

# WINGS OF DESTINY

MAGAZINE **OIF 05-07**

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE 101<sup>ST</sup> AVIATION BRIGADE

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## *From the Editor...*



**Hello, Screaming Eagles!**  
We are excited to bring you the second deployment issue of *Wings of Destiny*. This is our first issue in Iraq, and features stories from all the battalions within our brigade. The magazine begins with our Transfer of Authority ceremony, in which the brigade took control of our Area of Operations from the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. Also included are stories on missions to local schools, human interest and other news. Our team of stringers worked very hard to do their best to keep you informed.

The mission of *Wings of Destiny* magazine is to cover the brigade as a whole. To do this effectively, you will see articles written by myself and our team of battalion stringers/unit public affairs representatives. These stories have also been sent out to newspapers and magazines throughout Tennessee, and in some cases, the country. Our team is excited to bring you as much information on what is happening here as possible.

Below you will see the contact information for myself, SFC Antony Joseph, the brigade's Public Affairs Officer, and our stringer team in the event you have any questions, suggestions, or story ideas. Enjoy the magazine, Air Assault!

**SGT Ryan Matson**  
*Wings of Destiny* editor/brigade military journalist

## WINGS OF DESTINY MAGAZINE

*THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE 101<sup>ST</sup> AVIATION BRIGADE*

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# NEWS

## 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Assumes Control of Operations in Iraq

Story and photos by SGT Ryan Matson  
*101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade*



**That's more like it!**  
SGT Doran Hayes (left) and CSM Tod L. Glidewell (right), 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, look at the brigade sign they just put up to symbolize the transfer of authority from 42nd Infantry Division Aviation Brigade to 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

CAMP SPEICHER, IRAQ -- The 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade took over aerial operations from the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division Aviation Brigade at Camp Speicher, Iraq in a Transfer of Authority (TOA) ceremony held Oct. 13 at 8:30 a.m. outside the two unit's Tactical Operations Center. The 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade, out of Fort Campbell, Ky., arrived in Iraq last month and has assumed control over aviation operations in the area to include providing convoy and route security, medical evacuations and utilization of air assets in support of ground forces in strengthening the Iraqi government and security forces.

The 42<sup>nd</sup> ID AVN BDE, an Army National Guard brigade based out of Patchogue, New York, had been in Iraq since January, 2005. The brigade is commanded by COL Mark F. Burke and CSM Rene Rivera. In his speech during the ceremony, Burke acknowledged the hard work of his Soldiers in supporting the security of the political process in Iraq over the past year. He also expressed gratitude in a tearful remembrance of the aviation brigade's two fallen Soldiers, CW4 Matt Lourey and CW2 Joshua Scott, reciting the division's motto, "Never forget."

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The 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade's COL Warren E. Phipps and CSM Tod L. Glidewell stepped in as commander and command sergeant major of the area of operations. In his remarks following the symbolic transfer of authority through the uncasing of the new colors, Phipps said, "We, the 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade and 42<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Brigade stand united in a great cause – to save the Iraqi people from the throws of tyranny and terrorism so that they can enjoy the freedoms of a self-determined representative government and the comfort of society governed by the rule of law."

Phipps pledged to the battalions of the 42<sup>nd</sup> ID AVN BDE that, "the Wings of Destiny will fly proudly over the Rainbow Soldiers protecting them as you have done over the past year."



### Uncased

COL Warren E. Phipps (left), 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), unveils the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade colors during the transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 13 at Forward Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.



### Great Seat

CSM Glidewell (left) and COL Phipps (right) participate in the ceremony, while PFC Christopher Gerber, HHC 101 AVN BDE (near right) watches from the back of a HMMWV.

# NEWS

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## 1st BN Apaches Fly On in Iraq

Story by 2LT Elizabeth Casebeer  
Photos by Tech SGT Andy Dunaway  
*101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade*



### **Flying high again**

**Two U.S. Army, AH-64D Longbow Apache helicopters, 1st Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, Fort Campbell Ky., return from another combat mission to Forward Operating Base Speicher Iraq, Oct. 22, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom**

FOB SPEICHER, IRAQ-- After months of hard work and training back at Fort Campbell, Attack Apache pilots of First Battalion, 101 Aviation Regiment, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) are now honing their hard-earned skills in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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In early September, pilots logged hours of flight time over Kuwait in anticipation of their arrival in Iraq.

“CFLCC [Coalition Forces Land Component Command] puts standards on our battalion to put so many crew members in the air [before arriving in Iraq] to reduce stresses on the battalion maintenance systems. It’s another way of them asking, ‘Are you sure you’re ready to go?’” said Chief Warrant Officer John Jones, Delta Company Maintenance Officer.

One of the main focuses of training in Kuwait was Environmental Training, where more experienced pilots went with junior pilots to show how to land in desert conditions at night as well as during the day.

“It’s harder to land in this environment because of all the dust. We really try to beat the clouds to the ground, but you’re going to be engulfed in it anyway,” said Chief Warrant Officer Tim Vincent, Battalion Master Gunner.

Vincent, who is on his third tour to the Middle East with 1st Battalion since 1991, said the finer the dust, the denser the ensuing dust cloud will be. “Grainy sand is what you want; the ‘talcum powder’ sand just gets everywhere,” said Vincent.

The “talcum powder” dust is so fine it adheres easily to equipment and soldiers and tends to get into small spaces such as wire boxes and control panels, as well as into soldiers’ lungs.

Heat is another factor pilots have to contend with. While there is less humidity in the air, afternoon temperatures sometimes exceed the 140-degree mark in Kuwait alone. Also, the combat load can cause the bird to be 1,000 to 1,500 pounds heavier than in training.

Regardless, Vincent said, “the weapons systems perform ‘as advertised.’ If maintained properly, the weapon will work.”

The overall preservation of the Apaches is the sole responsibility of the crew chiefs. Amongst other things, crew chiefs ensure everything is cleaned and oiled to ensure the guns work properly.

“We did intensive maintenance on rotor blades, tail rotor blades, filtration systems and environmental control systems due to dust,” said Jones.

Since the beginning of the deployment, the Battalion has conducted 24-hour, seven day-a-week maintenance on the birds to make sure they get as much attention as possible to maintain their Fully Mission Capable status.

“Maintenance personnel come to do a job here and they do it. There are few distractions here, but if some of those come on the radar we remove them because it reduces combat power,” said Jones.

SGT Diane Garver, Alpha Company Platoon Sergeant, said the main glitches the crew chiefs found were electronic problems and not with the birds themselves.

“They are like laptops in a way. If you get sand in the hard drive, they won’t work so well. It’s the same with birds,” she said.

Garver said of the eight Apaches in Alpha Company alone, while in Kuwait, four or five were usually flown a day. This meant crew chiefs on rotating day and night shifts worked about twenty hours each daily to maintain the aircraft. Garver said the time included the inspections as well as the actual broken part repair.

“Aircraft is high maintenance; basically, the more you use it, the better it works. This is because the Apaches have a lot of moving parts that could potentially become corroded or dirty without frequent use,” explained Vincent.

“The aircraft actually seem to work better here in the desert, but it’s been like that the past two times I have been here,” said Vincent.

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In order to keep the Apaches running smoothly, 1st Battalion crew chiefs have their work cut out for them.

While in Kuwait, crew chiefs spent more time maintaining the birds than most were accustomed to back at Fort Campbell. "There was a lot more maintenance than normal because of the big push up north," said SFC Class David McLaughlin, Bravo Company Platoon Sergeant. Bravo was the first company from 101 Aviation to cross the border into Iraq.

"We were flying double so there was quite a lot of work [for the crew chiefs]," said McLaughlin. They were pretty proactive with the small things so the big things [such as a broken rotor] didn't come back and bite us."

McLaughlin estimated he got between eight and ten new soldiers straight from Advanced Individual Training back in March.

McLaughlin said the new soldiers quickly picked up on troubleshooting problems. "Launching aircraft was my biggest worry because my old crew always knew what to do first. My new crew is catching up, though."

"The crew chiefs know what I expect, which is long hours pretty much seven days a week. They are still motivated though, and they still kid around with each other," said McLaughlin.

Vincent says he trusts the crew chiefs, armorers, and everyone else directly responsible for the upkeep of the Apaches. "But just because I trust them doesn't mean I don't check everything out thoroughly before I jump in."

Perhaps it's the camaraderie 1st Battalion is famous for, or the teamwork, overall good attitudes, or hard work and experience, but one thing is for sure: with nearly one month down in Iraq already, 1st Battalion is doing its part in Operation Iraqi Freedom for the second time since the campaign started in 2003.

**One more  
time**

**Another shot of  
the Apache in  
action.**



# NEWS

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## Ghostrider mechanics keep 5<sup>th</sup> BN flying high in Iraq

Story and photos by SGT Ryan Matson  
*101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade*



### Workin' it

SPC Jason Thompson, a powerplant turbine engine mechanic, finetunes the engine on a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. Along with the rest of the Company D, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion crew, Thompson has been working 12-hour shifts to ensure the battalion's aircraft are able to operate at peak performance.

FOB SPEICHER, IRAQ-- When a NASCAR race is over, it is the driver who stands in the spotlight, lifting the trophy above his head. But while the driver spent a few hours racing the car, his team of mechanics spent countless more getting it ready to go.

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The same is true with helicopter pilots in Iraq. While the pilot's fly the mission, it took a good team of mechanics to keep that aircraft in the sky.

The Company D, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade "Ghostrider" Aviation Unit Maintenance Company are all aware of what it takes to build a winning team. It is through the efforts of the Ghostrider mechanics that the battalion's Blackhawk helicopters stay in the air. In a desert environment, this is easier said than done, SGT Justin "Squeak" Beckman, a power train mechanic, said.

"The sand can make things interesting and create wear on different parts of the aircraft," he said. He noted that in the desert environment, a lot of time is spent on cleaning and maintaining the various parts of the helicopter.

In addition to the sand has been the heavy workload the battalion has been carrying, logging more than three times the amount of flight hours in Iraq as at Fort Campbell, the battalion's home station. This has meant the Ghostriders have been busier than ever, performing 24 hour, seven-day-a-week service, maintenance and inspection to the aircraft in the battalion.

"We're constantly going, we constantly have work to do," SPC Jerry Clark, a Blackhawk general maintenance mechanic, said. "I love that, it keeps me busy."

"It makes your year go by faster, that's for sure," SPC Jeffrey Collins, a Blackhawk structural repair/sheet metal airframe mechanic added.

"Yeah, it's hard to believe we've already been here three months!" SPC Brandon Sinclair, also a body shop mechanic, agreed.

Each of these mechanics play a vital role in ensuring the pilots and crew chiefs can complete the battalion's missions throughout the course of the deployment. All are in Army aviation mechanical Military Occupational Specialties, or jobs, and much like auto mechanics, each has their own specialty in maintaining and repairing the aircraft. All were trained at Fort Eustis, Va., on their particular skill.

Clark performs the Blackhawk's general maintenance, and said he will often fix a problem on the aircraft, then find another requiring the special skills of another mechanic on the Ghostrider crew. He has been a Blackhawk mechanic four years, and said he has always loved working on machinery with his hands and is good everywhere on the aircraft.

If Clark finds a problem in the powertrain or gear box, Beckman can step in. If the problem is the engine, then SPC Jason Thompson, can bring his six years of knowledge as a powerplant turbine engine mechanic, to the table.

"I know the engine is the heart of the aircraft, it powers it and the helicopter ain't going anywhere without it!" Thompson said.

Sinclair and Collins are ready for anything the desert throws at them. Sinclair said sand can erode an expensive part such as a rotor blade, making something as simple as applying protective blade tape on the edges a vital maintenance step. He and Collins are trained in everything from replacing cracked windshields to the different metals and composites making up the body of the helicopter.

"I like learning about the different metals that make up the aircraft," Sinclair said. "Sometimes we'll even make our own parts to repair something."

Though they all work on Blackhawks, some of the crew, like Thompson, who spent 5 months at Eustis being trained on all Army helicopter engines, can work on other models of aircraft. Clark said he can also work on Chinooks, and Sinclair and Collins can also work on Chinooks, Kiowa and Apache exteriors. Sinclair has also worked on F-14 Tomcats for the Navy prior to his time in the Army.

But although they may be able to work on other helicopters, many of the mechanics said they enjoy working on the Blackhawk.

"It's the most versatile," Beckman said. "It's a utility helicopter, so you can do anything with it. You can put armor on it and make it an attack helicopter, you can use it for medical evacuations or carry passengers and equipment with it."

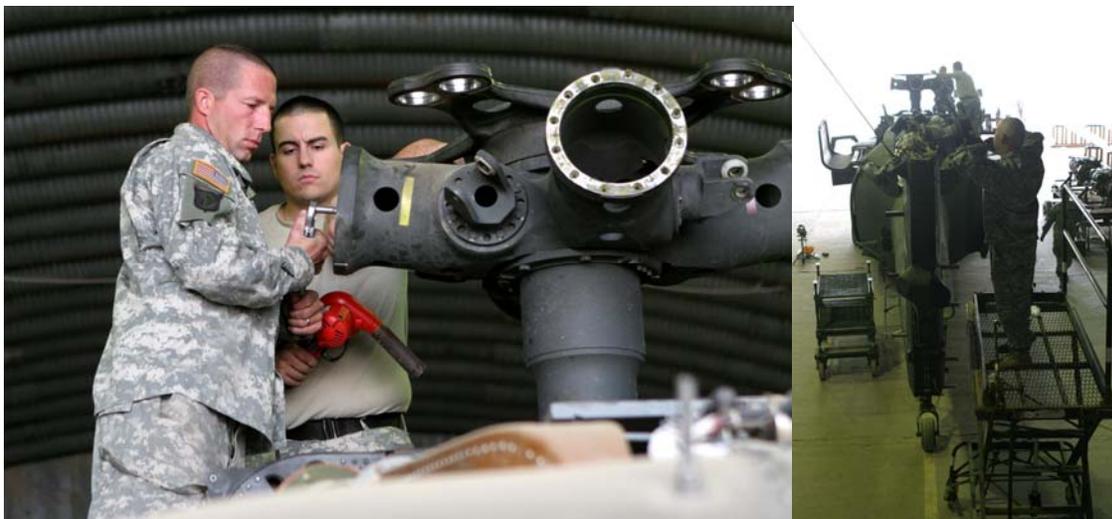
And then there are the mechanics who work on the systems inside the aircraft, like SSG Timothy Ros. He heads a crew of mechanics who work on the aircraft's radios and survivability systems, as well as the Blackhawk's three generators and other electrical aspects of the aircraft.

"This is by far the best maintenance crew I've worked with in any battalion," Ross said. "They are enthusiastic workers, and fantastic at what they do."

Sinclair said another thing he likes about working on helicopters is that "they almost seem to have their own personalities. Some are pure workhorses and some you will hear the name of the aircraft and go, uh-oh it's that one again!"

No matter what problems the aircraft encounters through long hours of flying over desert terrain, the Ghostriders know they can get the helicopter back in the air again, which is what Clark said it's all about.

"The best thing about being a mechanic is looking at an aircraft and the satisfaction you feel when you know that you got it flying," he said. "I love going out to watch them take off, and know that I had a part in that."



### **Rotor Repairs**

SPC Jeffrey Collins (left) and SPC Andrew King, both Ghost rider maintenance company mechanics, make adjustments to the main rotor system of a 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Blackhawk helicopter while SPC Jerry Clark (standing in photo right) works on the tail section.

# NEWS

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## 6TH BN Returns to Northern Iraq – With a Different “Shadow”

By CPT Matt Graessle and 2LT Margaret Nencheck  
*101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade*



### Desert Shadow

The sun sets on the tail rotor of one of 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion's UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters at Camp Speicher, Iraq. After completing a “Relief in Place” with three different units, the “Shadow of the Eagle” is casting its presence over Iraq once again.

FOB SPEICHER, IRAQ-- Since returning from the unit's first rotation to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, the 6-101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment has undergone many dramatic changes.

They lost the Pathfinder Company to 5-101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment in April of 2005, but shortly thereafter they gained MEDEVAC capability with the arrival of the 542<sup>nd</sup> Medical Company (Air Ambulance) from Korea. "Shadow Dustoff" is now set to join the rest of the "Shadow of the Eagle" battalion in December.

With all of these transformational changes comes a unique leadership challenge for the Battalion Commander, LTC Michael Miller. As the only "transformed" GSAB, Miller has command of the Blackhawks that support the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division's General Officers, one of the only Chinook companies in theater, a MEDEVAC unit, as well as three support companies. As a result, 6-101 AVN conducted its Relief In Place – the handover process between the out-going and in-coming organizations – with three different units. The Battalion took the reins from 1-150<sup>th</sup> GSAB, a National Guard unit from New Jersey and Delaware. They also took over for the 36<sup>th</sup> Medical Battalion, which supervised all of the medical operations in Northern Iraq. With this handover, the 1159<sup>th</sup> Medical Company (AA) fell under 6-101. When the 1159<sup>th</sup> redeploy, they will be replaced by the 542<sup>nd</sup>. In addition, the Bravo Company Pachyderms had to do their handover with a B/4-123<sup>rd</sup> Aviation based out of LSA Anaconda in Balad.



Despite all these moving pieces, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion hit the ground running. The Headquarters and Forward Support Companies did a joint handover with the 1-150<sup>th</sup> Headquarters Company and started to support the integral missions of headquarters set-up and refuel operations. The Alpha Company Warlords were quickly working to fly the Division's General Officers around Iraq, as they surveyed their Area of Operations in preparation for

upcoming missions; a mission previously executed by two full UH-60 companies.

Almost immediately after their arrival from Kuwait, the Pachyderms conducted numerous personnel moves, facilitating the redeployment of units from the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. And the always busy Delta Company Witchdoctors worked under the harsh desert conditions at the port in Kuwait to rebuild the aircraft, as well as in Iraq to keep them up and running.

All of these mission challenges were met while falling in on a position that was only meant for a unit half their size. As a transformed GSAB, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion has almost two times as many personnel and pieces of equipment as their OIF III counterparts. Yet despite these potential difficulties, the Soldiers of 6-101 AVN have adapted and continue to work tirelessly to support the mission. With the help of the Vandals of 1-150<sup>th</sup>, they are ready for the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division's next rendezvous with destiny.

# NEWS

## School Mission Continues as 101<sup>st</sup> Takes Over

Story and photos by 2LT Bridget Deuter  
*101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade*



### Making a difference

PFC Andrea Bills, 96<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, helped deliver school supplies as a humanitarian relief effort to local Iraqi schools on Oct. 5 near Tikrit, Iraq.

TIKRIT, IRAQ -- Soldiers of 96<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion (ASB), 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, teamed up with the 642<sup>nd</sup> Division Aviation Support Battalion (DASB), 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, New York National Guard, to conduct a humanitarian school mission Oct. 5. 96<sup>th</sup> ASB is relieving the 642<sup>nd</sup> DASB of their overall

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mission at Camp Speicher, Iraq. Part of the relief in place (RIP) is a humanitarian mission at two local Iraqi schools, Hemrin and Al Salam.

Both battalion commanders worked together to ensure the mission's continued success upon the redeployment of the 642<sup>nd</sup>. Lt. Col. Glenn Marchi, 642<sup>nd</sup> Division Aviation Support Battalion, 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division was an avid supporter of the mission during his tour in Iraq.

"These children are the future of Iraq. It is our hope by treating them with dignity and compassion we will impart a positive impression of America." stated Marchi.

The 642<sup>nd</sup> DASB conducted this mission several times during their stay in Iraq. The mission is solely supported through donations. Organizations and individuals from the United States mail school supplies, shoes, clothes, food, and toys to the Soldiers who support the mission. Soldiers divide up the supplies, load it onto trucks, and deliver it to the schools.

"It is about going out and sharing," commented Lt. Col. Joseph Jellison, 96<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade. "It's a gesture of good will toward the local populous to improve their impression of us not just as Soldiers, but as individuals."

At the schools, the supplies are off-loaded and given to the children. The children scramble to make sure they get some of the supplies and toys. The Soldiers make sure each child walks away with a handful of goods.

"Iraqi children are just like our kids back home," said Marchi. "They smile the same. They kick soccer balls the same. They even 'high-five' the same. They have the same needs, wants, and desires as kids back home."

The children were eager to see the convoy pull up to the schools. They knew why the trucks were coming.

"They were ecstatic," said Jellison. "As soon as the children saw the trucks, they immediately started to gather from miles around. It looked like kids converging on an Easter egg hunt."

While at the school, the Soldiers are allowed to dismount the vehicles and help distribute the supplies. It is a great opportunity for Soldiers to interact with the children.

"This really the only opportunity Soldiers have to meet and interact with Iraqi people," said Marchi. "This is their chance once every three months to get things they can't normally get. Seeing the joy in their faces is most gratifying."

The future of the mission is now in the hands of 96<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade. They will continue to make improvements and collect donations. The Soldiers benefit as much as the Iraqi children.

"Everybody that participated in this event came away with a good feeling about Iraqi citizens and their culture."



#### Gift from above

Chaplain (1<sup>st</sup> Lt.) Gary Malone, 642<sup>nd</sup> Division Aviation Support Battalion, 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, New York National Guard, gives a little girl a pair of shoes during a humanitarian relief school mission on Oct. 5 near Tikrit, Iraq.

# NEWS

## From Airborne to Air Assault

Story by LT Nicholas Anhut and SGT Ryan Matson photos by SGT Ryan Matson  
*101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade*

### Cav Kiowa

An OH 58D Kiowa helicopter lifts off at Camp McKenzie, Iraq. The 1-17 Cav is getting ready to return home and will eventually become part of the 159th Aviation Brigade at Fort Campbell, Ky. Meanwhile, the 2-17 Cav, from Fort Campbell, is taking their place in theatre.



CAMP MCKENZIE, IRAQ -- While one Cavalry Regiment is about to leave Iraq and eventually will be re-assigned to Fort Campbell, another Cavalry Regiment from Fort Campbell has arrived to replace them in Iraq.

It is the tale of two Cavs: the 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment out of Fort Bragg, N.C., and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment out of Fort Campbell, Ky. The 1-17 Cav has been deployed at Forward Operating Base (FOB) McKenzie, Iraq since January, 2005. They are currently being replaced by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, out of Fort Campbell, Ky. Shortly after the 1-17 Cav returns home, they will move to Fort Campbell, also, to become a part of the 159<sup>th</sup> Aviation Brigade there.

Both units are OH-58D Kiowa Warrior-equipped Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter Air Cavalry Squadrons, and each hails from well-known divisions in the Army. The 1-17 Cav is part of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division out of Fort Bragg, N.C., while their 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron counterparts are part of the 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell, Ky.

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“There’s not a whole lot of difference between us,” CW3 Lee S. Conley, Company D, 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, said.

“We have the same mission, the same aircraft, the same mentality, the same training. The biggest difference is 2-17 is proud to support the Army’s Air Assault Division, which has a long, proud heritage while the 1-17 Cav supports the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, which is an equally storied division. Everybody in 1-17 is proud to become a part of the 101<sup>st</sup>; it’s a good unit, it has a lot of history, a lot of tradition and we’re looking forward to becoming a part of it.”

Conley said the 2-17 can expect to use its Kiowa assets for reconnaissance and surveillance, security missions, convoy security and route clearance missions in support of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division until the rest of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) arrives. 2-17 will fulfill the role 1-17 plays in covering a sizable Area of Operations in support of the Iraqi Government and its full transformation of responsibility. Included in this responsibility are missions in support of Infantry areas such as Mosul, Balad and even Tikrit. 2-17 Soldiers can look forward to plenty of upcoming wartime experience in executing 24 hour operations over this wide area.

Although aerial operations are the basis for the squadron’s mission, a large number of 2-17 Troopers will be relied on to provide general support for the unit and FOB as well as ground operations and security. “While the pilots are in the air, the foot Soldiers in the Cav have been trained on, and can plan to be a part of convoy operations, force protection and Entry Control Point overwatch during their time in Iraq,” 2nd Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment Command Sergeant Major, CSM said.

Before 1-17 Cav could officially hand over the reins of responsibility, the two units had to complete a Relief-In-Place/Transfer of Authority where 2-17 shadows their 1-17 comrades in order to learn while on the job. During this period, the two units operate real-time missions while flying with mixed cockpits made up of one pilot from each squadron, referred to as left-seat, right-seat flying. At the same time, Cavalry ground support units will learn the ropes operating several forward armament and refueling points, maintenance operations and getting a first-hand look at operating out of Forward Operating Base McKenzie. This training culminated with the Uncasing of the Squadron Colors ceremony on October 10, 2005.

Conley said right now the 1-17 Cav anticipates joining the 159<sup>th</sup> Aviation Brigade between December 2005 and April 2006. He says that when this occurs, the unit will change its name and be redesignated the 7<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment as part of 159<sup>th</sup>. 1-17 Cav is moving due to a greater Army-wide transformation, which began with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division. When complete, both the 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade and 159<sup>th</sup> Aviation Brigade will mirror each other in structure within the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault). They will all contain Kiowa, Apache, Blackhawk and Chinook helicopters, and therefore be capable of accomplishing the full spectrum of Army aviation missions.

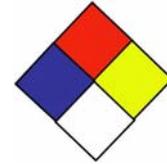
Though the 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment has had the distinction of being the lone cavalry regiment in the 101<sup>st</sup>, pilots and crewmembers from 2-17 Cav said they are looking forward to working with 1-17 Cav again in the future. CSM Ortiz said that 2-17 Cav has already benefited from the help of 1-17 Cav in Iraq.

“We really need to thank 1-17 Cav for the work they did here,” Ortiz said. “They set this place up pretty good, so we’re not starting from scratch like they did.”

One of the areas Ortiz said he was referring to was the recreation center the 1-17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment set up in an old hangar. It contains an open-air weight room and saloon in an old Wild West theme, containing an area for Soldiers to sit down to eat and relax, watch television, workout, use computers or phones, or play a game of cards. Ortiz said the area is rich with the Cavalry's flavor.

"They could have just added a building with some recreation items in it, but they added a saloon and a whole Wild West town," said Ortiz, who came to the 2-17 Cav just a couple months before the unit arrived in Iraq.

"For years, everybody in the Army hears about the Cavalry and their reputation for morale: wearing their Stetsons, working hard and playing hard. I enjoy being a part of them."



## History of the Diamond and 101st Combat Aviation Brigade

During World War II the Diamond was worn on the helmet by the 501st (PIR). In Vietnam 1969-1970, MG Zais, Commanding General, 101st Airborne Division, asked the 101st Aviation Commander, Col Ted Crozier if a group of Huey's flying by belonged to him. He replied, "Sir I don't know because there is no way to distinguish them from the ground." So after the conversation, Col Crozier set out to make it easier for ground forces identify aircraft in the 101st .

Shortly thereafter the 101st Aviation adopted the Diamond, the 158th the Circle and the 159th a Triangle. Red identified A Co., White B Co., Blue C Co., Yellow D Co. and Black HHC. The Diamond came and went several times over the next thirty years mainly in what is now 101st Aviation Regiment.

Since the Army regimentalized in 1987, the 101st Aviation Brigade was distinguished from other brigades within the division by the spade. In Sept 04, the Army undertook transformation and as part of transformation the 506<sup>th</sup> (PIR) was activated. During World War II the spade was worn by the 506th. The leadership of the 101st Aviation and the 506th Infantry realizing this, agreed to surrender the spade to take its rightful place with the 506th and requested to adopt the Diamond as our distinctive marking. Once again the Diamond is proudly displayed by the 101st Aviation as part of history and heritage.

# SPORTS

## 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade Soars to Victory in Halloween Basketball Tournament

Story and photos by SGT Ryan Matson  
*101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade PAO*

CAMP SPEICHER, IRAQ – They say it isn't over until it's over.

Well, that was certainly the case with this year's Halloween championship basketball tournament, held at the Main Gym on Camp Speicher, Iraq. The tournament started with 15 teams, but when all the dust cleared, the 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade came out on top, claiming the men's tournament title.

The championship game went into overtime – an old-fashioned “barnburner” with not more than three or four points separating either team throughout the course of the game.

Center/forward Master Sgt. Charles Leonard connected on a baseline jumper with less than a

second left in overtime to propel the 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company



### Two for the team

PFC Glenn Wendland, HHC 101<sup>st</sup> AVN BDE, drives to the hoop for a score during the Camp Speicher Halloween Basketball tournament. The HHC Hellcats beat out a field of 18 teams to take home the championship.



## Champs

The championship team, from left, front row: SFC Samuel Horton, 2LT James Acevedo, MSG Calvin Callicutt, CW1 Erica Knowles (coach), back row: SGT Richard Broadnax, MSG Charles Leonard, MSG Charles Leonard, PFC Glenn Wendland, PFC Michael Ramirez, SSG Orlando Gearing.

“Hellcats” to a 32-31 victory over the Company E, 5th Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment team. The shot bounced off the top of the rim, teasing the backboard before falling through the net to seal the victory.

“I wanted to take the shot, so it (the game’s outcome) would be on me,” Leonard said. “It felt good leaving my hand because I knew I had shot it softly enough to bounce around when it got to the rim. It was either going to bounce in or to the other side, but the Lord was with us that night and it went in. It could have gone either way, though; they were a very good team.”

Leonard, who hails from North Carolina, was one of many veteran players lining the Hellcat roster. At 42, he played against his favorite player, NBA legend Michael Jordan, when both were in high school.

“When I was younger and used to be able to jump a little higher, that’s who I styled my game after,” he said. “But now I don’t mind going out banging in the paint and getting some rebounds because I knew our guards would do something with it. We had some good guards on the team and they executed well.”

Besides Leonard, the team consisted of Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Samuel Horton and Master Sgt. Calvin Callicutt (guards), Staff Sgt. Orlando Gearing and Richard Broadnax (shooting guards), Master Sgt. Frank Lercher (center), Pfc. Glenn Wendland (forward/center), and Pfc. Michael Ramirez, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. James Acevedo and Staff Sgt. Kevin Fairley, utility players.

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All members of the Hellcat squad contributed to the team's victories, usually with Gearing leading the way in the scoring department. The 5-foot-11 shooting guard finished as the team's leading scorer, connecting on several clutch threes and driving in for numerous key lay-ups throughout the tournament.

"There were some good teams and they definitely challenged us," Leonard said. "But we knew if you do as coach Larry Brown says and just play the right way – play team basketball, we'd prevail. A lot of people try to play a one-on-one

type of game. We just stuck to the fundamentals and played team ball. Everybody did something."

Gearing said the championship game with Company E, 5th Battalion, was the most challenging team the Hellcats faced in the tournament, due to their height advantage.

"We matched up pretty well against most of the other teams," he said. "But those guys had the height."

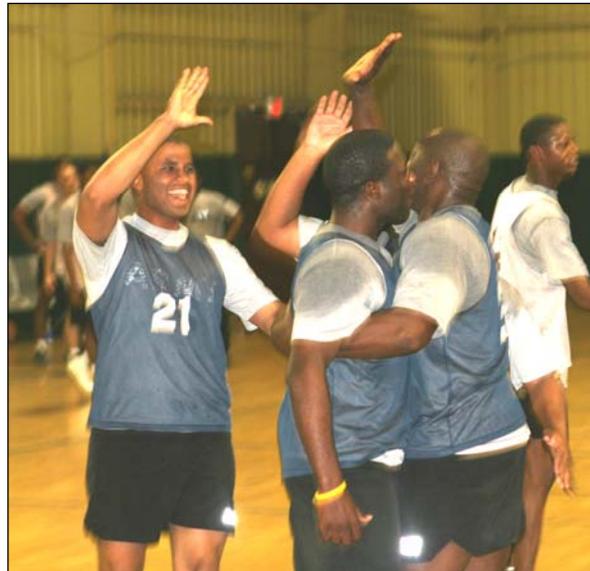
Still, even as the game teetered back and forth, Gearing said he never doubted his team would prevail.

"I knew we were going to win, just because of the way the game was going," he said.

They were getting frustrated, but we kept our composure. Once we started to get the momentum back, they kind of helped us out."

More than anything else, Gearing said the tournament provided some time for Soldiers on the Camp to enjoy themselves and momentarily take their mind off the long deployment ahead.

"It was a good tournament," he said. "It was something to get everybody out and see the type of talent we have on FOB Speicher. I really enjoyed playing in it."



# PARTING SHOTS

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## Big shot

COL Warren E. Phipps Jr, the commander of the 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, receives his flu shot in October.

## Beary scary

PFC Kayla Reynolds, HHC, 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, sports the bear costume she made out of poly pros for the HHC Halloween party at the company MWR Center, the Cat Cabana.

