

# Wings of Destiny

101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division

Volume 2 Issue 4 April 2008



*Task Force No Mercy:  
Ready for Action*

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### On the Cover :

An AH-64 Apache prepares to depart for a mission.

(Photo by Spc. George Welcome, TF Destiny PAO)



### From the editor's desk

Hello readers,

On your screen is the latest issue of Wings of Destiny magazine, the monthly news publication of the 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade. This month's featured unit is Task Force No Mercy, whose Soldiers work around the clock to conduct missions in support of Coalition forces in Salerno and anywhere else they are needed.

The Soldier profile section has expanded this month, and it is my hope to see it grow even more, so please keep sending in the Soldier "nominations" so the individuals who make this brigade great can continue to be recognized.

Last but not least, a story by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Anthony Nelson, tells how crew chiefs of Company C, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, worked diligently to replace engines and install modified exhaust systems in several AH-64s, in support of Task Force Eagle Assault.

Until Next Month,

Spc. George Welcome

101<sup>st</sup> CAB Public Affairs

**Got Stories or  
Photos you want  
to see  
published in  
Wings of Destiny?**

Send them  
to [WODeditor@hotmail.com](mailto:WODeditor@hotmail.com)

## Wings of Destiny

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# COMMANDER'S COMMENTS



Greetings to the Soldiers and families of Task Force Destiny. Spring is here, and the changes are noticeable all around us. First, we've experienced a pronounced increase in operational tempo with the improved weather. We expect this to continue on into the summer months. Second, the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) now has the controls, after assuming authority during an outdoor ceremony on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April. While we most certainly enjoyed the professionalism and camaraderie of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, it is good to welcome the familiar faces from Fort Campbell.

In May the Brigade will host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual GWOT TROT...a 10K road

race run concurrently at four FOBs in Afghanistan; Bagram, Jalalabad, Salerno, and Kandahar. Each aviation task force has been actively involved in the preparation for this event...t-shirt design, prize procurement, support planning, and marketing to name a few. Ultimately, we anticipate over 1000 participants throughout the country, and we'll most certainly provide coverage of this event in next month's newsletter.

Recently, CSM Herndon had the honor of introducing a very special guest to the Bagram community—country entertainer Toby Keith. After receiving a hearty "Screaming Eagle" welcome, Toby entertained the troops with an hour concert, providing a well deserved "break" from the daily routine. Not only did he perform, but he spent significant time talking to the troops and posing for a multitude of pictures. During his stay in Afghani-

stan, Toby will get around to several more of the FOBs to visit Destiny Soldiers before proceeding to Iraq. We are extremely thankful for many of the celebrities and entertainers who take time out of their schedule to give back to the troops...it is truly appreciated!

Many of our Soldiers are beginning to go on R&R leave, and I know you are enjoying a much deserved reunion with your loved ones. Have fun, make the most of your time together, and please be safe! To all the rear-attachment leaders, FRG team members and families...thank you for your continued support. We could not accomplish our mission in Afghanistan without your efforts back on the home front. God Bless you, our wonderful Soldiers, this Brigade, and our nation.

**Wings of Destiny... Air Assault!**

**Col. James Richardson**

# A MESSAGE FROM CSM HERNDON



Hello to all the families at Fort Campbell. Spring is upon us here in Afghanistan. The hotter temperatures and rain are an everyday thing. We have been in charge of the area of operations for 100 plus days now in support of OEF IX and the entire Afghanistan Army Aviation assets. We are very close to steady state, but I will tell you we continue to remain on our toes to ensure we do the two things we are charged to do, accomplish every mission and bring everyone home safe and sound.

I would like to send an early thank you and congratulations to the brigade volunteers who will be recognized in the next few weeks for their support of the Soldiers, and family members of the Wings of Destiny brigade. These volunteers support all of you on a daily basis and their work normally goes unnoticed. Thank you all for what you do everyday.

Earlier this month Col. Lewis, Command Sgt. Maj. Chandler and the staff of 159<sup>th</sup> Aviation Brigade arrived to Afghanistan to conduct their Pre-Deployment Site Survey. As you all know, the 159<sup>th</sup> is slated to replace us at the end of this rotation. They had a chance to integrate with the Destiny brigade, and visit each of the areas our Task Forces operate in. It was a great experience for both brigades.

As I type this we are also transitioning the brigade. There are many company level changes of command in the new few months. There are many ways to look at these changes of command. From my standpoint, they ensure the brigade is postured for future operations and we are also developing more professional and well rounded officers for the future of our Army, which includes the future of the brigade. My congratulations to the new and incoming company commanders and my thanks to all the commanders who are relinquishing command. Your Soldiers benefited from your professionalism as did the entire brigade.

To all the families out there, I want to thank you for all you do for your Soldier each and every day. Without you, we could not do our jobs. You can be proud of your Soldiers. They are professionals in every sense of the word.

Before I close, I would like to say a Happy Mothers day to all the mothers out there. You are the ones who raise the sons, daughters, mothers and fathers that make our brigade, Army and our country what it is today. The children you have at home are a tribute to you and the care you provide them everyday is amazing. From me to you, HAPPY MOTHERS DAY !

Soldiers and Families, until next month, I wish all of you the best.

**Wings of Destiny,**

**Air Assault !**

**CSM Mark F. Herndon**

# Task Force No Mercy:

## Ready for Action

Story/Photos by Sgt. George Wilcox  
77 Destiny P-40



personnel and aircraft recovery throughout the battle space.”

Task Force No Mercy has 24 helicopters which support Soldiers in forty outlying FOBs and outlying patrol bases across the Currahee Area of Operations.

“All of these areas have Soldiers who need to be supported, and that takes a lot of flying,” said Scott. “This battle space is vast, and rotary wing operations make these missions happen.”

A recent example of their support of coalition forces was the participation in Operation Valos II, a combined effort with Special Forces Soldiers, the Afghan National Army and Police. The operation was designed to capture suspected insurgents who were causing disruption in the area.

“Our most significant effect on the battlefield has been through the execution of these targeted raids, where we nab and pull off the battlefield targets who are directly associated with direct fire or IED cells,” Scott said.

In order for the mission to be safe and successful, the task force had to create a working operations plan in accordance with the ‘Gold Book’, which provides the guide lines for all 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division aviation operations.

“There were a lot of moving parts in Operation Valos, but it was a bit simpler to plan because it was only a two lift mission,” said Capt. Anthony Marston, liaison officer for Task Force No Mercy. “The more notification we get for a mission, the better we can prepare and allocate assets. We

### FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO,

**Afghanistan**— The word flexibility is defined as a ready capability to adapt to new, different, or changing requirements. This word rightly describes Task Force No Mercy, a multi-functional task force which assumed control of aviation operations at Salerno in January.

In the months since, the task force has been busy conducting numerous attack, transport and re-supply missions in support of coalition forces in their area of operations.

“The mission for Task force No Mercy is to support the ground troops, day in and day out,” said Lt. Col. John M. Scott, Task Force No Mercy commander. “We provide command and control and continuous support operations. The task force is made up with a large support structure. We run three FARP’s (Forward Arming and Refueling Points) 24/7 one here, one in Ghazni and one at Orgun-E, we provide continuous medevac operations as well. We also conduct on order,



Story continued on Page 5

can usually plan missions well within a week, and that is more than enough time for a mission like this.”



Task Force No Mercy dedicated five aircraft for the mission; two AH-64s (Apaches) which would provide security for the other aircraft and the ground forces once the objective had been reached, two CH-47s (Chinooks) provided transport for the Afghan and Special Forces troops. The UH-60 (Black Hawk) served as the command and control center for the air mission commander.

The mission would begin with the usual pre-flight inspections of each of the aircraft. The airlift from Salerno started in phases, first with the two Chinooks departing to the rendezvous point at Forward Operating Base Shank. Several minutes later, the two Apaches and Black Hawk followed.

Once all the involved personnel were rallied at Shank, they

conducted another mission brief just to cover once more what would happen during the event and what to do in the case of enemy contact. After the briefing was completed, the ground element conducted several iterations of cold load training, entering and exiting the two CH-47s as quickly and safely as possible.

During the wait for the sun to go down and the mission to start, one Special Forces Soldier jokingly said, “I’m surprised we got this much helicopter support. Usually we would only get a couple of bi-planes for these missions.”

Nearly an hour later, the rotors on the helicopters began to spin, unofficially signaling the start of the mission. The ground commander gave word for the troops to load up. The ANA, ANP and Special Forces broke down into two chinks and loaded their respective helicopters. Within a few short minutes, the Chinooks were loaded and departed FOB Shank for their objective in the Kerwar district. The Apaches took off shortly after to provide armed escort. The Black Hawk followed, keeping track of the mission from the air.

“The mission was a success,” said Scott. “The ground guys



**ANA, ANP and Special Forces troops practice loading a CH-47 in preparation for the mission.**

were able to detain three suspects.”

After being heavily involved in the planning of the mission and actually flying in one of the AH-64s, Marston said he was really pleased with the outcome of the mission.

“It’s awesome. It’s a great feeling,” said Marston after the success of the mission. “As a staff guy you don’t get to fly as much. But when you sit here and spend so much time and effort coordinating with the ground commander and the different flight companies, it’s really great to see the plan executed.”



# Fuelers Power No Mercy Aviation Operations



Story and Photos by Spc. George Welcome



Fuel trucks are lined up near the FARP at Salerno.

## FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO,

**Afghanistan**— Just as water is the liquid necessary for the proper functioning and survival of the human body, JP8 (Jet Propulsion Grade 8) is the precious liquid necessary for the proper functioning of helicopters.

The Soldiers of the Company E, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade are single handedly responsible for maintaining and operating the Forward Arming and Refueling Points at Salerno, Ghazni and Orgun-E.

"On an average day we pump about 10 to 15 thousand gallons of fuel here at Salerno," said Sgt. Justin Cott, dayshift FARP non-commissioned officer. "We have six 50 thousand gallon bags giving us a 300,000 gallon maximum fuel holding capacity."

With all the missions Task Force No Mercy conducts, it is critical that aircraft are able to be supplied with a steady, available source of fuel. The FARP at Salerno is set up with efficiency in mind.

"We have four landing pads here," stated Cott. "The front two are for the Apaches and the back ones for the Chinooks and Black Hawks. We pretty much know the schedules for when to expect the helicopters. The Chinooks go out really early in the morning. The Apaches are more hit or miss."

There are other tasks the Soldiers perform to make sure the FARP is running as safely and efficiently as possible.

"We always make sure that the proper fuel bags are open when fueling the helicopters," said Spc. Tim Mann, a fuel specialist in Co. E. "We also make sure that trash or debris that could damage the bags or helicopters is removed from the area. We also place lights on the pads at night so the helicopters know where to land, and

can tell where personnel are."

The fuel used at the FARP is trucked to Salerno from Bagram several times a week. The Soldiers then escort the fuel trucks from the front gate of the base to the fueling point. Then, they check to ensure that the proper amount of fuel has been transferred once the downloading is complete.

"The trucks they bring the fuel in are pretty old, so minor leakage can occur from Bagram to here. "Getting proper accountability for the fuel is definitely one of the most challenging aspects of this job," Mann added.

The aircrews of Task Force No Mercy know that wherever the Soldiers of Co. E are manning FARPs, they have a reliable place to land and receive fuel. ♦



A Soldier from Co. E operates a fuel pump during a re-fueling mission.



**SUBJECT: Spc. Larry West**

**COMPANY: A Co. 96th ASB**

**MOS: 92 F (Petroleum Supply Specialist)**



Doing more than what is expected is par for the course in the life of a Soldier. Sometimes the mission requires you to perform one more check, to work an additional hour or to perform an extra task.

Destiny Soldiers do this often, which allows the brigade to perform so effectively. One Soldier who makes the extra effort is Spc. Larry West, of Company A, 96<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion. A petroleum supply specialist by trade, West, a native of Belton, Texas is serving as the company communications non-commissioned officer.

A Soldier of five years, West has been stationed in Korea and Fort Campbell. He is now serving in his second deployment with 96<sup>th</sup> ASB, a unit he says has a family-like atmosphere.

"Some of the best parts of my time in the Army have involved serving and bonding with old fueling buddies and making new friends," he said. "Being here at 96<sup>th</sup> is like being with family, like a home."

While his primary job is as a fueler, Price's aptitude with communications allowed him to be slotted as the company's commo NCO.

"I pretty much got moved into the commo job once we (96<sup>th</sup> ASB) got back from Iraq," West said. "It was a pretty easy adjustment for me because I was able to adapt quickly."

In addition to his abilities as a fueler and communications specialist, West's skills as a builder are often made use of by his company.

"I was a carpenter for ten years before I joined the military. I have built several offices down at the company, put in ceilings and laid floors," said West. "It's funny, I got out of construction because I was tired of it at the time and now I'm in the Army and I find myself building all the time in order to make life a little bit better down there."

"When I don't have much going on in my job, I usually try to help out, whether it's with building, or helping the supply people or the armorer. I have to be doing something because I can't sit still all the time." ♦



**SUBJECT: 1st Lt. James Hickey**  
**COMPANY: B Co. 5-101 Avn. Regt.**  
**MOS: 15 A (Aviation Officer)**



The Destiny Brigade is full of Soldiers who are living their dreams everyday while in the service of our great nation. Some have dreamed of becoming service members since childhood, while others became inspired later on in their lives. No matter their job, each one plays a role in preserving freedom for the present and future generations of Americans.

1LT. James Hickey is a young American who was inspired to joined the Army and serve his nation during a time of conflict. As a Black Hawk pilot in Company B, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, he gets a chance to serve and fulfill a lifelong dream of flying an aircraft.

"I honestly just wanted to challenge myself and be a part of an all volunteer organization that prides itself on defending the American way of life," said Hickey, a native of Cocoa, Florida, of joining the Army. "There is a military background present in my family, so they are very supportive of me being in the Army and what we are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Having a lifelong curiosity with flying is what lead Hickey to pursue a career in aviation during his final year at Marshall University.

"I experienced my first airplane ride when I was five, and ever since then I've been curious about flying. However, it wasn't until my final semester of obtaining my degree that I decided to pursue the dream."

Flying in Afghanistan has been a new experience for Hickey and many of the other pilots of Task Force Eagle Assault. The senior aviators work hard to make sure that newer pilots are constantly building their readiness level to assume greater flying responsibilities

while in combat.

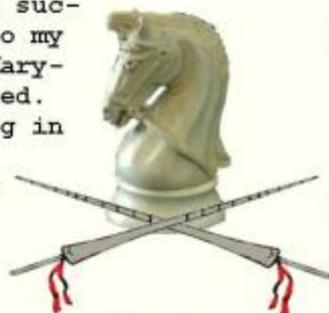
"Flying in theater has been very exciting," he said. "There's no way of predicting what type of day you will have in a combat environment, versus flying around in the states. The senior aviators in the battalion all take great pride in mentoring junior aviators to enable us to become skilled pilots first before taking on the responsibilities of being a pilot in command."

When not flying across the battle space, Hickey enjoys playing pool at the MWR and listening to people sing on Karaoke nights. Along with flying, he has other daily responsibilities he has to tend to.

"On a regular day, I attend maintenance meetings, exercise in the gym, check new FRAGOs (fragmented orders) to ensure that the company meets its various deadlines and simply help out with anything that needs to be done in the company. The thing that I like most about my job is that it's more fulfilling than just getting a paycheck. The hardest thing is that as soon as I learn and understand my duty position, it's time to move on, leaving behind a great group of individuals."

In addition to being a talented young officer, he sets a positive example to his four younger brothers, whose ages range from 10 to 22. He was also recently married to his beautiful wife Chante.

"I owe all the success I have had to my mother, Rosetta Maryland," he explained. "I plan on staying in the Army as long as it's something that I continue to enjoy." ♦



# Your Health

## Myths and Facts about Heat Illness



By Capt. Jeremy S. Helphenstine  
TF Troubleshooter Flight Surgeon

**I**t's finally Spring time here in Afghanistan. We've gotten through the blustery winter days in the mountains and are moving on to the very welcome warmth of the upcoming months. At last, instead of wearing eighteen layers of clothing to the bathroom at night, we can go outside and enjoy the smell of flowers (or MoGas), the sounds of the birds (live or mechanical), and outdoor activities. However, along with the great things about spring, we must stay aware of the very real dangers that it presents. Not only are there the hazards of the local area – malaria, snakes, scorpions, and the occasional mine – there is a very real danger from something that is everywhere – the sun. While the heat is definitely a good thing, it can have devastating effects if not properly prepared for. Heat illnesses alone are responsible for more deaths than any other environmental hazard annually. Here, we'll take a look at some of the myths and facts that surround heat illnesses and then look at what we can do to prevent and treat them.

**MYTH #1:** The thermostat says it's only 76°, so we shouldn't have any problems.

**FACT:** The actual temperature that your body experiences may be vastly different than what is recorded on a thermostat. It is reliant on a variety of different things – for instance, I will be much hotter in body armor on patrol on a humid, day with no winds than if I'm on a beach in shorts on a windy day. Firstly, direct sunlight on your body raises the actual temperature. If the air is humid, this will interfere with your body's ability to lose heat through evaporation – you'll still sweat, but it won't have any place to go. The wind also plays a role – the air currents moving around you remove the small insulating layers that hold heat – which is how a fan makes you cooler. Your clothing will also play a role. Modern uniforms are designed to wick away moisture and are "breathable" (allowing those insulating layers to be moved and circulated for cooler air). This can be impaired with the addition of gear and armor over the uniform.

**MYTH #2:** I know I'm well hydrated because my urine isn't yellow.

**FACT:** While it is true that your urine will become more concentrated when you get dehydrated, you may be well behind the power curve before this happens. In fact, as little as 1% dehydration can impair your body's ability to lose heat. Each 1% loss of body weight from dehydration can cause your temperature to rise up to 0.5°F. While there is no hard and fast rule for hydration, you should stay hydrated and increase intake to match what your activity level is.

**MYTH #3:** I can get everything I need from this wonderful, icy cold bottle of water.

**FACT:** Water is great – there's no doubt about it. However, when you sweat, you're not just losing water. If you think about it – it only makes sense – evaporated water usually doesn't smell like B.O. Sweat is actually a mixture of various items – water, electrolytes, urea, and others. The point here is that you have to replace the electrolytes with the water. You can do this with drink mixes or simply by eating salty foods when you are sweating a lot.

**MYTH #4:** You can't get heat stroke when you're sweating.

**FACT:** Heat stroke can be very devastating – leading to death or severe disability. It can also sneak up on you – unlike a machine, we have no warning lights to tell us that something is wrong. However, there are signs to look for. Ideally, you want to notice changes as soon as possible and start treating early (see below). One sign that seemingly everyone has learned is that you have to stop sweating to get heat stroke. While this may be present as the body's heat regulation systems fail, you can most definitely suffer from heat stroke and still sweat – especially with exertional heat stroke. Therefore, if your buddy develops signs of heat illness, treat them before the sweating stops.

**MYTH #5:** I'm in shape, I don't need to acclimatize.

**FACT:** Acclimatization takes time, and without it you or your soldiers could be hurt. It usually takes 7-10 days of moderate activity in a hot, dry environment for 60-100min/day. Simple exposure to a hot environment for 1-4 hours a day may also help achieve acclimatization within 2 weeks. There are a number of changes that take place with acclimatization to help your body lose heat more effectively. Acclimatization does not mean going out for 5 minutes and then into the A/C for the next few hours. Also, just because you've acclimatized to one area – i.e. BAF – doesn't mean you're good to go in a hotter environment.

**MYTH #6:** If I start to feel bad, I'll just go rest.

**FACT:** Many individuals that suffer from heat illnesses may not recognize the symptoms, or may contribute them to something else. For instance, someone suffering from heat exhaustion may feel that it's due to lack of sleep the night before. Another danger is trying to "tough it out" – as many people feel they can beat the symptoms. This often leads to continued work with continued heat production. Therefore, it is important for soldiers and leaders to recognize changes in individuals and treat them for the possibility of heat illnesses.

All of this information is great, but you have to know about heat illnesses and treatment to actually do something about it, right. So, here goes.

**Heat cramps** are one of the mildest forms of heat illness. It is believed that these occur due to alterations in the body's electrolytes from sweating and other losses. The result is a painful tightening of the muscles, usually the calves. These are treated with fluids and salt intake/electrolyte solutions. While most cases are mild, heat cramps can become severe and require intravenous therapy. **Heat exhaustion** is characterized by weakness, lightheadedness, fatigue, headaches, and muscle pain. This may be seen with or come just before **heat syncope**, which is loss of consciousness due to the heat. A common misconception in this stage of heat illness is that the individual is "just tired" or is "lazy" – which can be very dangerous as these stages usually precede the onset of heat stroke. Treatment of these conditions consists of moving to a cool, shaded area, loosening any tight clothing. Individuals should be given fluids and electrolyte replacement. Lukewarm water and fanning may be used on patients to increase evaporative heat loss. Cold water should be avoided because it can cause blood vessels in the skin to contract and hold heat in the body's core.

**Heat stroke** is a true, life-threatening emergency. Heat stroke is defined as an elevated body temperature [typically >40°C (104°F)] with altered mentation of any kind (agitation, confusion, seizure, hallucinations). The definition of altered mental status that defines heat stroke can become confusing, therefore anyone with possible heat illness and altered mental status should be assumed to have possible heat stroke. These individuals require rapid and active cooling. The same steps as those listed for heat exhaustion should be taken, as well as ice packs placed in the armpits, the groin, and around the neck, as well as intravenous fluid rehydration. Again, ice water/cold water should not be placed on the skin in other areas. The goal is to lower the temperature to below 40°C. Care must be taken not to cause shivering – which produces heat – or to cause hypothermia. These individuals will require immediate evacuation and inpatient hospital care.

### \*\*Special note: Heat and Kidney Problems –

A quick mention should be made of the possibility of kidney disorders as the temperature rises. While things like heat stroke can damage the kidneys – you can develop other issues without having to get a heat illness. The first of these is kidney stones. Our kidneys filter all of our blood and remove waste products. In order for the waste products to remain dissolved in the urine, there must be enough fluid. Therefore, even mild dehydration, can increase your risk of developing a kidney stone.

Secondly, many of you will be using some of your time to work on your physical fitness. Along with this, many people will use supplements. Caution must be used as many of these increase the risk of heat illness themselves, but here we must mention protein supplementation. Without enough water, that extra protein can plug up the intricate plumbing of the kidneys. This can lead to serious damage to the kidney function. Therefore, anyone utilizing protein supplements must read the instructions carefully and ensure that they are taking in enough fluids to allow the kidneys to process the excess. ♦

# Chaplain's Corner

## Passover 2008: Religious Support of our Aviation Soldiers



Maj. Donald Kammer  
TF Destiny Chaplain

U.S. Military personnel have a long history of receiving religious care from America's ministers in times of war.

Such religious events in war are common and reflect our nation's greatness. Providing or performing religious support for Soldiers is the center of gravity of chaplain care.



On April 19th Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Mark Weiner, a Jewish Rabbi and federal prison Chaplain from Chicago, led Jewish Soldiers and authorized civilians on Bagram in Pass-over celebrations.



The worship experience and dynamic religious training of Chaplain Weiner kept the attention of all who attended.



Some of the participants flew in from FOBs around the country in order to enjoy this special opportunity of worship with the Rabbi. TF Destiny helicopters transported many of them.



Chaplain (Lt. Col) Weiner serving Matzah and sacramental wine to a Jewish Soldier.

# Legal Advice: Int'l Adoption

Sgt. Steven Sams, TF Destiny Legal



International adoptions involve much paperwork. Most military families adopt overseas during a tour and bring the new addition to the family home when they PCS back to the states. There are several things to consider with an overseas adoption: how to get started, qualifications, documents, steps you go through, fees, military programs and benefits, and tax exemptions. This information should help for anyone considering an international

adoption overseas.

In getting started you have to consider the country of origin, age, and sex of the child you are considering adopting. After deciding this information you have to choose how you wish to adopt. There are two ways, a do-it-yourself adoption where you complete each step by yourself or an agency adoption. Agencies help coordinate each step of the processes and walk you through the necessary paperwork. For people who chose to do the process you have to find the individual qualifications depending on the country you chose, the specific forms, and go through each step of the process on your own. Agencies are a considerable asset in my opinion as you have someone who is trained and has the specific knowledge of international adoptions. It is recommended that you research before deciding which agency to go with and you should choose an agency that deals with the specific country you choose to adopt from as they will be knowledgeable with the paperwork, process, and requirements. A list of attorneys abroad can be found at the following website: [http://travel.state.gov/law/info/judicial/judicial\\_2519.html](http://travel.state.gov/law/info/judicial/judicial_2519.html), and a list of international adoption agencies: <http://directory.adoption.com/services/International.html>.

Qualifications vary per country and are found by researching the countries at <http://international.adoption.com/foreign/trends-in-international-adoption-2003.html> and [http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/country/country\\_369.html](http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/country/country_369.html). This will tell you whether that specific country will allow a couple or a single person to adopt. Some countries have strict qualifications as to the age of a person, how long that couple has been married, or they may require the adoptive parents to spend time in the country before they can adopt. If you find you don't meet or are unwilling to accept a country's qualifications then you must strive to meet them or choose a different country.

[Adoption.com](http://adoption.com), free forms for international adoption, has forms and information from the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Service (USCIS) and the Internal Revenue Service. This website has a brief synopsis of several forms and the process required in the adoption;

<http://international.adoption.com/foreign/free-forms-for-international-adoption.html>

There are two types of immigrant visa categories for international adoption, they are IR-3 and IR-4. The differences between the two is the IR-3 does not require re-adoption while the IR-4 is used when the foreign adoption does not meet Federal U.S. requirements for the severing of the biological parents ties and ensures the adoptive parents and child have the same rights, responsibilities and privileges. The adoption must be completed in the United States with this type of visa. <http://international.adoption.com/foreign/all-about-visas.html> contains an overview and more specific visa information.

There are multiple fees involved with adoption such as travel, agency, medical, dossier, government, home study, and adoption program fees. These fees change per country and agency and can range from \$7,500 to \$30,000 and seem

to be an average of \$14,000. Different agencies cover different fee portions of the process and should be researched when choosing an agency.

The adoption tax credit is also very useful in dealing with adoption expenses, but you must keep in mind many things while using this credit. First, credit for an international adoption can only be applied for after the adoption is finalized. Second, the total amount of credit is \$10,960 per child, not per year, and stay the same regardless of the time it takes to process the adoption. I would recommend researching this particular tax credit before beginning your adoption process to learn how it applies to you and how to get the most benefits. You must keep firm track of all expenses and should work with a professional who understands the process. Further information on the tax credit and the forms can be found at <http://tax-credit.adoption.com/>.

The military allows for a child placed with the potential military parents to receive medical care even before the adoption is finalized by applying to the Secretary of the Army for the child to be a "Secretary Designee".

Military parents under the military's Program for Persons with Disabilities, who have adopted disabled or special needs children are eligible to receive up to \$1,000 a month and enrollment within the Exceptional Family Member Program, ensuring that the special needs of the child will be met at each duty station.

The military allows service members up to 21 days of leave in conjunction with regular leave to be used during the adoption. Commanders are encouraged to approve this leave once a child is placed in the home of the service member to allow for a period of bonding or adjustment and for arrangements of child care to be established. Those service members eligible for the reimbursement of adoption expenses qualify for this leave. If two service members adopt a child in a qualifying adoption then only one is allowed the special leave.

The Department of Defense has created an adoption Reimbursement Program which states that an active duty member may be reimbursed for expenses in the adoption of a child under 18 for up to \$2,000 per child to a maximum of \$5,000 per calendar year on any one service member. Only one service member in a dual military family can receive this reimbursement for the adoption of the same child and still may not claim more than the maximum amount of \$5,000 per calendar year. This reimbursement is payable only after the adoption is final. All requests must be submitted within one year after finalization of the adoption on Department of Defense form 2675. A copy of the DD form 2675 can be found at [www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd2675.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd2675.pdf).

Even deployments or assignments may be deferred for single or one service member of a dual military couple for four months on duty away from the home station directly following the placement of a child in the home of the service members as part of the formal adoption process.

Now that you have more information on international adoptions take your time and research everything before making a decision. The Federal government and the Army will help you through this process with the different programs and incentives created to make the adoption process easier on military families. Also, <http://www.adoption.com> has an abundant amount of information on international adoptions and should be one of your first stops when looking for more information. ♦

# *Paladin Crew Chiefs Shine in Kandahar*

*Story and Photos by 1st Lt. Anthony Nelson*



It is always exciting to see a flight of helicopters leaving Kandahar Airfield for a mission. While pilots are the ones who fly away and execute the mission, behind the scenes there are many hard working maintenance personnel sweating and turning wrenches 24 hours a day.

For the past three months, the Company C, Paladin crew chiefs, along with the Company D, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion crew chiefs have worked tirelessly for Task Force Eagle Assault in Regional Command-South, maintaining mission capable Apaches with limited resources.

One recent task with impressive results has been the repairs of engine exhaust modification systems on three of four aircraft, and replacing both engines on two aircraft, all within 72 hours.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brian Charles, a maintenance test pilot with Company C, commended their performance.

"We had some major exhaust repairs to do on our Apaches," said Charles. "Our maintenance team stepped up to the plate and did what they're best at—

fixing aircraft."

Spc. Edwin Moreno, a crew chief who was on the wrench turning end of the work, said, "It was a very tedious and time consuming job, but everybody did their part to meet the commander's suspense."

The Paladin maintenance team is lead by platoon sergeants; Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Sterling Hilmo, Staff Sgt. Luis Bultron, and Staff Sgt. Jared Morris. Together, with their experience, these three non-commissioned officers have kept the Paladin's focus on the mission and will continue to tackle any maintenance tasks that arise. ♦



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# Visions of Destiny



Maj. Mark Morgan and Pfc. James Donaldson shake hands after Donaldson's re-enlistment ceremony at Bagram Airfield.



Lt. Col. Thomas Stauss presents Australian Army Maj. Jason Duggan with a combat patch during a ceremony at Kandahar Airfield.



Capt. Michael Duschle works on main gear while standing on a CH-47.



Soldiers of Company B, 20th ASB handle an engine of a Chinook in order to make repairs.



A pilot from TF Out Front checks a rotor before going on a mission in Jalalabad.



CW4 Juhai Nibudan administers the oath of enlistment to Pfc. Tanaj'a Mares during a re-enlistment ceremony on the flight line.