THE FALCON Flyer

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Mailroom Delivers Thoughts From Home

by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Not may people use postal mail back in America any more; these days business letters and personal correspondence are mostly done with email. Aside from birthday and holiday cards during particular times of the year, people rarely look forward to receiving mail any more.

Photo by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Pfc. Sarah R. Hartunian, a mailroom clerk with HHC, 1/3 ARB delivers a registered package to Chief Warrant Officer 3 Bobby G. Brockway, of 2/3 GSAB, in the brigade mailroom.

At Camp Taji, that couldn't be farther from the truth. Receiving letters and packages from home is one of the most important things for aviation brigade Soldiers.

The aviation brigade's mail clerk team works hard to ensure you receive your mail as soon as possible.

The mail clerks understand how important their job is for Soldiers while away from their families. "Getting mail is crucial while you're deployed because it lets you know people back home are thinking of you," said Spc. Marty G. Mohr, a mail clerk with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4/3 AHB.

Technology has changed the way Soldiers correspond with their loved ones in America. People call home from the phone center and send and receive emails from their family daily. These are convenient ways to stay in touch, but are no substitute for an old-fashioned letter.

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Message From Col. Tuggle

Safety Everyone's Responsibility

As we continue to settle into our daily routines here at Camp Taji, I want to take this opportunity to focus on an area that must remain at the forefront of everything we do, each and everyday; SAFETY. Some of these comments also apply to our families at homes.

As you will notice, in this and every issue of the Falcon Flyer, there is a column dedicated to the subject of safety. Additionally, CSM Stidley is having some safety bulletin boards put up. Being safe and incorporating safety into your daily routine is essential to the overall success of our mission. Every member of the Brigade is an important member of the team required to accomplish our mission.

Each of you plays a role in this effort. How you might ask, and what can I do in this effort? It starts by taking responsibility for yourself and for the Soldiers that work for you and with you. It means wearing the proper equipment when operating a vehicle; kevlar, and seatbelt when in a tactical vehicle; kevlar when on a

see COMMANDER, page 2

What school will win the NCAA College Basketall Tournament?

"I'm a Washington Huskies fan. I grew up with them so I have to root for them."

Spc. Chris A. Gonser, Bravo Company 1/3 ARB

Capt. Franz W. Mentor, HHC 4/3 AHB

I'm from Detroit, so I'm biased toward Michigan State. However, Illinois will win it all; they have an awsome defense."

"There will be a lot of good teams in the tournament, but Kentucky will pull it out in the end."

Spc. Joshua C. Field, HHC 3-3 ARB

Pfc. Francis S. Tun, Charle Company 1/3 ARB

"I'm going for Duke. I have been a fan for awhile; I use to live in North Carolina."

Photos by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Commander's Column

Making Safety Your Top Priority

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Gator type vehicle and kevlar with reflective belt or vest when on a bicycle. It means, remaining alert when driving and following the posted speed limit; and having a ground guide when backing or moving a vehicle stationary objects.

When working, driving or walking on the flight line or around aircraft, everyone must maintain situational awareness of their surroundings at all times. You must account for your tools after you complete a repair on an aircraft. We must watch for other aircraft or people when driving along the flight line or when towing an aircraft. We will use the same procedure established at home when we move aircraft. It means doing the right thing each and everyday, and making sure Soldiers around you do the same.

The brigade Safety Officer is responsible for developing the safety program for the brigade. I hold each commander responsible for implementing the safety programs at their level. We expect all Soldiers of the Falcon Brigade, to enforce and practice Safety at every level. You have heard this often, but I will repeat it here; you are all safety officers/NCOs. If you see a Soldier doing something that isn't safe you, regardless of rank and position, have an obligation to make an on-the-spot correction.

Fighting complacency is a safety challenge. In time, your daily routine will become just that-routine. Leaders need be aware of this and establish procedures to guard against becoming complacent. We must think about safety at all times. If it doesn't seem right, it probably isn't. If it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. If you have to ask yourself-is this safe, it probably isn't. I challenge you to make safety your top priority.

Finally, I want to congratulate all of those individuals who were promoted this month. Congratulations! You will be given increased responsibility and I challenge you to increase your attention to detail and enforcing standards-this is the key to being part of a disciplined force that accomplishes all tasks to standard. For those who have recently reenlisted, you too are to be congratulated on your choice to remain in the service of your country-we need you!

To our families at home, the Soldiers of the Falcon Brigade continue to impress me each day with their professionalism, dedication to duty and hard work. They are doing a tremendous job, and you can be very proud of them for the contributions they are making on-behalf of our Army and the American. These Soldiers are making history as we fight to keep terrorism from spreading and assisting the people of Iraq in building a strong effective government.

I realize that our families at home are also very busy. Moms and dads are driving more to cover the events that the Soldier would normally be there to help with. They are getting kids to sporting events, friend's houses, movies, shopping etc., as well as all of the required trips to the commissary, dentist, doctor etc. Little fender benders are often an indicator that you are not paying attention. We are not worried about the cars; we are concerned that you might get injured. Please be careful and do not overextend yourself.

"Wings of the Marne"
Colonel Tuggle

Apaches Pilots Achieve Mission Success

Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Capt. Jonathan Tackaberry, 3-3 ARB S-2, performs a pre-flight inspection on an apache helicopter prior to his VIP mission.

by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

The thunderous sound of rotors spinning can be heard all over Camp Taji, letting soldiers know that Apache aircraft are on the move. On the airfield, a Blackhawk helicopter prepares to lift off. Their mission: to pick up Iraqi officials and escort them to an undisclosed destination. This mission like all missions flown in Iraq carry risks, but Capt. Jonathan Tackaberry and Chief Warrant Officer J. Rob Carter, two Apache pilots, are assigned to accompany the Blackhawk and try to make this mission as safe as possible.

Providing aerial security is an integral part of conducting a VIP mission. This is only one type of mission that pilots of the 3-3 Attack Reconnaissance Battalion (ARB) are assigned to do.

"We are responsible for the safety of this Blackhawk," said Tackaberry. "But as for other missions, we also scout around Baghdad looking for ambush sites, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and we provide security for ground forces."

Carter agrees with Tackaberry that their role is vital for the accomplishment of this VIP mission.

"We protect the Blackhawk and make sure it gets to its intended destination," Carter said as he did his pre-flight inspection of the Apache. "If there is a threat, we will provide them with added protecation."

The Apache is equipped with three different types of ordinance in its arsenal: rockets, hellfire missiles and an automatic chain gun.

Soldiers of the 3-3 ARB work tireless hours in preparation for flights such as this. Crew chiefs must maintain the helicopter, refuelers make sure the helicopter is

see APACHE, page 9

Crew Chiefs Provide First Line of Defense

by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Pilots play an obvious important role in the aviation brigade. A pilot's success on a mission is in large part due to the maintenance of their helicopters. The first line of defense in maintaining the brigade's helicopter fleet is the role of the crew chief, and their job plays a pivotal part in the aviation brigade's mission.

Before a pilot even enters the cockpit of a helicopter, the crew chief is on the flight line working on the helicopters to make sure they are mission-ready. Pfc. Francis S. Tun, a crew chief in Charlie Co., 1/3 Attack Reconnaissance Battalion (ARB), feels he plays an integral role to the pilot's mission.

"Crew chiefs have to keep track of all inspections and maintenance and make sure they are not overdue," said Tun. "Constant maintenance is important to make sure the birds can fly and the pilots can do their missions."

Many crew chiefs believe making sure a pilot can complete his mission is the goal of the crew chief. They have to make sure that everything on the helicopter is ready so that a pilot can get in a helicopter and be ready to go.

Crew chiefs hold many responsibilities; to perform proper maintenance, one must have extensive knowledge of the helicopter in order to find and fix problems. Crew chiefs find what system is down, such as electrical, and then find out which section can fix it. It is important to find out all the things that are wrong so they can be expediently fixed.

Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Spc. Nathan B. Dennis (left) and Spc. Matthew S. West install a panel on a Blackhawk while Sgt. Cardron F. Nixon oversees. All three Crew Chiefs are part of Alpha Co. 2/3 General Support Aviation Batttalion.

While crew chiefs in ARB's work on Apaches, the crew

see MAINTENANCE, page 6

Let's Get Physical

Aviation Soldier Instructs Camp Taji Aerobics Class in Spare Time

by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Sweat beads roll down the brows of dozens of soldiers. Their hearts are racing as they breathe harder with every passing moment. Some soldiers feel the pain of their actions, but one thing is true for all of these soldiers—they all made the choice to be here. Are these soldiers road marching through the desert? Jumping out of planes? Clearing a building in Baghdad? Actually, they are all part of a class that features one thing—aerobics.

One of the numerous opportunities available to soldiers here at Camp Taji is an aerobics class, which is conducted twice-a-day, three-days a week. These classes are taught by Sgt. 1st Class Elizabeth S. Brown, also the Property Book Office NCOIC for Headquarters, Headquarters Company, Aviation Brigade.

Brown's aerobic instruction began five years ago at Fort Stewart, Ga., where she worked as the post partum pregnancy PT instructor for the 3rd Infantry Division. When her deployment brought her to Taji, she volunteered to teach aerobics to servicemembers. She was surprised by the turnout she received on her first day of instruction.

"When I went to my first class, I was amazed to see how many people showed up, around 30," said Brown. "The class continues to grow; now we get up to 60."

Classes are made up of a good mix of males and females. Brown likes to see males in her classes because it breaks the stigma that aerobics is strictly for women. She often gets positive feedback from her male participants.

"I come three days a week," said Staff Sgt. Joker Botin, Alpha Co. 603rd Aviation Support Battalion. "It is a good workout and the instruction is outstanding."

The aerobics class is an hour long and contains a cardio workout in which Brown tries to incorporate something for everyone.

"Aerobic routines come natural to me," Brown said. "I try to use moves that will work out different parts of the body, and I like to try new moves that people will enjoy. I will look in the crowd and gauge how they like the routine by the looks on their faces, and I adjust my routine accordingly."

Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Sgt. 1st Class Elizabeth S. Brown, HHC Aviation Brigade,gives a hand to Spc. Marcus Archibald during the abs workout portion of the aerobics class.

Brown believes music is important when doing aerobics. She will change the music to fit a certain part of the routine.

"I have to feel the music in order to come up with the moves," she said. "I need upbeat and uplifting music. I like to try out different styles. For the future, I plan to incorporate some Latin music into my routine."

Despite having five years of experience, Brown still gets butterflies when teaching her classes.

"No matter how long I've been doing this, I still get nervous before each class," Brown said. "But once the class starts and I see people enjoying it, my nervousness diminishes."

People are indeed enjoying her class as seen by the growing number of participants.

Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Sgt. 1st Class Brown instructs aerobics class twice a day, three times a week in addition to her job in the aviation brigade Property Book Office.

see AEROBICS, page 8

Soldiers in Action

Aviation Brigade Soldiers here are always keeping busy with their mission. Whether it's working in their office, performing maintenance, or on a detail, there is always something to do at Camp Taji.

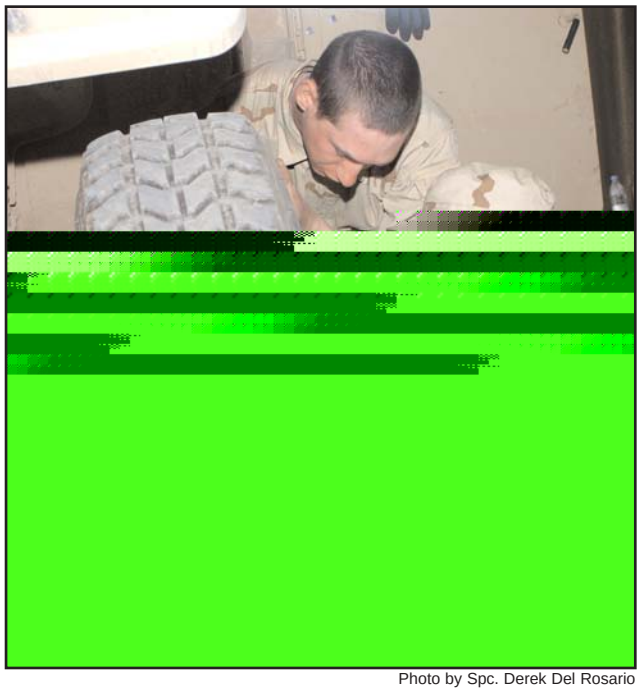

Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Spc. Daniel R. Cohen (left) helps PV2 William Johnson, both of Headquarters and Headquarters Company 3-3 Attack Recon Battalion, change a humvee tire in their companies motorpool.

Photo by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley and Sgt. Sean Aube, HHC Avn. Bde., raise the brigade colors in front of the Tactial Operations Center for the first time.

Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Spc. Alma D. Felix, Aviation Brigade Property Book Office, works on property forms for a monthly report.

Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Pfc. Kevin M. Haynes,Delta Co. 1/3 ARB, cleans a main rotor gear shaft in preparation for being installed in an apache helicopter.

Photo by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Soldiers from Alpha Co. 603rd ASB sweep around their shop area.

Maintenance: Easier with Crew Chiefs Aboard

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chiefs in General Support Aviation Battalions (GSAB) like 2/3 GSAB and 4/3 AHB, work with Blackhawks and Chinooks. Crew chiefs on Blackhawk helicopters not only maintain the aircraft, but they also fly on the helicopters during missions. Blackhawk and Chinook crew chiefs also must qualify with the M60D machine gun and man them during missions.

"We maintain the Blackhawk so it can get to its destination," said Sgt. Cardron F. Nixon, crew chief in Alpha Co., 2/3 General Support Aviation Battalion. "When in flight we scan our sectors for any potential enemies."

In addition, Blackhawk crew chiefs take care of the passengers by making sure they are strapped in, as well as make sure the back of the aircraft is secure, said Spc. Matthew S. West, crew chief in Alpha Co., 2/3 GSAB.

Flying in the Blackhawks can come with difficulties though.

"A crew chief's job can be difficult during dusk," said West. "It is too light outside to use night vision goggles and just dark enough to obstruct vision."

Being part of the aircraft crew might seem like an extra duty, but flying in the Blackhawks is a reward in itself for some crew chiefs.

There's nothing better than flying, it's why I work here," said Spc. Nathan B. Dennis, Alpha Co., 2/3 GSAB. "I get to see a lot of Baghdad and meet interesting people, such as Iraqi government officials."

The routine of a crew chief can be anything but typical. Crew chiefs have to be able to adapt to the situation at hand.

"We have a list of missions we have to do, but sometimes a mission request will come in and we have to work quickly," Dennis said. "In my job, you learn how to be flexible."

Crew chiefs put in many hours on the flight line. As long as pilots are flying, crew chiefs have to be working to help ensure the helicopters are operational.

"We don't get off of work until the maintenance is done," said Tun. "Usually we will have someone bring us lunch so we can continue to work on Apaches."

On days with early missions scheduled, crew chiefs will sometimes have to come in the early mornings and put in 12 hour plus days, said West.

Despite long hours, the Soldiers depend on each other to stay in good spirits.

"We have a good crew and we keep each other up," said Nixon. "We joke with each other to keep our morale up. It's a great benefit to be working with great people."

All the time and hard work is well worth it, as the crew chief gets much gratification in the job they do in support of the aviation brigade. For Tun, it is a great honor to be a crew chief.

"It is honorable to be a crew chief because we are working for the pilots," Tun said. "It makes me feel good to see a helicopter land. When pilots come back from a mission-that's what matters the most."

March Promotions

Congratulations to the following Soldiers who were promoted as of 1 March.

The following individual was promoted to Captain: Joseph Davis, **4-3 AHB**

The following individual was promoted to CW4: Douglas Dickens, **4-3 AHB**

The following individual was promoted to CW3: Sandra Pack, **603rd ASB**

The following individuals were promoted to Sergeant First Class: **2-3 GSAB:** Hector Benitez-Ortiz, Chad M. Hall

The following individuals were promoted to Staff Sergeant: **1-3 ARB:** Jason Bauer, Bryan MacFarlane, Lonnie L. McGee, Anthony Thompson **2-3 GSAB:** Jerome Fayville **603rd ASB:** Chad L. Roberts **D 1/58th:** Tomeco Farrior **4-3 AHB:** Maria Escobedo

Photo by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Sandra Pack recites the oath of office from Col. Ronald D. Tuggle, brigade commander, during her promotion.

The following individuals were promoted to Sergeant: **1-3 ARB:** Matthew Cierpial, Phelan P. Hoover, Nathaniel Houston, William Mclane, Carmelo Vazquez, Tawone L. White, Wesley Wilson **2-3 GSAB:** Justin Brackenridge, Ryan K.B. Daberam,Wei Lin Cheng **3-3 ARB:** Chelesea Plater **4-3 AHB:** Jason Donner, Bryan Medina, Jacob Weikart, **603rd ASB**: Orlando Harper, Calvin F. Smith, Brian V. Sparks, Takia S. Wallace **D 1/58th ATS:** Victoria Vaagbay, Castro Bustillohawk.

Alpha Co., 603rd "Keeps 'em Flying"

by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

When you mention an aviation brigade, most people think of Blackhawks and Apaches in the sky patrolling the battlefield.

Yet none of this could be accomplished without the tireless efforts of their maintenance and support elements.

Alpha Company, 603rd ASB is the brigade's intermediate aviation maintenance company and their task is to perform scheduled and unscheduled maintenance and repairs for all four line battalions. After a predetermined number of flight hours each aircraft is required to receive its scheduled maintenance.

They perform the highest level of maintenance done on the helicopters in Iraq.

"We are the last people to fix a problem before it needs to be sent back to the factory," said Maj. Christopher Brewer, Alpha Company commander.

Alpha Company has been very busy since arriving here. The tempo of operations has been high.

Photo by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Spc. Edmund G. Brock, an Apache mechanic with Alpha Co., 603rd ASB, checks the wiring on a rear Apache rotor.

In their first month in Iraq, they have completed the amount of work that normally takes six months back home. There has been six to seven times the amount of work orders here than there would be normally, said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mike Wilson, Alpha Company production control officer.

Despite the huge workload, the Soldiers of the company continue to work hard and remain in good spirits.

"Morale is extremely high right now. All of this work we do is allowing the guys to prove what they're capable of," said Brewer.

Among Alpha Company's other missions are running an equipment test facility which tests weapons systems for Apaches to allow them to fix problems here without sending them to the factory and a downed aircraft recovery team (DART) which quickly reacts to helicopter accidents to assess any damage and bring the aircraft back to Camp Taji, said Brewer.

Our goal is to keep as many aircraft in the air as possible to stay in the fight. A large amount of the pilots having there flight hours is up to us, Brewer said.

Photo by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

A crew chief with 4-3 AHB provides security over Baghdad for a Blackhawk delivering supplies to forward operating bases around Baghdad.

4/3 AHB Resumes Duties over Iraq

Avn. Battalion Readjusts to Iraq After Year Home

by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

It's like they never even left.

For Soldiers of 4/3 AHB, continuing the mission just 11 months after completing their first tour of Iraq has been a great challenge and success during their first month since arriving.

The mission as 3rd Infantry Division's air assault asset began with a seamless transition of responsibility from 1st Cavalry Division aviation assets. This began with a series of "right seat rides." When pilots arrived, they would go along on missions with the outgoing unit. Since much had changed during the year of OIF II, this gave pilots a chance to pass down knowledge of both their and the enemies tactics, techniques and procedures, said Maj. Joseph Matthew, battalion executive officer. Thanks to these ride-alongs, pilots learned what routes to take and which places to avoid.

Taking over the sky with that knowledge helps pilots with one of the most essential tasks in the division. 4/3 Aviation is responsible for delivering air assault troops, transporting personnel and equipment to reduce the risks inherent to convoys and flying the stand-by division ready reserves, said Matthew.

"We are the ones who reposition the battlefield."
- Maj. Joseph Matthew

"The gamut of what we do is huge and it's important because it

see 4/3, page 10

Mailroom: Clerks' Mission Essential for Morale

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"There's a big difference between getting an email and being handed a letter," said Pfc. Sarah R. Hartunian, a mail clerk with HHC 1/3 ARB. "People want something they can touch and hold; something that has the fragrance of home."

Being the person to hand a Soldier a letter or package and seeing the joy on their face is the most rewarding part of the job for the mail clerks, said Spc. Tony A. Barnhart, a mail clerk with HHC 2/3 GSAB. "We understand how important our jobs are."

People appreciate their work and recognize them for what they do.

"I'm one of the most popular people here," said Spc. John C. Trane, a mail clerk with HHC 603rd ASB. "Soldiers who I've never seen before know me and come up and ask if they have mail."

If you are expecting mail but haven't received it yet, remember the delivery process to Iraq is slow.

When someone from America sends you a letter using an APO address, it begins by going to John F. Kennedy International Airport. It is sorted by APO address and sent to Rhein Mein, Germany, where it's sorted for people stationed in the Middle East. Mail is then sent to either Baghdad International Airport or Camp Doha, Kuwait, where it's sorted to be sent to individual camps or forward operating bases.

Mail is then sent to Camp Taji, where it's received by the camp's mail distribution center. The brigade mail clerks pick it up from there and separate it by battalion and company.

The whole process can take up to two weeks, on average, for letters, and up to three weeks for packages. However, the mail clerks warn delivery can take up to five weeks during busy periods.

If you think there should be a letter for you here that hasn't arrived yet, talk to your unit mail orderly, not the clerks in the brigade mail room, said Barnhart. The only time Soldiers need to come to the mail room is to sign for registered mail and insured packages.

Sending mail back to the U.S. or another APO address is free if it's a letter or personal correspondence. Fill out the address normally and write 'Free Mail' where the stamp would normally go on a letter. Letters can be dropped off in the mailboxes located by the dining facility, MWR building, brigade mail room and post office.

For larger letters and packages you must go to the post office. Don't bring them to the mail room, said Barnhart.

Photo by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Spcs. Tony A. Barnhart and John C. Trane, Aviation Brigade mail clerks, download a package from their mail truck.

Aerobics: Class Popularity Growing

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"My friend told me about this class and it's pretty intense," said 2nd Lt. Kristi Hyatt, 3/3 Air Reconnaissance Battalion, who was participating in the class for the first time. "She (Brown) makes it fun and she is very motivated."

Being an aerobics instructor keeps Brown busy. Along with instructing morning and evening classes three times a week and being in charge of the brigade's property book office, she also is taking two classes in order to get her Bachelor of Science in criminal justice.

"I have to manage my time and get into a routine," she said. "I enjoy doing both classes, so it's hard to give one up. Sometimes before a class I am drained, but once the music starts and I see how energetic people are, it wakes me up."

Despite her full schedule, Brown finds gratification in knowing she is giving something back to the soldiers by helping them get fit.

"Today someone came up to me and told me how much they enjoyed the class and how I helped him get back into shape," Brown said. "That's the best part for me, knowing I can be of help to someone else. Hearing the positive feedback and helping people makes me know I'm doing something."

Aerobics Class Schedule:

Monday: 0600, 1800

Wednesday: 0600, 1800

Friday: 0600, 1800

Building 509

Apache: Pilots Remain Ready

continued from page 3

ready and flight operation personnel must plan logistics before pilots ever enter the cockpit. Getting pilots off the ground is truly a team effort.

"Our battalion is flying between 210 to 250 hours a week," said Carter. "The battalion flies around 6 or 7 missions a day."

Tackaberry and Carter feel that the Apache is important to the mission because it not only has significant fire power, it also intimidates the enemy. Enemies do not shoot at Apaches because of its fire power and capabilities, Tackaberry said.

"We may or may not have to suppress targets," said Carter. "But I think our presence alone will discourage the enemy (from attacking)."

Carter, Tackaberry and the pilots of the 3-3 ARB will continue to make their presence known as long as there are missions to fly. Whether providing escort, reconnoitering around Baghdad, or providing air support to the maneuver brigades, the 3-3 ARB play an important role in the mission of the aviation brigade and the freedom of Iraqi people.

Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Capt. Jonathan Tackaberry (left) and Chief Warrant Officer J. Rob Carter, pilots for 3/3 ARB, conduct crew-briefings. 3/3 ARB pilots often fly several missions a day in support of the aviation brigade.

Chaplain Corner: The Communication Cycle

by Chaplain (Maj.) Bill Kilmer

Relationships are never easy and maintaining one while one person is deployed is even more difficult. Communication is an important part of developing relationships for you and your loved ones while you are deployed. Being far from home, communicating with family and friends becomes even more important for your well-being and the well-being of the relationship. Writing letters, sending post cards, and mailing packages are all ways you can let your family know how you are doing while you are deployed.

I like to define communication as the sending and receiving of messages. There is a cycle to communication. As messages are sent by Person A, they are received by Person B and then the Person B sends feedback to Person A in the form of another message and so the cycle continues.

Many times I have sat with couples who are having problems in their marriage but they don't know why they are having so many problems. One of the biggest hurdles they have to get over is that neither one is listening to the other. And so there is a breakdown in the communication cycle.

Communication with your family is important to your emotional well being and to theirs as well. Talking on the phone, sending letters and trading emails, are all good ways to communicate. An important part of communication is not only the sending of messages, but also the receiving part of the cycle of communication. Knowing how the other person will receive the message you send is critical to better communication and relationship building.

An example: You may be excited about a DVD you were able to buy at the PX here and want to tell your spouse back home about it. But, the day you call happened to be a hectic, and tiring day back on the homefront. Kids have been sick and cranky. It has rained all week, your spouse has not felt well, and the only thing they have watched in a week is Sponge Bob Square Pants a dozen times. All you did was say something about a DVD you bought at the PX but that wasn't what your spouse heard from you. See how important it is to understand how the person will receive your messages?

Write lots of letters, trade emails, and send packages home. When you send and receive messages with

see CHAPLAIN'S CORNER, page 10

Aviation Brigade Reenlistments

Congratulations to the following Soldiers who have recently re-enlisted. Thank you for your continued service to your nation.

HHC, AVN BDE: Sgt. Frank Aponte

2-3 GSAB: C Company; Staff Sgt. Karen L. Hall, Spc. Joshua Rubio

4-3 AHB: Spc. Joshua Mccorkel

603rd ASB: Headquarters and Service Company; Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Martinez, Staff Sgt. Gabriel Pinto, Sgt. Danielle Lee, Sgt. Frank Spence, Spc. Leonard Jones III, Spc. Melissa Mulock, Spc. Jason Shannon

A Company; Staff Sgt. Joseph Dickinson, Staff Sgt. Shawn Lovelis, Sgt. Jermaine Baldwin, Sgt. Brian Griswold, Sgt. Hector Thilletbarbosa, Spc. David Lewis, Spc. Jason Noack

Chaplain's Corner

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your family, remember the communication cycle. How you send the message may not be the way it is received. Think about how the messages you are sending will be received and consider changing the message so the receiver can understand what you are trying to communicate. Relationships take work to build, even when you are deployed. Grace and Peace.

Notes From the Desk of the Brigade Surgeon

from Maj. Christopher McGraw

The Brigade Troop Medical Clinic is fully operational. I wanted to take the time to highlight for you our sick call hours and procedures so that when you arrive at the clinic we can see you quickly and get you back on your feet.

First, I want to say that overall that the Soldiers of the brigade are doing a good job of preventative care, which has kept our sick call numbers low. Continue to do those simple things like washing you hands often, drinking plenty of water and eating well balanced meals. However, when the need arises, sick call is available to you.

Sick-call hours are Monday through Saturday 0800 to 1000 and 1500 to 1700, Sundays 1500 to 1700. Sick call slips DD 689 are required, per Army Regulation, for E6's and below. More importantly, we also require them so we know that your chain of command knows where you are. New injuries and acute illnesses can come in at any time for evaluation. With the exception of acute injuries, weapons are not allowed in any of the clinics on Camp Taji, please either bring a battle buddy or leave it with your unit. There are several reasons for this: 1) we don't have the room to store weapons while you are being examined. 2) If we have to evacuate a patient, we then have to secure the weapon. 3) If we are required to send you to another clinic for X-ray or lab tests, you can not take your weapon. All these reasons delay your treatment and the treatment of others should we have to secure someone's weapon.

Flight Physicals: We are now doing flight physicals. Hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays 0800 to 1000, 1500 to 1700, and 2200 to 2300. You have the same 90-day window as anywhere else. If you need a Class I initial physical you need to take your Flight Aptitude Standardization Test first and bring results to the clinic before we will set up the required testing. If you need a more detailed physical come in with the information, the type of physical needed and any specific requirements they have.

Finally, I want to remind everyone that the water in the PODS is non-potable, meaning that you can not drink it. It is safe to shower and shave with, but you should not drink or brush your teeth with the water from the sinks. That is why you drink bottled water throughout the day. Use bottled water to brush you teeth with.

4/3: Flight Hours Keeping Soldiers Busy

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minimizes the threat of having to put convoys on the road," Matthew said. "We are the ones who reposition the battlefield."

Soldiers have been working hard to accomplish all this. "We are flying twice as often as we did during last year's deployment and three or four times more than we do at home," Matthew said.

All of the hours in the air keeps the pilots happy, crew chiefs working very hard and everyone else in the battalion very busy, Matthew said.

The Falcon Flyer is published in the interest of the service members of the 3rd Infantry Division's Aviation Brigade.
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