

THE FALCON



Flyer



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Tiger shark milestone: One million gallons and counting for 3-3 AHB



Photo by Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Pvt. Demarcus L. McMillan closes a panel after fueling "Shark 6". McMillan pumped the millionth gallon of fuel for 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance) on July 7, marking a milestone for the unit. Pg. 8

Crew Chief



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1-3Supply Reps



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Weather Team



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Commander's Column:

Teamwork has been, and will continue to be, the key to our success throughout this deployment.

Like any big organization, the Army, and specifically the Falcon Brigade, is dependant on many MOSS executing their skills to standard to collectively accomplish the mission of supporting the Brigade Combat Teams.

Our success is also tied to many Soldiers accomplishing critical, but seemingly mundane, basic Soldier tasks like guard duty. The Brigade is full of Soldiers doing great things, Soldiers that work hard every day and night behind the scenes to make it happen.

The weather has limited our ability to keep aircraft in the sky to support our brothers on the ground. We have been forced to take a break from flying, which has allowed our crewchiefs to focus on unscheduled maintenance, working small deficiencies off their airframes.

However, the weather down days does not impact our daily efforts to work scheduled maintenance - we have the same numbers of Soldiers working these tasks regardless of weather conditions - and they have been executing maintenance to standard since we arrived in theater.

This is very important to our families at home. Our families find comfort in knowing that Soldiers are executing maintenance to standard because our air crews fly these aircraft to the limits of their capabilities.

From a ground Soldier's perspective, it is comforting knowing that someone is overhead watching the area around him and knowing the Apache can provide additional fire when the enemy grows a backbone. The ground Soldiers find additional comfort in

see **COMMANDER**, page 2

Reenlistments for June 2005

**Headquarters and Headquarters
Company, Aviation Brigade:**

Sgt. Marty Galvez
Staff Sgt. Manuel Alcantara

**603rd Aviation Support
Battalion:**

Staff Sgt. Joker Botin
Sgt. Anissa Southwell
Staff Sgt. Tarrus Randle
Sgt. Akera Wilkerson
Spc. Robert Bates
Sgt. Eldon James
Staff Sgt. Joseph Ealy
Spc. Krystal A. Cotton

**1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation
Regiment (Attack
Reconnaissance):**

Spc. James M. Saylor
Sgt. Patrick L. James
Sgt. Herman Keese
Spc. Brian G. Mueller
Sgt. Christopher M. Pierson
Sgt. John F. GarzonVasquez

**2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation
Regiment (General Support):**

Sgt. Simon Ford

**3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation
Regiment (Attack
Reconnaissance):**

Staff Sgt. Justin Mauk
Sgt. James E. Palmer
Staff Sgt. Jennifer Crowley
Staff Sgt. Eon Phillips
Sgt. 1st Class Michael Chadwick
Sgt. Conrad J. Meek

**4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation
Regiment (Attack Helicopter):**

Sgt. Pablo G. Sotelo
Sgt. Joseph Howard
Sgt. Christopher Jones
Sgt. Anthony R. Davis

COMMANDER: "UNsung HEROES"

continued from page 1

knowing that Med Evac helicopters are only a radio call away. For many, all they see is the end state...a flight of Apaches, Black Hawks or Chinooks providing support across the Division battle space. What they don't see are all the long hours of detailed maintenance that these complex aircraft require on a daily basis.

It takes a combined effort by the maintenance team to ensure that aircraft are maintained, serviced and mission ready.

This includes the crew-chiefs, the engine shop mechanics, sheet-metal, avionics, armament, the parts clerk, prop and rotor, production and quality control, and the close watchful eyes of the technical inspectors and the maintenance test pilots making the final checks.

Additionally, we have a very talented group of civilian contractors here to assist in this effort. This contracted work force is extremely professional and they are the ones that enable the brigade to maintain the high OPTEMPO we have been able to provide the Marne Division.

Once the aircraft is ready for flight, the aircrew still requires additional assistance to successfully accomplish the mission. The aircraft requires fuel before, dur-

ing and after a mission and our 3/5 (class III & V) Soldiers at the Baghdad International Airport FARP, Taji FARP, and manning the refuel trucks providing cold fuel on the flight-line, remain mission focused 24 hours a day.

To date, they have dispensed over 4 million gallons of JP-8, without accident or incident.

The air-traffic control specialists who man the Taji tower, Washington Helipad, and Baghdad Radio assist the aircrews by enhancing their situational awareness.

The helipad control team keeps the Soldiers and cargo moving around the battle space by manifesting and loading the aircraft.

There is another group of Soldiers manning tactical operations centers at battalion and brigade gathering, analyzing, and providing the crews critical information - changes to mission priorities and intelligence concerning the enemy's activities.

There are many non-aviation specific MOSs that enable the brigade to accomplish many tasks that are all linked to our ability to accomplish our primary mission - keeping aircraft in the air.

I thank all the Soldiers who make our mission a success. The pride and professionalism you display in your work every day is a testament to your

dedication to your fellow Soldiers.

You truly are the "Unsung Heroes" of the Falcon Brigade.

I also want to take this opportunity to extend congratulations to Capt. Stephanie Carter. Capt. Carter, who is currently the Brigade Chemical Officer, has been selected to command the Division's Chemical Company.

Like many of you, I hate to see her go, but I will always support a Soldier's opportunity for career progression, whenever the mission allows. Capt. Carter - thank you for your hard work and all of us wish you the best of luck.

Finally, I want to congratulate all of those individuals who re-enlisted and to those that were promoted this month and last.

Congratulations! You will be given increased responsibility and I challenge you to remain mission and safety focused - know and enforce the standard.

To those that have recently re-enlisted, thank you for your continued service to your Army and our great nation.

"WINGS OF
THE MARNE"

COL TUGGLE



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3ID Commander: Maj. Gen. William G. Webster
Avn. Bde. Commander: Col. Ronald D. Tuggle
Avn. Bde. PAO: Maj. David J. Weis
Team NCOIC: Staff Sgt. Tad A. Browning
Writer, Editor, Photographer: Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Aviation medics respond during exercise

Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Aviation Brigade PAO

A Chinook helicopter sits on the far side of the forward arming refueling point. Soldiers and civilians lie on the ground or stumble around in confusion, some are still inside the aircraft.

As the sun beats down on the concrete pad, Soldiers from the FARP carrying litters race towards the waiting helicopter. As they move among the Soldiers on the ground and in aircraft, they assess injuries and begin to move Soldiers away from the aircraft.

Thankfully, this was not a real emergency, but a joint mass casualty drill conducted on July 8 by Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), Aviation Brigade, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, and HHC 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance).

Training of this type is conducted quarterly, said Maj. Christopher K. McGraw, HHC, Avn. Bde., to practice for medical emergencies and to test the systems used to handle those emergencies.

There's no real way to predict an exact emergency situation said McGraw, "but this gets people to think about what might happen."

Location and simulated emergency weren't the only things switched up in this training. With so many aviation assets at Camp Taji, any badly injured Soldiers or civilians would be transported by helicopter to combat area support hospitals (CASH) in Balad or the International Zone.

For this exercise, however, weather conditions were said to be too dusty to fly. Not being able to fly the injured Soldiers see **EXERCISE**, page 10



Photo by Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

SPC Yancey O. Devoy (left), and SPC Donald S. Dedmon, HHC, 603rd ASB, asses a patient during the exercise.

A day in the life: a crew chief in the air and on the ground

Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Aviation Brigade PAO

There are literally thousands of moving parts on a Black Hawk helicopter. Each part plays a key role in getting these birds off the ground to complete essential missions for the aviation brigade. If a part isn't there, it can impair performance and mission readiness.

Not all of those critical parts are mechanical. Some of them are Soldiers working with the mechanical equipment to keep each helicopter on schedule, maintenance- and paperwork-wise.

Crew chiefs, such as Sgt. Desmond A. Schultz, with A. Co, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (General Support), are such parts.

For Schultz, joining the Army was another step in an adventure that started when Schultz, originally from Guyana, South America, left his hometown on a spur of the moment adventure and never looked back.

Schultz, who enlisted four years ago, had been in the United States for about five years when he decided to look up an Army recruiter. "I knew I wanted to fly," said Schultz, "but I

didn't know anything about the aircraft until I got to Ft. Eustis."

Arriving around two hours before the scheduled lift-off time, Schultz and his fellow crew chief go over the aircraft with a fine-toothed comb. Even with post-flight inspections, unexpected problems can pop up, especially with the extreme temperatures here.

Fluid levels, such as hydraulic fluid, transmission fluid and engine oil are checked constantly. If needed, new fluids are added.

Fuel samples are also taken before the mission, to make sure the fuel isn't contaminated by water or dirt. An amount as small as ten parts per million will keep a helicopter on the ground.

Additionally, crew chiefs act as door-gunners. Part of Schultz's pre-flight routine includes mounting a 240 heavy machine gun on the swinging arm in front of his seat. Crew chiefs are required to qualify with the 240 machine gun during both ground and aerial ranges, and must know how to clear and fix any malfunctions.



Photo by Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Sgt. Desmond A. Schultz, A Co. 2-3 GSAB inspects an engine on his Black Hawk during pre-flight checks.

See CHIEF, page 12

Ground support maintenance: Keeping aviation's wheels rolling

Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Aviation Brigade PAO

For an aviation brigade, shooting, moving and communicating are essential to completing the mission. If the ability to move isn't there, communicating and shooting becomes difficult or impossible.

B Company, 603d Aviation Support Battalion provides additional maintenance support for all of the wheeled vehicles needed to keep the brigade moving on the ground, from five-ton trucks, to fuel tankers and forklifts to cranes to lift rotor blades for installation on helicopters.

Whether it's performing regularly scheduled maintenance or repairing unexpected problems both fall in the scope of B Co. operations. "Operators are very important to the unit's maintenance program," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 John A. Johnson, Direct Support Officer for 603rd ASB, "that's the heart of it."

Vehicles come in for a technical inspection, including a monthly PMCS. The vehicle is road-tested to make sure that the engine starts right, the brakes work, and nothing is leaking. If the vehicle is dirty, the road test includes a trip to the wash rack at the forward arming refueling point.

During the service, any parts that were ordered and have been received are installed. Operators install what they can, and help mechanics install any parts that are beyond what the

operator can do.

After the services are completed, the vehicle is put through another road test and a quality assurance checklist.

During this rigorous inspection, "All parts must be installed, everything must be done by the book, everything torqued to specification and any deadlines verified by an NCO or above," said Sgt. Daniel Munoz, a recovery specialist from Paterson, N.J.

"Vehicles such as cranes are load-tested as part of the final inspection," said Munoz, "usually by suspending a Jersey barrier a few feet off the ground overnight."

Keeping track of PMCS and needed parts through a computerized system is part of Spc. Lakesha N. Lundy's job. The automated logistics specialist, from Tipton Ga., spends her days making sure parts that have been delivered are picked up and distributed to the right sections, and that PMCS forms are kept up to date.

Lundy has no doubts as to her job's importance. "Without us, basically, there would be no parts to fix the vehicles that are broken, and keep the battalion's strength up," she said.

Any parts needed that aren't on hand are ordered through the Standard Army Retail Supply (SARS) system. Sometimes a motorpool in another unit or camp may have the part B Co. needs to get an Aviation Brigade asset working.

The automated PMCS systems and SARS become especially useful if a

critical battalion asset goes down. "We've got 24 hours to get that asset repaired," said Johnson, "24 hours to diagnose, order parts and repair it."

Generator repair and service is also part of the ground support maintenance shop. Providing the power for the brigade is exactly what Spc. Lisa R. Medeiros, an air-conditioner mechanic, does on a daily basis.

Between repairs and services the generator shop sees between three and four generators per week.

"We see a lot of problems because people let them (generators) run out of fuel," the Dalton, Neb. native said, "and if all the operators were doing regular PMCS it would help us out a lot."

Medeiros knows how important her section is to the brigade. "We supply their mechanics with power," she said, "A lot of the places out here (in the brigade) run off our generators."

Being able to see in the dark is essential to keeping the brigade safe. Spc. Krystal A. Cotton, a special electronics device repairer in the communications and equipment (C&E) shop makes sure night vision devices used by Avn. Bde. Soldiers are working right.

"We service 20 pairs a week," said Cotton, "usually they don't turn on." If the goggles don't need any special parts, C&E shop can get them back out to the Soldiers in a day. Devices that need parts are usually turned around in two weeks.

Despite being away from family and friends, Soldiers in B Co. maintain an upbeat attitude. Knowing that they are an essential asset keeps them focused on the exacting job they do for the brigade.

"We all take care of each other," said Cotton. "The company's been pulling together...over the last few months."

Cotton is enthusiastic about her job, and the Army, and knows that she's accomplishing great things.

"The Army is what makes us different from other countries. Without people putting their own time, their own lives, their own spirit into what we're doing, we wouldn't have freedom. Somebody has to do, might as well be me."

Munoz echoed Cotton, with a slightly smaller focus. "Nothing around here works without the motorpool," he said. "If the motorpool shuts down, everything shuts down."



Sgt. Terrence N. Moore, a mechanic, adjusts a lever while working on a wrecker in the maintenance bay. Moore, from Brooklyn, N.Y. is with B Co., 603rd ASB.

Photo by Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

1-3 Supply reps provide essential service

by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Aviation Brigade PAO

It can be easy to take the little things for granted. Many people don't give a second thought to realize who provides the water we drink, the pens we write with, or the cartridges we use for our printers. It is the job of supply personnel to ensure that Soldiers are well stocked with essential equipment needed to do their day-to-day job. The supply office representative's responsibility includes the distribution of pen and paper, but it also entails larger items such as vehicle parts, fuel or ammunition. The personnel of the 1st battalion 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance) supply room in Headquarters and Headquarters Company have been making sure that the Soldiers of the battalion are well prepared to do their duties, whether it is at the office, motor pool or flight line.

The 1-3 ARB supply office has a representative for each company in the battalion. This ensures that a Soldier is paying attention to each of the companies' supply needs. Carson, Ca., native Spc. John Atwater, HHC 1-3 ARB and B Company representative, says that the his responsibility extends to more than giving out pens and paper.

"Each representative tracks the supply needs of their company, whether that is Class 2 items like pens or Class 5 items like ammunition," said Atwater. "We also have to handle hand receipts, equipment inventory and process the requests of the company."

Representative Pfc. Nathan George ensures that all the supply needs of D Company are taken care of. The Little Rock, Ark., native feels that hand receipts are the most important part of supply.

"In here we handle all supply related issues like issuing, receiving, adjusting the property book and hand receipts," said George. "Hand receipts are very important here in supply. It holds people accountable for all equipment."

In order to receive certain supplies, Soldiers fill out a supply request which goes through the appropriate supply representative. The representative will either send the request to the S-4 for approval, or provide the item himself if it is readily available.

"We go over the supply request and provide the items that we have on hand, and if those items are running low we order more," said HHC 1-3 ARB representative Spc. Jonathan Mitchell. "We usually check the warehouse daily to see if our orders come in. Each representative is responsible for the shortages of their respective company."

One very important service the supply representative provides for the battalion is providing water. At least three times a week the representatives pick up bottled water, a service that A Co. representative Pfc. Juachaun T. Cogdell feels is vital.



Pfc. Juachaun T. Cogdell (left) and Pfc. Diyuan C. Robins, unload supplies to be stored in a Connex box.



Spc. Jonathan Mitchell (left) and Pfc. Nathan George, go over supply forms in the battalion supply office.

"Our water runs are very important because of this overwhelming heat," said the Lumberton, N.C., native. "Water is more essential now than ever. The summer time is when people should be extra conscious of staying hydrated."

While staying hydrated during the summer heat is important, Mitchell recognizes that the representatives' water runs are important all year round.

"On my pick up day I usually get six pallets of water for my company, and I think it is important to maintain that standard," said Mitchell. "Hydration is important all year round. You can dehydrate during winter just as in the summertime; I think that is often overlooked by Soldiers."

Being a companies' supply representative can come with some challenges, but for Cogdell, it is all a learning experience.

"It can be hard to handle the last minute requests, like if someone requests a radio by 0600 the next morning and its already 2200 at night," Cogdell said. "But I am learning a lot out here. I think I have become more organized and disciplined. When you have to handle so many supplies, you learn a lot about organization."

Each unit supply specialist received eight weeks of specialized training to handle and maintain the supplies they issue. The representatives received three weeks of familiarization of supply forms, instructions and reports; two weeks of learning an online automated system for hand receipts, and the last three weeks of an armorer school, a learning experience that Mitchell feels is very valuable in his line of duty.

"In the armorer school we learned about different type of weapons, how to identify them and how to break them down. In the end we have the knowledge to become assistant armorers," Mitchell said. The training is important because it allows the representative to identify the items that they are supplying, he added.

No matter what class of supply they are issuing, the supply representatives of HHC 1-3 ARB all seem to agree that they play an integral role in the battalion's mission.

"We do what we can to help out the companies. Everyone needs supplies, from the Soldiers in the office to the mechanics on the flight line," Atwater said. "Everyone here plays a part in supporting the battalion. Without us, the mission can't be done."

Aviation Brigade at work....



Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts
Capt. Mary Beth Thompson, HHC Ann. Bde. runs through pre-flight checks before taking off.



Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts
Lt. Col. Morgan M. Lamb, commander 3-3 ARB says a few words before awarding coins to Soldiers who pumped the millionth gallon of fuel for 3-3 ARB.



Photo by Combat Camera
3-3 ARB Apache helicopter fires rockets while conducting a combined live fire exercise in Iraq with U.S. and Iraqi forces .



Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts
Spc. Glen B. Ordinario, HHC 3-3 ARB, treats a "casualty" during the mass casualty exercise.



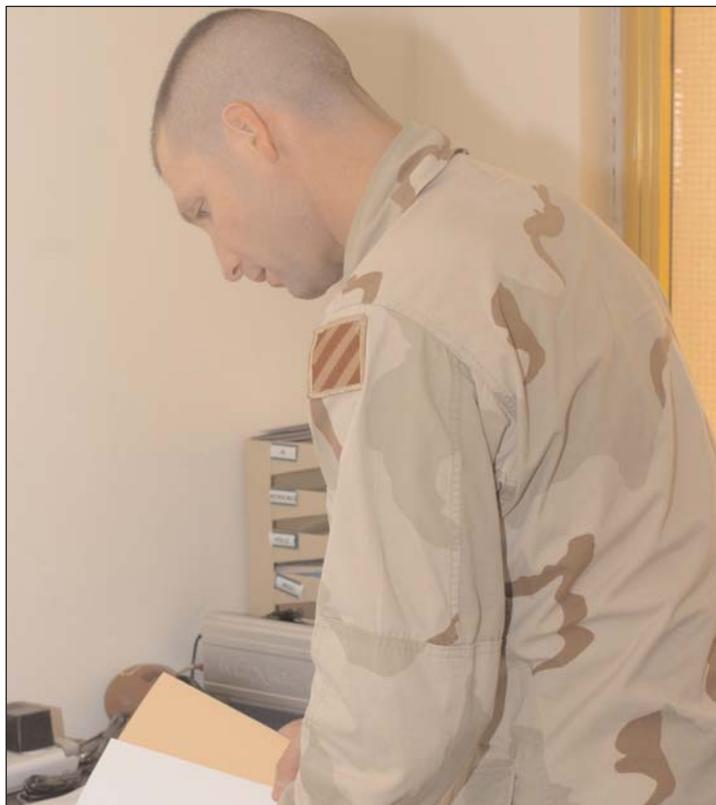
Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts
Early morning light peeks over a barrier on the flighline, backlighting a Blackhawk, as the crew goes through a pre-flight inspection.



Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kenneth Evans, B Company, 3-3 ARB, looks out of his Apache after another successful mission.



Photo by Curtis Compton
SGT Jason Donner, a crew chief from C Co. 4-3 AHB, mans his 240H heavy machinegun over Baghdad.



Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts
Warrant Officer 1 Jim G Arnold, HHC Avn. Bde., looks over paperwork in the brigade S-1 office.



Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts
Staff Sgt. William J. Ogden, D Co., 1-3 ARB works on an Apache helicopter in the 1-3 ARB hanger.

Tiger sharks reach millon gallon milestone

Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Aviation Brigade PAO

Fuel trucks may be an everyday sight along the flight line here but it isn't every day that the Soldiers who keep the fuel flowing are met with "champagne" toasts. It isn't every day that Soldiers hit the million gallon milestone, either.

For Pvt. Demarcus L. McMillan and Staff Sgt. Teresa A. Carter, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, a glass of sparkling apple juice rewarded their part in pumping the millionth gallon of fuel for 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance).

"Aircraft don't fly without fuel," said Capt. Derek P. Story, HHC, 3-3 ARB, "and a million gallons is about 10,000 flying hours."

This is the second time a unit in the brigade has reached this mileston. The 603rd forward arming refueling point reached a million gallons earlier this year refueling aircraft from all over Iraq.

These million gallons,



Photos by Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Pvt. Demarcus L. McMillan closes a panel on an AH-64 Apache helicopter from 3- 3 (AHB). McMillan pumped the one millionth gallon of fuel put into 3-3 ARB aircraft.

however, have gone solely into supporting Tigershark missions.

With a fast and furious operational tempo, the battalion flies around 2,500 hours a month, said Story, and his fuel handlers are there to support them with

around the clock operations.

"We're only six months into the game," said Carter, "for us, it's a big deal."

It's a big accomplishment for younger Soldiers, who haven't operated in a wartime situation before, said McMillan, from

Newport News, Va.

Neither Carter nor McMillan has any doubts about how important the fuelers are to the battalion's mission.

Although operations rarely slow down, Carter is

see MILLION, page 10

June and July PROMOTIONS

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Aviation Brigade

Staff Sgt. Matthew McCrossen
Sgt. Denise Alonso

1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance)

Capt. Brian Wirtz
Chief Warrant Ofiicer 2 Russell Mills
Sgt. Kenn Descoteaux
Sgt. Craig Kauzlaric
Sgt. Ryan Orourke
Sgt. F. OrtizAlvarado

2nd Battalion,3rd Aviation Regiment (General Support)

1st Lt. Riley
Chief Warrant Officer 4 McIntyre
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Gonzales
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Holsinger
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ware
Sgt. Bryan Dicus

3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance)

Chief Warrant Officer4 Scott Reagan
Master Sgt. Rethia Lord
Staff Sgt. Quincy Pearson
Sgt. Ifeany Rapu

4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Helicopter)

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Anthony Probasco
Sgt. Adam Barnett
Staff Sgt. Miguel Hernandez

603rd Aviation Support Battalion

Sgt. Russell Canady
Sgt. Christopher Fick
Sgt. Christopher Hancock
Sgt. Phillip Martinez
Sgt. Chelse Stephens
Sgt. Demetriu Taylor

Forecasting for successful missions

Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Aviation Brigade PAO

The forecast for Baghdad: hot and dusty.

While this prediction might seem obvious, the process of forecasting the weather is a science that combines a high level of training, a lot of practice proficiency, with a bit of luck thrown in for good measure. The weather controls our everyday decisions, from what we decide to wear to our daily activities. For pilots and Soldiers of the aviation brigade however, knowledge of the weather can be information that is a matter of both mission completion and life or death.

The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Aviation Brigade Weather Team is made up of five Airmen trained to anticipate weather patterns in order to help the brigade in their everyday missions. Savannah, Ga., native Tech. Sgt. Julie Moretto, 15th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron and the NCOIC of the Weather Team, feels the Team holds many responsibilities.

"The weather team is in charge of observation of current weather," said Moretto. "We also forecast the weather for the aviators, and keep the Tactical Operations Center and brigade informed on the weather so they can better make decisions regarding missions."

The weather team plays a vital role in the well-being of pilots. It is the job of the weather team to make sure pilots have essential weather information that is pertinent to their mission.

"We give a heads up on weather that can affect future missions, and whether flights will be delayed or on time," Moretto said. "For every helicopter that goes up, we provide that pilot with a briefing. We inform pilots on such information as temperature, pressure altitude, visibility, solar data and such hazards such as turbulence. Without the briefings, aviators won't know what to expect. We basically help provide safety for the pilots so they can get the mission done."

The environment and weather of the Middle East has been a challenge the weather team has been handling. Jacksonville, Ark., native Senior Airman Thomas Hughes, 154th Weather Flight, found forecasting the Iraq weather patterns a difficult and unique experience.

"The dust here is quite a hassle," said Hughes. "It is almost impossible to forecast. I have never worked in an environment with this much dust."

Moretto agrees that the dust in Iraq can make her job difficult. She has been to Iraq before, but this is the first time she has worked with dust of such severity.

"The summer weather pattern is one of the hardest to forecast," said Moretto. "No two dust storms are alike. They all differ in thickness and visibility. I have not seen such intense dust storms as I have for this deployment."

The weather team uses sophisticated equipment to handle challenges such as dust storms to help in their forecast. The equipment allows the team to gauge such important facets of flight such as visibility, atmospheric pressure, temperature and lightning detection.

"We have very good communication systems and weather models," Moretto said. "Satellite dishes and tactical observation equipment allows us to get minute to minute weather updates."

There equipment is located on the roof of the Tactical Operations Center, where members of the weather team check for updates often.

"We check the system, power supply and equipment at least once an hour, sometimes more during degraded weather conditions," said Moretto. "We also check the visibility both by the automated system and the human eye. We like to see the weather for ourselves for verification."

The weather team personnel take great pride in what they do. For Hughes, it is job that is very self-gratifying and well worth the six months of training at forecasting school.

"It is great, technical work where I get a lot of job satisfaction," Hughes said. "If we miss a step, it can be hazardous for the pilots, but when we are right (in our forecast) it means the pilots get to fly and do their mission."

Moretto couldn't agree more. For her, job satisfaction comes in the form of peace of mind knowing that a pilot returns safely from a mission.

While the weather can be unpredictable, what is easy to forecast is

the steadfast nature of the weather team and their commitment to the mission, and for the safety of the brigade aviators.

"This job is very challenging but at the same time very rewarding," Moretto said. "I get my satisfaction knowing that I did my job correct and that I played a part in a pilot's safe return."

"We basically help provide safety for the pilots so they can get the mission done."

-Tech. Sgt. Julie Moretto, HHC, Avn. Bde. Weather Team



Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Tech. Sgt. Julie Moretto (left) and Senior Airman Steven Hollatz, both of 15th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron, check their observation equipment on the roof of the Tactical Operations Center.

Camp Taji medics respond during “casualty” exercise

EXERCISE, continued from page 3

out forces the medics to evaluate patients more closely, said McGraw, to see whether patients can be stabilized for a convoy to a CASH.

After the exercise started, the Soldiers at the FARP notified the Airfield Defense Operations Center (ADOC), which then notified the Base Defense Operations Center (BDOC), and from there to the various supporting troop medical clinics (TMC), as well as Camp Taji emergency services.

Letting the ADOC know what had happened was just the first step for FARP personnel. After clearing the aircraft, casualties were evaluated. Casualties who could walk or could help others were directed to a staging area away from the “burning” aircraft. Litter crews hurried to move Soldiers who were too badly “injured” to move themselves.

As the first medics arrived, casualties were sorted into categories, from worst to least injured, loaded on field litter ambulances and whisked away to various TMCs.

Arriving on the scene to observe the combat lifesavers and mortuary affairs, 2nd Lt. Tammy K. Guillet took the reins as medical incident commander (MIC) after realizing the appointed MIC hadn’t arrived on scene yet. Camp Taji emergency services had appointed an incident commander, but had not appointed a triage, treatment or staging officer.

“The lack of communications equipment on the ground was

frustrating” said Guillet, since she couldn’t communicate with the various TMCs to determine how many patients each could handle.

Despite that, Guillet was impressed with the response. “The evac guys were taking to each other,” she said, “and everyone came together as a team.” Guillet also praised the firefighters for their quick, professional response.

The lack of communication between the ADOC, BDOC and TMCs proved to a valuable lesson learned in this exercise.

Despite initial confusion as patients were evacuated, Spc. Glen B. Ordinario, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance) was pleased with his TMC’s response.

“We did well responding and reacting,” said Ordinario. “I got to do treatment in the FLA, which was good training for me.”

Working together to stabilize patients at the TMC was good experience because “it gets the flow going, and shows you what equipment you have, what works, and what deficiencies you have” said Ordinario.

“I think it went very well under the circumstances,” said Ordinario.

Despite some initial confusion, medics gained confidence as the exercise progressed, said Guillet.

“This was a huge team effort,” said Guillet.

Tiger shark Soldiers toast first million gallon milestone

GALLON, continued from page 8

enthusiastic about her unit and the role they play in accomplishing the mission in Iraq. “Without POL (petroleum, oil, lubrication), all pilots are pedestrians,” said Carter, a native of Maple Hill, N.C.

Carter and McMillan are proud of what they’ve been able to accomplish as fuel handlers in a tightly-knit unit.

“We do a great job in this platoon,” said McMillan. “That helps to keep our morale high.”

After presenting McMillan and Carter with battalion coins and certificates for pumping the millionth gallon of fuel for his battalion, Lt. Col. Morgan M. Lamb, 3-3 ARB commander, stressed how critical his support troops are.

Fuel handlers may not have the most glamorous or high-profile jobs, said Lamb, but they do have one of the most essential jobs in the battalion.

They “facilitate” the application of combat power in support of the people

of Iraq and the ground forces of the 3rd Infantry Division said Lamb.

It takes a special breed of Soldier to excel in an environment like that, said Lamb.

“They’ve never failed us, never complained.”

“These Soldiers should inspire all of us,” said Lamb. “There’s no glory in what they do, but their professionalism allows us to continue our mission.”



Photos by Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Staff Sgt. Teresa A. Carter and Pvt. Demarcus L. McMillan prepare to open celebratory bottles of sparkling grape juice after pumping the one millionth gallon of fuel for 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance).



After toasting the millionth gallon pumped, Carter and McMillan pour “champagne” on each other.

Redeeming Your Time: It's never too late to make better use of the present for the future...

Chaplain (Captain) Nils Juarez-Palma
 603d Aviation Support Battalion Chaplain

A college class on ecological sciences taught me that nature recycles all natural resources over the course of time. The water cycle is the most commonly observed one. Water evaporates to then come back in the form of precipitation. As impressive as the cycles are, there is one thing that nature does not recycle, and that is time.

Time is one resource that we do not recover. The more we hoard it, the less of it we have left. We will never again have another today. Once the present is gone, it's gone for good. The Apostle Paul encouraged the Colossians (4:5) to make good use of the time allotted to them. Although time cannot be stopped, stored, or recovered, it can be managed by those who guide their lives with purpose and direction.

Managing our time around moral principles is one approach. These principles are the moral realm's natural laws, and if broken then we detract from our quality of life. They are not unique to any religious belief or institution. They are shared by all people. Using these principles provide we can then focus on what is important to us.

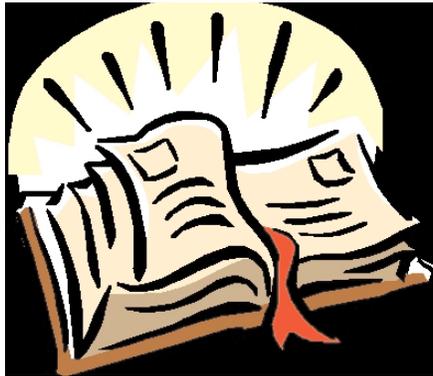
In FM 22-100 we find the seven Army values. These values reflect the basic principles that strengthen and nurture human relationships throughout the Army. As Soldiers it is

our responsibility to implement these values not only in our units but elsewhere. Practicing these values at home minimize the loss of time due to conflicts or disagreements.

Loyalty is just as important at home between spouses as it is in a unit. Without it a couple can not develop the trust that it needs to face the life's challenges together. Duty ensures that everyone in the family care for its physical and emotional needs. Respect provides the family with the encouragement it needs to develop healthy self esteem. Try accomplishing anything of significance without a healthy self esteem? Selfless service at home gives the family confidence that you will do what is right for them.

Likewise, you can expect the same from them. Honor provides the family with a compass to sort out lifestyles and moral choices. Integrity shows consistency between behavior and beliefs. Last, but not least is personal courage. Personal courage means doing what needs to be done without consideration of the consequences to oneself. Disciplining an unruly child may make the child dislike you for a while, but in providing guidance you help the child stay out of more serious trouble.

We cannot recover lost time, but it is never too late to make better use of the present. By using our time in support of our values, we can then live a more fulfilling life. There are no regrets for a person who lived life according to these values. What are your values?

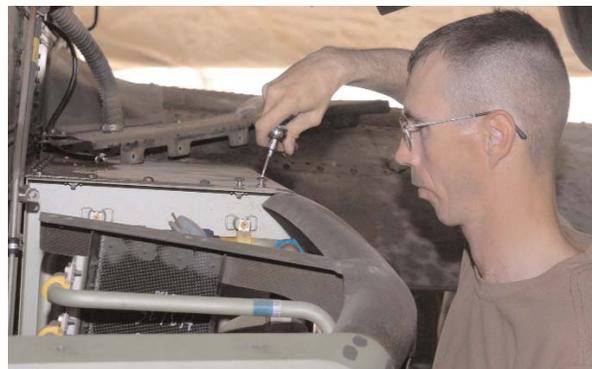


Photos by Curtis Compton, Atlanta Journal-Constitution , Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts
 Above-SPC Bryon Williams, C Co. 4-3 AHB, checks the tail rotar on his Blackhawk helicopter under a full moon during a pre-flight check at day break June 23.



Top right-To demonstrate the many directions the Brigade is moving, these two Blackhawks "move out" on another mission.

Right-Spc. Richard L. Lawhord, D Co. 1-3 ARB removes bolts to prep for a wingmount inspection in the hangar.



A day in the life; a crew chief in the air and on the ground

CHIEF, continued from page 3

Pre-flight maintenance also includes making sure the paperwork is up to date. The number of flight hours and inspections must be logged accurately for the helicopter to be ready to fly.

During the flight, the crew chiefs are responsible for all the passengers and baggage being transported; making sure everyone and everything is secured for flight.

Flying helicopters requires a lot of situational awareness, so Schultz acts as another set of eyes looking out for hazards the pilots can't see. Crew chiefs make sure that the tail rotor is clear when the helicopter is turning, and in the case of a small landing

area, that the rear end of the helicopter is actually over the pad during landing.

After landing, the crew chiefs make another thorough inspection of the helicopter,

making sure nothing broke during flight. Said Schultz, the aircraft gets looked at from top to bottom again.

During the post-flight inspection, Schultz climbs up on the aircraft to inspect the blades. Seals and hoses are checked again for leaks and the tires are inspected for pressure and wear. Schultz and his partner clean up the aircraft, setting it up for the next flight. Logbooks are closed out, recording the pilots' names, the flight information, and the number of hours spent in the air.

Schultz and his fellow crew chiefs spend a lot of time at work between maintaining the aircraft and flying. "I don't regret it," said Schultz. "I love my job, even if we get stretched a lot."

Working long hours doesn't create a lot of friction in the unit, he said. "We get along as a family, and we handle it (the workload) well for the amount of people in the unit."

At the end of the day, there's a sense of accomplishment, since Schultz knows how important crew chiefs are to keeping the brigade's Blackhawks in the air.

"I look at the aircraft, and I'm the driving force behind it," he said. "The pilots fly, but because of me that this aircraft gets off the ground."



Sgt. Desmond A. Schultz, a crew chief with A Co. 2-3 GSAB, checks the oil level on a Black Hawk engine during his pre-flight inspection.

Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts



Aviation History Trivia

1907 -- Paul Cornu makes the first flight in a helicopter, near Lisieux, France, Nov. 13.

1923 -- Spaniard Juan de la Cierva builds the Autogiro, which takes off almost vertically on whirling blades and flies horizontally on wings using a conventional propeller -- an ancestor of the helicopter.

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