

159TH COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE

THUNDER FLIGHTENING



Inside this issue:

Soldiers celebrate Independence Day

P4 re-enlists 235 troops on KAF

Afghan medic integrates with TF Thunder

Volume 1, Number 5

July 25, 2011

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The 159th CAB TF Thunder Enlightening

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Commander's Corner

Col. Kenneth T. Royar

Brigade Commander



Probably the best privileges I have as a commander are promoting and re-enlisting Soldiers. They are opportunities to recognize not only the great things the Soldiers have done, but also what they will do in the future.

For me though, the inspiring part is that they are freely committing themselves to something greater. As both the re-enlistment oath and oath of office state:

"I ... do solemnly swear to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic. That I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same ..."

When re-enlisting or accepting promotion, our Soldiers today know the hardships they will face. Today's Soldiers are aware that not only are deployments in their future, but there are many in the world who would do them harm because of the uniform they wear. Yet they continue to sign up, and by doing so, protect the freedom we all enjoy. Just as

importantly, they enable our Nation to protect the rights of others worldwide and serve as a shining example of democracy and all its associated values.

Our Army is the strength of the Nation and it is the individual Soldier who provides that strength. Likewise it is the individual Soldier who is able most effectively to share our ideals with others.

This month, I had the opportunity to visit the Pathfinders from Task Force Wings at a patrol base outside Kandahar Airfield, where they were partnered with the Afghan National Police. I found it simply amazing – despite the language differences – how well the two elements performed together. They interacted not only on a personal level by sharing the same hardships, but they were also breaking bread together. United in a common goal, it is the individual Soldiers and their counterparts who will have the greatest impact on our collective freedom.

Many of us would agree that while we Soldiers are the ones who deploy, it is really our Families who bear the greatest burden. Our Families share all of the anxiety of the deployments along with the added responsibilities of the taking care of everything at home. Without their support, many of us would not be able to provide the same commitment to the Nation that we do. Our Families rightfully deserve an equal share of the credit for helping to keep us free.

July 4, we marked the founding of our Nation – a time for barbeques and a little fun both at home and here in Afghanistan. Let us not forget that we are only able to fully enjoy ourselves based on those who are willing to defend those rights. The familiar expression of "freedom is not free" is remarkably true. Thank you for your commitment to making our freedom and those of our allies possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth T. Royar".

CSM Hill visits TF Thunder

By Spc. Jennifer Andersson
Task Force Thunder Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Command Sgt. Maj. Martin Hill, the command sergeant major for International Security Assistance Force and for U.S. Forces – Afghanistan, visited with the Soldiers of Task Force Thunder (159th Combat Aviation Brigade) here June 30.

Hill visited Soldiers at Task Force Thunder's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Fighting (563rd Aviation Support Battalion), Task Force Palehorse (7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment), and Company C, 1st Battalion, 52nd

Aviation Regiment, before meeting with senior enlisted leaders for a question-and-answer session. He even squeezed in time for a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Wounded Warrior Project, and visiting troops at the Role 3 hospital here.

Hill said face time with the troops is important to him and to the troops.

"I enjoy the ability to give energy and to feel that I am making a difference in their careers and lives in some way," he said.

Each time he met with troops, he asked them how long they've been in and whether they've been to a promotion

board.

Professional growth is an integral part of being a Soldier, he said.

"Our Army is becoming more and more competitive every day," Hill said. "It is our responsibility as leaders to ensure that our troops remain competitive."

"They are incredible young Americans who are making some enormous sacrifices. It's important that they know the highest level of leadership here in Afghanistan is aware of their sacrifices and appreciate them."



KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (June 30, 2011) - Command Sgt. Maj. Martin Hill (left) greets Staff Sgt. Kyle Clark (right), a platoon sergeant with Company C, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, during a visit here June 30 to recognize Soldiers who have excelled in their fields. Clark played a vital role in working with Afghan medics as they train to conduct medevac missions of their own.



KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (June 30, 2011) - Command Sgt. Maj. Martin Hill (right) defines a "team player" to troops from Task Force Palehorse (7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division) during a visit here June 30. The purpose of the visit was both to recognize Soldiers who stand out in their fields and meet with senior enlisted personnel to answer questions and address concerns they may have.



KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (June 30, 2011) - Command Sgt. Maj. Martin Hill (right) talks with Wounded Warriors after a ribbon-cutting ceremony here June 30 to celebrate the addition of a covered walkway for the recovering Warriors. Hill said he enjoys visiting with the troops, and that to connect with the troops, he has to go to where they are.

Sounds of Thunder

Now that you've been deployed a few months, what will you appreciate more when you return?



"I took for granted having a kitchen, because I love to cook. I cannot wait to go home and cook a real meal for me and my fiancé. That, and I miss those things called weekends."

**2nd Lt. Tiffany Taylor,
Network operations officer in charge,
HHC, TF Thunder**

"Going out with just my wife is something I took for granted. We didn't get to go out much, and when we did it wasn't for very long. When I get back I plan on spoiling her more and making more time for just the two of us."

**Spc. Joshua Dawson,
Signal support systems specialist,
HHC, TF Thunder**



"Spirituality is what I took for granted before I deployed. I miss the connection with my religion. Being deployed is a good thing for me because I'm not influenced by negativity and temptations."

**Spc. Oladele Abiodun,
Tech supply specialist,
Troop D, TF Palehorse**



"I certainly miss my family, but I knew I would miss them. I miss little things like driving my own car on a real road. I miss my pet cats, too - I think I'll take them with me on the drive."

**Capt. Jonathan Porter,
Chaplain,
HHC, TF Wings**



"I miss my wife's cooking and baking. Everything she prepares is fresh with different variations of food to choose from."

**Spc. Timothy Grauel,
Signal support systems specialist,
HHT, TF Palehorse**

"I miss home cooked meals, getting a full night's sleep, and playing golf or bowling."

**Pfc. Jake Bustos,
Field-level maintenance mechanic,
Company E, TF Wings**



Afghan Air Force medic takes experience to new heights

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Stephanie L. Carl

Task Force Thunder Public Affairs

KANDAHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan (June 22, 2011) – After about 20 medevac missions to evacuate mildly injured Afghans, Afghan Air Force flight medic Sgt. Gulap Ahmadzia gained a new level of experience today as he became the first Afghan to treat a Category Bravo patient during flight.

“We don’t have much opportunity in the clinic to treat this type of patient,” said Ahmadzia.

Instead, Ahmadzia joined the medevac crews of Company C, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, as they evacuated four Afghans who had suffered mid-grade injuries and were classified as Cat. B.

Cat. B patients require medical evacuation to a higher level of care within four hours before they are at risk of losing life, limb or eyesight. The patients Ahmadzia treated had suffered a variety of injuries.

The first was an Afghan soldier who was hit with

shrapnel from an RPG. The second was an Afghan soldier who fell from a barrier and suffered a spinal injury after hearing the news of his son’s passing.

After retrieving these two patients and delivering them to Camp Hero – the Afghan National Army hospital here – for further treatment, Ahmadzia thought he would get a chance to stop for lunch. But duty called.

The UH-60A Blackhawk helicopter lifted off once again, this time to pick up an Afghan soldier who fell from a vehicle and landed on his head. Once Ahmadzia and his American counterpart, Staff Sgt. Kyle Clark, loaded their patient into the aircraft, he began checking the patient’s vital signs and hooked up an IV drip.

“At one point, his oxygen saturation level dropped to 93,” Clark said. “The normal level is 95.”

When this happened, Ahmadzia leaned in to explain to the man that he was going to put an oxygen mask on him. The patient’s numbers quickly rose back to normal.

Ahmadzia had the advantage of being able to talk to the patient in his native language. This also came in handy at

Camp Hero, where he quickly exited the ambulance and went inside to brief the Afghan doctors on the patients’ conditions and what treatment had been provided thus far.

“Having Sergeant Gulap with us also really helped with our patients,” Clark said. “When we picked up the patient who fell off the barrier, the only thing we knew was that he was being belligerent. Sergeant Gulap was able to talk with him and keep him calm.”

While language differences can impact medevac missions, they didn’t impact the integration with Ahmadzia.

The two medics used basic medical terms to talk with each other, and they didn’t run into any confusion. Some of this comes from the extensive training Ahmadzia has received in the past.

Ahmadzia is one of seven flight medics who have been working with the 441st Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron to further their skills. The ultimate goal is for the Afghan Air Force to become the primary unit responsible for evacuating Afghan patients; a goal the medics are quickly progressing toward.

The training all the medics participate in focuses on preparing them to treat more serious patients while in a moving aircraft rather than just on the ground, explained Air Force Tech. Sgt. Steven A. Guillen, the flight medic advisor for the 441st AEAS. The medics have already conducted evacuations of less critical patients, but they haven’t had the exposure to the ones who require immediate care.

“This interaction today is the biggest step toward the hands-on experience these guys need to be able to perform the mission,” said Guillen.

While today was the biggest step, it wasn’t the only. The Afghan medics will continue to work with the American teams on a regular basis, gradually increasing the severity of the patients they treat.

“They’re already capable of handling the most critical patients medically,” said Guillen. “But they haven’t been getting the trauma and wartime experience they really need to do the mission in this country.”

It’s a mission Ahmadzia said he takes on with pride.

“I can serve my people,” he said of the experience’s impact on his ability as a medic. “I can serve my country.”




KANDAHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan (June 22, 2011) -- Afghan Air Force flight medic Sgt. Gulap Ahmadzia prepares to cover the IV site on an Afghan National Army soldier as he is medevaced to Camp Hero, the ANA hospital here. The man fell from the back of a military vehicle and suffered injuries to his shoulder and head, as well as a possible spinal injury. Ahmadzia is the first Afghan flight medic to join American medevac crews as they evacuate more serious patients from the battlefield.

Induction ceremony helps new NCOs to develop, inspire, lead

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Char Fick
TF Dragonlords Public Affairs Representative





Army NCO | No One is More Professional than I ...



N

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (July 2, 2011) - Soldiers at all levels in their careers are expected to lead. Leadership is never more prevalent and crucial to the development of our future enlisted leaders than when a Soldier makes the transition to the NCO Corps.

Such was the case when eight NCOs from Task Force Thunder (159th Combat Aviation Brigade) were inducted into the NCO Corps on July 2 here.

Since the earliest days of our Army, the NCO has been recognized as one who instills discipline and order within a unit.

The NCO induction ceremony is a formal celebration of the newly promoted joining the ranks of a professional NCO Corps, and emphasizes and builds on the pride we all share as members of such an elite Corps. It brings a proper level of recognition to the accomplishments of those Soldiers who are selected to serve as NCOs and the responsibilities that accompany their selection. The ceremony also serves to honor those men and women in the history of the NCO Corps who have served with pride and distinction.

The Creed of the NCO has served as a guiding document for NCOs since its inception in 1973, though its concepts have always been a part of our Corps. These words have inspired NCOs and served as a compass to guide us.


During the NCO induction ceremony, the brigade's newest NCOs – Sgt. Jeremy Atchison, Sgt. Andrew Bemus, Sgt. Kimberly Cafferello, Sgt. Christopher Isabel, Sgt. Erik Parsons, Sgt. Vincent Stolden, Sgt. Troy Tharnish, and Sgt. Cordell Wallace – affirmed their commitment to the professionalism of the NCO Corps, and became a part of the “backbone” of the Army.

1st Sgt. Derrick W. Davis, first sergeant of Task Force Dragonlords (Headquarters and Headquarters Company) said it was important for units to hold NCO induction ceremonies, even in a deployed environment.

“I think NCO induction ceremonies are important for two reasons,” he said. “First, the rite of passage signifies to the newly promoted sergeant that he or she has taken a significant step forward in their leadership development as a Soldier. It is a clear indicator that they are no longer a specialist, but indeed a sergeant.

“Second, sergeants, staff sergeants, and sergeants first class need to see and know how to execute these types of ceremonies so that they will continue the tradition. Senior enlisted leadership have a responsibility to pass on those military customs, which reflect a pride in being a Non-Commissioned Officer and also strengthen the NCO Corps.”

During the ceremony, every NCO in the room stood to recite the Creed. Task Force Thunder's Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Thom affirmed the NCOs as teammates, mentors, coaches and leaders in a keynote address accentuating the contributions of the NCO, and giving the inductees an insightful glimpse into their futures as members of the elite Corps. Each inductee marched across the “Rites of Passage” and accepted their charge from their battalion and brigade command sergeants major. As the ceremony concluded, the NCOs were welcomed into the Corps by their peers and senior NCOs.



4 T H O F J U L Y

TF THUNDER



Independence Day, commonly known as the Fourth of July, is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence July 4, 1776, declaring independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain. Independence Day is usually associated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, fairs, picnics, concerts, speeches and ceremonies, which are exactly the types of events Task Force Thunder Soldiers participated during their deployment to Afghanistan to celebrate the U.S. national holiday this year.

Kandahar

Task Force Thunder's Soldiers celebrate 4th of July in Afghanistan

Story by Spc. Jennifer Andersson
Task Force Thunder Public Affairs

Thousands of miles from U.S. soil, American Soldiers and civilians alike celebrated the 235th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

The festivities began at 6 a.m. for 5K and 10K runs at Mustang Ramp.

The day also featured a reenlistment ceremony for 235 participants, led by Gen. David H. Petraeus.

The 4th of July would not be complete without a cookout. And cookouts there were.

At the Boardwalk there were games, festivities and decorations – all that was missing was fireworks. But here in Afghanistan, that was a good thing.

While Soldiers of Task Force Thunder could not be at home this Independence Day, they celebrated in true American style.



Tarin Kowt



Story by Capt. Cassndra Perkins
Task Force Attack
Public Affairs Representative

Happy 4th of July

During the 4th of July celebration TF Attack promoted several officers and Soldiers. The Task Force had the opportunity to recognize the recipients of the Combat Action Badge and the Order of Saint Michael.

Embracing the Suck

Combat Stress celebrated the 4th of July early by conducted a 5K run around the airfield at Tarin Kowt on July 3. On the back of the shirts given to all the runners was "Embrace the Suck" which were perfect words to live by when running at 6 a.m. and it was already 100 degrees!



Wolverine



Story by Sgt. Michael Tellier
Task Force Wings
Public Affairs Representative

The celebrations on Independence Day here at Forward Operating Base Wolverine began at 7 a.m., and ended with a monthly FOB Ceremony at 8 p.m., resulting in quite the full day of activities for Task Force Wings Soldiers. The call went out to each company to round up their best players who weren't otherwise engaged in their daily tasks, and teams

were made for the seven events throughout the day. The award for the company who scored the highest overall in each event - the coveted Commander's Cup, which the Pathfinder company had held onto since last year's day of fun in the sun. A custom made trophy also went to the winner of the softball game between Task Force Wings and Dyncorp. The festivities kicked off with Ultimate Frisbee, with four teams showing up to compete in the sand, followed by a basketball tournament.

After lunch, a volleyball tournament took place outside of the Firefighter's station, horseshoes, a tug-of-war competition, a hot dog-eating contest, softball game, and finally, the award presentation. During dinner, there was also a great flyover by multiple helicopters. The Air Traffic Controller Company from 7-101, attached to Task Force Wings, won the overall competition and received the Commander's Cup. They were also instrumental in the softball game win over Dyncorp.



KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (June 18, 2011) - Sgt. Samuel Fong, a flight engineer for Task Force Voyager (1st Battalion, 171st Aviation Regiment) mans the gun on the ramp of a CH-47, Chinook, during a relief-in-place here June 18. A relief-in-place is a tactical enabling operation in which, by the direction of higher authority, all or part of a unit is replaced in an area by the incoming unit.

*Story and photos by Spc. Shanika L. Futrell
Task Force Thunder Public Affairs*

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (June 21, 2011) – It was a windless morning with the temperature a sweltering 108 degrees Fahrenheit as the Chinook unit from Task Force Voyager (1st Battalion, 171st Aviation Regiment), a National Guard unit attached to TF Lift (7th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment), geared up to conduct a relief-in-place mission.



A relief-in-place is a tactical enabling operation in which, by the direction of higher authority, all or part of a unit is replaced in an area by the incoming unit.

“Everyone... put on your gear,” said Capt. Byron Cadiz, the Task Force Voyager executive officer and pilot-in-command for this mission.

The gear consisted of a helmet, a 20 pound combat flight vest, eye protection to keep dust from sandblasting your eyeballs and gloves.

After 30 minutes of waiting in a scorching hot Chinook, it was then time to communicate between aircraft to ensure the proper take-off time.

When all flight personnel and passengers had their vests on and proper hearing protection in their ears to drown out the intense, high-pitched sound of the engines, the aircraft crew was ready to be airborne.

“Helmets on,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Darren Byler, a Task Force Voyager co-pilot, right before he and his crew started up the engines in the Chinook to aid ground elements in conducting the relief-in-place.

A flight engineer hopped out the side of the aircraft with a small, red fire extinguisher.

“We have to take every precaution with the aircraft,” said Staff Sgt Brandon Adriano, a flight engineer with TF Voyager. “Safety, safety, safety, is the key to a successful

flight. We have to ensure the engines and blades are good for flight and nothing is catching fire or running hot.”

After taking off from the flight line, the Chinook crew assisted in helping to commute personnel and cargo to their respective posts.

“Chinook units are extremely important to the commands conducting a RIP,” said Adriano. “We are capable to load more weight in our aircraft than any other aircraft in the



unit, by tying the cargo down inside and sling-loading the cargo outside the aircraft to ensure the unit has everything they need to accomplish their mission effectively.”

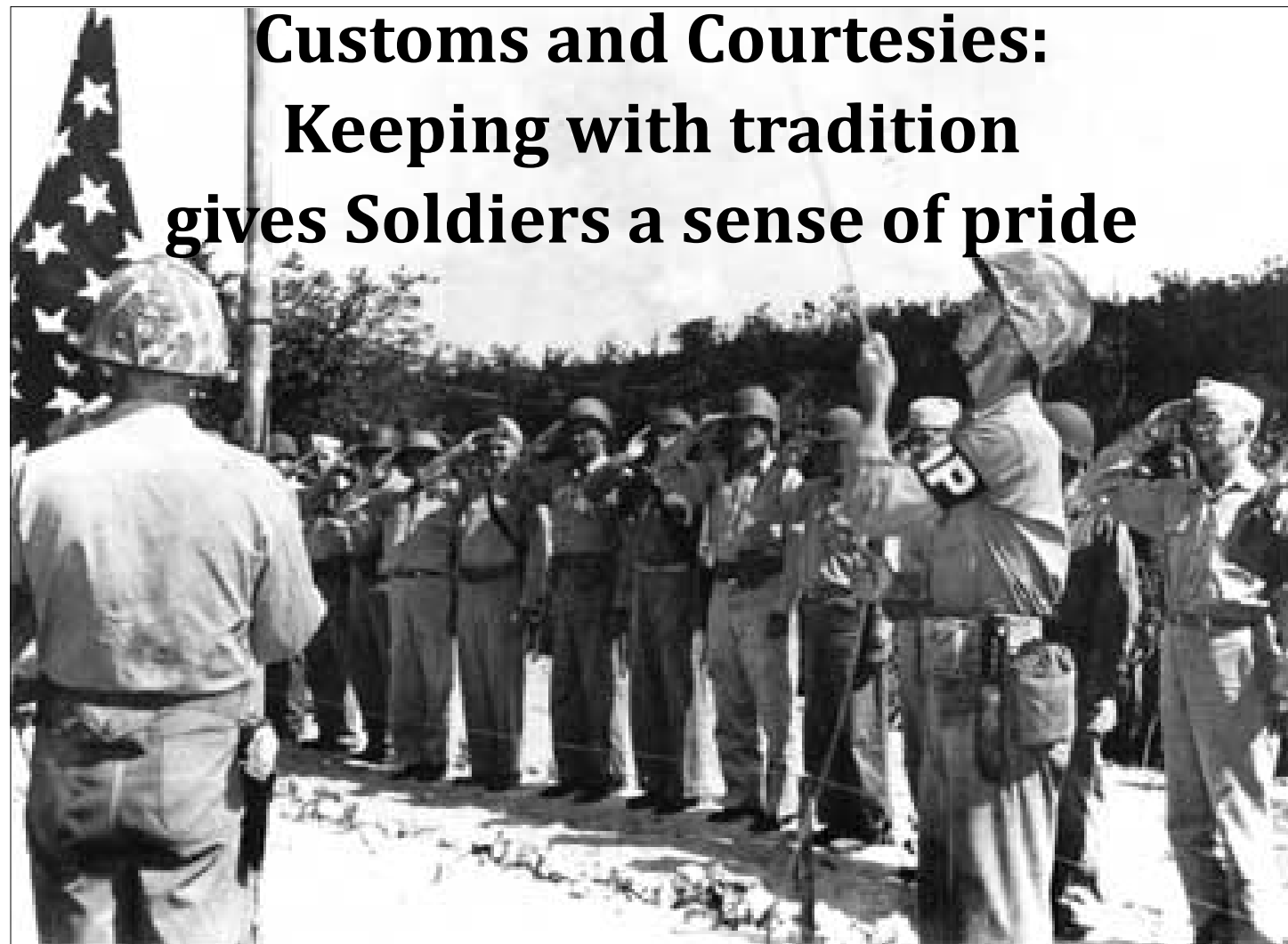
As the crew approaches the landing zone of several different forward operating bases here, the faces of the outgoing or incoming personnel reflect their emotions.

“For many of the members we pick up to replace units, you see sadness in their faces,” said Adriano. “This may very well be their first deployment or they have never been away from their new family before, so I try to smile at them and interact before dropping them off. I learned that a smile out here goes a long way while deployed, and whatever I can do to help for the few minutes during the flight to bring comfort I do such as giving them cold water, apples, and whatever other snacks I have to spare.”

After several turns of dropping off, picking-up passengers and receiving hot gas – when the aircraft is refueled while engines are running – the crewmembers are ready to return the aircraft to its respective place on the flight line.

“Conducting these type of missions is great,” said Cadiz. “We are afforded the opportunity to interact with different coalition forces and different branches of the military.

“We are happy to do our part in the aviation’s mission while deployed, and we take pride in what we do, which is safely transporting (passengers) to their respective places of duty. When we can return and say, we did our job effectively and safely with no damages or injuries, that is a good day. For our task force, we pride ourselves in having good days.”



Customs and Courtesies: Keeping with tradition gives Soldiers a sense of pride

Story by Spc. Shanika L. Futrell
Task Force Thunder Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (July 11, 2011) - Soldiers know that military customs and courtesies exist, but they do not always identify with the true meaning behind them. These customs and courtesies have long formed a solid foundation for the Army. Through the continuation of these rituals, Soldiers today are connected with the men and women who served throughout U.S. Army's history.

"A custom typically refers to a tradition, a set of agreed upon stipulations, or generally accepted rules and when he thinks of customs, norms and standards come to mind," said Staff Sgt. Gabriel Bridges, the NCO in charge of operations for Task Force Dragonlords (Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade).

"Military courtesy is upholding those customs and traditions to maintain good order and discipline, and also to promote esprit de corps within the unit," said 1st Sgt. Derrick Davis, the TF Dragonlords' first sergeant. "An example would be the unwritten tradition that enlisted Soldiers are allowed the opportunity to eat chow before NCOs and officers. This represents a small indicator of discipline and taking care of Soldiers."

"Several customs and courtesies are practiced routinely and daily in today's Army, such as the hand salute,

standing at parade rest when talking to someone superior and walking to the left of someone senior in rank," Bridges said. "The purpose of adhering to these customs and courtesies is to preserve military tradition and continue the good order and discipline (among the ranks)."

When this is practiced correctly, people would see professionalism, pride and discipline that Soldiers have for themselves, their service, their brothers and sisters they serve alongside and their country, he said.

Utilizing customs and courtesies at all times are imperative to the formation, said Sgt. Yenny Alcantara, an orderly room clerk for Company A, TF Fighting (563rd Aviation Support Battalion).

"Soldiers are not only a representation of themselves, but their chain of command, the Army and their country, so it is imperative we as Soldiers show the proper respect to all personnel, whether it is a different country or among U.S. military ranks the proper customs and courtesies should be rendered," she said.

According to Salutes, Honors, and Visits of Courtesy, Chapter 4, courtesy among members of the Armed Forces is vital to maintain military discipline, and respect to seniors will be extended at all times.

"The salute is the most common courtesy," said Davis. "Rendering honors to the Colors during Reveille and Retreat, announcing the arrival and departure of senior members of the organization and giving greetings of the day are all common courtesies Soldiers should be ren-

dering to individuals senior to them."

Chapter 4 of the Soldier's Guide states the hand salute is not an honor exchange; it is a privileged gesture of respect and trust among Soldiers. The salute is an expression that recognizes each other as a member of the profession of arms; and they have made a personal commitment

of self-sacrifice to preserve the Army's way of life. The junior extending the greeting first is a point of etiquette, and a salute returned makes the same statement.

Etiquette is defined as common, everyday courtesy. The military world, like the civilian world, functions more smoothly and pleasantly when members practice good manners.

Simple things such as saluting to officers of friendly foreign countries, when writing an e-mail addressing the Soldier with correct rank, ma'am, sir, or saying please and thank you help the Army and the Soldiers within it to run more smoothly.

Army Command Policy states that all commanding officers and others in authority in the Army are required to take all necessary and proper measures under the laws, regulations, and customs of the Army.

The NCO support channel parallels and complements the chain of command. It is a channel of communication and supervision from the command sergeant major to first sergeant and then to other NCOs and enlisted personnel of the units. Commanders will define responsibilities and authority of their NCOs to their staffs and subordinates. The NCO support channel will assist the chain of command in teaching Soldiers the history of the Army, to include military customs, courtesies, and



traditions.

"It is important to teach the junior Soldiers the significance of keeping with tradition, customs and courtesies because it teaches esprit de corps, team building; they will be the Army's future leaders," said Sgt. 1st Class Willie Nettles, a platoon sergeant for Co. D, TF Lift (7th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment).

"The future leaders of tomorrow must understand why the Army has a set way to do things," said Sgt. Eric Pickens, the ammunition NCO for Co. A, TF Fighting. "It is the NCO's job to aid them in understanding, but it is also the individual's job to go in-depth and take that extra step in utilizing the guides and tools such as field manuals and Army regulations to further that understanding. The military has a standard much different from the civilian life most are accustomed to, and Soldiers must adhere to them. Ignorance is not an excuse, so Soldiers must ask questions of their NCO support channels and research Army publications," he said.

Army Command Policy also states military life is fundamentally different from civilian life in that the military society is characterized by its own laws, rules, customs, and traditions, including numerous restrictions on personal behavior that would not be acceptable in civilian society.

While deployed, military members must not consume alcohol or partake in any sexual conduct because by doing these things could have an impact on mission accomplishment.

Fellow Soldiers, known as "battle buddies," are important to one another and to the mission. In saying this, it is important to hold yourself accountable to the laws, rules, traditions, customs and courtesies set forth by Army rules and regulations.

Through NCOs and self-perseverance, Soldiers should practice and maintain the traditions of the Army's customs and courtesies to help maintain good order and discipline, esprit de corps, and the pride and tradition the Army has had for more than 200 years.





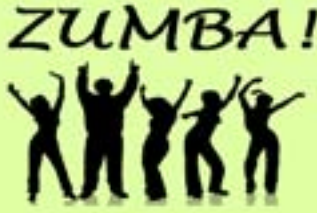













18:00 - 23:00
(MUSIC ROOM)

July 2011

EVENTS



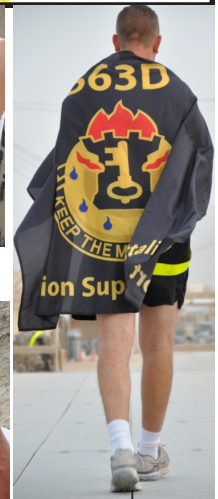
Times & Events subject to change due to mission requirements.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 POKER Every Sunday	 KARAOKE	 ZUMBA! M, W, F 0600-0700 T, Th, Sat 1800-1900	 HAPKIDO TAE KWON DO	 BREAK DANCE	 Spades Tournament	 Lodge #202 OPEN HOUSE 1900-2300
3 POKER 1800-2300	 Happy 4th of July! AT THE BOARDWALK & MWR	5 ZUMBA <u>1800-1900</u> TAE KWON DO <u>1900-2000</u>	6 HAPKIDO <u>1830-2000</u> ZUMBA <u>2000-2130</u>	7 ZUMBA <u>1800-1900</u> TAE KWON DO <u>1900-2000</u>	8 Country Night 20:00 - 23:00 	9 2000-2300  Spoken Word
10 POKER 1800-2300	11 HAPKIDO <u>1800-1930</u> KARAOKE <u>1930-2300</u>	12 TAE KWON DO <u>1900-2000</u> BREAK DANCE CLASS <u>2000-2100</u>	13 HAPKIDO <u>1830-2000</u> ZUMBA <u>2000-2130</u>	14 TAE KWON DO <u>1900-2000</u> BREAK DANCE CLASS <u>2000-2100</u>	15 20:00-23:00  BIRTHDAY BASH	16 958th NCO CALL 1900-2300
17 POKER 1800-2300	18 HAPKIDO <u>1800-1930</u> KARAOKE <u>1930-2300</u>	19 TAE KWON DO <u>1900-2000</u> BREAK DANCE CLASS <u>2000-2100</u>	20 HAPKIDO <u>1830-2000</u> ZUMBA <u>2000-2130</u>	21 TAE KWON DO <u>1900-2000</u> BREAK DANCE CLASS <u>2000-2100</u>	22 Photo Night 1800-2100 	23 OPEN MUSIC PLAY  2000-2300
24 POKER 1800-2300 POKER 1800-2300 31	25 HAPKIDO <u>1800-1930</u> KARAOKE <u>1930-2300</u>	26  KAF EASYRIDERS GROUP 2000-2300	27 HAPKIDO <u>1830-2000</u> ZUMBA <u>2000-2130</u>	28 TAE KWON DO <u>1900-2000</u> BREAK DANCE CLASS <u>2000-2100</u>	29  BINGO 1900-2100	30 BENCH PRESS COMPETITION 1830  Spoken Word 2000-2300

M

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CONGRATULATIONS THUNDER 5K/10K WINNERS!!!

Please visit USO Kandahar or the 159 CAB MWR

Facebook pages for more info on what is going on at KAF!!!



July 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Surprise Sunday	Tuesday Game Night			Creative Thursday	A Friday Evening at the Movies	Sport Saturdays
Notes:					1 Movie Night- The Breakfast Club @ 2100	2 Salsa Night @ 0900
3 Scavenger Hunt @ 1600	4 Combat Crafters Club @ 1900	5 Texas Hold 'Em @ 2000	6 Justified Marathon All Day	7 550 Cord @ 1130	8 Movie Night- Caddyshack @ 2100	9 Wiffle Ball Home Run Derby @ 1730
10 Yoga @ 0630 Movie and Trivia @ 2100	11 Combat Crafters Club @ 1900	12 Texas Hold 'Em @ 2000	13 Burn Notice Marathon All Day	14 Jam Session @ 2000	15 Movie Night- Fight Club @ 2100	16 Wii Bowling @ 2200
17 Yoga @ 0630 Movie and Trivia @ 2100	18 Combat Crafters Club @ 1900	19 Texas Hold 'Em @ 2000	20 The West Wing Marathon All Day	21 550 Cord @ 2000 Dominos @ 1900	22 Movie Night- Animal House @ 2100	23 XMAS in July!
24 Sugar Cookie Decorating @ 1300 Movie and Trivia @ 2100	25 Combat Crafters Club @ 1900	26 Texas Hold 'Em @ 2000	27 Deadwood Marathon All Day	28 Tie Dye @ 2000	29 Movie Night- The Princess Bride @ 2100	30 Zombies Tournament @ 2000 Lifting Event @ MWR at 1400
31 Day at the Pool and Water Wars @ 1400 Movie and Trivia @ 2100	Notes:					

ACTIVITIES ABOVE WILL BE HELD AT THE KAFUSO!!!

ACTIVITIES ABOVE WILL BE HELD AT THE KAF USO!!!



Logistics: the heart of aviation operations

Story by Spc. Shanika L. Futrell
TF Thunder Public Affairs Specialist

TARIN KOWT, Afghanistan (April 02, 2011) - No matter where you work, receiving supplies is essential to getting the job done effectively.

For Task Force Thunder (159th Combat Aviation Brigade) to continue its aviation mission, Soldiers in the Supply Support Activity ensures that all requests are submitted properly and all parts commonly needed are in stock.

"The aircraft that our brigade has will require parts when something is damaged or needing to be replaced during phase maintenance," said Spc. Josiah Long, an automated logistic supply specialist with Company A, TF Fighting (563rd Aviation Support Battalion). "To ensure that our rotary-winged aircraft are able to be repaired in a timely manner, we make sure all requests are ordered properly, and when we receive the shipment, we distribute them as soon as possible."

Out of the three different types of supply distributions within the brigade, SSA Soldiers say without them, no one would be there to control the delivery of materials, as the other two rely on SSA.

"The mission would fail without an SSA, which is why we have split our shop up to make sure that the brigade is effectively covered down on," said Pfc. Juana Donaldson, an automated logistic supply specialist with Co. A, TF Fighting. "SSA has a variety of different sections that make up the strong and effective distribution center that we are."

To support the mission effectively, SSA Soldiers specialize in certain areas to ensure all parts are in the correct area and disseminated to the right shops.

"Within the SSA, we have receiving, in-stock control, turn in, storage, issue, and outbound sections," said Staff Sgt. Gordon, the ware-

house NCO in charge with Co. A, TF Fighting. "All of these sections combined have a total of 10 Soldiers, supporting not only Task Force Attack, (3rd Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment), but other Army units, as well as civilians here and abroad."

When a shipment comes inbound to SSA it goes through the receiving section; if the load is a lot of equipment, all Soldiers help out to guarantee shops have their equipment in a timely manner.

"At SSA we are all a team," said Gordon. "We all know each other's sections, so if one section is overwhelmed we can help them complete their job in a timely manner. The faster we complete our tasks, the more effective our brigade's mission is. We understand the mission, so we come together as a team to help make the mission successful."

SSA Soldiers say they know how important a single part can be to the overall mission.

"What we do in the SSA is what the heart does for the body," said Gordon. "The heart pushes out blood through the veins to ensure that the limbs are properly taken care of. Well that is what the SSA does; we push out all parts and supplies to ensure that the Soldiers have what they need to be mission successful."

The SSA is the essential part of the mission to continue not only the aircraft and its crew mission, but every other shop that support them as well.

"The logistics shop for the battalion orders equipment often, and when their shipment is received, we notify them to come retrieve their items," said Long.

"As a logistics Non-Commissioned Officer in charge, I ensure the battalion has everything it needs for the deployment," said Staff Sgt. Kenneth Brown, the logistics NCOIC with TF Attack. "Because I handle all contracts, whether they are the non-tactical vehicles for transport of troops or the blue water for the port potties, I

need to ensure we have all necessary items to take care of that individual shops mission."

SSA also distributes items to the company-level supply offices as well.

"From a desk to pen and paper, all of these items can be vital to the mission," said Brown. "Perfect example: in the tactical operations center, when the grid coordinates are given, the Soldiers write down the information that the battle captain gives them to pass it on to the pilot. To ensure that they pass the information correctly, that pen and paper was vital to them. Though pen and paper may not seem like much, it has a very important job, just as we as logistics in an aviation brigade may not seem like much, but we are needed to get the job done effectively," he said.

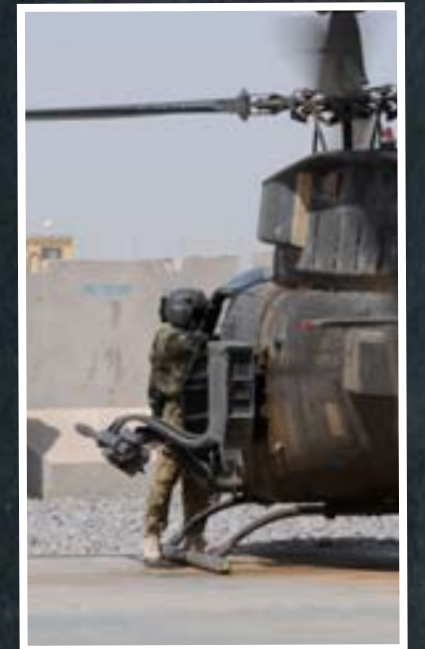
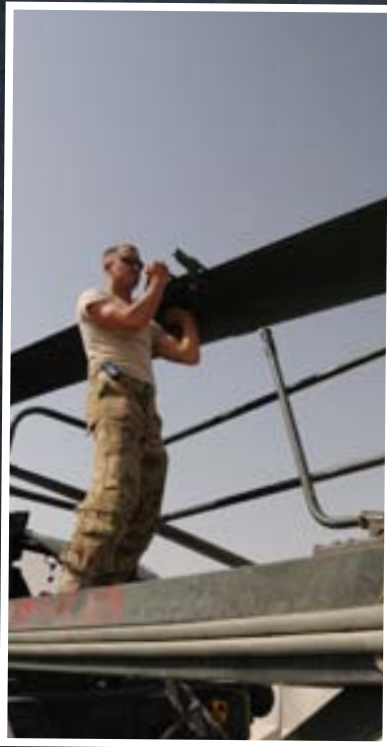
"Without SSA, we would not have the stock that we require to support the battalion's needs," said Pfc. Justin Johnson, a unit supply specialist with TF Attack. "If we could not support the Soldiers with what the mission requires, we have failed them, resulting in possible several failed missions throughout our brigade."

The logistics team does not ever want to let down its family, its brother and sisters in the air, on the ground, nor the Families back home, he said.

"So we ensure that we, the SSA, the S-4, and the supply offices work together as one big logistics family to ensure mission readiness throughout our area of responsibility."

"We are here to provide the stock needed to get the job done," said Gordon. "Tarin Kowt SSA is a supply element that is the heart of the mission, which is vital to ensuring success. To ensure this, we stand firmly by our motto: SOD, supply on demand. We will continue to provide this service until the mission is complete."

A Day in the Life





TF THUNDER
Command
Retention Officer
COL ROYAR

TF THUNDER
Command
Retention NCO
CSM THOM

TF THUNDER
Senior Career
Counselor
MSG URBAEZ

TF FIGHTING
SFC MIDDLETON
DSN: 318-421-7216

TF ATTACK
SFC DEPONTEE
DSN: 303-673-4137

TF WINGS
SSG HOLMAN
DSN: 303-673-4613

TF LIFT
SSG CARTWRIGHT
DSN: 318-421-6664

TF PALEHORSE
SSG SCRUGGS
DSN: 318-421-7950

159TH CAB REAR DET.
SSG GORDON
DSN: 312-412-8388



TF THUNDER RETENTION

Fourth of July Reenlistment Ceremony

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – July 4th was not just a celebration of the Red, White and Blue, but “the Red, the White and the True.”

For the last time as their leader, Gen. David H. Petraeus spoke to 235 service members who volunteered to re-enlist on the 235th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

“You raised your right hand and said, ‘Send me,’ and today you raised your right hand again and said ‘Send me again, if needed,’” he told the troops. “I cannot say how impressive your action is. It is the most meaningful display of patriotism possible.”

Petraeus thanked the service members for their service and gave a brief history of re-enlistment, highlighting its importance in today’s military – especially during times of war. Then he issued the oath of enlistment to the service members in the audience.



“Here 235 of you stand ready to re-enlist for another tour of service, or to reaffirm your recent re-enlistment by reciting the oath of enlistment, knowing full well your commitment will likely entail another long separation from loved ones and more tough battles with the enemy,” Petraeus said. Petraeus said there was no other place he would rather celebrate Independence Day than in Afghanistan with Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines and that he spent eight of the last 11 Independence Days deployed.

The ceremony concluded with the traditional cutting of the cake, with the youngest and oldest service members assisting.

The next day, Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin L. Hill contacted the senior enlisted leaders for Kandahar Airfield, saying, “Our most sincere thanks for a job well done. General Petraeus could not stop talking about it last night, and it spilled over into this morning’s update. I said earlier the best gift that we as NCOs could give (him) is a great 4th of July event. The 4th of July is a special, special event for him and we did it right.”

SOLDIERS LEADERS
CIVILIANS FAMILIES

Take 5

before going
to the beach!



What Have You Done
to Save a Life Today?

Save that Skin

- Wear sunglasses with total UV protection
- Wear wide-brimmed hats, long-sleeved shirts and pants
- Avoid direct exposure as much as possible during peak UV radiation hours
- Apply sunscreen properly



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<https://safety.army.mil>

ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG





By Spc. Jennifer Andersson
Task Force Thunder Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (June 3, 2011) - The line to use the phones and computers stretched across the room and blocked off the walkway in the USO Friday night. Of course, it could have been any other night, for that matter.

The USO stays chaotically busy, yet thrives, thanks to volunteers.

"We are a volunteer-run organization," said Sarah Kemp, duty manager with USO Kandahar. "Without them, we'd never make it. Most of our volunteers are military, so we have Soldiers, Seabees, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, but we also have DOD civilians and contractors as well who volunteer. We even have interpreters – linguists – who volunteer."

Spc. Taylor Gavello of Livermore, Calif., a brigade combat medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Thunder (159th Combat Aviation Brigade), said volunteering helps make his deployment go by faster. Gavello, who has logged more than 100 hours since his arrival in theater in February, also said it is important – mentally – to volunteer.

"Being in your room can be so depressing," he said. "When I volunteer at the USO, it's a good environment to hang out and meet new people. You actually get to get out of your room, be with people and share stories."

Gavello works 12-hour days, but still finds time to volunteer.

"Usually, on my day off, I volunteer for 12 hours, but if I volunteer after work, it's only for about three hours, just enough to relax and settle down," he said.

Pvt. Jimmy Woody of Hickory, N.C., who works with Gavello, also often works 12 to 14 hours a day as Task Force Thunder's brigade behavioral health specialist, yet has logged more than 400 volunteer hours at the USO since he began volun-

teering March 5.

"Any free time I get in the afternoons, I go over there," he said. "Usually on Saturdays, because I'm off on Sundays, I stay until they close, around 2 a.m., and after clean up and all, we get out of there around 3 a.m. I average about four to five hours a day in the afternoons."

Volunteering is just as common at home as it is down-range. Many family members of deployed Soldiers volunteer to pass the time, too.

"Within the last few months of this deployment, we have recognized a few great volunteers with Division rear detachment coins," said Pam McFarland, Task Force Thunder's Family Readiness Support Assistant.



(Above) Nichole Dechent, wife of Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ryan Dechent, pilot for Task Force Eagle Lift, is recognized for her outstanding volunteer service at Fort Campbell.

(Opposite) Quanetta Corral, wife of Sgt. 1st Class Juan Corral, S-6 NCO for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, poses for a photo with her son, Trevon, after an awards ceremony to recognize the volunteers at Fort Campbell.



"We have more than 300 registered volunteers actively logging volunteer hours for our brigade. In any given month, our brigade averages more than 1,000 hours of logged volunteer time."

Warning: volunteering can be contagious.

"We have great teens within our brigade who also volunteer with many organizations through their schools, on post and elsewhere," McFarland said.

"One way we get volunteers is peer pressure," Kemp said. "When I first got here, I had a volunteer who was a Wounded Warrior. His lieutenant saw him doing it and (the lieutenant) volunteered. Another Soldier in the company soon started volunteering, too. From that one Wounded Warrior, eventually the entire company started volunteering whenever they were in here. They were at a (forward operating base), but whenever they came back, they were here volunteering."

The USO is not the only way to volunteer while deployed.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Sam Baker, a helicopter pilot with Task Force Eagle Lift (7th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment) and a trustee for The Foundation for Hospital Art helped begin Operation Colorful Hope in Kandahar and Tarin Kowt during a deployment here in 2002.

"I started with the Foundation for Hospital Art back when I was a CW2 about 15 years ago," Baker said. "My boss saw that I was artistically inclined and asked if I would be interested in a project with him. It only took one incident of painting for me to be hooked for life."

While many here might prefer to whittle the deployment time away volunteering, there is ultimately a mission to accomplish, and naturally, it is priority here.

"The biggest challenge in dealing with volunteers is knowing they have a job to do," Kemp said. "It's hard to plan an event when we don't know how many volunteers we will have for it. Mission comes first, but that's why

we're out here in the first place. We're here to help support the military in their mission."

Gavello said because of the increase in his mission requirements, he reluctantly had to decrease his volunteer hours, though he still volunteers when he can.

Balancing work time, personal time and volunteer time can be tricky, especially while deployed.

"It's not that they don't have time – it's that they don't make time," Woody said. "There's a huge difference. Anybody has the time if they actually want it. If they want to go to the gym, or ride a bike, or take a run, they've got to make time."

The motives for volunteering can be as diverse as the volunteers themselves.

"There are many factors that motivate Family members to volunteer, but probably the biggest is the need to stay busy to help the time pass quickly during deployment," McFarland said. "Sometimes our family members volunteer with our Family Readiness Groups because they feel that sense of pride and loyalty to the unit that their Soldier is serving with. Many volunteer because they have a passion to help and support others."

"I was in retail management a little over 10 years (before joining the Army)," Woody said. "My forte is dealing with people. I like the interaction. When I first started volunteering over there, I said I'd give it a try and see what I think. After a week – not even a week, really – I thought, hey, this is fun. It becomes a challenge, and it feels like retail again, which I like."

"Plus, I enjoy giving back to the Soldiers," he said. "And, I'm earning volunteer hours toward a volunteer service medal."

According to an article in Army Times, dated July 15, 2009, the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal can add 15 promotion points in the awards section of the Promotion Point Worksheet, DA Form 3355, when advancing to sergeant and staff sergeant.

Gavello took advantage of volunteering in garrison for another reason.

"At my last duty station, Fort Lewis, I volunteered at the emergency room almost every night, just trying to sharpen up my skills," he said.

Kemp began working at the USO after a friend volunteered – for the military.

"My close friend joined the Air Force," she said. "It really got me thinking, 'What am I doing, and what have I done for our country?'"

While those reasons may motivate some, most people who volunteer do it sheerly out of a drive to help others.

"When you're volunteering, you're thinking about how much you're going to have to put in, but really you get so much more back in just the thanks and the smiles," Kemp said. "Those are things, when you first sign up as a volunteer, you don't necessarily think about, but it's a really great reward."

"I have never, ever been paid a dime," Baker said. "It is way too important to see the result and convince others the value of the project. Selfless service is out there, and we find it through a paintbrush to some who never knew they could paint and contribute."

"I get enjoyment from helping people," Woody said. "I feel like I'm making a difference by making other people's lives easier. If someone tries to pay me back, I just ask them to turn around and pay it forward – to make the next person's life a little better."

The g of giving

By Staff Sgt. Charles Cartwright
TF Lift Public Affairs Representative

An average Soldier on Kandahar Airfield works anywhere from eight to 14 hours per day, operates in temperatures that range from 90 to 115 degrees, and lifts close to 1,000 pounds a day, so the one thing that raises that a Soldiers' spirits more than anything is a care package from home.

Soldiers receive packages from wives, kids, parents, grandparents, churches and friends. These pack-

ages contain items that fill soldier's bellies, entertain their limited time off and offer a little bit of home that every Soldier misses while deployed.

So how would you react if your children told you that instead of all the wonderful new toys and gadgets that were on the market, they wanted all of their birthday gifts to be items that could be sent out to deployed Soldiers?

Elliott and Gracie Metz, stepchildren of Chief Warrant Officer 3 Chris Reese from Company C, 4th



Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, attached to Task Force Lift, decided to do just that at their most recent birthday party.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Reese's wife, Danielle, works with charity foundations including Patriot Walk of America where donating and sending care packages are part of the operation.

Seeing their mother's good work, Elliott and Gracie decided instead of getting presents from their friends, they would rather get goodies for the troops serving in their stepfather's unit.

After their birthday bash, Danielle sent off all the goodies to Kandahar Airfield, where they were given out to the soldiers in Task Force Eagle Lift.

When Command Sgt. Maj. Jean Thomas, the battalion command sergeant major of TF Lift, heard about the birthday party, he said he felt like these kids needed some well deserved recognition for their good deed.

He sent each one a battalion patch and a battalion coin in thanks.

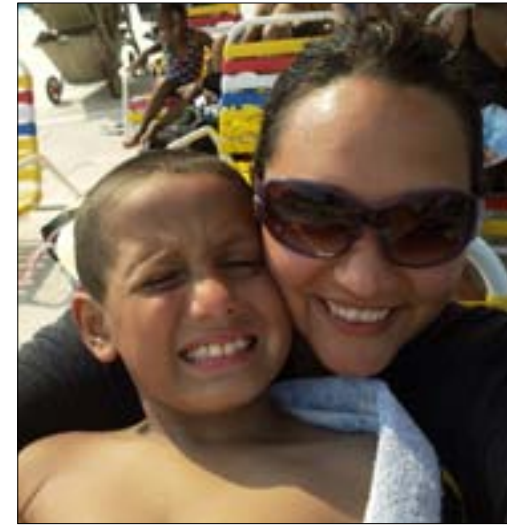
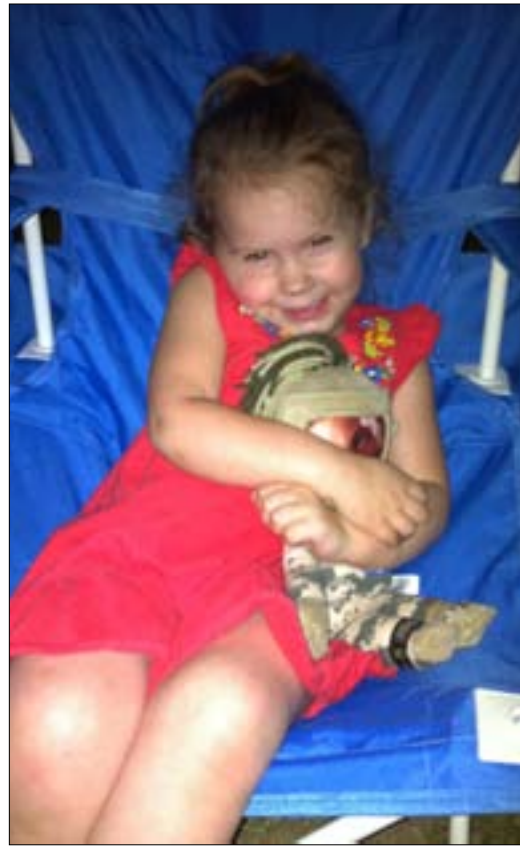
Reese said, "I couldn't be more proud of them."

Another Soldier who had heard about the story said, "That is probably one of the most unselfish things I've ever heard of. I need to teach my kids that kind of charity."

So to Elliott and Gracie Metz, from all the Soldiers of TF Eagle Lift, we salute you and thank you for all the goodies. They definitely hit the spot!



Through your eyes





Progression of crew chiefs

Story and photos by Spc. Jennifer Andersson
Task Force Thunder Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (May 25, 2011) – In the military, personnel move up in rank, depending on their time in and desire to do so. In the aviation community, crewmembers can move up in position, regardless of rank. Here, on the aircraft, rank and position are mutually exclusive.

All crew chiefs initially join the Army as helicopter repairers, whether they are 15T – Blackhawk repairers, 15U – Chinook repairers, 15S – Kiowa repairers or 15R – Apache repairers.

“In a perfect world, one should come out of AIT and go to a delta company maintenance platoon,” said Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Bruce, Task Force Thunder’s enlisted standardization instructor. “In the maintenance platoon, they conduct phases, where they tear down the entire aircraft and build it back up. Also, they perform a lot of scheduled maintenance, different things in between, any kind of unscheduled stuff – if the aircraft breaks, they pass it on to Delta Company – big things, not little things. That’s where the maintainer gets the mechanic skills they need.”

Choosing the right person for a crew chief takes careful observation from supervisors. Supervisors in the Delta companies and troops keep checklists of the skills each individual has mastered. This list helps the supervisors determine who is ready to become a crew chief and who is not.

However, it’s not just the skills that are the deciding factor of whether the maintainer advances.

“A lot of it has to do with your work ethic,” said Spc. Daniel Ruth of Phoenix, Ariz., a flight engineer with Company B, Task Force Lift (7th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment). “What we look for are the (Chinook repairers) out on the line with us, asking us, ‘Do you need any help?’ They come up to us and ask us about flight. The guys who show us they like to work, they like to learn about the aircraft, and usually those who are more squared away than their peers.”

Sgt. Kevin Schoonmaker, a native of Van Detten, N.Y., currently with Co. D, 4th ARB, 227th Avn. Rgt., attached to Troop D, Task Force Palehorse (7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Rgt.), has been an AH-64D Apache crew chief for 12 years. He has had to select maintainers who would be good candidates for crew chief.

“You need to prove yourself here first,” he said. “If you want to be a crew chief, you have to show me you can do this job.”

Once Schoonmaker is confident repairers are ready to move up to crew chiefs, he sends them to a line unit, where they are groomed to become crew chiefs.

Excelling as a maintainer is not the only challenge a potential crew chief might face.

Crew chiefs often arrive before and leave well after the pilots to ensure the safety of all

aboard the aircraft. Long days do not leave crewmembers with much spare time.

Bruce said because of risk management, crewmembers are limited to a 12-hour duty day. In a typical duty day, a crew chief has about two hours to get the aircraft ready, including inspecting the aircraft, gathering gear and maintaining the logbook. If it takes longer than that, the aircraft may not meet its take-off time. After a flight, the crew chiefs must do a post-flight inspection, put away gear, make entries into the logbook and prepare the bird for its next flight.

“One of the biggest things about being a crew chief is time management,” Bruce said. “Because crew chiefs are maintainers as well as crewmembers, they’ve got a lot on their plate.”

“Crew chiefs will generally perform crew-level maintenance – basically minor stuff,” said Sgt. 1st Class Billy Sargent of Howards Grove, Wis., a UH-60M Blackhawk line maintenance platoon sergeant with the Black Widows, Co. C, 4th Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt., tasked out to Task Force Lift. “Granted, from time to time, they’ll do major maintenance, but their basic job is to do ‘keep-the-aircraft-flying’-type maintenance. They’ll do frequent inspections and frequent services.”

While Blackhawk and Chinook crew chiefs can fly inside the aircraft with the pilots, Apache and Kiowa cannot. These aircraft frames seat only two, and each requires two pilots. This grounded crew must be satisfied that their pilots will reap the benefit of their work ethic.

“We do all the same things that a Blackhawk or a Chinook crew chief does – we just don’t get to fly,” Schoonmaker said.

“The way a flight company is, we don’t have just flight mechanics,” Sargent said. “It’s all flight-status personnel. We’ll get mechanics ... and put them through the readiness-level progression.”

The RL progression consists of two to three months of classroom time, hands-on training and flight training.

“We have flight instructors or standardization instructors who do the training,” Sargent said. “You go through a lot of ground classes before you are ready to do any flying.”

For Chinook crew chiefs, the ladder to the top has one more rung than it does for crew chiefs of other aircraft. Chinooks are exclusive because they are the only ones to tout flight engineer.

“We don’t have a person identified as a flight engineer (on Blackhawks),” said Sargent. “I think the flight engineer training is geared more toward aircraft systems. To be a flight engineer, you have to understand very thoroughly aircraft systems, more so than what a crew chief is required to know.”

“Everything falls back on the flight engineer,” Ruth said. “The flight engineer is really the bread and butter of the (Chinook CH-)47 community because they are the ones who are responsible for the aircraft. They’re the ones responsible for maintaining the aircraft, because they’re the ones signed for the aircraft, so they help maintain it.”

“The flight engineer is the right-hand man for the pilot-in-command, who is in charge of the overall aircraft,” said Sgt. Robert Riley of Waukegan, Ill., a flight engineer for Company B, Task Force Lift. “The PC and FE are normally the more experienced people, and they, together, make a mission-based determination on how



An AH60D Apache helicopter crew chief with Troop D, Task Force Palehorse (7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment), examines a blade to determine whether it needs repair or replacement here June 22.

they’re going to do things that will affect the crew and the aircraft, ensuring both safety and mission completeness.”

One may understand an aircrew to be a miniscule version of an Army unit. The pilot-in-command is the commander, but the flight engineer is the first sergeant, in charge of the flight crew.

“It doesn’t matter about rank,” Riley said. “Although we’re all in the Army, and it is an important thing, when you get on that aircraft you might have an E-6 crew chief and an E-4 flight engineer, and it’s that E-4 who’s in charge. It has nothing to do with rank. It’s all about proficiency and experience.”

A motivated crew chief or a Chinook flight engineer may eventually become a flight instructor.

“A flight instructor is a flight engineer who has been through the (aircraft crewmember standard instructor) school,” said Ruth. “The flight instructors are going to be the guys progressing the door gunners and the new crew chiefs.”

“They’re the ones who will say when we’re ready to be signed off as a crew chief, and they’re the ones who are going to give us our check rides to become flight engineers.”

Flight instructor is the top position at a company level, Bruce said. At a battalion level or higher, one moves into the standardization instructor position. Their jobs are to train the crew chiefs and flight engineers to standard, he said.

And the circle continues, passing the torch from one generation of repairers to the next.



Chaplain's Message

Maj. Brian Curry

Is your well dry?

When I was a boy, I used to visit my grandparents' farm in rural Kentucky. Their next door neighbors still used a hand-pumped well to supply their water for their house.

I remember being amazed that I could pump the handle and refreshing, cold water would come gushing out of the well. I remember how good it tasted on those humid August days to have cold water to drink. It must have been a deep well, because I never remember it running dry.

Water is one of those things that we take for granted when we have it, but take it away and we often panic. It doesn't take long for the grumbling and frustration to begin, even though it takes a couple hours to have the water restored.

In a desert environment, water is one of the most valuable things to have because it is needed to sustain life.

Recently, I have spoken to a lot of people and there seems to be a common theme about their "well being dry".

What do you do when your well runs dry? I've been trying to answer that question myself, as I, too, feel that I'm surviving, but not really thriving.

Life is like that, sometimes. It's not always about succeeding. Sometimes life's best lessons are those of enduring difficulties and hardships. Enduring hardships is not fun, and we often try to avoid them at all costs. If we try to run from hardships, we may miss an opportunity to become a better person.

This deployment marks my third year away from my family over the last eight years. I know some of our Families have been away

from each other longer than that. While these separations have been difficult, it has made my family stronger.

This is the dry season for Afghanistan as well as the dry season of the deployment as we near the six-month mark in August.

During a dry season, you have two choices. If your well is dry, you can try to dig deeper or dig a new well. Both ways require faith and digging, but one way will leave you with two wells.

My point is if you're feeling empty and dry, look for a new source of nourishment. Have two wells -- keep those things that helped you in the past and add some new positive things in your life.

You might want to add more exercise to your routine, read a book from a different genre than you normally do, enroll in a college class, learn to play an instrument or seek to grow deeper in your faith.

These things can give you a new outlook and can be refreshing when you're feeling dry. For me, my faith is what gives me the strength and nourishment in my hour of need.

Our overall health is dependent on us being mentally, physically and spiritually strong. Don't neglect these areas in your life - seek to nourish each of them. Jesus spoke to a woman at the well and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst again."

Blessings!

CH Curry

FRSA Notes

2011 Week of the Eagles Schedule

Times and places shown below are tentative and MWR expects to have a Facebook Page up with more details shortly. Visit www.campbell.army.mil for more information on Week of the Eagles events.

The Gate 7 Welcome Center will be open daily from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m.



Thursday, Aug. 4

Fort Campbell schools resume

Saturday, Aug. 6

- 6:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. — 10k run/5k Fun Run at the Campbell Rail Operations Facility on Market Garden Road
- To be determined — Community Health Fair on Blanchfield Army Community Hospital grounds

Sunday, Aug. 7

- Noon-6 p.m. — Legacy Golf Tournament at Cole Park Golf Club
- Run for the Fallen
- 7 p.m. — Normandy Barbecue at Pratt Museum (limited number of tickets available)

Monday August 8

- 9 a.m.-1 p.m. — Combatives
- 9 a.m.-5 p.m. — Softball/Basketball

Tuesday, Aug. 9

Christian County schools resume

- 6 a.m.-11 a.m. — Toughest Air Assault Soldier Competition at Sabalauski Air Assault School

- 9 a.m.-5 p.m. — Softball semi-finals
- 10 a.m.-4 p.m. — Marksmanship Competition

Wednesday, Aug. 10

- 9 a.m.-noon — Combatives finals
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m. — Basketball semi-finals
- 12:30 -1:30 p.m. — Softball: Commanders vs. Sergeant Majors Cup
- 5 p.m. — Memorial Ceremony rehearsal

Thursday, Aug. 11

- 9 a.m.-noon — Basketball finals (12:30 p.m. awards)
- 9 a.m.-noon — Softball finals (12:30 p.m. awards)
- 10 a.m. — Division Review rehearsal
- 5 p.m. — Memorial Ceremony at McAuliffe Hall

Friday, Aug. 12

- 10 a.m. — Division Review
- Division Commander presents awards at Parade Field, Division NCO of the Year

Monday, Aug. 29

Montgomery County schools resume

Save the Date:

Fort Campbell MWR

August 27th – Lt. Dan Band set to perform

More information to follow, watch www.fortcampbellmwr.com for more details.

Save the Date:

159th CAB Strong Bonds

We are working to put together another Strong Bonds retreat during deployment on Sept 2-4. Look for more information to come via FRG e-mail in the coming weeks.

Change of command ceremonies: A behind-the-scenes look

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Char Fick
Task Force Dragonlords Public Affairs Representative

The change-of-command ceremony is an important part of military tradition. Officers conduct a change of command between the incoming commander and the outgoing commander. The change-of-command ceremony is a formal passing of responsibility, authority and accountability of command from one leader to another. In the Army, the change-of-command ceremony is conducted at all levels, from company to Army level. Typically, a company-level change of command is led by the battalion commander and battalion command sergeant major. In the case of a brigade Headquarters

and Headquarters Company, or a battalion change of command, the ceremony is led by the brigade commander and brigade command sergeant major.

The most significant part of the ceremony is when the guidon passes hands between the first sergeant, outgoing company commander, the battalion commander or brigade commander, to the incoming company commander, and is then returned to the first sergeant.

The secret to conducting a successful change-of-command ceremony is preparation. The outgoing leader has the primary responsibility to plan the event. The two commanders must coordinate with the battalion commander to de-conflict schedules. Once a date is established, the outgoing commander must conduct



backward planning. Some key planning considerations include designating a time and location, identifying personnel, conducting rehearsals, and preparing a speech.

Officers are not just appointed commanders, they are groomed for it. The different leadership positions, such as platoon leader, company executive officer and battalion staff officer are designed to shape, mold and develop “seasoned” captains to become effective company commanders.

To be a successful company commander, there are certain characteristics that one must possess, including maturity and experience as an Army leader. As a second lieutenant or first lieutenant, one does not have that experience yet, as experience is gained with time. Realistically, an officer should obtain a few years of company grade officer experience to prepare for a company command position. The brigade commander is responsible for selecting the most experienced and qualified officers to take command positions. Typically, in an aviation unit, a first-time commander will take command for a period of 12 to 18 months, where a second-time commander may only take command for 12 months.

Capt. Luke T. Chivers, former commander of Task Force Dragonlords (Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade), said, “The speech is the most difficult part of planning a change-of-command ceremony because you don’t want to leave anyone out, but then you don’t want to have an extremely long speech, either.”

Chivers took command of TF Dragonlords from Capt. Leah Shubin in March of 2010. Ironically, he will be replacing Shubin again as commander of Co. B, Task Force Attack, (4th Battalion, 101st Avn. Regt.), in July, 2011. Capt. Kevin Matthews, who took Command of the Dragonlords last month, was previously the commander of Co. C, Task Force Lift (4th Bn., 101st Avn. Regt.). All three of these commanders have command experience in both a Headquarters Company and a flight company. Coincidentally, all three are UH-60 pilots.

Proper planning and organizing of a change of command, just like any event, helps work out the kinks to ensure the event is a success. As for the impact that a

change of command has on the Soldiers in formation, Chivers said, “It lets the Soldiers reflect back on what the company has accomplished in that Commander’s timeframe and it is also a formal leadership transition”.

Chivers said incoming commanders must set the tone with inventories and do a thorough job with property accountability.

“Command Teams have to be 100% on the same page, I was lucky to have an awesome first sergeant,” he said.



1st Sgt. Derrick Davis hands the Company guidon to Capt. Luke Chivers during the change of command for Headquarters and Headquarters Company here June 27. The ceremonial tradition of the passing of the guidon signifies passing command authority from the outgoing commander to the incoming commander.



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