

Wings of Destiny

101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division
Volume 2, Issue 9 September 2008



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An AH-64 Apache sits in Parking at the East ramp on Bagram Airfield. The helicopter is an asset of Co. G, a scout and attack company comprised of Apaches and OH-58D Kiowa Warriors.

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

Send them to WODeditor@hotmail.com

Wings of Destiny

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Commander
Command Sgt. Maj.
Public Affairs Officer
Public Affairs Specialist

Col. James Richardson
Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Herndon
Sgt. 1st Class Antony Joseph
Spc. George Welcome

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS



Soldiers and Families of the Destiny Brigade,

Another month has passed, and the Soldiers of Destiny Brigade continue to provide the best aviation support possible for the Soldiers on the ground. September has been a month of change for the brigade, as we said goodbye to the Task Force Shadow commander, LTC Tim Healy, and welcomed LTC Brad Ninness to the team. Tim provided outstanding leadership to his Task Force, continuously rising to meet the daily challenges of combat. We wish him and his family God Speed! Brad is no stranger to Afghanistan, and we welcome his energy and experience to the Destiny family.

The temperatures around the country are starting to cool, and we are seeing less of the 100 degree days we had grown accustomed to. A month from now, snow will cover the mountaintops, and we will be breaking out the cold weather gear.

We've had some very high profile visits to our area of operations this month, including the Secretary of Defense, the CENTCOM Commander, the Army G3, and the Army G8 to name a few. Once again, the Soldiers of the brigade were commended for their professionalism and dedication to the mission.

I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of CW4 Michael Slobodnik. I know that moving forward in the wake of his loss will be difficult, but it is what we must do as Soldiers. What better way to pay tribute to his memory than to show our enemies that though they

may seek to do us harm, they will never break our resolve in accomplishing our nation's mission here.

To the Soldiers, I ask each of you to stay positive, focus on the work that remains to be done, and take care of each other. To the families, I'd like to thank you for your outstanding support during the course of this deployment. Extended separations are never easy, but you continue to rise to the challenge and provide unwavering support to the entire Destiny team.

Wings of Destiny, Air Assault!!

Col. James Richardson

A MESSAGE FROM CSM HERNDON



Hello Wings of Destiny Brigade.

Another month has passed. It has started to turn chilly throughout the country especially in the

higher elevations. The day time temperatures still remain warm but at night and at the higher elevations, a coat or jacket is required, and the heaters are starting to be turned on as well. As most of you know F Co., 6-101st finalized their deployment home from Iraq in the middle of August. As I write this, the rest of the brigade is passing under 90 days before various units within the brigade will begin redeploying on the proposed time line.

159th Aviation Brigade just completed their last Pre Deployment site survey. I know most of you have seen them loading their equipment at Ft. Campbell, this and our proposed time

line is very good news. It means if all goes as planned soon we will be heading home to Ft Campbell. Once we return the Brigade leadership will need the help of all the family members to ensure our Soldiers remain safe and focused. As all of you know the last 90 days deployed and the first 90 days back home are the most critical. Leader and family involvement is the key to success.

Over the last month or so we have had many visitors to the Wings of Destiny Brigade. Some of the visitors were the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Army and many General officers from the Pentagon and Washington, D.C. The professionalism and outstanding performance by the brigade's Soldiers was noted and commented on many times.

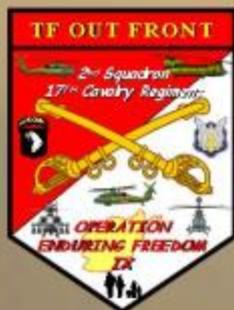
The longer the deployment goes, the more impressed I am with our Soldiers. Their professionalism and dedication is visible every day. The Soldiers of this brigade continue to be the most professional Soldiers in our Army. They are making history every day.

I would like to thank all of you for the continued support that you provide each and every day. Without you we would not be able to accomplish our mission. You are the reason we are successful.

Wings of Destiny, Air Assault!

CSM Mark Herndon

In Memory of CW4 Michael Slebodnik



On September 15, Soldiers of Task Force Out Front gathered at Jalalabad Airfield to pay tribute to the life and service of Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Slebodnik, who died in combat on September 11, 2008.

"Lucky Strike"

Flies Diverse Missions
to Support Troops



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— When Company G of 6th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment was officially activated on June 27, it became a valuable asset in the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade's diverse mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. With its mix of attack and reconnaissance aircraft, the company can perform a wide array of missions.

"The main mission for the Golf company is performing BAF (Bagram Airfield) secret security," said Capt. Matthew Wolfe, Co. G commander. "Basically, we'll fly around the BAF Bowl (The ring of mountains that surround Bagram Airfield) looking for anyone who might be trying to perform small arms attacks against aircraft."

Being a main air traffic hub for all of Afghanistan, protecting the air field is an important mission. In addition to area security, the "Lucky Strike" company performs medevac chase missions and V.I.P escort missions. Its mainstay however, is troop support missions.

"Our other major mission is as a quick reaction force to troops in contact," Wolfe said. "We mostly provide support to the French troops out in Tagaf Valley (Task Force Chimera). That involves a lot of route reconnaissance, area reconnaissance and convoy security."

The idea of forming a scout and attack helicopter company is relatively new, and Co. G is the first to get the concept off the ground.

"The guys who were here before us (Co. A, 1-101st Avn. Regt.) came up with the "Lucky Strike" concept," Wolfe explained. "It was about more than just being an Apache pilot or Kiowa pilot, but working together and building an effective team."

The company was comprised from Soldiers in various units from across the brigade. Normally, units don't form and begin operations during a deployment-in-progress, but Co. G has been

performing excellently, which Wolfe attributes to, "exceptional aviators, maintainers and crew chiefs."

The mechanics and crew chiefs' play is vital in keeping the aircraft ready for flight whenever they may be called; that readiness can make all the difference to the Soldier on the ground.

"When it comes to maintaining oil levels, fuel, weapons and the mechanical systems, we have to do our own pre-flights and post flights just like the pilots," said Spc. Jamie Wilson, an AH-64 crew chief. "If an aircraft that has been on a mission for several hours comes back here and gets called back out, we usually can have it prepped and ready to go back out within 30 minutes."

"These guys work super hard to keep these helicopters up," explained Wolfe. "They understand that their mission is more important than just keeping the aircraft together, but maintaining an aircraft that goes out and supports the guy on the ground and brings him home at night." ◆





★ ★ ★

Captain Re-enlists Brother, Airmen During Ceremony

Every day, service members across Afghanistan and other locations are making the decision to continue serving in the Armed Forces. While most re-enlistment ceremonies are fairly common, one that happened at Bagram Airfield on Sept. 30 had an unusual twist.

Army Capt. Bryan Woody, assistant operations officer with the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, had the opportunity to re-enlist four Air Force non-commissioned officers on the east helicopter flight ramp. One of the NCOs re-enlisting in the ceremony was Woody's brother Justin, a Staff Sgt. serving with the 157th Security Force Squadron, 455th Expeditionary Security Forces.

"It was an honor," Capt. Woody, a native of Blue Anchor, N.J., said of being able to conduct the ceremony. "I have never re-enlisted anyone outside of the Army, so being able to re-enlist not only my brother, but other members of a

sister service was pretty cool. I enjoyed it."

The two brothers were informed by their grandmother that they would both be serving in Afghanistan at the same time. Capt. Woody had already been in country for several months, before Staff Sgt. Woody arrived with his unit in early September.

"He's been deployed to a foreign location three times, I thought it would be a great honor to have him come out and re-enlist us since we are both deployed here together," said Staff Sgt. Woody, of Pembroke, New Hampshire.

While their jobs manage to keep them busy, the brothers still manage to find time to spend together when they can.

"We're busy," said Capt. Woody, "but we definitely get together and have lunch on the weekends and go to the gym together." ♦



THE BIG FIX

**PHOTOS BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS
ALAN MCKINNEY**



**SOLDIERS FROM CO. E
6TH BAT. MAKE MAJOR
REPAIRS TO A TRUCK
ENGINE.**

Task Force Shadow Conducts Change of Command



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— The Soldiers and friends of 101st Combat Aviation Brigade gathered at Foxtrot Ramp on Bagram Airfield for a Task Force change of command ceremony on September 26.

Lt. Col. Timothy Healy relinquished command of 6th Battalion, 101st Avia-

tion Regiment to Lt. Col. T. Bradley Ninness, who left Afghanistan only nine months ago, as the operations officer for 3rd Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

The reviewing officer for the ceremony was 101st CAB commander, Col. James Richardson. During his speech, Richardson praised the Soldiers of Task Force Shadow for successfully accomplishing some of the most complex and diverse missions that an aviation unit could perform, calling them, “the premiere multi-functional aviation battalion in the Army today.”

In his outgoing address, Healy thanked the Soldiers of the task force, and the families back home. He also

thanked his wife, Susie and their sons Joe and Tyler for their continual support throughout his career.

“It has been a privilege and an absolute honor to lead these great Soldiers,” Healy said. “I want to thank each and every one of you for what you do every day to ensure that our nation is successful in our struggle against the forces of evil.”

In his incoming address, Ninness thanked Richardson and Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Schloesser, Combined Joint Task Force-101 commanding general for the opportunity to command the battalion. He also thanked the Soldiers standing in formation during the ceremony.

“I’d be remiss, if I didn’t thank my wife Janet and our daughters Keely, Hannah and Macy for their continual love and support; without which, I wouldn’t be here today,” Ninness concluded. ♦



SUBJECT: Spc. James Hill

COMPANY: A Co. 96th ASB

MOS: 92 Y (Supply Specialist)



Deployments can often be strange. While Soldiers do work long hours, there is still usually enough spare time for people to take college classes, and delve into their hobbies which range from playing video games, to building furniture.

As a supply specialist (92 Y) with Co. A, 96th Aviation Support Battalion, Spc. James Hill knows how busy deployment days can be. He decided to make the most of his free time by pursuing his dream and creating his first hip-hop mix tape.

"I started rhyming in 2003 when I was in the 10th grade," Hill said about the beginning of his rap career. "I had a cousin who was always rapping and he wanted me to try, but I was always nervous because I was young. I finally tried it; the first time I started writing and recording, my stuff sounded like I was just reading my rhymes, it didn't really have much character. At the time, people would tell me that it sounded good, but listening to it and compared to what I am doing now, the old stuff sounds like trash. I'm on another level with it, my rhymes have a lot of character now. I take my time and make the plot like a movie."

Hill, who is from Alexandria, Louisiana names hip hop icons Tupac Shakur, L.L. Cool J, KRS-One, Big Daddy Kane and Easy-E as some of his classic influences. Some new artists who have inspired him are; Mike Jones, Lil' Wayne and Slim Thug.

"Starting out, I was rapping about cars, clothes, shoes and things like that," Hill said. Now that I have broadened my horizons, I'm talking about issues with my family, real life situations that I have seen and been through."

Being a Soldier deployed to a combat zone is also a topic that found its way into many of Hill's songs.

"Some of the things I am going through wouldn't be happening if I wasn't here in Afghanistan," Hill said. "I just take those experiences

into perspective and write about them."

Using his laptop, commercially available recording software, headphones, a professional quality microphone and the help of some partners-in-rhyme, Hill was able to record and produce the 16 song album titled: 'G Music 2008' all from the comforts of his room in the B-HUT.

"I rapped with Spc. Christopher Jones, Spc. Dexter Horn, Spc. Mario Allen and Sgt. Albert Fullman (all with 96th ASB) on a couple of the tracks. Everyone is from different parts of the country and brought a different vibe to the tracks. I like that because it doesn't sound like the same old thing."

Hill has completed three songs for his next disc which is titled '700 Degrees'. It is scheduled for release in May 2009. In all, he says that being able to create his music is a positive way to express himself.

"It feels good knowing that I can use my time wisely and do something positive. It keeps me out of trouble, so I just stay to myself and do it."

'G Music 2008' has received some glowing reviews from Hill's peers. He hopes that one day, he'll be able to pursue a career in music, and encourages others to develop their talents.

"Most of the younger people I work with have heard the record, and I've been getting a lot of positive feedback. I think I'm talented and so are a lot of other people I know. I think that if you have a talent, no matter what your job is, you should pursue it because you never know who will be looking or listening."

To hear a sample of Hill's music, check out his MySpace page at www.myspace.com/hilla318



MOVING ON A D A Y



'Nothing happens until something moves' is one of the Army Transportation Corps' mottos. Things are starting to move on Camp Albert at Bagram, Airfield; namely tricons, as the first customs inspections of shipping containers recently took place.

This is usually a good sign for deployed Soldiers, as the inspection, movement and shipping of containers signals re-deployment.

"This is the first of many customs inspections to come," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Daniel Kemp, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade movement control officer. "We're looking forward to completing the others."

Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st CAB prepared for the inspection by emptying their containers and sweeping them free of any dirt or debris. They then placed plastic tarps on the ground, that way they could lay out all their items without fear of bringing dirt into the containers.

After finishing their preparations, they received a briefing from a customs inspector on what items were and were not allowed for shipping. Successful completion of this inspection is the first step in a unit's re-deployment process.

"The customs inspection covers a lot of aspects," said Staff Sgt. Calvin Fairley, 101st CAB transportation management coord-

inator. "It covers the agriculture part, making sure we're not taking any insects back, because the dirt carries parasites, the inspectors also make sure the Soldiers are not taking back prohibited items."

Given the size of the brigade, the customs inspections have to happen in phases. Individual units within the brigade must contact the movement control office before having customs inspect their containers and equipment.

"The inspections are set up in phases according to a unit's required delivery date, and when they are leaving the country. Basically each unit comes to us and tells us that they have containers that are ready to go. They can go and set up an appointment with customs, who'll give them times for the inspection."

Preparing to return equipment and containers to the United States is a time consuming process that takes a lot of effort between the movement office and customs.

"A lot of people don't realize the amount of coordination and planning that has to be done in order to deploy and re-deploy a unit," Fairley concluded. ♦

EAGLE ASSAULT SOLDIER PROMOTED TO SERGEANT FOR THE SECOND TIME



Story and Photos by
Capt. Anthony Nelson

On September 1, Cpl. Duane McCarty, of Co. C, 1st Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment (Task Force Eagle Assault), was promoted to sergeant, earning the distinction and responsibilities of becoming a Non-Commissioned Officer—for the second time in his Army career.

When a Soldier is promoted to the same rank more than once, it is usually the result of punitive action or some other negative influence. The promotion to sergeant for McCarty however, was a unique and monumental occasion for the 46 year old crew chief. He was promoted to Sergeant 20 years ago on August 24, 1988 when he was serving in the Army as an AH-64A Apache, helicopter crew chief.

At the age of 23, McCarty first joined the military on October 19, 1985, and served in support of Operation Just Cause in Panama as well as Operation Desert Storm. McCarty's AH-64A, which took on the Panamanian rebels, was the first test for the Apache helicopter. It returned with 16 AK-47 bullet holes and was combat proven.

After Desert Storm he decided to part with the Army and spent the next 15 years as a civilian in the hotel and construction fields of work. Still, McCarty frequently thought back to his years working on Apaches and wanted to return to what he loved. In late 2006, McCarty went to see an Army recruiter with the intent to find out about a government contracting job repairing AH-64Ds with DynCorp. "The recruiter that day did his job," says McCarty, and he enlisted again in the Army on November 16, 2006 at the age of 44.

Since then, he has excelled as a Soldier and has proven that he can keep up with the other Paladins; who are 20 years younger, working along side him. His promotion to sergeant fell exactly 20 years to the day after his first promotion to E-5. "My plans are to finish what I started 20 years ago and try to 'Be All That You Can Be' up to

retirement," says McCarty. With nine years of service to go, McCarty plans to re-enlist in 2010.

Looking back to his military career, McCarty made special note of his "run-ins" with current serving Soldiers of the 101st CAB whom he served with between 1985 and 1991. He remembers working along side of Spc. Vance, who is currently the Command Sergeant Major for the 96th ASB, Troubleshooters. From 1-101st Avn Regt, he remembers Pfc. Bailey, who is now Sgt. 1st Class Bailey, who is currently the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the No Mercy quality control shop. Also, McCarty was present for the promotion from 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt. for the soon to be 101st CAB Commander, Lt. Col. Gayler.

"I've seen many changes in the Army throughout my time in the military," says McCarty "and they have all been for the good of the Army as well as the good of Soldiers and families." ♦



Your Health +



Capt. Karen Luisi
TF Destiny Medical Ops.

STAYING HEALTHY

Whether we're here for 90 more days or 6 more months, staying healthy in Afghanistan takes diligence.

Wash your hands, stay hydrated, eat balanced meals, exercise, take your malaria medication, and get enough rest. Forget any one of these and you'll easily get diarrhea, dehydration, fat, lazy, really sick, or stupid. Combating these seems easy enough, but one look at sick call cases, review of the Division DNBI (Disease, Non-Battle Injury) report across the Combined Joint Operational Area, nutritional counseling requests, and accident reports will leave you asking—how easy is it to stay healthy in Afghanistan? Well, it depends on how smart you are—or does it?

Washing your hands becomes a challenge when latrines run out of hand sanitizer or the soap containers are empty. Keeping sanitizer in your pocket and at your desk is essential. A recent "outbreak" of diarrhea at Camp Albert was a reminder that basic field sanitation/hand washing is the primary means of preventing illness. Wipe down your phones, your computer keyboards, the mouse, and all your door knobs. Oh heck, just wipe down everything!

Despite pallets of water everywhere, staying hydrated here is a challenge. It doesn't matter if it's hot outside or cold; you work out, you work hard, you're not necessarily thirsty—and presto, you're dehydrated! Drinking coffee and soda is not a replacement for water. Dehydration is no joke. You get dizzy. You get foggy in the head. You are now at risk for getting stupid and making mistakes. Mistakes out here can be life threatening. Imagine a dehydrated pilot or maintenance crew repairing aircraft, or cook with a sharp knife, or administrator working your promotion packet, or medical provider sewing your head up after you smacked it when you passed out from dehydration. Keep drinking water!

Food is available nearly 24/7. Servers at our dining facilities don't know the meaning of "just a little bit". If you're not insistent, you will have enough food on your plate to feed three of you at every meal. If you're one of those people who eat everything on your plate and you don't have an equally well matched exercise plan, it won't be long before your uniform doesn't fit. I use hand gestures—the universal sign for "just a little". If appropriate, I announce a number, like "two meatballs please". I make sure they get it. Now they see me coming. They tease me by putting two green beans on my plate—followed by a reasonable portion.

There's no lack of exercise opportunities in Afghanistan: Boxing, biking, Tae kwon do, Spin cycles (in Kandahar), jogging, walking, weight lifting, ping pong (table tennis for those of you with your own paddle and sweat a lot when you play), volley ball, aerobics and even yoga. Let's face it,

sports injuries happen—even with all the basic precautions in place. And then there's just plain stupid—like wearing a fully loaded combat vest while running (unless you're a Pathfinder); running on rocks (especially in the dark); or getting extra "creative" by tossing tires for PT. If you want to become a statistic in the clinic—that's a statistic for stupid in addition to a statistic for sprains, strains, and you guessed it, dehydration—those are just some of the ways you can make our wall of shame.

But there's good news! Yoga. Low impact, soothingly stretching, buoyantly breathing, core demanding, endurance/stamina challenging, mind focusing, flexibility facilitating, stress reducing, cardio requiring (sometimes), spiritually embracing, injury preventing, relaxingly powerful, body-aligning, combat enhancing, traditionally ancient yoga.

Yoga in combat is not new. Google it and you'll find articles galore: Marines in Fallujah; aviators on the deck of an aircraft carrier; even government-subsidized yoga for veterans with PTSD. But at Bagram Air Field, it's only been around for six months. Thanks to Will Sherman, a fixed wing contracted pilot, we've had free yoga three nights a week since March. And when he goes on leave, others have stepped up to lead the class, providing variety and challenges for all who are brave enough to step onto a yoga mat. The room is always filled to capacity. Why? Because strength without flexibility reduces joint range of motion—so you're strong and bulky instead of strong like and lean, because high-impact exercise all the time can take its toll on your joints, because steadier arms, stronger legs, and controlled breathing makes your aim truer, because a focused mind is smarter, and therefore safer, more confident and relaxed, because flexible hips enhance running, jumping, and every other sport and combat event you can think of, because breathing deeply keeps oxygen flowing to your brain cells and helps keep your blood pressure from gushing out your ears during daily operations, because yoga poses burn calories—safely, because all that stretching, strengthening, focus and deep breathing helps you rest peacefully.

The newly initiated, big, powerful, manly-men are always amazed. Try it if you dare. **Here's the current Bagram schedule:** Monday and Wednesday: 1900-2000. Friday: 1800-1900. And now Sundays: 1930-2030. All classes are currently held at the Aviation Gym, 2nd Floor, however, we may be back in our beloved, quiet B-hut up the road for some of the classes starting 1 October. Will has about 1 dozen mats (\$15) and some blocks (\$6). Let him know if you need one: Cell phone 078-692-6972. Check for a yoga class in your area.

Finally malaria season is NOT over. In fact, in Afghanistan, it's never over. Those pesky malaria-carrying mosquitoes are stealthy and hearty. They must do yoga. Keep taking your malaria medication!



Legal Advice:

War Souvenirs



Sgt. Lisa Chepenik
CJTF-101 Legal Office

As we prepare to redeploy, keep in mind there are certain requirements and restrictions regarding mailing “war souvenirs” and other items through the United States Postal Service.

Weapons may be mailed back but only if they meet two main criteria. First, the weapon must be an “antique.” The National Firearms Act defines “antique” as any firearm not designed or redesigned for using rim fire or conventional center fire ignition with fixed ammunition and manufactured in or before 1898 (including matchlock, flintlock, percussion, or similar type of ignition or replica thereof, whether actually manufactured before or after 1898), or for which ammunition is no longer manufactured in the United States and is not readily available in the ordinary channels of commercial trade. Here are just a few weapons that are authorized for mailing:

- British Bulldog Revolvers (1898 and prior)
- Henry Martini Rifles
- Mannlicher Bolt Action Rifles (1898 and prior)
- Enfield Snider Rifles
- Enfield Bolt Action Rifles (1898 and prior)
- French Gras 1874 Rifles
- Mosin Nagant Rifles/Revolvers (1898 and prior)

The second requirement to mail an antique weapon to the states is to have an affidavit which can be drafted at your nearest Legal Office. The affidavit states the firearm is indeed antique and is completed in quadruplet. After the affidavit is notarized by the Legal Office, the form, along with the weapon, is taken to Customs. Customs will review the affidavit, and if everything is correct, stamp it. Customs is the determining factor if a weapon is considered antique and if it is allowed to be mailed back to the states, not the Legal Office.

While drug paraphernalia is not authorized, hookah pipes are, so long as they are clean and have no resi-

due. The following is a list of some other authorized souvenirs for mailing:

- Helmets and Head Coverings
- Bayonets
- Uniforms and items such as insignia and patches
- Rucksacks
- Canteens and insignia compasses
- Pouches
- Load bearing equipment
- Flags
- Military training manuals

Here are some items that are NOT authorized for mailing:

- Cuban Cigars
- Sand & Soil
- Switchblades (unless military issue)
- Aerosol Cans
- Flammable & Combustible items, i.e., lighters
- Ammo or Brass

Your Legal Office can assist with any questions you may have regarding what can and can not be mailed. In addition, the Post Office and Customs Office can also assist. Just remember, it's always easier to ask for permission than forgiveness. Happy mailing.



Soldiers Presented with Prestigious Aviation Awards



After the presentation of awards was completed, the general took time to address all the Soldiers present for the event.

"It's a privilege for me to be here and present these medals to these heroes," said

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— On the night of September 23, a group of Soldiers with the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade were presented with prestigious aviation medals for their outstanding performance in flight, during combat missions.

Six Soldiers assigned to Task Force Shadow were presented with the awards by Brig. Gen. James McConville, Combined Joint Task Force-101 Deputy Commanding General, Staff.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jason Shumate was presented with the Distinguished Flying Cross, which according to the award's citation, is presented for "heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight."

On May 12 during a night resupply mission coined "Mountain Highway", the crew of Mastodon 36, a CH-47D based at Bagram Airfield was carrying a sling load of items over the Gowardesh Valley, when they were engaged by hostile forces with a rocket propelled grenade. The impact violently shook the rear of the aircraft, causing it to go into descent.

As the pilot in charge, Shumate summoned all his abilities to bring the crippled aircraft down onto the roof tops of houses in the valley, saving the lives of the crew, and even minimizing further damage to the helicopter.

For their gallantry during the event, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brian Carnahan, Staff Sgt. David Berrellez and Sgt. Seth Schroeder were all presented with the Air Medal with a Valor Device.

McConville. "Their actions are in keeping with the traditions of this division. They looked out for each other like a team should, from the warrant officers to the NCOs"

While expressing his pride in the courage of the awardees, McConville took the opportunity to warn the Soldiers against the dangers of complacency during the last months of the deployment.

"You all have performed heroically for the past 9 months, but you are entering the most dangerous time during a deployment; the last 90 days, the last stretch," McConville said. "Remember that when going on missions, the terrain has a vote, the weather has a vote and the enemy has a vote. You have one as well, so continue to be safe and look out for each other like these Soldiers did."

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Matthew Frederickson and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jonathan Harris were also awarded the Air Medal with a Valor Device for their actions in separate incidents. ◆



Touch The Sky

Aviator Takes Final Flight at Bagram



"He performed as the pilot in command during this last flight," said Nikolao. "He knew that this would be his last flight, and he asked me what I needed him to do. I told him, 'Sir, this is your last flight in combat, under goggles, going into some of

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— As the UH-60 Black Hawk made a rolling approach to the Foxtrot ramp, two fire engines were parked on either side of the taxiway, like two bright red sentinels guarding entry onto the flight line. As the helicopter drew near to the fire engines, they both fired their powerful water cannons, creating a sparkling water arch over the aircraft.

Normally, the sight of multiple fire trucks dousing an aircraft with water means something has gone terribly wrong; but there was no tragedy at Bagram Airfield on the morning of September 24, just the marking of an important moment in the career of a 101st Combat Aviation Brigade aviator.

A small crowd of onlookers watched as Lt. Col. Timothy Healy, commander of Task Force Shadow (6th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment) brought his aircraft to a halt in the parking ramp. Once the helicopter had shut down and the rotors finished spinning, he climbed out and greeted the small crowd who assembled to watch the event.

"It was kind of emotional approaching Bagram for the last time," Healy said after speaking with the Soldiers who came to witness the event. "It was 15 years ago that I went to flight school, and six years to the day of my first flight in Bagram. When we were approaching the ramp and I saw the fire trucks out there, I knew what the guys had planned. It makes me feel good that they did all that and I appreciate it."

Co-pilot with Healy during his final flight was Chief Warrant Officer 4 John Nikolao, Task Force Shadow Standardization Instruction Pilot.

the most demanding terrain and environment known to aviators. Do what you require all your aircrew members to do; fly every flight as if it were your first in combat."

The flight, a re-supply mission through Korengal and Pesh Valley, proceeded without incident. During the mission, the pilots discussed ways in which the task force could better support the Soldiers living on the various outposts.

After the mission was completed, Healy reflected on his time as the Task Force Shadow commander.

"This is the best unit I've ever been in and these are the greatest Soldiers I have ever worked with," said Healy. "I've been in the Army for 24 years now, and it was an honor and a privilege to be their battalion commander for the past 22 months. These Soldiers are definitely great Americans, and I will miss them all."



Visions of Destiny



Maj. Thomas O'Connor, TF Destiny Operations Officer is promoted to the rank of Lt. Col. by Brig. Gen. James McConville.



Brig. Gen. James McConville, CJTF-101 DCG-S, promotes Task Force Destiny executive officer Maj. Jason Cummins to the rank of Lt. Col.

(Photo by Spc. Dawanda McPhail)



Onlookers at TF Shadow's change of command Ceremony.



A Soldier cuts wood in order to help with the construction of the Lighthouse.

