bryan Welch

Snow falls and gathers on a TF Knighthawk Kiowa Warrior as it sits on the flight line, Feb. 7 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.



Spc. Jose Villa

Sergeant Michael Montforto (left), goes over information on the supply support activity with Sgt. Latonya Chisolm, both members of A Co., TF Workhorse as she cross trains him, Feb. 4 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.



Sgt. Scott Tant

Sergeant Jason Graham (left side in the Black Hawk) and Staff Sgt. Darcy Munoz (right side), both with C Co., MEDEVAC, TF Brawler, conduct live hoist training with a Soldier from the 27th Engineer Battalion, TF Tiger, Jan. 12 at Forward Operating Base Shank.



Spc. Grant Marzolf

Specialist Mitchell Hough, A Co., TF Knighthawk, conducts maintenance on a Black Hawk, Jan.27, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.



A Chinook from F Co., TF Lighthorse lands at an Afghanistan Border Police Observation Post during a resupply mission for the combined action partners B Troop, TF Rough Rider and the 6th Afghanistan Border Police Kandak, Jan. 23 on the Afgh:anistan-Pakistan border.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Cierra Peterson

LEGAL NOTES

Staff Sgt. Eric Boatwright

Judge Advocate General Office

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind the Task Force Falcon Soldiers of the variety of ways in which the Judge Advocate Corps is here to support the command, as well as the individual Soldier. The attorneys are clearly tasked with advising the command on a range of legal issues, and prosecuting any cases at a Court-Martial. Many times, however, paralegals are under-utilized due to misconceptions about our responsibilities and duties in the Army. Our MOS encompasses six core disciplines: Military Justice, Legal Assistance, International and Operational Law, Administrative and Civil Law, Contract and Fiscal Law, and Claims. In this space, I'll discuss them in each newsletter.

The Army tasks us with providing legal support to the command. The most obvious way in which we do that is by assisting them with Military Justice. Lots of Soldiers see us as adversaries, but in truth, we are there to make sure that any Article 15 proceeding, Court-Martial, or separation (popularly known as a "chapter") is handled in accordance with the law and regulation.

Doing our job properly ensures that commanders stay within the guidelines set for them, and that the rights of Soldiers are not ignored. If we allow a Soldier's rights to be disregarded, then that Soldier could receive punishment that is too severe, or could be separated from the Army incorrectly. Those types of outcomes are not good for anyone, including the command, which relies on Soldiers' belief that their leaders will treat everyone fairly, and uphold justice at every opportunity.

The Legal Team works hard behind the scenes to ensure that Soldiers are treated fairly, to identify trends for the command, and attempt to focus on an issue before it becomes a true problem. Ultimately, we assist commanders to uphold the values that we all proclaim.

STICKY FINGERS SENDS A LITTLE TASTE OF HOME

PHOTOS by SPC. MONICA K. SMITH

Sticky Fingers Rib House, a small chain restaurant with a store front in Savannah, sent Soldiers of Task Force Falcon two boxes full of their barbecue sauce. The Marne Café dining facility used the sauces during their wing-bar lunch, Jan. 14 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.



(Above) Sergeant Lajuane Lee, Task Force Workhorse, arranges the Sticky Fingers sauces between two trays of chicken wings, Jan 14 at the Marne Cafe, Bagram Airfield. (Top right) First Sgt. Richard Szlachta, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, TF Knighthawk pours Sticky Fingers sauce on his tray to dip his chicken wings in, Jan. 14 at the Marne Cafe, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (Bottom right) Sergeant First Class Aurelio Luna, HHC, TF Falcon, pours sauces into pans for Soldiers to use during lunch, Jan. 14 at the Marne Cafe, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.





FALCONS & HIPPOS COMBINE FORCES

Soldiers from Task Force Falcon assisted Task Force Hippo, an aviation unit from the Czech Republic, assemble their aircraft.

Story & photos by Spc. Monica K. Smith



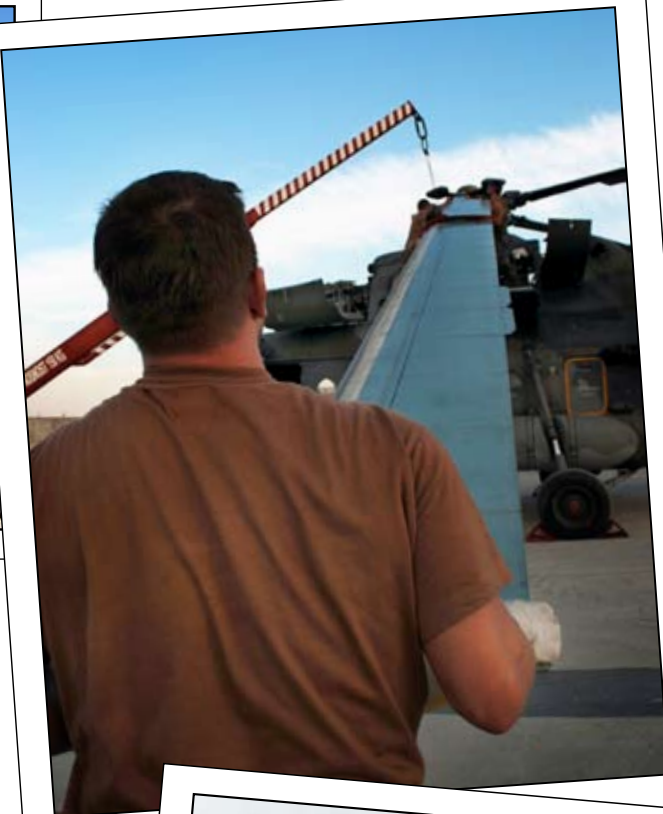
They didn't dress like the rest of the Task Force Falcon Soldiers, they didn't sound like the rest of the TF Falcon Soldiers but that didn't stop TF Falcon from lending a hand to their fellow comrades, TF Hippo in assembling their aircraft, Jan. 7 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

"As the authority for rotary wing aviation in RC-East, the responsibility falls on us to ensure all necessary resources are made available to Task Force Hippo in order to effect their seamless integration as an operational arm of TF Falcon," said Maj. Michael Entrekin, who works in the plans office of TF Falcon. "Though we do not share the same uniform, we share the same operational priorities and desired endstate in Afghanistan. We are one team and together are committed to providing the best aviation support possible to the Coalition in RC-East."

Task Force Hippo, an aviation unit from the Czech Republic, will be falling under TF Falcon in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and will provide general aviation support. Their aircraft, Mi-171 utility helicopters had their blades detached for transport and upon their arrival in Bagram the aircraft were transported by TF Falcon Soldiers to an area controlled by TF Falcon. There the Czech Republic Soldiers worked to reattach the blades. However, TF Falcon's assistance was not limited to maintenance help.

"Task Force Falcon and the subordinate task forces helped us integrate with TF Falcon procedures and how

Photos from top: 1. Task Force Hippo Commander, Col. Petr Schwarz (right) talks with (from left) Maj. Michael Entrekin, 1st Sgt. Christopher Wood, and Lt. Col. William Cristy, all members of TF Falcon, after landing in Bagram Airfield. 2. Soldiers from Task Force Hippo attach a blade to the body of a Mi-171 Jan. 7 at Bagram Airfield. 3. Specialist Ethan Lee, medic with TF Falcon, goes over how to use a tourniquet as he leads a review of basic first aid skills for Soldiers in TF Hippo, Dec. 17 at Bagram Airfield.



to do business here – flying business,” said Col. Petr Schwarz, TF Hippo commander. “They were like our sponsors - not donating money but donating information.”

The first of the TF Hippo Soldiers arrived in early December, taking part in RSO& I training (reception, staging, onward movement and integration), Dec. 19 at the TF Knighthawk conference room at Bagram Airfield.

“The classes they attended were designed to bring the unit up to speed on the current operations, procedures, resources, and threats in Afghanistan,” said Entekin.

The training is required before any servicemember can conduct their missions in theatre, regardless of what country they come from. For the Czech Republic soldiers, the classes served as a refresher course on topics such as how to properly use their first aid equipment. The class also introduced new information such as how to communicate with the Air Force tower to land and take off, and what to do should they crash.

“I taught the Czechs Medium Risk of Isolation (MRI) which is a mandatory class,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Chris Hinkle, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, TF Falcon. “It details recommended actions of the crew should an aircraft go down, survival techniques in the Afghan environment and actions if taken as prisoner. This class is vital to aircrews since the possibility of becoming isolated, missing, detained or captured is higher.”

This information is particularly important to the TF Hippo Soldiers because they are the first helicopter unit from the Czech Republic to deploy to Afghanistan, said Schwarz.

“We had challenges because we are the first helicopter mission deployed (this far from the Czech Republic) and in such hellish conditions as we face in the Afghanistan environment,” said Schwarz. “We needed to learn NATO standards, learn to be more familiar with local flying procedures and be more familiar with the people who will be here giving us instructions. The help we have here will help us establish link to prepare our helicopters and prepare a foundation stone for my successors.”

Clockwise from top left: 1. A Task Force Hippo Mi-171 prepares to be towed by Sgt. Ryan Gillette, B Co., TF Workhorse (right) Jan. 5 at Bagram Airfield. 2. A Soldier with Task Force Hippo holds a Mi-171 blade steady as two other TF Hippo Soldiers attach the blade to the body of the aircraft Jan. 8 at Bagram Airfield. 3. A Soldier from Task Force Hippo attaches tail rotor blades on a Mi-171 Jan. 7 at Bagram Airfield. 4. Soldiers from Task Force Falcon prepare a main rotor head for blade attachment Jan. 6 at Bagram Airfield.



APACHE PILOTS BATTLE TERRAIN, ENVIRONMENT TO FIGHT THE ENEMY

STORY BY 1ST LT. KADEN KOBAYASHI

Every day the pilots of Task Force Viper's Apache company, the Pythons, prepare to conduct an array of missions in support of the ground forces across the Afghan provinces of Khowst, Paktya and Paktika. As the pilots come on shift they must be ready to conduct their planned missions for the day, including providing reconnaissance for ground forces or security for other aircraft. In addition they provide reconnaissance and security in support of all combat outposts and forward operating bases, while deterring anti-Afghan forces' activities in their area of operations.

They also respond at a moment's notice to support troops in contact with the enemy.

"The aviators conduct close combat attacks, reconnaissance, security, and command and control operations for the ground maneuver forces," said Maj. Stephen Gilbertson, Apache pilot and officer in charge of operations for Task Force Viper. "The pilots are challenged daily with demanding terrain and harsh environmental conditions coupled with very complex mission sets."

The fast pace and continuous changes of the modern battlefield require Apache crews to have an extensive understanding of the battle space and the units they are supporting. For every mission the crews establish communications with the ground troops to verify the current tactical and operational picture. Maintaining this rapport enables the Apache crews to maximize



Staff Sgt. Bryan Welch



Spc. Janora Phillips



Spc. Monica K. Smith

(Opposite Page): As snow falls, Soldiers with B Co., Task Force Knighthawk, move an Apache to its hangar, Feb. 7 at the flight line on Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. **(This Page Top):** Crew chiefs with TF Viper conduct routine maintenance on an Apache, Jan. 20 on the flight line at Forward Operating Base Jalalabad, Afghanistan. **(This Page Bottom):** Chief Warrant Officer 5 Martin Calkins, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, TF Falcon, conducts a pre-flight check on an Apache, Feb 6, at the flight line on Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

their effect on the battlefield.

Operation Enduring Freedom presents multiple challenges to the Apache pilots. Pilot in Command, Chief Warrant Officer 2 J.D. Lawrence, HHC, TF Viper, compares the operation to his previous combat experience.

"Afghanistan's environment is much more diverse than in Iraq, offering unique challenges," said Lawrence.

Lawrence went on to describe how Afghanistan's extreme environmental conditions, the high altitude, mountainous terrain and wide range of temperatures, require the crews to constantly evaluate their ability to maneuver and affect the fight on the ground.

"Steep mountainous terrain makes it particularly difficult to perform a reconnaissance mission, especially in a wooded environment," says Capt. Jeffrey Meinders, Apache pilot and task force intelligence officer for TF Viper.

The nature of the current rules of engagement, reflecting the unconventional warfare the U.S. is engaged in, necessitate that the pilots evaluate the tactical and strategic nature of each possible engagement and how it affects the overall mission of the ground force commander.

Meinders elaborates on one of the issues faced in today's war.

"Any time the enemy has the ability to blend in with the local populace makes it difficult to report enemy activity accurately to the ground forces," said Meinders.

The pilots are not the only members of the Python team contributing to success in Operation Enduring Freedom.

"In addition to the pilots, the crew chiefs and maintenance personnel facilitate the ability of the Apaches to affect the battlefield and lead to operational success," says Gilbertson. "It takes a tremendous amount of dedication to conduct scheduled and unscheduled maintenance to match the flying hours required for operations in eastern Afghanistan."

Since TF Viper's transfer of authority in November, the Apaches have flown in excess of 1500 combat hours, a grueling schedule for pilots and maintainers alike.

Many of the Pythons spoke of their excitement to be bringing the capabilities of the Apache and their own expertise to the fight in Afghanistan. Captain Jason Kittlesen, the Apache Company commander, voiced an attitude prevailing among many of the pilots.

"I enjoy my job immensely. I take great pride and satisfaction in the fact that I am privileged to lead the fine young men and women under my command during a time of war," said Kittlesen.



FARP TRAINING STRETCHES SOLDIERS' SKILLS

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 1 ROBERT RENNY

Many Soldiers are asked to perform missions and duties beyond the scope of their military occupational specialty. The Soldiers of Task Force Knighthawk who operate the forward arming and refueling points are no exception to this expectation. Though these Soldiers are formally trained to either refuel or rearm aircraft, they are expected to do both in this rigorous combat environment in the mountains of Afghanistan.

Task Force Knighthawk FARP Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Methar Lam participated in helicopter re-arming training, Jan. 10, led by TF Lighthorse Soldiers. This event, spearheaded by Capt. Michael Clatworthy, Troop D, TF Lighthorse enabled the FARP Soldiers to have invaluable training and resources in a combat environment.

"I was excited to get my team together to provide our combat enablers at the FARP with some good Army training," says Clatworthy.

This training initiative all began more than a month ago when Staff Sgt. James Evans, TF Knighthawk FARP NCOIC at Methar Lam, asked Clatworthy, who just happened to land at the FARP for refueling, if he could come out one day and train the FARP team on rearming.

Clatworthy, who happened to be flying with his task force plans officer, Maj. Matthew Ketchum, saw the need and desire to train Soldiers within their task force's battlespace and ran with the idea.

"The creation of task force elements allows an aviation brigade to extend its assets across a wider area, but it is inherently difficult to ensure the level of maintenance and support for all aircraft remains the same," said Ketchum. "The FARP training at Methar Lam allowed additional instruction to help bolster the confidence and proficiency of the aviation Soldiers who support the direct fire assets who support the ground commander."

The FARP rearming training consisted of two 45-minute blocks. The FARP team was divided into two groups and briefed on the major safety concerns and procedures for rearming both the Apache and Kiowa. Troop D, TF Lighthorse had senior Apache and Kiowa rearming specialists on site to lead training. Each team was given a block of instruction and hands-on training experience on loading and unloading Hellfire missiles, rockets, 30mm and .50 caliber rounds on both aircraft.

"This was a great opportunity for our Soldiers," said Evans. "For the first time, we were able to see what we were doing right and wrong in loading Apaches and Kiowas, and now that we've had this block of instruction we know we will do right."

Second Lieutenant Stephanie Burnett, platoon leader for the FARP Soldiers, spoke on how invaluable this training was to her Soldiers.

"E Company, TF Knighthawk distribution platoon is appreciative of Capt. Clatworthy and his team for providing armament training for the FARP," said Burnett. "They gave my



fuelers the opportunity to have hands on training with the aircraft. Additionally, the Soldiers have the competence and confidence in loading aircraft for future operations. "

"This was my first time to be able to rearm an aircraft," said Spc. Jamie Hendon, aircraft fuel handler in Company E, TF Knighthawk. "Learning about the capabilities of the Hellfire missiles and loading them was great. I can't wait to do it again!"

Specialist Reginald Owens, also an aircraft fuel handler with E Co., TF Knighthawk, said he enjoyed the training as well and said his favorite part was loading the machine gun on the Kiowa Warrior.

"I didn't know it was so easy until someone took the time to show me how to load the rounds and feed them through to the weapon," said Owens.

The TF Knighthawk FARP at Methar Lam has been consistently busy since assuming control of the mission on Nov. 24, 2009. To date, the FARP has pumped more than 117,645 gallons to both ground vehicles and aircraft. This includes supporting more than 170 U.S. military and other coalition and civilian aircraft.

"These Knighthawk Soldiers are part of a vital link of the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade FARPs that enable aircraft to move people and equipment all over Regional Command-East to secure the citizens of Afghanistan and take the fight to the enemy," said Lt. Col. Tom Smedley, commander of TF Knighthawk.



(Page 12) Specialist Reginald Owens (left) and Staff Sgt. James Evans, E Co., TF Knighthawk, load a Hellfire missile on an Apache, Jan. 9 at Methar Lam FARP. (This page) 1. Soldiers with E Co., TF Knighthawk receive training on the Kiowa Warrior weapons systems, Jan. 10 at Methar Lam FARP. 2. Private 1st Class Jeremy Carlyle (left) and Spc. Jamie Hendon, both E Co., TF Knighthawk, refuel the Black Hawk, Jan. 10 at Base Methar Lam.



AROUND THE TASK FORCE



CW5 Chris Batt

1



Spc. Monica K. Smith

2



Spc. Grant Marzolf

3



Spc. Monica K. Smith

4



Sgt. Candice Peppie

5



CW1 Robert Renny

6

1. A Task Force Falcon Apache flies over the Afghan mountains, Dec. 25. 2. Task Force Falcon Commander, Col. Don Galli places the Marne patch on TF Knighthawk Commander, Lt. Col. Thomas Smedley, Jan. 1 at Bagram Airfield. 3. Specialist Jon Clark, A Co., TF Knighthawk stands by his aircraft, Jan. 1 at Bagram Airfield. 4. Chaplain (Maj.) Grace Hollis-Taylor, HHC 3 CAB, TF Falcon, speaks during the prayer breakfast, Jan. 7 at the Marne Café in Bagram Airfield. 5. Specialist John Kedrowski, Troop D, TF Lighthorse, installs the lifting clevis on a Kiowa Warrior engine, Jan. 12 at Forward Operating Base Jalalabad. 6. A chinook is slingloaded by another chinook while a Black Hawk follows, Jan. 25 at Bagram Airfield.



CW1 Robert Renny



CW1 Robert Renny



Spc. Grant Marzolf



Spc. Monica K. Smith



Spc. Monica K. Smith



Spc. Monica K. Smith



CW1 Robert Renny

(Clockwise from top left) 1. A Kiowa Warrior with TF Lighthorse lands, Jan. 9 at Methal Lam Forward Arming and Refueling Point. 2. An Apache with TF Lighthorse lands at Methal Lam FARP, Jan. 9 to train E Co., TF Knighthawk Soldiers how to load and unload rockets and bullets. 3. Qugamali, an 18-year old who teaches English classes in Bamyan, Afghanistan. 4. Sergeant Matthew West, A Co., TF Knighthawk, removes boxes of supplies from the back of a Black Hawk, Jan 13 in Bayman. 5. A Black Hawk pauses to cross the active runway as an Air Force F-16 lands Jan. 25 at Bagram Airfield. 6. Specialist Jason Faulk, HSC, TF Workhorse places an Israeli bandage on Spc. Jeremy Jackson, A Co., TF Workhorse during a combat life saver class, Jan. 27 at Bagram Airfield. 7. Chief Warrant Officer 3 Paul Getner, A Co., TF Knighthawk conducts a preflight check on a Black Hawk, Jan. 15 at Bagram Airfield.

Third time's the charm

After two deployments apart, one couple in Task Force Lighthorse enjoys spending this deployment strengthening their marriage

Story by Capt. Raymond Reed
& Spc. Monica K. Smith

As most couples said their lingering goodbyes to one another at Hunter Army Airfield before the deployment, one couple could have simply said "see you soon" before boarding the airplane headed to Afghanistan. Staff Sergeants Christopher and Guadalupe Alexander, both members of Troop E, 3rd Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Lighthorse, were going on their third deployment, but their first deployment spent together.

"This is our first deployment together, out of three and it is nice to be able to see each other during the day," said Guadalupe. "It is nice to be able to have lunch together or sit down and watch a movie together."

Married for two years, Christopher is a cook and Guadalupe is a supply specialist, both are in E Troop, and both are currently stationed at Forward Operating Base Jalalabad. They have both served in E Troop for one and a half years and both have served in the Army for the same amount of time which has been their entire adult lives - 18 years in February 2010 for Chris and in March 2010 for Guadalupe. They also plan to re-enlist once more before they retire.

"It's great to do something that you love while being with the one you love," said Christopher. "It makes going to work that much easier and definitely makes this deployment a little more stress-free."

The regulations do not allow the Alexanders to maintain the same living quarters, however they say that is the least of their difficulties. With three children, Guadalupe says the hardest part for them is being away from their kids.

"I miss the kids, but when I get home sick I know that my husband is here and that puts a smile on my face," said Guadalupe. "He tells me a funny joke, and just acts silly, but it works. He truly is my rock."

Christopher says the best part of being deployed with his wife is being able to talk to her when things become difficult.

"There is times where she has a rough week or I have a rough week, and we just sit and vent to each other and have that weight off our shoulders," said Christopher. "We meet up, once a week, to call the kids (and have) them tell us about their week. (We) also attempt to talk to our baby. We cross our fingers and hope that he will say the words he has learned that week, and that we are able to hear them."

Though deployments have the opportunity to place a strain on relationships, for the Alexanders, they say this deployment has served to make their marriage stronger.

"This deployment has definitely brought us closer together," said Guadalupe. "We were already close, but it feels that we are closer. We are definitely lucky to have



Staff Sgt. Jason Lossiter



Sgt. Candice Pepple

(Above) Staff Sergeants Guadalupe (left) and Christopher Alexander, both members of E Troop, TF Lighthorse, share a quick moment together after picking up mail, Feb. 4 at FOB Jalalabad. (Left) Staff Sergeant Christopher Alexander, laughs at a joke told by his wife, Feb. 4 at FOB Jalalabad. (Below) Staff Sergeant Guadalupe Alexander, unloads mail for E Troop, Feb. 4 at FOB Jalalabad.



Staff Sgt. Jason Lossiter

Special day more than a decade in the making

Task Force Workhorse Soldier joins the ranks of the NCO Corps.

Story and photos by Spc. Jose Villa

New Year's Day started much like any day in Afghanistan, clear and cool. But for one Soldier, this day marked an honor more than 10 years in the making – Specialist Michael Monforto was being inducted into the Corps of Non-Commissioned Officers.

"It was one of the proudest days of my career," said Monforto, Company A, Task Force Workhorse. "I waited a long time and worked extremely hard to get to this point. I had a lot of people in my corner backing me and supporting me so it is nice to see that hard work and support go a long way."

The ceremony was held at the Bagram Airfield Rotary Wing Arrival and Departure Airfield Control Group. Some of the guests that attended were members of his former platoon (supply support activity), TF Workhorse Command Sgt. Maj. James Snyder, TF Workhorse commander, Lt. Col. Woodard Hopkins, and Monforto's first sergeant and company commander.

"He had to pick someone to do the honor of pinning him," said Sgt. Patrick Wiley, Monforto's supervisor. "He asked me if I would pin him and I was honored to do it. I have the utmost confidence in him to be an outstanding NCO."

Monforto's military career began Sept. 9, 1996 with the U.S. Marine Corps where he served as an infantryman. He deployed three times in various peace keeping efforts across the globe and in February 2001 he became a member of the New Jersey Army National Guard and deployed with the 1st Battalion 114th Infantry Regiment to the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt.

"I joined the National Guard to be stationed at home and have the help and support of my family," said Monforto. "We



had just started our family and being close to home was a great help. I love the military and did not want to walk away from it so the Army National Guard was the next best thing for me. As far as my experience in Egypt, it was a peace keeping mission in the Sinai Peninsula that was a great time. We, as a unit, learned a lot about the culture and they offered many trips. I attended two of these, one to the pyramids and one to the top of Mount Sinai."

Upon his return from Egypt, Monforto was selected for recruiter duty in Camden County, N.J., where he was awarded the National Guard Recruiting Badge for his efforts in helping the recruiting station achieve their mission goals for two years. In September 2006 Monforto switched to active duty status and became one of the Dog Face Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division.

"I came back active duty because I missed the camaraderie of being on active duty," said Monforto. "After long talks with my family and a lot of planning, it was decided that going active duty was the next step in my career. I have been told for as long as I can remember, 'Do whatever makes you happy in life.' I love being able to wake up in the morning and still love what I do."

Monforto has been deployed twice with the 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, once in Operation Iraqi Freedom V and VI for 15 months and is currently stationed at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. He is a member of the headquarters platoon, where he serves as a company training NCO.

"I believe Sgt. Monforto will make an outstanding NCO because he is very knowledgeable about regulations and how things work in the Army and he is always willing to pass that knowledge on to junior personnel," said Spc. Juron Luster, who



(Top) Sergeant Michael Montforto (left), goes over information on the supply support activity with Sgt. Latonya Chisolm, both members of A Co., TF Workhorse, as she cross trains him, Feb. 4 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (Above) Sergeant Michael Montforto, is promoted by Sgt. Patrick Wiley, both with A Co., TF Workhorse Jan. 1 at Bagram Airfield.

works closely with Monforto in the headquarters platoon.

Monforto said he hopes to motivate his Soldiers to be the best Soldiers they can be.

"I look forward to the challenges ahead of me as an NCO," said Monforto. "And (I also look forward) to leading Soldiers and pushing them to be better than they thought they could be."

MAKING

Task Force Brawler career counselor is first in brigade to make mission

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Scott Tant

Making mission, for an Army career counselor, means two things: Taking care of Soldiers and meeting the quota assigned to the career counselor. This is the measuring stick by which each counselor's success is evaluated. For fiscal year 2010, no other retention representative has done more within Task Force Falcon to 'make mission' than Staff Sgt. Adam Bartlett. As the battalion career counselor for TF Brawler, based in Forward Operating Base Shank, Bartlett has just recently met his annual quota a mere four months into the fiscal year, with less than six months as a newly-appointed counselor.

Bartlett presented his 53rd contract of the year Feb. 2 to Spc. Frank Bowers, a supply specialist with TF Brawler, who wished to re-class to infantryman as part of

his re-enlistment option. Bartlett assisted in that request, spending many hours on the phone and computer communicating with a number of sources to ensure that the reclassification criteria was met and the Soldier got exactly what he wanted.

With this 53rd re-enlistment finalized, Bartlett met his quota. He 'made mission'.

"When you look at the aggregate numbers, out of 36 other units in the division, we (TF Brawler) are number four on the total percentage completed, and actually the third unit to make mission this year," said Bartlett, holding up a memorandum from his superiors at 3rd Infantry Division explaining the breakdown of numbers from each unit in the division.

The population of each battalion determines the quota that division sets each year for the counselors to meet. The difference now is that regardless of the task force set-up, the numbers are based off our original battalion configuration, Bartlett said.

"I feel like I am on top of the world right now!" said Bartlett, reflecting on his accomplishment.

Since this is his first year as a career counselor, his recent achievement, according to Bartlett, 'felt much more fulfilling'.

"Being that this is my first year as a

counselor, it is good to see that even during war and our austere conditions here at FOB Shank people are re-enlisting," said Bartlett. "I have to give credit to the excellent command climate within TF Brawler, which has been very helpful to my success."

Prior to becoming a career counselor Bartlett was a petroleum distribution section leader. Looking to advance his own career, he chose a military occupational specialty that also lets him help Soldiers. As a career counselor, Bartlett is charged with maintaining mission-essential levels of manpower not only within the battalion, but also within the entire Army. The large dry-erase board on the wall in his office attests to this: Korea, Germany, and Egypt are but a few different locations that Soldiers have recently chosen for a new duty assignment. He points out that only a small section at the bottom of the board is for those Soldiers who have elected to voluntarily leave the Army, while the rest of the board displays those who have confirmed contracts.

"I told Staff Sgt. Bartlett I was not so much concerned with the numbers as I was with him taking care of the Soldiers," said TF Brawler Command Sgt. Maj. Stuart O'Black. "As far as that goes, he has done



(Photos from left) 1. Staff Sergeant Adam Bartlett (right), career counselor for TF Brawler, talks with Pfc. Anthony De-sender, B Co., TF Brawler, about his recent decision to pursue the Green-to-Gold Program, Jan. 19 at Forward Operating Base Shank. 2. Staff Sergeant Adam Bartlett (right), sets up a site for the re-enlistment of Spc. Kendrick Stephens, HHC, TF Brawler, Nov. 23, 2009 at FOB Shank. Stephens was the first TF Brawler Soldier to re-enlist in Afghanistan.

MISSION

exceedingly well.”

During the interview, a Soldier who recently signed a contract to remain within 3rd CAB stopped by to pick up his paperwork. Bartlett reached into a box and handed the Soldier a ‘Stay Brawler’ embroidered backpack, which contained the Soldier’s papers.

“Coffee cups, knives, and backpacks are nice and the Soldiers like them, but it is not what gets the contract signed,” said

Bartlett. “What’s most important is to be accurate with the contracts. So far, I have been 100% on all bonus options with zero errors on the payouts. Meeting each individual Soldier’s needs also helps promote retention. Word-of-mouth from a happy Soldier spreads far and fast.”

In making mission, Bartlett noted that he has no intentions on slowing down.

“I am going to continue assisting Soldiers with their careers, which is compliant

with the 3rd Infantry Division mission statement,” said Bartlett.

According to the division’s mission statement, each career counselor is charged with ‘retaining quality Soldiers for long periods of time, which assists in the balancing of force management.’ Bartlett summed up the mission statement with his own personal philosophy, which he has written on his dry erase board: “Do what is best for the Army and for the Soldier.”



(Above) Task Force Brawler career counselor, Staff Sgt. Adam Bartlett (right) shows Spc. Frank Bowers, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, TF Brawler where to sign on his contract, Feb. 2 at Forward Operating Base Shank. Bowers became the 53rd Soldier to re-enlist for Bartlett, helping the Brawler career counselor ‘make mission’ for fiscal year 2010.

Workhorse Soldiers join

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Kieana Peluso



The 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, Task Force Workhorse, conducted its first Noncommissioned Officer Induction Ceremony Jan. 19, at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Gymnasium at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

With 30 sergeants sitting at the position of attention, poised, and ready for the ceremony to begin, narrator 1st Sgt. Karen Hughes, Headquarters and Support Company, TF Workhorse, got the festivities underway with the history of the NCO.

The guest speaker Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, provided a motivational speech geared towards the future leaders of the Army.

"Having been selected, trained, and promoted to the rank of sergeant, they will now face another transition-their induction into the ranks of the Non-Commissioned Officer," said Stidley. "This is their first step understanding the awesome responsibility he or she has just gained."



a time-honored corps

"The transition from Soldier to leader is a difficult one, but one I really believe I am ready for," said inductee Sgt. Taniesha Wilson, Company B, TF Workhorse.

Stidley also addressed the importance of the inductee's new primary responsibilities; accomplishment of the mission and the welfare of Soldiers.

"We change our frame of thought from worrying about ourselves to mentoring, training, guiding, leading, and taking care of the Soldiers whose lives we are entrusted with," said Stidley.

His wisdom stems from nearly three decades of being an NCO. He concluded his speech by telling the audience the date he was promoted to the rank of sergeant (Oct. 06, 1982) and he offered a few words of advice for all leaders. He recommended all to "... assess yourself, always try to improve yourself, seek out those things that challenge you and your Soldiers'.

During the ceremony Spc. Robert Dean, HSC, TF Knighthawk, recited a poem titled, 'A Soldier's Request'. As he stood before the inductees and ceremony attendees, Dean proudly asked the

NCO's to, "Treat me (Soldiers) with respect ... speak with me often ... and train me to be a leader, sergeant."

The Soldier's request was followed by the procession of inductees through the crossed sabers while their sponsors briefly yet proudly introduced them to the audience. It was not until after the Charge of the NCO was given by Command Sgt. Maj. James Snyder, TF Workhorse, that the inductees officially became a part of the NCO Corps.

"I entered the Army January of last year as prior service, having served in the Navy and the Army National Guard I came in as a sergeant," said inductee Sgt. Robert Healy, A Co. "I've never experienced a military ceremony like this ... it made me feel honored to be accepted into this society where we uphold the honors and traditions of a time-honored corps."

The ceremony concluded with the singing of the Dog Face Soldier and the Army Song. Following the ceremony all of the newly inducted NCOs were presented gifts and plaques inscribed with the NCO Creed and the Charge of the NCO.



(Opposite Page Top) Sergeant First Class Marlene Dacosta, Task Force Workhorse, speaks at the Noncommissioned Officer Induction Ceremony Jan. 19, at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Gymnasium at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan (Opposite Page Bottom) TF Falcon Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley speaks at the NCO-induction ceremony. (This Page) Soldiers of TF Workhorse make a pledge, Jan. 19 during the NCO-induction ceremony.

He's Got Your Back

ARMY RESERVE SOLDIER WORKS TO MAKE HIS CIVILIAN JOB AN ARMY APPOINTMENT

BY MASTER SGT. MARK LIGGET
AND SGT. AMARYLISS BECERRA

By nature, the military is comprised of Soldiers with different backgrounds and varying goals for the future. Sergeant Joshua Eldridge, of the 321st Military Intelligence Battalion, Task Force Dark Knight, is no different. Eldridge, who works as the linguist manager, low level voice intercept information manager, and the field detention site information manager for TF Dark Knight, is also licensed doctor of chiropractic and hopes to become the Army's first commissioned chiropractic medical officer.

"Chiropractic is a form of medicine that deals with muscles or joints," said Eldridge. "I would like to be the Army's first (chiropractic) commissioned officer. I believe it would validate chiropractic as far as its effectiveness and it would be a ground breaking appointment".

The Army has already progressed from using contracted civilian chiropractors, to hiring them as Department of the Army employees. Eldridge says he considers it inevitable that chiropractors become full members of the Army medical team and be-



Courtesy Photo

(Above) Sergeant Josh Eldridge, linguist manager for 321st Military Intelligence Battalion, Task Force Dark Knight, and a licensed chiropractor, reviews the arches of a marathon runner on a computerized scan, last year in Greeley, Colo.

lieves chiropractic can be a part of the team effort to get a Soldier back in the fight.

"Back home I mostly dealt with sports medicine," said Eldridge. "I worked with high schools doing field work as well as treating patients who came into my office. Most of them were athletes and most of their injuries were athletic related or injuries due to overtraining."

Task Force Falcon Brigade Surgeon, Lt. Col. Katrina Hall, says she believes a medical officer who focused on chiropractic would benefit the Army.

"I would love to have a (chiropractic medical officer) - it would be a tremendous help because we have a significant number of Soldiers' injuries dealing with chiropractic," said Hall. "A lot of it can be fixed with manipulation instead of rest and drugs but you need special training to do it. Chiropractors have received a bad rap recently because people were not receiving the proper training and did more damage than good, but a well trained chiropractor can do a world of

good especially in the Army because those are the majority of our injuries."

Before joining the Army, Eldridge had always wanted to become a doctor but was unsure of what field of medicine he wanted to specialize in. Dissatisfied with the medical treatment his mother received during an illness, a family friend suggested chiropractic. Eldridge graduated Chiropractic College shortly after 9/11 and then began another adventure, joining the Army.

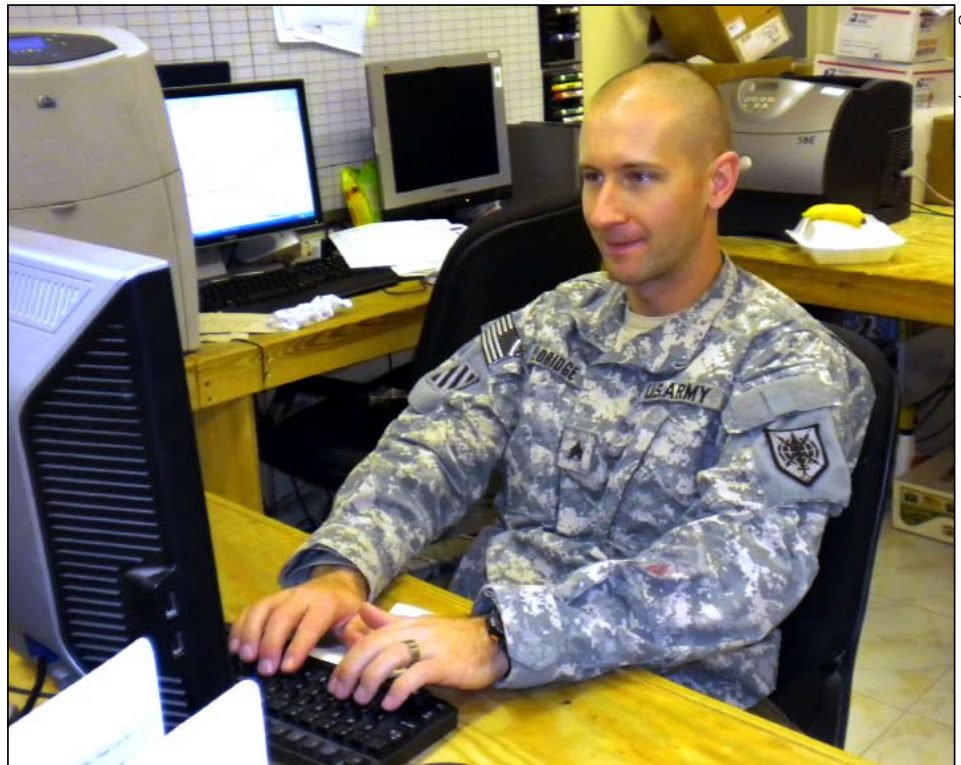
"It was after I earned my doctorate degree, I was waiting to take my Florida board exam and I was sleeping on my brother's couch when I woke up, turned on the TV and there were a whole bunch of Soldiers in Afghanistan," said Eldridge. "I felt pretty guilty for not being part of it. I was 26, I didn't have a family and I thought I'd check into it and see what I could do to help."

During his first deployment to Iraq Eldridge was assigned to be an unmanned aerial vehicle maintainer and realized the job was more physical than he had expected. Often the machines had to be recovered in difficult terrain and unrelenting temperatures. Eldridge began to realize ability to practice chiropractic could be used to treat his fellow Soldiers who complained of aches and pains.

"The (improved outer tactical vest) and the (advanced combat helmet) add extra weight to the head and body therefore causing musculoskeletal issues, the primary issue with Soldiers", says Eldridge. "That is what a ton of the injuries we're seeing in Iraq and Afghanistan are – lower back pain, neck pain, knee pain – anything that comes from the increased stress of wearing the body armor, running around the mountains, riding around in the vehicles – that's what causes the stress and that's what chiropractic relieves."

At the close of his active duty obligation, he moved to Greeley, Colo., and opened a chiropractic office. He chose to continue his military career in the Army Reserve, joining the 321st MI, out of Austin, Texas. Now on his second deployment, Eldridge spends his free time working on his goal of being the Army's first chiropractor.

"It's been authorized by congress to get chiropractics but there is no career course which is the hurdle right now," said Eldridge. "I've been talking to congressmen and senators and before I left in October to deploy here, the Army hired their first DA position. We've had contractors before but no DA position. I think this is the first step – they're becoming employees. I'd love to still be able to help Soldiers out, so that's the goal right now."



Sgt. Amyliss Beccerra



Courtesy Photo

(Top) Sergeant Josh Eldridge, 321st Military Intelligence Battalion, Task Force Dark Knight, performs his job as a linguist manager at his desk, Jan. 13 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. **(Bottom)** Eldridge, teaches a patient core strength exercises, last year in Greeley, Colo.

ODIN-A

THE NEW ENTERPRISE IN AIR-GROUND INTEGRATION

STORY BY TASK FORCE ODIN-A

At first glance they look like any other aviation unit with airplanes and unmanned aerial vehicles. With Soldiers and fixed-wing aircraft moving on and off the flight line it would be easy to assume Task Force ODIN-A (Observe, Detect, Identify, Neutralize-Afghanistan) had a simple mission. However, like many things, you can't judge this task force by its cover – TF ODIN-A is progressing on a new frontier in air-ground integration.

"Make no mistake, Task Force ODIN-A is not merely another aviation battalion with a unique mission tasking," said Maj. Charles Hancock, Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) Theater Observation Detachment, embedded with ODIN. "It's also not strictly an intelligence battalion with fixed-wing aircraft. Task Force ODIN-A is a completely different unit, unlike any other Army unit."

Commander of TF ODIN-A, Lt Col. John Hinck, explains that though the battalion is aviation in name, their mission is much broader than flying.

"Task Force ODIN-A is a multi-aircraft, multi-intelligence unit, representing nine branches and 15 (military occupational specialties) from across our Army – active and National Guard," said Hinck. "Even though our formation represents 35 states in our nation, we have one stated purpose of helping our fellow Americans and Coalition partners on the battlefield through air-ground integration – all focused to protect and save lives. The focus is on providing capable, reliable, and flexible aerial (reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition; and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) options of manned and unmanned assets to

ground forces in the combined action/coalition fight – a truly, new enterprise in air-ground integration."

A combined, multi-component organization, TF ODIN-A recently became an unclassified organization and is the trial product of a new way to combat an ever changing enemy. Working under the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, TF Falcon, based out of Bagram, Afghanistan, TF ODIN-A is one of two deployed aviation units (the other being in Iraq) bringing a new point of view to the fight. They not only seek to warn ground units of potential threats but also integrate with ground forces to find those who are at the center of the threat. Though TF ODIN-A is a declassified unit, much of the details surrounding the mission and capabilities of the task force are still classified to prevent the enemy from further evolving their tactics.

"Task Force ODIN-A provides a unique capability to the warfighter," said Maj. Eric Jankowski, deputy commander of TF ODIN-A. "We provide long duration surveillance through the use of unmanned aerial systems like the Warrior-A and Hunter which provide situational awareness and persistent stare using full motion video. We achieve specific targeting through the use of powerful signals intelligence and communications intelligence sensors from our (medium altitude reconnaissance surveillance system) and Guardrail manned aircraft. Those aircraft in combination with analysis produced by our ground-based intelligence professionals allow us to furnish timely, actionable intelligence to ground commanders. TF ODIN-A is the unit of choice to interdict the IED network before the devices can be emplaced."

Though the task force is comprised of Soldiers there are also many civilian contractors allowing TF ODIN-A's aircraft to be flown "all Army," government owned and civilian flown, or even contractor owned and flown by contracted civilians.

Although TF ODIN-A has various fixed-wing manned aircraft and a myriad of unmanned aircraft in their inventory that serve to provide information to ground units, it is the operators and analysts that make the difference. The operators, military and civilian, work hand-in-hand to conduct quality operations around the clock. The analysts can detect and designate targets for combat aviation assets and ground units which provide a critical sensor-to-shooter link.

"Task Force ODIN-A has made a difference by teaming manned fixed wing aircraft with unmanned aircraft to provide actionable intelligence over a long duration and by combining multiple intelligence capabilities into a packaged force – all in support of ground units across Afghanistan," said Hinck. "The aviation-intelligence organization will continue on the frontier of providing actionable intelligence to the ground force commander in the (counter insurgency) fight to help protect Coalition forces and improve the lives of the people of Afghanistan."



Spec. Monica K. Smith



Spec. Monica K. Smith

(Top right) Lieutenant Dennis Harding, Company B, Task Force ODIN-A, conducts a pre-flight check on a medium altitude reconnaissance surveillance system (MARSS-11) aircraft, Feb. 9 at Bagram Airfield. (Bottom) Lieutenant Dennis Harding, Company B, Task Force ODIN-A, checks the blades on an MARSS-11 aircraft, Feb. 9 at Bagram Airfield.

Task Force View



Spc. Grant Marzolf



CW1 Robert Renny



Spc. Grant Marzolf



Capt. Garrett Gandia



Spc. Monica K. Smith

1. A Chinook crew chief with B Co., TF Knighthawk stands near his aircraft Jan. 31 during a resupply mission outside Bagram. 2. Sergeant Mark Woods, E Co., TF Knighthawk, conducts maintenance Feb. 1 at Bagram Airfield. 3. Specialist James Harrison, A Co., TF Knighthawk, prepares to fly, Feb. 2 at Bagram Airfield. 4. Sergeant First Class Karen Hughes (center), HSC, TF Workhorse, stands next to Col. Don Galli, TF Falcon commander (left) as TF Falcon Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley says a few words during her appointment ceremony to first sergeant, Jan. 12 at Bagram Airfield. 5. Soldiers celebrate after the New Orleans Saints win the Super Bowl, Feb. 8 at the Marne Cafe, in Bagram Airfield.



Spc. Grant Marzolf

1



Spc. Grant Marzolf

2



Spc. Grant Marzolf

3



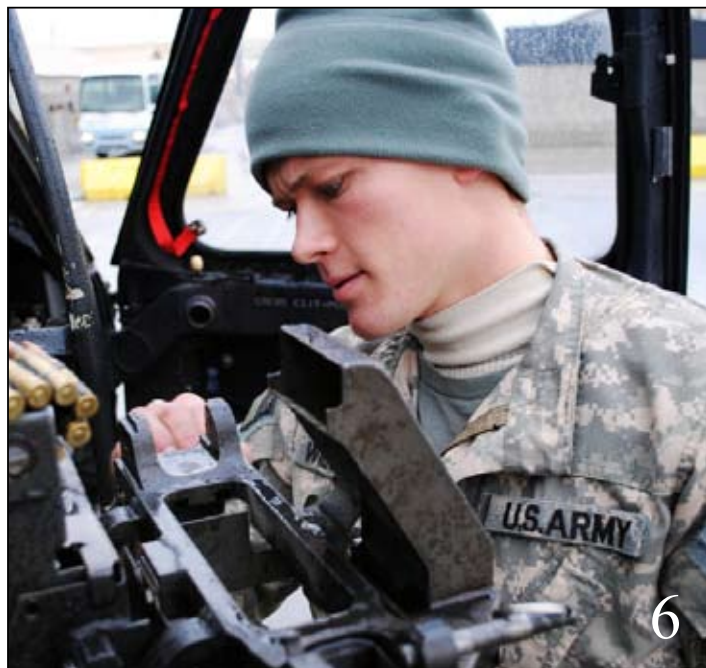
Spc. Monica K. Smith

4



CW1 Robert Renny

5



Spc. Grant Marzolf

6

1. Passengers stand on a dry patch of the flight line as they wait to board a Chinook with B Co., TF Knighthawk, Feb 8 at Bagram Airfield. 2. A Black Hawk with A Co., TF Knighthawk sitting on the flight line, is seen in the reflection of the melted snow, Feb. 8 at Bagram Airfield. 3. Snow covers Black Hawks with A Co., TF Knighthawk, and the flight line Feb. 8, at Bagram Airfield. 4. Task Force Falcon Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley (far right), meets with junior enlisted Soldiers over breakfast to discuss issues regarding morale and wellness within the brigade and to pass down information, Feb. 8 at the Marne Cafe on Bagram Airfield. 5. French Soldiers, with TF La Fayette, load a Chinook with B Co., TF Knighthawk as part of hot and cold load training, Feb. 1 outside Bagram Airfield. 6. Specialist Joshua Willoughby, crew chief with A Co., TF Knighthawk, checks for corrosion on a Black Hawk, Feb. 6 at Bagram Airfield.

Parting Shot



Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Lemke

Combined action partners, Troop B Task Force Rough Rider, and the 6th Afghanistan Border Police Kandak, exit a F Co., TF Lighthorse Chinook, Jan 23 during a resupply mission on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.