

# EYE

JULY  
2011



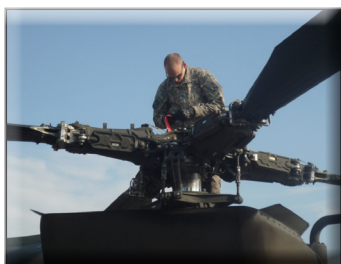
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Cover Photo

BAGRAM, Afghanistan - An AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopter provides security for an air movement mission July 4. The helicopter is flown by pilots from 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Falcon based out of Fort Drum, N.Y. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)

## EYE OF THE FALCON

July 2011

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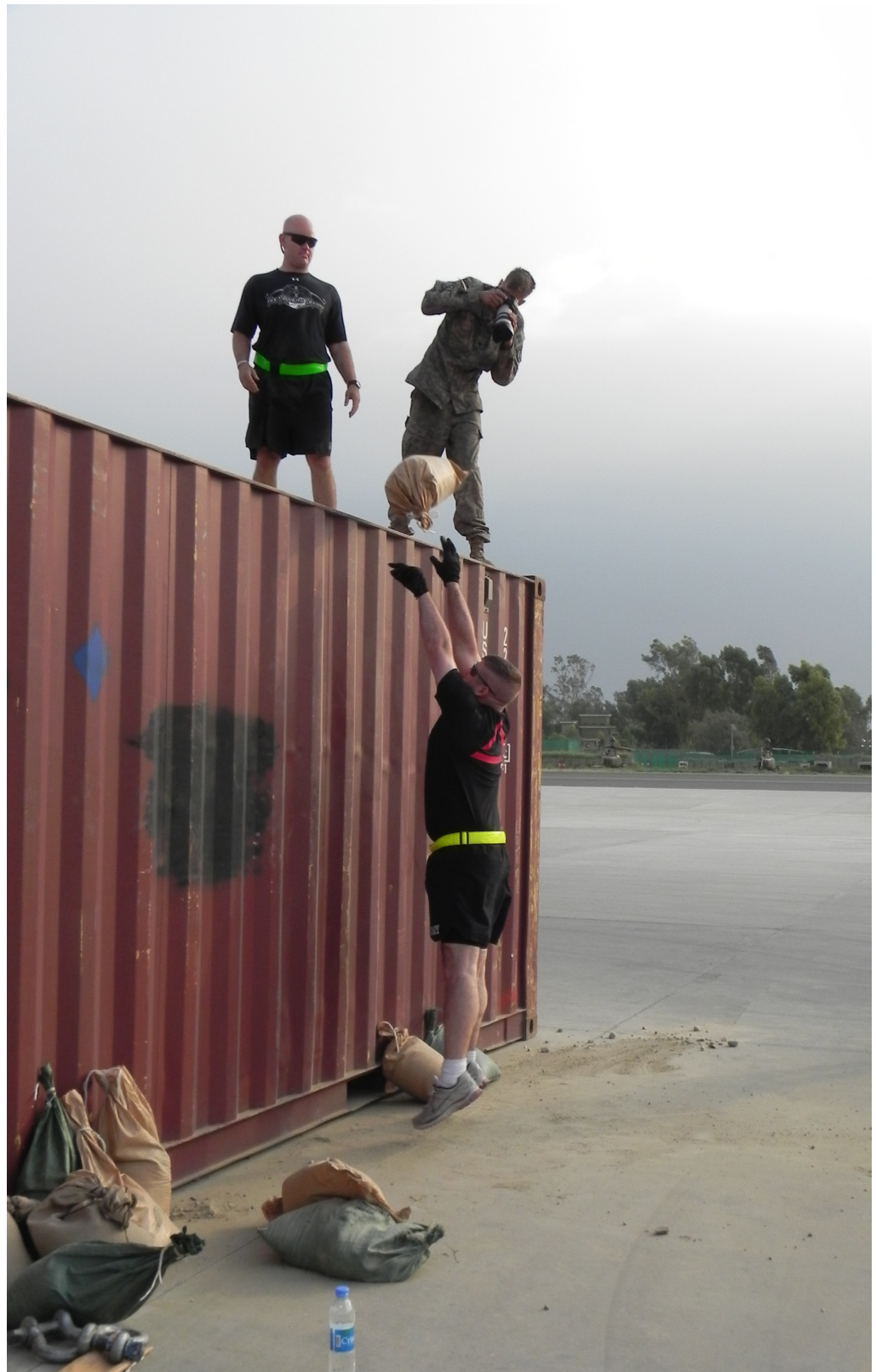
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**NANGARHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Task Force Six-Shooters cavalry trooper Chief Warrant Officer 2 Scott Burke of Watertown, N.Y., an OH-58D Kiowa helicopter pilot of Troop A, tosses a sandbag on top of a milvan for the sand bag toss event of the Shooter Strong Competition held July 3 in celebration of Independence Day. (Photo by Cpl. Kam Gerohimos Task Force Six-Shooters, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)**



# From Falcon 6:

Families, Friends, and Soldiers of Task Force Falcon and 10th CAB,

The month of July brought a lot of heat here in Afghanistan, but your Soldiers continue to do phenomenally well in spite of that. Several changes of command at the company level took place as Captains Timothy Davis, Michael Farrell, Michael Flint, Robert Kazmarek, Michael Marchetti, Chad Monroe, and Brian Schlesier relinquished their commands to seven new company commanders. In Task Force Tigershark, Capt. Erick Trivette took command of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Capt. Robert Kazmarek took command of Company B, 2-10, and Capt. Jeffrey Timmons took command of Company D. In Task Force Phoenix, Capt. Michael Bales took command of Company D, and Capt. Joni Floyd took command of Company E. In Task Force Six Shooter, Capt. Benjamin Jackson took command of Company B, 3-10, and Capt. Paul Milas took command of Troop C. We welcome these new commanders as they lead their units as we complete our deployment, redeploy and prepare for our next mission.

A new month also means promotions and, as a commander, it's fantastic to see Soldiers and officers excel and take on greater responsibility. Congratulations to all who were promoted this month. I look forward to seeing you make your mark in the task force.

As we get nearer to rejoining our friends and Families back home, your Soldiers continue to do great things here in eastern Afghanistan, supporting operations to disrupt insurgent networks, protect the local population, and support the development of a stable, independent government. TF Knighthawk conducted their largest air assault mission this deployment, supporting a battalion-sized element of 4th BCT, 10th Mountain Division, which was inserted near a village housing a large number of insurgents. One of the keys that contributed to the success of this complex air assault was its planning, especially in the area of re-supply. UH-60 Black Hawks delivered emergency supplies both day and night during the mission while CH-47 Chi-

nooks were used to drop water and food by parachute into predetermined drop zones over three nights. The operation resulted in removing many insurgents from the battle, and the recovery of weapons caches.

As we start our preparations for redeployment, it's imperative that we remain focused on our mission and see it through to the end. I cannot express enough our appreciation for all the support we receive from back home. Many of you have had to take on additional responsibilities in the absence of your Soldier. It won't be much longer and we will all be reunited.

Fly to Glory!  
Col. Pedro Almeida  
10th Combat Aviation Brigade  
Falcon 6





# From Falcon 7:

Families, Friends, and Soldiers of Task Force Falcon and 10th CAB,

Task Force Falcon Soldiers are working hard supporting aviation operations throughout eastern Afghanistan and we can all be proud of their work here. They know that even though we are getting closer to returning to Fort Drum, we must remain focused on our work here and remain vigilant so that we all can return safely.

I've seen a lot of our Soldiers using their spare time to improve themselves through fitness and college classes. I encourage those of you who haven't taken these opportunities to strongly consider it. We will be in garrison soon; you don't want to be struggling during PT while others are meeting and exceeding standards. Start now before it's too late so you don't fall behind.

Families and friends, we hope you're enjoying your summer back in the North Country. We wish we were there, too. But rest assured, our focus remains on completing our tasks and we'll be home soon. Thank you all for support. We appreciate it very much.

Fly to Glory!  
Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Patton  
10th Combat Aviation Brigade  
Falcon 7





# “Junkyard Dogs” keep Apaches in the air

By 1st Lt. John Panzer  
Task Force Six-Shooters

NANGARHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – A call for the Quick Reaction Force hits the Task Force Six-Shooter Tactical Operations Center to support Task Force Bronco Soldiers. Without missing a beat, the battle captain calls over to Company B “Killer Spades”, 1st Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, TF Shooter, to launch their AH-64 Apache helicopters; helicopters that wouldn’t be able to perform the mission without the help of the “Junkyard Dogs.”

Despite the extremely high operational tempo of over 650 flight hours per month the Killer Spades’ eight Apaches operate under, there is never a question if Co. B will have helicopters ready to go. Capt. John Mclean, former Co. B Commander from Watertown, N.Y., nicknamed the maintenance crew for their company the “Junkyard Dogs”

for their ability to fix aircraft and enable mission accomplishment regardless of the resources at hand.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Matthew Rood from Grand Blanc, Mich., and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Alvin Melvin from Charlotte, NC, who are Co. B’s maintenance test pilots, are responsible for ensuring the Killer Spades’ aircraft are fit to fly and are maintained to standard. They are extremely proud of their Junkyard Dogs.

Melvin explains, “The sheer number of hours our aircraft have flown this deployment and the maintenance they require to sustain the hours has caused our crew chiefs to become experts at diagnosing and troubleshooting issues before they become a problem. They can tell by the

**Cont. on pg. 8**





**NANGARHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan- Task Force Six-Shooters trooper Spc. Cody Roberts, who deployed from Fort Drum, N.Y., is working on the rotor system of an AH-64D Apache helicopter at Jalalabad Airfield. Roberts is a crew chief with Company B, 1st Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, TF Six-Shooters, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division.**  
**(Photo by U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Matthew Rood, Task Force Six-Shooters)**





slightest change in the noise the aircraft makes that there is an issue in the aircraft and where the likely problem lies.”

Rood says, “ the most impressive example of how good our crew chiefs is not only never dropping a mission due to maintenance, but being able to hot swap an aircraft in under 12 minutes, which ordinarily takes between 30 and 45 minutes.” Hot swapping is when an aircraft comes in for repairs and the pilots are able to transition to another aircraft to continue their mission through the efficient and pit crew work they perform preparing and moving the pilots to the new aircraft.

“Another key trait about our guys that can’t be overstated is their ability to understand the importance of their work. While some of the other airframes here at FOB Fenty allow crew chiefs to fly with the airframe and see the result of their hard work. Our guys understand the impact our Apaches have protecting our fellow Soldiers on the battlefield without ever seeing it firsthand. They truly understand that keeping our birds in the air keeps our ground forces safe and destroys the insurgent forces,” Rood explains.

Not only do the “Junkyard Dogs” contribute greatly to the success of TF Six-Shooter’s operations, they have also

made a tremendous positive impact to the health and welfare of the squadron as a whole.

Under the leadership and planning of Sgt. Timothy Nosser of Chicago, Ill., the ten crew chiefs have planned and built a well-stocked gym, which is appropriately called the Small Arms Repair Room, which is used by a large number of Soldiers throughout the task force. In addition, they created a balcony overlooking the flight line and produced the furniture used on the balcony, which has hosted numerous key leader events with leaders both from within and outside the task force.

Whether they are maintaining aircraft or improving the facilities at FOB Fenty, the “Junkyard Dogs” have made a lasting impact to the many service members throughout Regional Command East.

Capt. Brett Monette, the commander of Co. B says, “The extraordinary success of the Killer Spade’s flight crews in this theater of operations is, without a doubt, directly correlated to its first class maintenance team. I cannot express how proud I am to have the most mission driven Soldiers a commander could ever ask for.” 🇺🇸



**FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHARANA, Afghanistan -- CH-47 Chinook helicopters wait parked just beyond the t-walls as twilight falls July 20. The aircraft are crewed by 3rd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Soldiers who are attached Task Force Attack, an aviation unit from Fort Hood, Texas, which is attached to TF Falcon, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class JR Williams, Task Force Falcon)**



# Tigershark mechanic baptized at FOB Salerno

By Staff Sgt. Ben K. Navratil  
TF Duke Public Affairs

KHOWST PROVINCE, Afghanistan – A soldier deployed with the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Tigershark, was baptized at the Forward Operating Base Salerno chapel July 17.

U.S. Army Spc. Guenter Nyanankpe, a mechanic from Columbia, S.C., with Company E, 10th CAB, 10th Mtn. Div., TF Tigershark, formally accepted God into his life in a ceremony performed as part of a regular Sunday service.

“Baptism symbolizes the death and resurrection of Christ,” said U.S. Army Chaplain (Capt.) Seung-Il Suh, the TF Tigershark Chaplain from Fort Drum, N.Y., who performed the ceremony. “You go under the water, meaning you are dead and buried. And when you come up again, that symbolizes resurrection.”

Nyanankpe said he waited until now to go through the ceremony so that he could fully appreciate the significance of being “adopted by God.”

He said his family never had him baptized in his youth, because they felt it was important that he make the decision himself when he was ready, and understood everything associated with it. He never got around to it though, while in high school or in his first few years in the Army.

“During this deployment,” he said, “my attitude was ‘What better time than now?’”

“I could tell that God was doing something inside him,” said Suh, remarking on the changes he noticed

in Nyanankpe during the deployment. Suh has known Nyanankpe for about two years.

He said that Nyanankpe at first didn’t seem very serious about his faith until a few months into his deployment. “He started coming to services every week,” said Suh, “and making a serious effort to pursue life as a Christian. Finally he came to me and asked how to ‘walk-the-walk’ to really live a Christian life.”

Nyanankpe said he sees his faith as a conduit to express his stronger emotions.

“Religion has given me someplace to find refuge when times are tough,” he said, “and a medium to rejoice when God’s blessed me. God is my savior, but emotionally gives me stability during my deployment and the ups and downs in life.”

He said he doesn’t foresee himself changing his personality or behavior noticeably, now that he’s formally given himself to God. He said he plans to continue “fighting the good fight,” which to him means continuing to take his life from the “aimless wandering stumble” it was, to living a purpose driven life and accomplishing the goals he believes God has set out for him.

He said he is particularly thankful for the help and support he’s been given from the ministry team in his unit. “I really appreciate, and thank God that we have people like Chaplain Suh to mentor people like me,” he said, “young Soldiers, people that are still developing as human beings.” 🇺🇸

KHOWST PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Spc. Guenter Nyanankpe, a mechanic with Task Force Tigershark, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, is baptized by U.S. Army Chaplain (Capt.) Seung-Il Suh, TF Tiger-shark's Chaplain from Fort Drum, N.Y., at Forward Operating Base Salerno July 17. Nyanankpe decided a month earlier to accept God into his life, and asked Suh to help him live the life of a Christian. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Ben K. Navratil)



# Camp Avenger recreation facility showcases Soldiers' creativity and craftsmanship

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot  
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

When Soldiers of Company B, Task Force Mountain Eagle, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, arrived at Camp Avenger in October 2010, there were very few places to go to relax when they weren't working.

With the facilitation of a few senior noncommissioned officers, the Rats' Nest recreation facility was created.

"When we got here in October there was only a small Internet café," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Richard Turner of Evansville, Ind., an avionics communications equipment repair supervisor with Co. B, TF Mountain Eagle, and Camp Avenger's Mayor. "We wanted to give our Soldiers someplace to get together to relax and have a good time."

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Kerry Greiner of Glenwood Springs, Colo., who was also camp mayor,

before moving to a component repair platoon maintenance supervisor position, applied for a permit to Bagram Airfield's land management office to occupy a space plot of land.

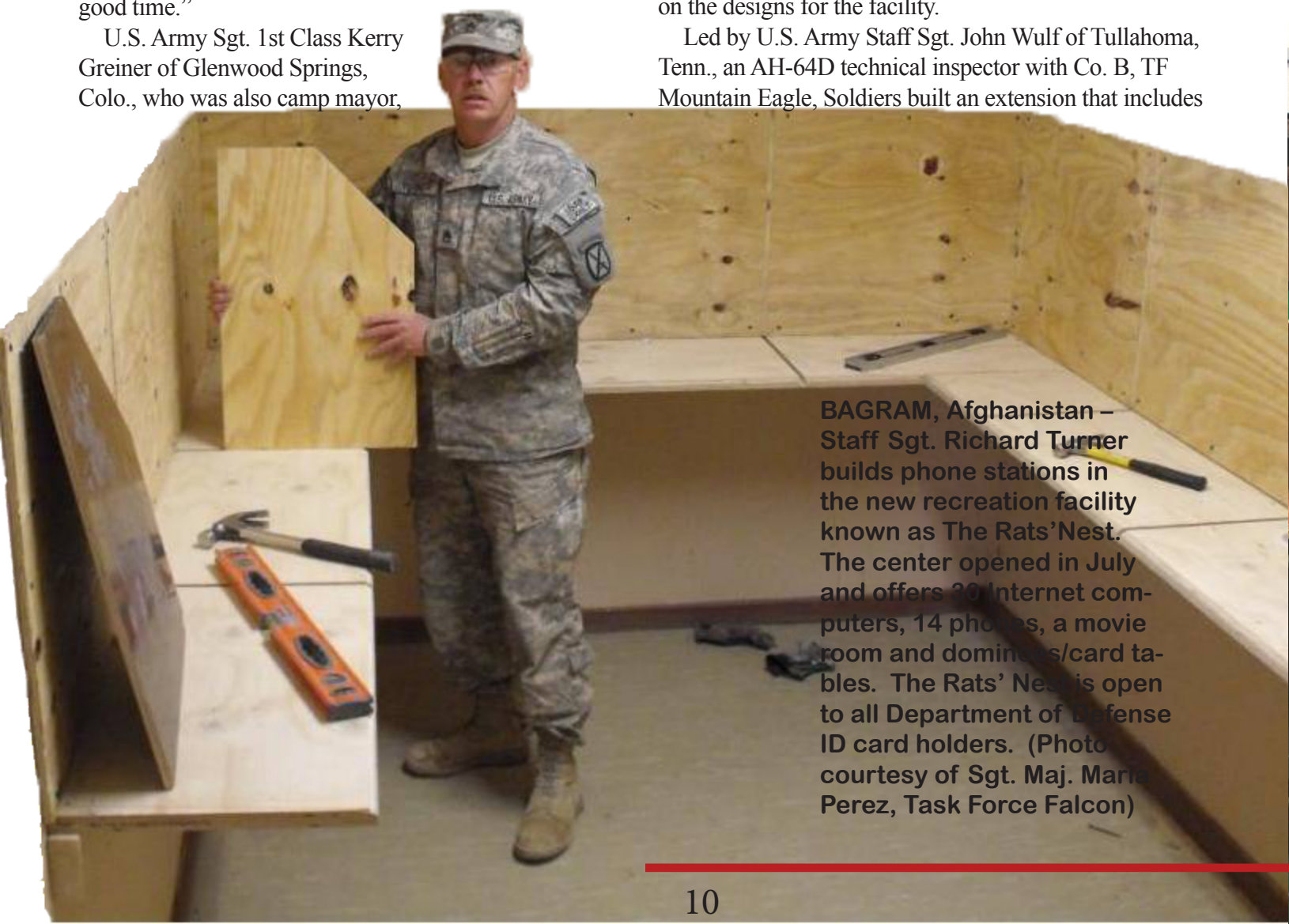
The project began with a building that needed a lot of refurbishing.

"We had an abandoned B-hut in our container yard," Greiner said. "The floors were caved in about 3 feet."

Staff Sgt. Turner and some Soldiers jacked up the building and reinforced the floor. They knocked out some walls and rebuilt the roof before moving it by crane to its current location.

The Soldiers attached a second B-hut before working on the designs for the facility.

Led by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John Wulf of Tullahoma, Tenn., an AH-64D technical inspector with Co. B, TF Mountain Eagle, Soldiers built an extension that includes



**BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Staff Sgt. Richard Turner builds phone stations in the new recreation facility known as The Rats' Nest. The center opened in July and offers 30 Internet computers, 14 phones, a movie room and dominos/card tables. The Rats' Nest is open to all Department of Defense ID card holders. (Photo courtesy of Sgt. Maj. Mario Perez, Task Force Falcon)**



a porch with Adirondack chairs, and a game room containing two dominos tables, four card tables, four gaming stations and two televisions.

“As a hobby I build cabinets and furniture,” said Wulf. “Building this facility is similar just on a larger scale.”

Inside, visitors will find a 14-phone station, Internet cafe with 30 computers and a movie room.

U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Rodney Harris of Asheboro, N.C., Co. B, TF Mountain Eagle, watched the project from its planning stages to completion.

“From the beginning they had grandiose plans for the facility,” Harris said. “Their plans have come to fruition. This is an awesome facility built by Soldiers for Soldiers!”

Turner said U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. Maria Perez and US Army Sgt. 1st Class Loren Smith from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, TF Falcon, helped tremendously with getting equipment and supplies. He also credited the TF Mountain Eagle chaplain for providing chairs, Spaware for Internet access and contractors from Fluor for providing electrical, heat and air conditioning services.

The walls are adorned with artwork. In the game room, there are drawings of the different types of heli-

copters Co. B, TF Mountain Eagle, Soldiers work on. In another room, are tributes to those who died in the 9/11 attacks; the official seal of the Pentagon, a crest commemorating flight 93, and the Twin Towers – all hand drawn and colored by Spc. Ricardo Perez, an OH-58 Kiowa helicopter armament, electrical aviation systems repairer with Co. B, TF Mountain Eagle.

“It’s an honor for me to do these drawings here, because everyone will see it,” said the native of Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico. “It’s like a medicine for stress.”

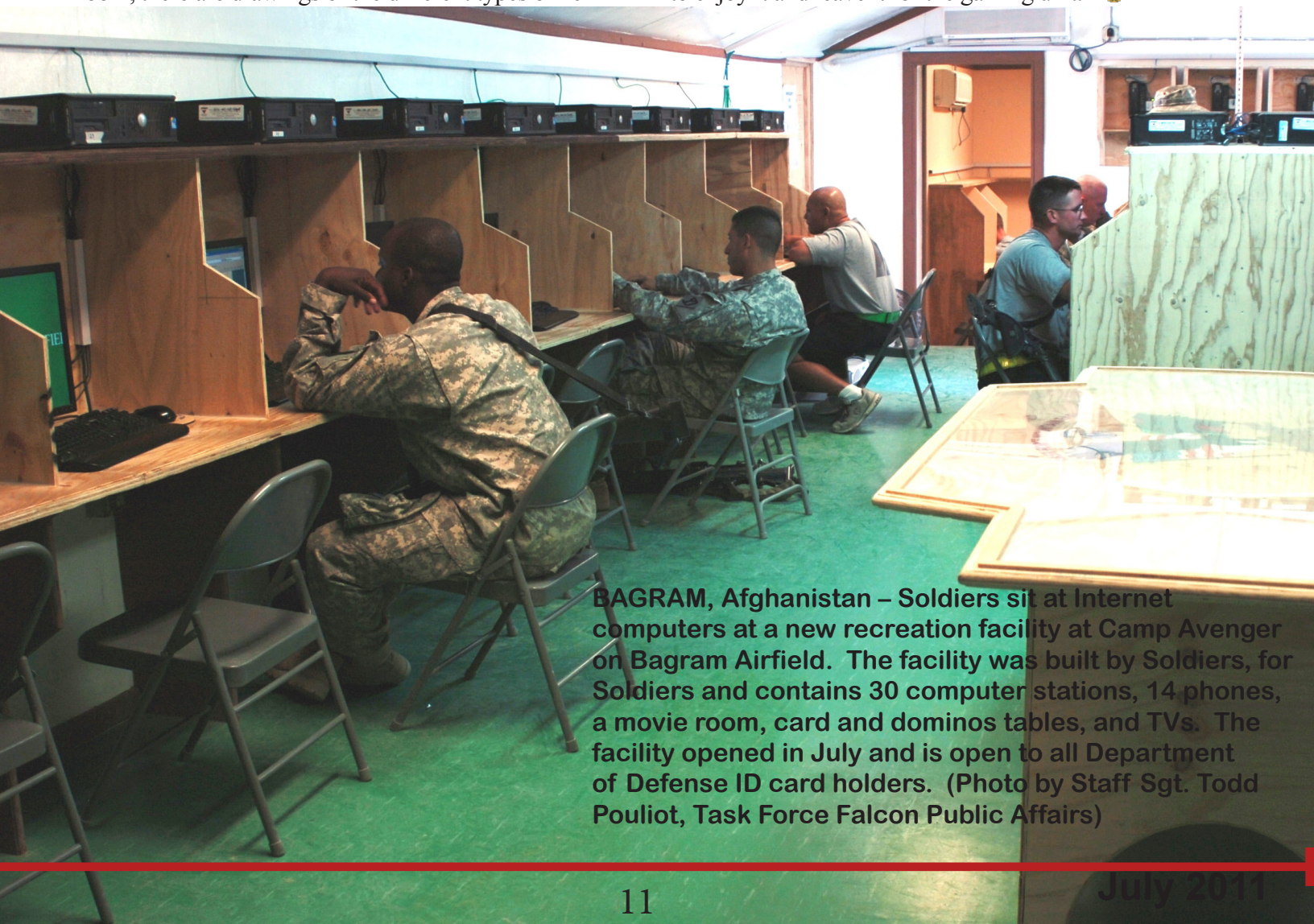
Perez said he used up 13 Sharpies in just one week, in addition to colored pencils and spray paint in his art work.

“We’ve been open for about a week,” said Turner. “The facility has an approximate capacity of 75-100.”

“I come every day after work,” said U.S. Army Pfc. James Abuya of Newark, Del., a logistics specialist with Co. B, TF Mountain Eagle. “I use the computers to work on my online classes.”

Abuya said he also likes watching movies in the new movie room.

“It turned out very nice,” said Greiner. “The Soldiers did all of it. They built their own place. They will be able to enjoy it and leave it for the gaining unit.”



**BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Soldiers sit at Internet computers at a new recreation facility at Camp Avenger on Bagram Airfield. The facility was built by Soldiers, for Soldiers and contains 30 computer stations, 14 phones, a movie room, card and dominos tables, and TVs. The facility opened in July and is open to all Department of Defense ID card holders. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)**



# Medics' realistic training drives home life-saving skills

By Sgt. 1st Class JR Williams  
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – “Bang, bang, bang, bang! You’re under attack! Get down! Get down!” a voice breaks through the morning quiet, sending Soldiers diving and scattering.

Screams and groans quickly follow as injured Soldiers call for a medic.

“All right, CLS, where are you?”

What are you looking for right now?” shouts U.S. Army Spc. Jessica Williamson, a medic with the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade’s Aviation Consolidated Aid Station.

Luckily, Soldiers of Task Force Falcon, 10th Mountain Division, are not literally under attack; this simulated ambush, complete with mock injuries, tests the Soldiers go-

ing through the lanes of the Combat Lifesaver Course here July 1.

“We received a lot of after action reviews saying that Soldiers wanted more hands-on training during CLS class. So, we felt that the lanes were a great way for them to get this training,” explained Williamson, a Long Island, N.Y. native.

“It’s their first real-life, so to speak,

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan – U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Anthony Trick (center) of Inverness, Fla., the brigade medical operations non-commissioned officer in charge of the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade’s Aviation Consolidated Aid Station, points out an injury on a simulated casualty to Soldiers completing the lanes portion of the Combat Lifesaver Course. Trick and a fellow medic developed the CLS lanes to create realistic scenarios to better prepare soldiers for the possible conditions and injuries they might treat on the battlefield. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd L. Pouliot, TF Falcon Public Affairs)**





experience in the sense that they're under pressure, they have to treat a wound that they see - the moulage that we've created on the patient - so, they see it, it's there, and they have to act on it quickly and aggressively in order to control the injury."

According to Williamson, the realism of the ACAS CLS lanes drives home the significance of the course and ultimately ensures the students react appropriately in the event of a casualty.

"The interventions that we teach these soldiers can prevent the most common causes of death on the battlefield - blood loss and chest wounds," said Williamson. "By showing them how to treat them and stop those conditions from killing the Soldier, the injured Soldiers' chances for survival increase very significantly."

Her fellow medic and lanes instructor, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Anthony Trick, the brigade medical operations non-commissioned officer in charge and native of Inverness, Fla., agreed.

"CLS is definitely echelon one care, where the rubber meets the road," said Trick. "This is where the most lives can be saved, honestly. Even if every Soldier can just learn how to effectively use a tourniquet; tourniquets can greatly increase a Soldier's expectancy to live by about 60%."

Williamson and Trick developed the lanes together, creating scenarios to highlight the interventions most needed to save a life. They group the Soldiers in patrol-sized elements, pulling a few of the Soldiers aside to place a moulage (simulated injury device) under their uniform. The group heads down the lane, comes under attack, and reacts to the different injuries presented, all under the watchful

eyes of Williamson and Trick who elevate the situation by yelling out their critiques of the students' actions and decisions.

"These lanes really help out by putting a lot of pressure on the students and showing them how tiring it can actually be and how sweaty and how unforgiving CLS can actually be," explained Trick.

"I think that every Soldier in the Army should be trained 100% on CLS," added Williamson. "I think these skills are good skills for everyone to have, should something happen on the battlefield or just walking down the street. You have the ability to help that Soldier or treat that person."

The 10th CAB commander, Col. Pedro Almeida, shares that belief and directed every Soldier in the brigade to complete the course. While an enormous task, Trick said the commander's goal is nearly met.

"Right now, out of roughly 4,200 Soldiers, we are at 75-percent certified."

More importantly, Trick continued, there's an increased chance of saving an injured Soldier.

"I think 100% across the board is a great thing because you never know who's going to be injured and you never know who's going to be around when that person gets injured," he said.

That's something that Trick knows first-hand. Back in 2007, Trick was injured while on a patrol with his infantry squad. He was the sole medic.

"I wasn't fully able to treat myself. But since everyone in my squad was 100-percent CLS certified by me, they all knew what to do. They worked with me before through the CLS lanes and knew exactly what they needed to do to help me out and to make sure I stayed

alive."

Students going through the lanes echoed this sentiment, saying they felt better prepared for a bad situation.

"I would hate to be that guy who saw an accident and wasn't able to help," said U.S. Army Capt. Royal Atwood, officer-in-charge of the air defense airspace management cell for the 10th CAB. While Atwood, who hails from Fort Drum, N.Y., feels all Soldiers should go through the CLS course, he also feels the lanes in particular drive those lessons home.

"This is not my first CLS class I've been to, but this is the best hands-on class. The classroom portion was adequate, but it was the hands-on portion that I believe was really well put together. I got a lot out of it and I think the other students got a lot out of it, too."

For Pfc. Joy Odom, an aviation operations Soldier completing her first deployment with the 10th CAB, the lanes reinforced the need to focus in an overwhelming situation.

"Overall, it was kind of crazy but good hands-on training," the Portsmouth, Va. native admitted. "The lanes were awesome with the casualties and different aspects of how they were hurt. But it's how you can expect things to go in real life and how to treat it, not to treat it the wrong way, but the right way. I'm confident that I can actually help that person."

It's that sense of confidence that keeps Williamson and Trick teaching the course and running their nerve-racking, action-packed, realistic lanes every two weeks.

"For Soldiers to understand how to how to treat the more severe, life-threatening injuries, in order to save their battle buddies' life is why we do this," Williamson stated. 🇺🇸



# Father promotes son



BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Capt. William Maloney, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, is promoted by his father, Lt. Col. Patrick Maloney here July 26. William, the TF Phoenix fire support officer, has been in the Army for three years and is serving his first deployment with TF Phoenix. Patrick, who is with Program Executive Office, has been in the Army for 32 years. He coordinated travel from Warren, Mich. to pin his son at Bagram Airfield here. William, a native of Oxford, Mich., said his father was his inspiration for joining the Army. (Photo courtesy of TF Phoenix)





# Nurses join MEDEVAC unit under new Army program

By Sgt. Amanda Jo Brown  
Task Force Falcon

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Aviation medical evacuation Soldiers are tasked with a hefty mission to retrieve injured patients and keep their vital signs stable until they can reach a hospital to receive higher level treatment.

Soldiers in Company C “Dustoff,” Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, have made strides in improving patient care since their arrival in country last August. This is due, in part, to the inclusion of the Army’s new program in which flight nurses have been attached to the unit.

U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Brian Peplinski, a native of Bay City, Mich., said having nurses on the team to help with critical

patients ultimately helps achieve their goal – to save lives.

“[Having nurses attached to MEDEVAC units in high operation areas] is good for the patients,” said Peplinski, “At the end of the day taking care of people – U.S. military, contractors, coalition forces and those in need - is what it’s all about.”

Peplinski said he feels extremely lucky to have the nurses working with Dustoff.

“They are very talented additions to the team,” said Peplinski, “The nurses provide an extra set of hands in critical situations that has repeatedly made a difference in patient care and outcomes.”

Every six months, five nurses travel from stateside hospi-

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – 1st Sgt. Brian Peplinski and Maj. Michael McFadden, command team in Company C “Dustoff,” Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, stand with outgoing and incoming flight nurses July 5. The nurses are attached to the unit in different locations in Regional Command – East for six months to help provide more knowledge to critical care patients. Peplinski is a native of Bay City, Mich., and McFadden resides on Fort Drum, N.Y. (Courtesy photo provided by TF Phoenix)**







**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Maj. Michael McFadden, Company C “Dustoff,” Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, commander, pins some of the first Army nurses with the Air Medal for Service and Basic Army Aviation Badge July 5 for their service while they were attached to Dustoff. McFadden resides on Fort Drum, N.Y. (Courtesy photo provided by TF Phoenix)**

tals, such as Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Madigan Army Medical Center, to serve with MEDEVAC units to provide en route critical care for patients in Afghanistan.

These highly skilled nurses undergo a wealth of training upon arrival to their Dustoff team including training on the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter, emergency procedures, medical equipment familiarization, as well as receive classes in the areas of administering medication and trauma care.

The flight nurses are trained to the level of a non-rated crew member. They complete a myriad of tasks from attending crew member briefs, cleaning windows, and ensuring all medical equipment is functional.

U.S. Army Capt. Tanesha Richardson, of Louisville, Ky., just completed her six-month tour with the company and says she is leaving Afghanistan as a more-rounded nurse.

“This experience has been very rewarding,” said Richardson, “I’ve become more knowledgeable and independent. I now understand why certain things were done for the patient. I can see the bigger picture of what the patient has gone through.”

As Richardson, and the four other nurses who accompanied her to Afghanistan, end their deployment and prepare to return to the hospital environment of the States, she shared some of the complex situations she faced when she first got to the unit.

“One of the most challenging things for me was learning how to assess the patient in the dark while flying,” said Richardson, “You have to gather the information in a different way.”

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jason Taylor, one of the newly arrived nurses on the Dustoff team, agreed with Richardson. He said the challenge would lie in the new surroundings.

“I think the most difficult thing about this tour will be adapting to a new environment,” said Taylor, a native of Mokena, Ill.

The nurses are well aware they will not have the controlled atmosphere that a hospital offers – such as proper lighting and a broad range of medical supplies at the ready; however, Taylor expressed confidence in the new team of nurses.

Taylor is certain that the next six months will be successful for them because of the knowledge and experience they already possess.

“[Nurses] have the skill set needed to do the job well,” he said. “It’s just a matter of applying and doing it in this environment.”

All of the nurses who have served with Dustoff, in Regional Command – East, are among the first Army nurses to receive the Air Medal for Service and Basic Army Aviation Badge.

Richardson said this experience has provided her with knowledge that she will utilize stateside when caring for patients.

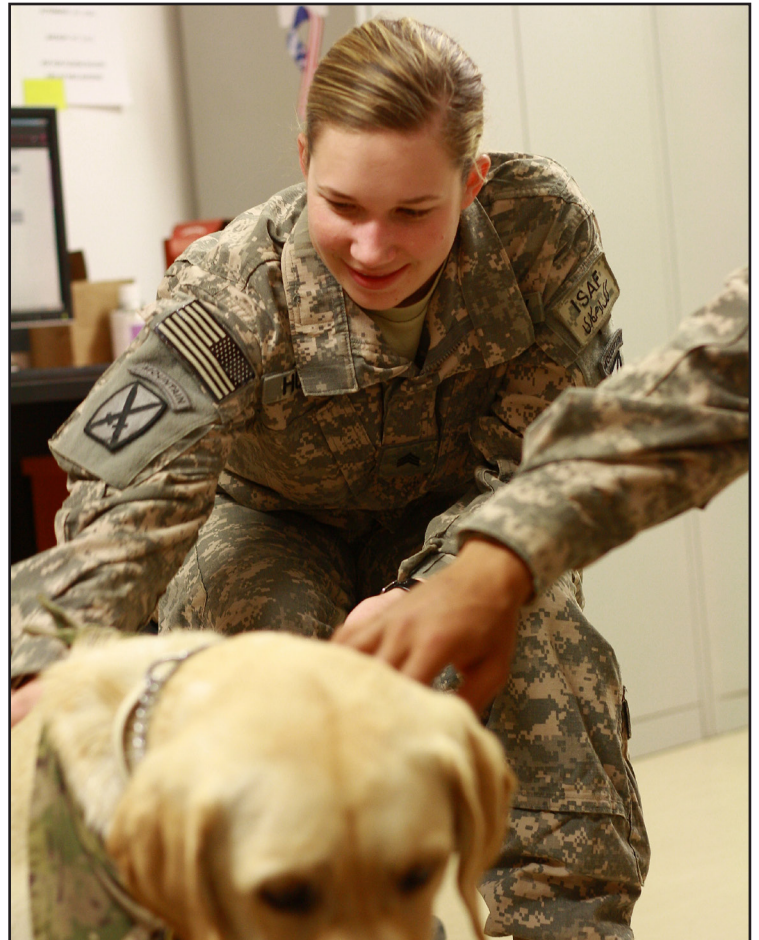
“I think by performing my duties with [Dustoff] my skills as a nurse have broadened and given me a better understanding of injuries,” said Richardson, “It has given me a better understanding of what patients have been through from start to finish.” 🇺🇸

# Therapy dog visits TF Phoenix



**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan –** Capt. Michael Flint, Company D, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, commander, enjoys an evening visit from Maj. Timmy, the restoration center therapy dog, July 7. Flint is a native of Cincinnati, Ohio. (Photo by Sgt. Amanda Jo Brown, TF Phoenix)

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan –** Sgt. Autumn Hughes, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, communications and information management shop NCO, smiles as she pets Maj. Timmy, the restoration center therapy dog, during his visit to the night shift July 7. Hughes is a native of Keyser, W.Va. (Photo by Sgt. Amanda Jo Brown, TF Phoenix)



**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan –** Sgt. Autumn Hughes and Spc. Raheem Stewart, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, both Soldiers in the communications and information management shop, enjoy a relaxing visit from Maj. Timmy, the restoration center therapy dog, July 7. Hughes is a native of Keyser, W.Va. Stewart is a native of Dallas, Texas. (Photo by Sgt. Amanda Jo Brown, TF Phoenix)



# Eye of the Falcon

BAGRAM, Afghanistan- U.S. Army Capt. Gwendolyn Whitcomb, a flight nurse with Company C "Mountain Dustoff," 3rd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Falcon, administers medication to her patient, an Afghan National Army Soldier July 11. Whitcomb is a Ware, Mass. native. (Photo by U.S. Army Pfc. Michael Syner, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)





# Falcon medevac keeps Afghans, coalition forces alive

By Pfc. Michael Syner  
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

Few people can claim with certainty that they hold the balance of life and death in their hands, but Task Force Falcon's Company C "Mountain Dustoff" not only claims it, they save lives on a daily basis.

Co. C, 3rd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Falcon, is a medical evacuation unit, performing patient transfers from one base to another and picking up patients from the point of injury; which in this case usually means the battlefield.

"Our job is to pick up patients," said U.S. Army 1st Lt. Michael Brisson, a pilot with Co. C and native of Albany, N.Y. "We have to be ready to take a call at anytime."

The biggest difference for MEDEVAC pilots over regular UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilots is the constant pressure to be able to take off at any time.

"I was an air assault pilot before coming here," said U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Donald Schumann, a pilot with Co. C and native of Mesa, Ariz. "It's a lot more challenging being a medevac pilot. We have to do on-the-fly planning for most of our missions. With my old unit, we would often have days to plan the mission."

The primary reason for the added pilot stress is the Dustoff standard of "wheels up" within

15 minutes of receiving an urgent medical evacuation call.

"When we're on shift, we have to be ready to respond very quickly," Brisson said. "If we get an urgent call, we're running out [to the helicopter] to get suited up and everything ready."

Of course, pilots, while important, are not the only members of the medevac team. Each crew includes a medic to attend to the patient.

"The patient is usually stable when we pick them up," said U.S. Army Spc. Christian Hinrichsen, a medic with Dustoff, "we're there to move them from one location to another, and make sure nothing goes horribly wrong."

Most of the initial care has been performed when we arrive, the Clovis, N.M. native said.

To round out the team, there's always a crew chief available to fly missions.

The crew chief is responsible for the maintenance of the aircraft, as well as everything outside of the cockpit of the helicopter.

"It's my job to do everything

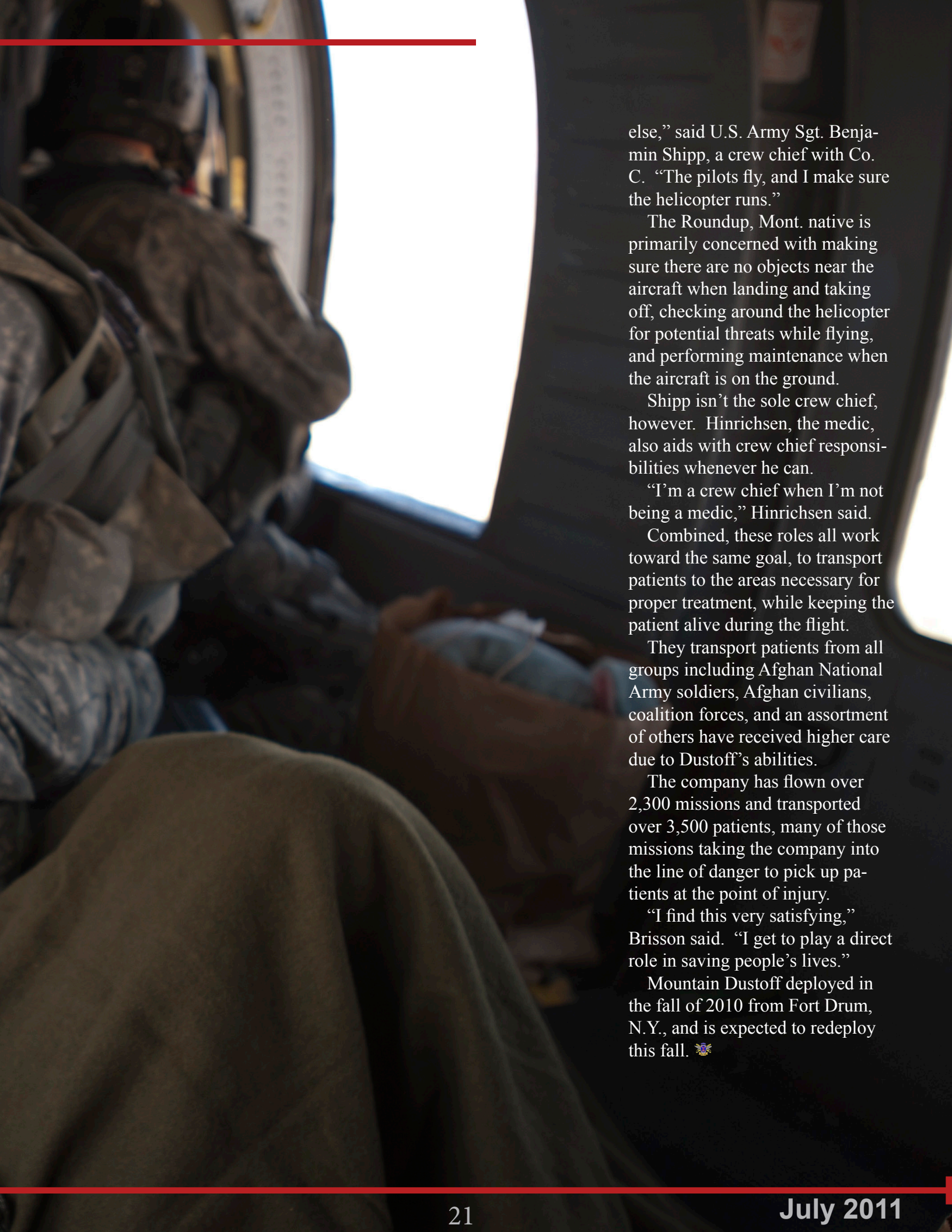
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BAGRAM, Afghanistan- U.S. Army Spc. Christian Hinrichsen, a flight medic with Co. C "Mountain Dustoff," 3rd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Falcon, and native of Clovis, N.M., treats an Afghan burn patient during a patient transfer flight July 11. Dustoff has provided aid to over 3,500 patients since arriving in theater in the fall of last year. (Photo by U.S. Army Pfc. Michael Syner, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)







else,” said U.S. Army Sgt. Benjamin Shipp, a crew chief with Co. C. “The pilots fly, and I make sure the helicopter runs.”

The Roundup, Mont. native is primarily concerned with making sure there are no objects near the aircraft when landing and taking off, checking around the helicopter for potential threats while flying, and performing maintenance when the aircraft is on the ground.

Shipp isn’t the sole crew chief, however. Hinrichsen, the medic, also aids with crew chief responsibilities whenever he can.

“I’m a crew chief when I’m not being a medic,” Hinrichsen said.

Combined, these roles all work toward the same goal, to transport patients to the areas necessary for proper treatment, while keeping the patient alive during the flight.

They transport patients from all groups including Afghan National Army soldiers, Afghan civilians, coalition forces, and an assortment of others have received higher care due to Dustoff’s abilities.

The company has flown over 2,300 missions and transported over 3,500 patients, many of those missions taking the company into the line of danger to pick up patients at the point of injury.

“I find this very satisfying,” Brisson said. “I get to play a direct role in saving people’s lives.”

Mountain Dustoff deployed in the fall of 2010 from Fort Drum, N.Y., and is expected to redeploy this fall. 🇺🇸



# Twins promoted to captain on FOB Salerno

By Staff Sgt. Ben K. Navratil  
TF Duke Public Affairs

KHOWST PROVINCE, Afghanistan – A pair of U.S. Army 1st lieutenants were promoted to captain on Forward Operating Base Salerno, July 2.

Making this particular promotion special, however, was that the two lieutenants, Jon and Nathan Dyer, originally from Bristol, Maine, are not only brothers, but identical twins.

The two have always looked up to those who serve their country, said Nathan, an AH-64D Apache pilot with Task Force Tigershark, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division.

Both their father and brother also served the country in the Air Force and Coast Guard, respectively.

“It is one thing to talk about

service and the desire to give back to the country that has given us so much,” Nathan said. “but it is entirely another thing to actually put your life and energy toward the service of our country. My brother and I shared a desire to put our commitment and desire to serve to the test and join the military as our father and older brother had done.”

They both attended West Point together, where they studied the same major and participated in the crew team, and graduated in the top five percent of their class, said Jon, the Logistics and Supply Officer for the 40th Engineer Battalion, 170th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, TF Ram.

The brothers, though in completely different career

fields, still are able to learn from each other’s experiences, said Nathan.

“We quickly came to see how different (our duty positions) are,” Nathan said. “but also how they complemented each other and how we could work better together.”

The event also marked the first time in two and a half years that the brothers were able to see each other.

“My trip to Salerno had only one purpose,” said Jon, who is based out of Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan, “to pin on captain’s bars with my brother. It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity to both pin on captain rank while we are both deployed in Afghanistan. 🇺🇸



KHOWST PROVINCE, Afghanistan – U.S. Army Capts. Nathan (left) and Jonathan Dyer, identical twins from Bristol, Maine, take the Oath of Office at Forward Operating Base Salerno July 2. Nathan, an AH-64D Apache pilot with Task Force Tigershark, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division; and Jonathan, the Logistics and Supply Officer for the 40th Engineer Battalion, 170th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, TF Ram, were both promoted to captain prior to being given the oath. (Photo by U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Bart Lomont, 3-19 ADT Public Affairs)



# Phoenix Soldiers enhance workouts with music

By Sgt. Amanda Jo Brown  
Task Force Phoenix

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – At the Fuller Gym on Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, many Task Force Phoenix Soldiers can be found using music during their workouts to improve their physical fitness test scores and weight management.

U.S. Army Pfc. Mario Charles, a logistics clerk with Company D, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, 10th Mountain Division, had been struggling to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test run since November.

Six days a week, sometimes twice a day, he could be found in the gym running to upbeat music to improve his two-mile run time. Focusing on the rapid beat of his rock music pulsing in his ear, and thinking about his newborn baby girl as motivation, he significantly improved his run.

After all of his music-filled training, Charles, of San Angelo, Texas, successfully passed his APFT in April.

An article published in The Sport Journal, The United States Sports Academy's monthly publication, detailed verifiable data of music's positive effect on individuals who use it for sports and exercise routines.

According to the journal, the right music can make an individual feel less fatigue and boredom by diverting his or her attention away from repetitive exercises.

Listening to music can also provide a distraction to push oneself further, and can help sustain rhythm – particularly while running.

“My music keeps me from being bored while I’m running on a treadmill staring at a wall,” said U.S. Army Spc. Erika Ortiz, an

arms room clerk with Co. E, TF Phoenix, 10th CAB, TF Falcon, 10th Mountain Div. “I can stare at a sign on a wall forever when I have my music to keep me moving.”

Ortiz is working on lowering her weight to meet Army standards by going to the gym five



**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Stephanie Kaledo, the flight operations non-commissioned officer in charge in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, 10th Mountain Division, said she always uses music as a means of determining her increments for her work out routine August 1. She monitors her tempo on the treadmill during her run with her music in Fuller Gym – something she cannot do if she were going to train outside on BAF. Kaledo, a native of Medaryville, Ind., works before and after work at the gym to improve her physical fitness. Her dedication was made tangible when she competed in the 4th of July Peachtree shadow run here. Kaledo came in first place for the women for this run. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Amanda Jo Brown, Task Force Phoenix)**



# Eye of the Falcon

days a week, at least once a day; however, the chronic pain that she gets in her feet while she exercises, puts a damper on her efforts.

She said she found listening to music helps to alleviate some of the pain of her injury, allowing her to push through her workouts to help strengthen the muscles needed to recover.

“When I use music, it keeps my mind off of my pain in my feet so it’s not so bad,” said Ortiz, of Corpus Christi, Texas, “I forgot my iPod once when I went to the gym to work out. Never again! My feet felt like they were on fire without my music.

I always have my music now to distract myself from the pain.”

U.S. Army Pvt. Manuel Santiago, an aviation operations specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, TF Phoenix, 10th CAB, TF Falcon, 10th Mountain Div., hits the gym twice a day, six days a week.

He said he enjoys listening to rock, rap and reggae while he’s working out. Santiago admits it provides him a diversion to push himself and that it helps him maintain his rhythm while he is doing cardio.

“Music helps me drain out all of the distractions and helps me get through my workout until

the end,” said Santiago, of Lynn, Mass., “I catch myself running to the rhythm – like it’s cadence.”

Santiago has been struggling with his sit-ups for his APFT.

“I’m using music to get my abs proficient enough to pass (the APFT),” he said. “It gets me into the rhythm so I can do sit-ups without thinking about them. I focus more on the music I’m playing in my head than how my body feels.”

TF Phoenix Soldiers recognize the benefits of exercising to music and are reaping the benefits daily as their APFT scores improve and their weight is properly managed. 🇺🇸



**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Spc. Jonathan Edney, a radio transmission operator with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, 10th Mountain Division, uses music to help him focus on a more intense workout. He spent his time at the gym doing various weight lifting exercises July 15. Edney, a native of Killeen, Texas, said he already significantly improved his push-ups and sit-ups. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Amanda Jo Brown, Task Force Phoenix)**



# TF Knighthawk supports Operation Dagger Fury

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot  
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

LOGAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Throughout Afghanistan, ground forces are fighting daily to disrupt insurgent activity and protect civilian populations. Due to the extreme terrain of Afghanistan, safe and quick movement of ground personnel and supplies depend on aviation assets.

Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, provided aviation support to Operation Dagger Fury July 25-30. The objective was to insert personnel from TF Dagger, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mtn. Div., along with Afghan National Army soldiers, to disrupt

insurgent activity in the Araban Valley in Wardak Province, resupply them throughout the operation and pick them up when the mission was complete.

"Knighthawk ensured that we, as the ground force, were able to rapidly mass our combat power," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Blace C. Albert



Photo by Sgt. Janell Emerson, Task Force Knighthawk



of Charlottesville, Va., TF Dagger, 4th BCT, commander. "Before the sun came up, we owned the Arabon Valley in Chak." With CH-47 Chinook, AH-64 Apache, and UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, the 10th CAB inserted personnel from TF Dagger and the ANA at night into several landing zones July 25-26.

"We infilled nearly 450 personnel the first night plus we sling-loaded a 20-foot container which was used as a forward command post during the operation," said U.S. Army Maj. Rich Tucker of Tampa, Fla., TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB, operations officer-in-charge. "81mm mortars, water, ammo and an all-terrain tactical vehicle were internally loaded on one of the Chinooks." This was the largest air assault operation TF Dagger has done since they arrived in theater last fall, said Albert.

Air Weapons Teams con-

sisting of AH-64 Apache helicopters, protected the troops for the duration of the operation.

"The Apaches provided over-watch throughout," said U.S. Army Capt. Steven Lancianese of Canton, Ohio, an AH-64 Apache helicopter pilot with TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB. "We also marked landing zones, provided troops in contact support, and close combat attack support."

TF Dagger called the Apaches into action the first day of the operation, after elements came under heavy fire from numerous areas.

"We were launched immediately upon coming on shift," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Steve Donahue Jr. of Leesburg, Fla., an AH-64 Apache helicopter pilot and master gunner with TF

Knighthawk, 10th CAB. "Upon arrival, we immediately provided aerial security, identifying the enemy's location and engaging with close-combat attack support with three Hellfires. This allowed the unit to safely maneuver through the area." On the fourth night of the operation, Apaches provided security and illumination in support of a complex medevac extraction.

"The (injured) Soldier was located on a pinnacle observation post with 150-500 foot cliffs on each side," said Donahue. "(Our medevac crew executed) a hoist extraction with the aircraft at a hover, during extremely low illumination and with a light wind gust."

As the medic and the patient moved toward the hoist, the patient slipped and began to slide to

the edge of the cliff. The medic was able to grab the Soldier by his collar and stop him from sliding closer to the cliff only 10-meters away.

Over the course of the operation, the Apaches were called upon several times to do what they do best; attack enemy positions. "Knighthawk's air weapons team responded on multiple occasions to engage the Taliban with Hellfires," said U.S. Army Maj. Heather Levy of San Jose, Calif., an operations officer-in-charge with TF Dagger, 4th BCT, 10th Mountain Div. "After a few days, the insurgents wouldn't attack when AWT was in the air - that was pretty important for



us since no other platform had the same deterrent effect.”

In addition to the fire power of the AH-64 Apaches, Air Force fixed wing aircraft dropped several tons of guided munitions on insurgent positions.

CH-47 Chinooks made nightly low-cost low-altitude drops of water and food for the troops on the ground throughout the operation. Parachutes were attached to pallets which were pushed out at the precise time so they would land at pre-established drop zones. The task force dropped a total of 45 LCLA bundles. In addition, UH-60 Black Hawks delivered

38 Speed Balls - pre-packaged containers of supplies to troops.

“Most of our resupplies were done in cover of darkness except emergency resupplies,” said Tucker.

The pre-planned resupply operation coupled with timely emergency resupply missions kept the ground forces fit and equipped to continue their mission.

“Knighthawk conducted emergency UH-60 supply runs into the green zone when our forces were out of ammo after a long day of fighting,” said Levy. “It was exactly the kind of teamwork between aviation and ground forces that is essential to Coalition Force success in the remote areas of Afghanistan.”

After five days, TF Dagger achieved their objective and sent the message

that the insurgents are not safe from pro-government forces, said Levy. It was time for TF Dagger and their ANA counterparts to prepare to be picked up and to return to their respective bases.

During exfiltration, all personnel inserted the first night were picked up plus several detainees the unit had on the ground.

“We made five lifts during the exfil, again using CH-47 Chinooks, AH-64 Apaches, UH-60 Black Hawks, and Air Force close air support aircraft,” said Tucker.

The exfil began just before midnight July 30 and continued for several hours into the early morning the next day.

The 10th CAB picked up and returned all personnel safely to their bases.

The success of the operation was the result of several days of in-depth

planning and preparation, said Tucker. They planned varying routes to minimize predictability and a detailed flight schedule orchestrated the many aircraft in the air.

“It was an extremely complex operation since we were pulling companies from all over Patriot’s area,” he said. “It was critical everyone knew what we were doing.”


In addition to 16 enemy killed-in-action, TF Dagger found four caches, which included weapons and bomb making material, in addition to extensive documents and equipment that may be exploited, said Tucker. “This is one of the best executed air assaults yet,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Lars Wendt of Watertown, N.Y., TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB, commander. “We minimized the threat to aircraft through in-depth planning. The area is one of the most dangerous places in Regional Command – East.”





BAGRAM, Afghanistan – As the sun begins to rise, the first of two trailers of a Longbow Crew Trainer, an AH-64 Apache simulator is positioned inside a U.S. Air Force C-5 Galaxy May 25. The LCT is Task Force Falcon's largest piece of equipment and was moved out of theater as a result of a joint effort of servicemembers from the Army and Air Force. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, TF Falcon Public Affairs)





# Joint effort moves TF Falcon's largest equipment out of theater

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot  
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

BAGRAM, Afghanistan -- Moving large equipment out of theater requires an extraordinary effort. The joint effort between servicemembers from the Army and Air Force facilitated the movement of 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Falcon's largest piece of equipment out of theater May 25.

"It was a wonderful collaboration of multiple services to make this mission happen," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Troy Mara of Lanexa, Va., a plans, program and operations officer-in-charge with 313th Joint Movement Control Battalion which is based out of Baltimore. "The requirement of moving the complete system of the AH-64 Apache Longbow Crew Trainer simulator from theater was a unique mission due to the size of the assets to be loaded and the manner in which it was executed."

Mara, along with Air Force personnel from the North Carolina National Guard began the process of loading up the LCT, which is comprised of two 65-foot trailers, onto a U.S. Air Force C-5 Galaxy before midnight and continued on through the night.

The effort involved first building a 65-foot ramp to the entrance of the large cargo aircraft. Dozens of pre-constructed boards were stacked and connected so that two ramps spread precisely to support the wheels of a truck and trailer.

Once the ramp was complete, the C-5 crew chiefs determined the positioning of the two trailers using the respective weight of the cargo.

Finding a driver to load the LCT

trailers was very difficult mostly due to liability concerns. When Mara heard that a driver was needed, he volunteered to drive the trailers into the aircraft.

"He [Mara] was a life saver because we didn't have a driver," said U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mary Eandi, a Mobility Officer with 10th CAB, 10th Mountain Div., TF Falcon. "He saved the military a lot of money because the flight would have been cancelled."

Around 2 a.m. Mara got into his truck, hooked up the first trailer, and backed it up onto the ramp and into the C-5 with the aircraft's crew chiefs guiding him into position. Because of the limited space, the positioning of the trailers required several attempts to get proper alignment.

"The difficulty of the load-out was amplified due to the 53' trailers having to be backed in," said Mara. "The ramp was only wide enough for the tires, and the height of the 53' trailers left only inches of clearance in the centerline of the C-5. In order to prevent any damage to the airframe, I had to slowly back in while constantly adjusting the height of the 5th wheel on the tractor as it entered the aircraft. This entailed precise maneuvering and accurate alignment to ensure the load maintained the necessary center of balance of the C-5."

"Mara's willingness and loading experience, along with the help of the Air Force ground and air personnel enable the 10th CAB to be able to move their largest equipment out of theater," said Eandi. 🇺🇸



# Soldiers become U.S. citizens during Independence Day ceremony in Afghanistan

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot  
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan -- On a day marking the 235th birthday of the United States, five Soldiers from the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Falcon, took the Oath of Naturalization, becoming the nation's newest citizens during a ceremony here July 4.

"You are representative of the values and diversity that

make our country stronger," said U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry as he addressed 48 Servicemembers from 25 different countries. "The great patriots who founded our nation have a lot in common with you. Like them, you've fought to keep America safe and you've served with distinction."

The TF Falcon Soldiers who became U.S. citizens during the Independence Day naturalization ceremony included:

U.S. Army Pfc. Felipe Andrade, a pathfinder with Company F, TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB, originally from Brazil and calls Monroe, N.Y., home.

U.S. Army Pfc. Robert

**KABUL, Afghanistan – Spc. Tod Lanki of Honolulu, second from right, a human resources specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, TF Falcon, became a U.S. citizen during a ceremony at Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan, July 4. Lanki, originally from the Marshall Islands, was signalled out by U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry during the ceremony for having earned a Bronze Star and Purple Heart while serving in Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, TF Falcon Public Affairs)**



**KABUL, Afghanistan – Pfc. Felipe Andrade, far right, a pathfinder with Company F, TF Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, TF Falcon, became a U.S. citizen during a ceremony at Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan, July 4. Andrade lived in the U.S. for 12 years and said it was more than to be called an American. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, TF Falcon Public Affairs)**





Holm, an automated logistics specialist with Co. E, TF Tigershark, 10th CAB, originally from Jamaica and calls Jamaica, N.Y., home.

U.S. Army Pfc. Zeiko Ifill, an automated logistics specialist with Co. E, TF Tigershark, 10th CAB, originally from Barbados and calls Brooklyn, N.Y., home.

U.S. Army Spc. Tod Lanki, a human resources specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Co., TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB, originally from the Marshall Islands and calls Honolulu home.

U.S. Army Spc. Jeridine

Stewart, a communications specialist with Headquarters Support Company, TF Mountain Eagle, 10th CAB, originally from Palau and calls Michigan home.

Andrade said he lived in the U.S. for 12 years, and although over that time he has come to feel like an American, he now can truly call himself one.

“There’s no greater feeling than to be called an American,” he said with a smile. The Fourth of July not only celebrates the beginning of the United States, but also his new beginning as a U.S. citizen.

For Stewart, who has

served in the U.S. Army for seven years, the Fourth of July reminds her the U.S. is a nation of immigrants who’ve come from all over the world.

“I believe the U.S. is a melting pot of people of all races; all of who share the same freedoms,” she said. “Now I get to be a part of it.”

Eikenberry, who will leave Afghanistan this summer, told the new citizens he is proud to call them American patriots.

“I want to thank each of you personally,” Eikenberry said. “You are the real U.S. ambassadors here in Afghanistan.” 🇺🇸

pe Andrade of Monroe, N.Y.,  
npany F, Task Force Knight-  
rigade, 10th Mountain Division,  
en during a ceremony at Camp  
Andrade, originally from Brazil,  
d said there is no greater feel-  
ean. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd  
s)

**KABUL, Afghanistan – Pfc. Zeiko Ifill of Brooklyn, N.Y., an automated logistics specialist with Company E, Task Force Tigershark, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, TF Falcon, shakes hands with U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry at the conclusion of a naturalization ceremony at Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan, July 4. The Barbados native became a U.S. citizen during the ceremony, along with 47 other Servicemembers. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, TF Falcon Public Affairs)**





# Chaplain facilitates worship for unique group at Bagram Airfield

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot  
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – When U.S. Army Chaplain (Capt.) John Hoos arrived at Bagram Airfield to begin his deployment with Task Force ODIN, he soon learned of an opportunity to facilitate weekly worship for a unique religious group.

“When I arrived, I was told that this opportunity existed, and I immediately volunteered for this tasking,” the chaplain who is attached to 10th

Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, 10th Mountain Division, said.

According to Joseph Story, a Pakistani Christian who works as a safety officer on Bagram Airfield, there are about 50-60 Pakistani Christians on the base. The group was unable to conduct their worship services in a military chapel due to a military regulation that requires all religious

groups to have a distinctive faith group leader.

“Chaplain Hoos’ volunteering to lead a group which represents a minority in Pakistan, enables their growth in their faith,” said U.S. Army Chaplain (Maj.) William Scritchfield, the Task Force Falcon chaplain and a native of Waynesburg, Pa. “He’s a perfect fit. His denomination is similar to theirs and he has a gift for

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Chaplain (Capt.) John Hoos, a chaplain with Task Force ODIN, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, 10th Mountain Division, discusses the verses of a selected opening hymn with Joseph Story, a safety officer, and other Pakistani Christians at the Camp Warrior Chapel, Bagram Airfield, July 22. Hoos, a native of Loveland, Colo. said he appreciates the opportunity of leading this unique group. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)**





learning languages. He's quickly picked up their language and is able to more readily facilitate their bible study."

At a recent weekly worship gathering, eleven worshippers gathered around Story, who had the only song book in Punjabi; a dialect of Pakistan's official language - Urdu. And though not everyone could see the book, all knew the words and quickly picked up the Punjab-influenced tune.

With Najam Aslam, a general supervisor on Bagram, translating between Chaplain Hoos and those who were not fluent in English, Hoos led a bible study with a focus on the importance of keeping God's laws and how these laws keep followers on the best path to lead a righteous life.

More songs were sung, communion was celebrated, and after a

closing prayer, members wished each other peace, departed the chapel and mingled outside.

Despite being in war-torn Afghanistan, the quality of life for these Christians is much better than in their homeland, said Aslam.

"It is very difficult for Christians to get good jobs in Punjab because we are a minority," he said. Despite being well-educated, many are limited to working as general laborers. The most lucrative jobs – those in government – are out of reach for most Christians. Punjab is the most populous region of Pakistan and lies along the border of India and Kashmir.

Story is a teacher by trade. But in Pakistan, he makes the equivalent of about \$45 a month. Meanwhile, working for a sub-contractor on Bagram Airfield, he is making over \$1,000 a month.

Becasue Pakistan suffered from recent earthquakes and floods, many Pakistanis have left the country to find better wages.

Hoos, form Loveland, Colo., said he is fortunate to have this opportunity to assist this unique group. One might think a chaplain's main duty is directing others how to worship; but sometimes chaplains must assist groups in worshipping according to its traditions. This is one of those instances.

"As a chaplain working in a combat zone, I believe it is my responsibility to help Soldiers and civilians who are living and working far from home to have the opportunity to worship God according to their customs and traditions," said Hoos before stepping out to mingle with his new group. "This is a very unique aspect of being a chaplain." 🇺🇸

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Chaplain (Capt.) John Hoos, a chaplain with Task Force ODIN, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, 10th Mountain Division, discusses the importance of following God's laws with members of a group of Pakistani Christians at the Camp Warrior Chapel, Bagram Airfield, July 22. Najam Aslam, a general supervisor on Bagram, translates for those who are not fluent in English. Hoos, a native of Loveland, Colo., said he's learning Urdu and Punjabi to better facilitate the group's worship. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)**





# TF Knighthawk pathfinders come to the aid of roll-over victim

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot  
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

LOGAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – The call came in July 23, and a Pathfinder Soldier, about to eat breakfast, set down his tray to respond.

An improvised explosive device just exploded beneath a Polish armored tactical vehicle causing the vehicle to roll over, trapping two occupants inside.

“After we got the call, I ran over to the tactical operations center, along with the company commander and Staff Sgt. Taylor, so they could let us know what was going on,” said U.S. Army Capt. Jeffrey Kelly of Westminster, Colo., an infantry officer with Pathfinder Company, Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, and the officer-in-charge of the mission.

A Task Force Knighthawk medevac helicopter had already dropped off a medic who was able to extract one passenger from the vehicle. However, the second passenger, the vehicle's gunner, remained pinned beneath the turret and the ground.

“We grabbed our extraction

equipment and loaded the helicopters,” said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jason Taylor, an infantryman with Pathfinder Company, TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB, 10th Mountain Div. “We headed down toward the site of the incident and once we got there, they put us down within about 30 meters from the vehicle. We linked up with the Polish commander and made a quick assessment of the situation.”

The Polish soldiers had already initiated security around the site and with an Air Weapons Team providing over-watch the entire time, the Pathfinders could focus all their efforts on the rescue.

“The Polish had tried to move the vehicle off the gunner, but with limited equipment, they were unable to extract him,” said Taylor, a native of San Antonio.

The turret had the gunner pinned just below the shoulder between the turret and the ground. His helmet was also stuck between the turret and the ground so he was unable to move his head.

“We used stabilizer struts to stabilize the vehicle before using air bags

**LOGAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- Soldiers from Pathfinder Company, Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, prepare their equipment for a mission during an exercise July 29. Pathfinders Soldiers are on call at all times so that they can be prepared to execute a mission within 15 minutes of receiving a call. These Soldiers responded to a call July 23 to extract a coalition soldier whose arm was trapped beneath an armored vehicle that had rolled over as a result of an improvised explosive device explosion in Ghazni Province. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)**



to lift it,” said Taylor. “We had difficulty lifting the vehicle because our air bags are designed to lift aircraft which are much lighter than armored vehicles. However, the air bags were able to lift the vehicle enough so that the trapped soldier could move his head which allowed him to free his severely injured arm.”

The Pathfinder Soldiers then pulled the patient in through the turret and out the back of the vehicle.

U.S. Army Spc. Kyle Baker of West Palm Beach, Fla., a medic with Pathfinder Company, TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB, 10th Mountain Div., along with the medics already on scene, stabilized the patient,

strapped him onto a litter, and prepared him for an aerial medevac.

“As soon as we were able to remove the soldier from the vehicle, the medic called (the medevac helicopter) to land and pick up the patient,” said Taylor. “Medevac had him picked up within 2 minutes after we pulled him out.

Teams of Pathfinders are on call around the clock with their equipment staged for when such a call arises. The company has been called upon numerous times to enter difficult terrain usually to recover damaged aircraft and crew members, but they've also been called to recover

damaged vehicles and injured passengers.

It's not uncommon for the Pathfinders to be called to recover the remains of coalition forces or civilians, said Taylor.

“It's good when you get the chance to help other units,” he said. “It's good to actually assist and medevac a survivor.”

“Everyone was committed to getting this guy out alive,” said U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel Sogn of Seattle, Wash., an infantryman with Pathfinders Company, TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB, 10th Mountain Div. “It was because of the experience of our senior guys that made a difference.”

**LOGAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- A group of Soldiers from Pathfinder Company, Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, extracted a coalition soldier whose arm was trapped beneath an armored vehicle that rolled over as a result of an improvised explosive device explosion in Ghazni Province July 23. Members of the group of Pathfinders are: top row from left, Sgt. Daniel Sogn, Seattle; Sgt. Jason Gatlin, Crestview, Fla.; Pfc. Aren Thorsen, Knob Noster, Mo.; Staff Sgt. Timothy Hartrantft, Newark, N.Y.; Staff Sgt. Jason Taylor, San Antonio, Texas; and Capt. Jeffrey Kelly, Westminster, Colo. Kneeling from left, Spc. Kyle Baker, West Palm Beach, Fla.; Pfc. Todd Seebom, Chester, N.J.; Spc. Jonathan Macejunas, Tacoma, Wash.; Spc. Marcus Chancellor, Laverne, Tenn.; and Spc. Daniel Perdue, Bloomingburg, N.Y. Some of their extraction tools lay before them. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)**





# Gen. Petreus administers Fourth of July oath of reenlistment



BAGRAM, Afghanistan -- Staff Sgt. Carmine Vuocolo, a shop foreman of Task Force Six Shooter and a native of Anchorage, Alaska, shakes hands with Gen. David Petreus, International Security Assistance Force commander, July 4. Petreus administered the Oath of Reenlistment to 235 Soldiers, including Vuocolo, on Independence Day. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class JR Williams, Task Force Falcon)



BAGRAM, Afghanistan -- Staff Sgt. Corey Boteler, a career counselor with Task Force Six Shooters, and a native of Petersburg, Mich., shakes hands with Gen. David Petreus, International Security Assistance Force commander, July 4. Petreus administered the Oath of Reenlistment to 235 Soldiers, including Boteler, on Independence Day. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class JR Williams, Task Force Falcon)



# TF Attack aircraft first AH-64 Apache to reach 10,000 flight hours



**FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHARANA, Afghanistan - From left, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Gruber, Spc. Dan Pfundtner, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Johnson and PV2 Michael Reynolds, the air crew and crew chiefs of AH-64D Apache 35394, which became the first AH-64D to reach 10,000 flight hours June 28.**

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHARANA, Afghanistan - All available AH-64D Apache maintenance personnel who ensure the task force can accomplish its mission. (Photo courtesy of Task Force Attack)**





# Senior leaders serve steak and seafood dinners



**BAGRAM, Afghanistan - Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Patton, Task Force Falcon command sergeant major, and Command Sgt. Maj. Isaia Vimoto, Combined Joint Task Force - 1 command sergeant major, serve steak and seafood dinners to Soldiers at the Mountain Eagle Cafe July 29. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class JR Williams, Task Force Falcon)**



**BAGRAM, Afghanistan - Capt. Matthew Romanych, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Falcon, commander, serves steak and seafood dinners to Soldiers at the Mountain Eagle Cafe dining facility July 29. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class JR Williams, Task Force Falcon)**



**BAGRAM, Afghanistan - Command Sgt. Maj. Isaia Vimoto, Combined Joint Task Force - 1 command sergeant major, assisted TF Falcon leaders serve steak and seafood dinners to Soldiers at the Mountain Eagle Cafe July 29. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class JR Williams, Task Force Falcon)**



# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



Designed by Peter Hemmer for the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute



KHOWST PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- Pilots from B Company, 2nd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Tigershark, put on their on fireworks display with flares from a UH-60L Blackhawk helicopter. The "Bugsy" crew added to the Independence Day festivities celebrated at Forward Operating Base Salerno. (Photo by U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Bart Lomont, 319th ADT)

