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# DESTINY FLYER



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2010,  
ISSUE 5



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SEPT/OCT



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Sadie Bleistein

From left, Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Thom and Col. Kenneth Royar, the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade command staff, came to conduct their pre-deployment site survey in August. The 159th CAB is replacing Task Force Destiny in the spring of 2011, to take over aviation operations in Regional Command (South).

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Changes are being made to the Army Retention Program. Make sure you stay informed and up-to-date on the new policies.

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# DESTINY FLYER

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## **Task Force Destiny**

Col. William Gayler  
Command Sgt. Maj. Trevor Beharie

## **Hellcats**

Capt. Eric Rempfer  
1st Sgt. Grant Stange

## **Task Force Saber**

Lt. Col. Hank Taylor  
Command Sgt. Maj. Douglas Jourdan

## **Task Force No Mercy**

Lt. Col. Scott Hasken  
Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice Terry

## **Task Force Eagle Assault**

Lt. Col. John Kline  
Command Sgt. Maj. Annette Hunter

## **Task Force Shadow**

Lt. Col. Brad Ninness  
Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Lindsey

## **Task Force Troubleshooter**

Lt. Col. William Ferguson  
Command Sgt. Maj. Todd Vance

## **Task Force Dragon**

Lt. Col. Charles Bowery  
Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Todd



*Destiny Flyer* is an authorized command information publication for members of the Department of Defense and their Families.

Content of this magazine is not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or Department of the Army.

The content of this monthly publication is edited by the Task Force Destiny Public Affairs Office, APO AE 09355.

### **Editor's Note:**

Please send submissions, letters and suggestions to the Task Force Destiny Public Affairs Office:

Sgt. 1st Class Sadie Bleistein  
[sadie.bleistein@afghan.swa.army.mil](mailto:sadie.bleistein@afghan.swa.army.mil)  
or  
Spc. Tracy Weeden  
[tracy.weeden@afghan.swa.army.mil](mailto:tracy.weeden@afghan.swa.army.mil)

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## **ON THE COVER:**

Photo by Spc. Tracy R. Weeden

Maj. Gen. John Campbell, Combined Joint Task Force-101 commander, gives an Operation Enduring Freedom CJTF-101 coin to Sgt. Jeff Elinburg, D Company, TF Shadow maintenance supervisor, Sept. 24 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan in honor of him earning the Cargo Helicopters' Super Soldier award.

# Command Central



## Destiny Families,

Hello again to everyone from Kandahar. We are now into autumn, and I can finally report to you that the weather has cooled off here.

As I write to you this month, I do so with an extremely heavy heart. As you may know, we experienced a tragic aircraft crash Sept. 21 that claimed the lives of five true Heroes and fellow Destiny Soldiers. Lt. Col. Robert Baldwin, Sgt. Marvin Calhoun Jr., Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jonah McClellan, Staff Sgt. Joshua Powell and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Matthew Wagstaff were killed when the UH-60 Black Hawk they were aboard crashed in Zabul Province during an operation supporting ground forces in Regional Command (South). Although words cannot come close to expressing the feelings of loss and sympathy we feel, I want to offer my deepest condolences to the Families of the Heroes we lost on behalf of the entire brigade. These great Soldiers were true professionals who loved what they did, and they will not be forgotten as this brigade continues on with its mission in their honor. – May God be with the Families and friends of our fallen and give them strength as they cope with the loss of their loved ones. I would ask each one of you to keep them in your thoughts and prayers. May our fallen rest in peace.

I know I opened the last letter by telling you how fast paced things are here – and they certainly have been. However, our

operational tempo seems to be continually picking up here in RC(S), and we are at the busiest point in the rotation right now. Overall, the International Security Assistance Force effort is at a defining time in Afghanistan, and as expected, your Soldiers have stepped up as all great Screaming Eagles do and have done in the past.

Just a couple of weeks ago, the people of Afghanistan took part in parliamentary elections all across their country. These elections are an important step forward for the government and the Afghan people, and our Task Force was an integrated part to ensure the safety and success of the election. Every battalion task force had a critical role in the preparation and execution of the successful election. From polling site security operations, to ballot and polling support movements, to transporting key government officials in and around the districts and provinces, our Soldiers and air crews had a direct impact ensuring the Afghan people had an opportunity to exercise their right to vote.

Also, as you may have read in the media back home, there is a substantial effort taking place right now on the outskirts of Kandahar to clear what were insurgent dominated areas for many years. All of these operations are being launched in an effort to eventually ensure the security of Kandahar City, so legitimate local governance and services can take hold in

a safe environment. Our great Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, as well as other coalition and Afghan security forces are making a huge difference through their operations, and we continue to be right there with them, every step of the way. Every task force air crew and Soldier in this brigade is assisting in the effort, and Task Force Destiny aircraft are all over the areas of operation executing reconnaissance, attack, air assault, medevac, resupply and air movement operations. It is a critical stretch here for the coalition effort in southern Afghanistan, and you can be incredibly proud of your Soldiers as they are making a difference every day.

As I close this letter, I want to express how grateful we are for everything each of you does back there for us. With five months remaining in the deployment, we are as determined as ever to see our mission through, and much of that is directly due to the great support of our Family Readiness Groups and loved ones. Please keep everyone in your thoughts and prayers, and may God bless each and every one of you.

Air Assault and Wings of Destiny!!



William Gayler  
COL, TF DESTINY  
101st CAB

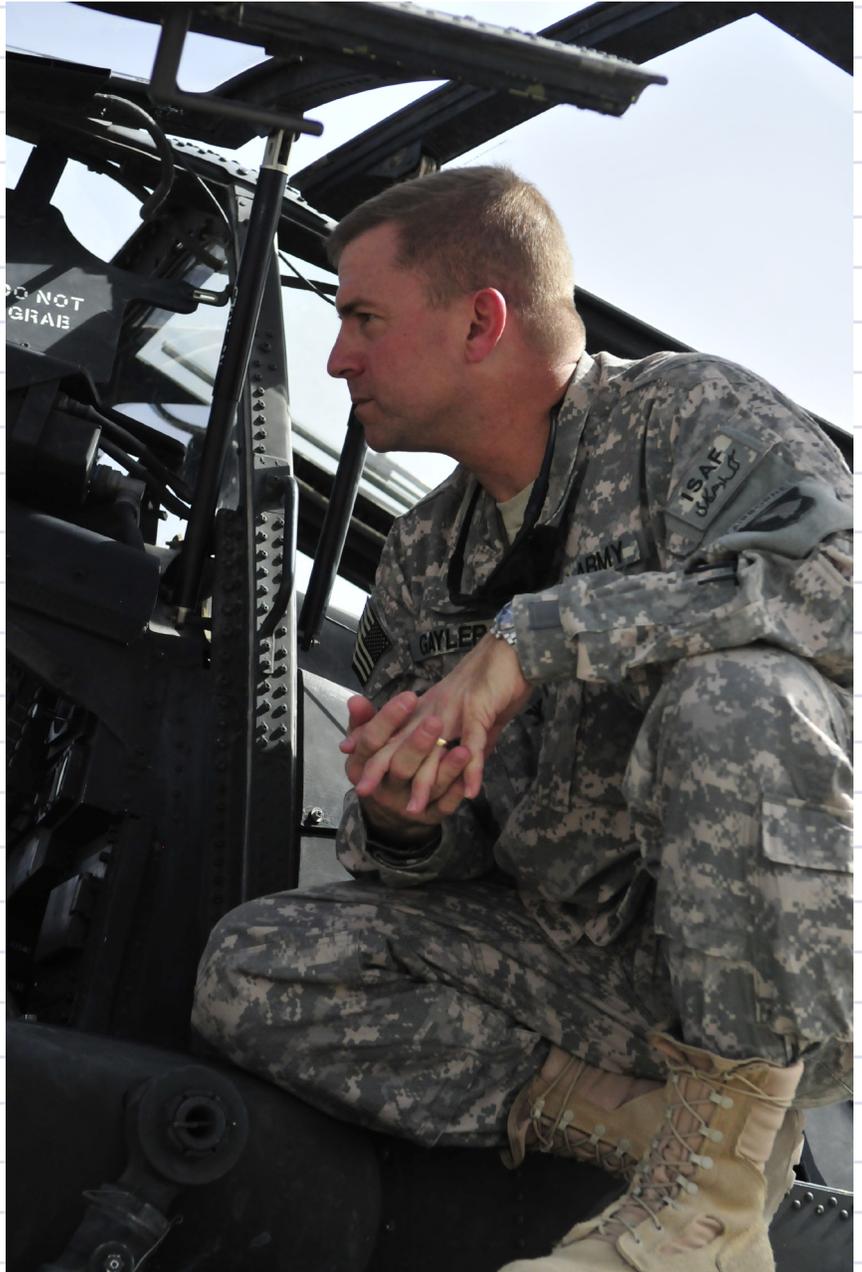


Photo by Spc. Tracy R. Weeden

**Col. William Gayler, Task Force Destiny commander, showcases the Destiny AH-64 Apache helicopters during a visit from U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Kathleen Dussault, Task Force 2010 director, Sept. 20 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.**



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Sadie Bleistein

**Command Sgt. Maj. Trevor Beharie, Task Force Destiny, crews for a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter Aug. 23 during a ring route over southern Afghanistan.**

Hello to all the Family and friends of the Destiny Brigade.

We have crossed another month off the calendar, and with that, we are officially at the end of summer. I hope all of you enjoyed your summer break, and I am certain you and your Family are back into the swing of things with the new school year. Now that autumn is upon us, the weather is getting milder. Temperatures have started dropping, making it cooler in the morning and not so hot during the day, giving us a much needed relief from the hot, summer sun.

It is with deep sorrow that I must write to you about a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash we had within the past month. Most of you, if not all, may have knowledge of this incident. However, I want to inform those who may not know. Regrettably, we lost five of our Destiny Warriors in this incident. I would like to

send my condolences to the Families and friends of Lt. Col. Robert Baldwin, Sgt. Marvin Calhoun Jr., Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jonah McClellan, Staff Sgt. Joshua Powell and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Matthew Wagstaff. Their losses have left a hole within our hearts, as well as our organization. We miss them tremendously. I pray that God will continue to look on their Families, friends and our Soldiers with loving mercies through this time of mourning. Additionally, I pray that angels will guide their journey home until they are one day reunited with their loved ones. Rest in peace Screaming Eagles, Wings of Destiny — In our resolve, we will honor you by finishing the mission we have started together.

Although we have had some difficult times, your Soldiers continue to make significant accomplishments in the ongoing effort to secure Afghanistan for its people. The Afghan national election is here, and the 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade has a large role in the movement of provincial leaders and securing and supporting the Afghan-led voting process. Each day brings constant improvement in techniques, tactics and procedures, and staying ahead of the enemy by constantly identifying and adapting to the ever-changing environment in Afghanistan. I am proud of our Soldiers as they are providing the necessary support based on feedback from our supported organizations during this current increase in operational tempo. Not to worry, our crews and maintainers are up to the challenge and are meeting every requirement with tenacity and dedication. Task Force Destiny will hold fast to our proud heritage and service here in Afghanistan.

Several events were held in honor of Women's Equality Day Aug. 26, allowing Soldiers of both genders to honor the accomplishments women have made in our society. One such program was held at the brigade headquarters and was presented by Staff Sgt. Ingrid Ryan, TF Destiny human resource noncommissioned officer, Staff Sgt. Sarahi Moton, TF Destiny supply sergeant and several junior female Soldiers from the brigade. The guest speaker was Command Sgt. Maj. Annette Hunter, TF Eagle Assault. However, she was prevented from attending

in person because of bad weather. Her speech was read by Staff Sgt. Thomeka Clark, TF Eagle Assault liaison noncommissioned officer in charge. Her speech shared a mixture of facts about women's accomplishments in and out of the military, as well as her own life experiences. It was very well done. The presentation was attended by the brigade commander, myself, staff members and junior Soldiers. It was a great job done by all participants; they represented women in and out of the military proudly.

I had the privilege this past month to be the guest speaker at the Noncommissioned Officer Induction Ceremony for Task Force Dragon, 1<sup>st</sup> Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> CAB. It was an honor to speak to the newly promoted NCOs and to talk with them about their roles as NCOs in our Army. To be a part of this extremely important ceremony is always special; however, doing so in combat added a memorable touch to a great ceremony. It is very important for our most junior sergeants to be officially welcomed into the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers as well as given the charge of duties and responsibilities.

In Kandahar and across Afghanistan, Soldiers who had the opportunity were given a small break on Labor Day to enjoy a barbecue and a bit of relaxation. It is not the back yard barbecue we are accustomed to at home, but any remembrance of home is a boost to our morale. Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Michael Jones, brigade food service NCO, and his helpers did an outstanding job preparing and serving up steak, pork ribs, chicken, hot dogs, cheeseburgers, seafood and even tofu burgers for our vegetarians. We make every effort within reason to remember and uphold our traditions from home. It is a welcomed change of pace from combat operations.

I am pleased to announce that the United Service Organizations Inc. has opened a large facility for Soldiers stationed on, and those traveling through, Kandahar Airfield. Your Soldier can take a break from their normal routine to enjoy several activities such as internet computer stations, satellite phones, the United through Reading Program, PlayStation 3, Wii gaming stations, large TVs offering sports

packages, books and music. There is also a 30-person movie theater with recliner seats. The site offers two living rooms and a bistro area to relax and unwind in. While there is no place like home with your Family, this new USO center will provide some of the comforts of home and another place to stay connected with loved ones. The USO is a great organization that has truly been there for our Soldiers and has lived up to their slogan, "we go where our Soldiers go."

Soldiers of the Destiny Brigade were visited this past month by British army Warrant Officer 1 Chris Gilham, Regional Command (South)'s senior enlisted leader. The British rank of Warrant Officer 1 is equivalent to the U.S. Army rank of command sergeant major. RC(S) is currently led by a task force from the British army. Warrant Officer 1 Gilham toured the Destiny area of operations to see Soldiers in their work places and see the progress being made by the brigade's expanding footprint on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Brig. Gen. Kenneth Dahl, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division deputy commanding general for support, also spent time with TF Destiny last month. He was on a pre-deployment site survey team visiting throughout RC(S) in preparation for their upcoming deployment as the division headquarters in RC(S).

In closing, on behalf of Col. William Gayler, myself and all the Soldiers of the Destiny Brigade forward, I want to say thank you to everyone who supports our troops. It is because of your unwavering support, loyalty and care for our Soldiers that the United States of America has the most powerful Army in the world. May God continue to bless our Soldiers and their loved ones, our Screaming Eagle Division, our Army and the United States of America.



Trevor Beharie  
CSM, TF DESTINY  
101st CAB

# CHAPLAIN'S

## Corner

By Capt. Mario Rosario,  
TF Troubleshooter chaplain



Courtesy Photo

*“Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised!”  
Matthew 5:5 (Good News Translation)*

Capt. Mario Rosario, Task Force Troubleshooter chaplain, speaks to firefighters at Mustang Ramp on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan about the sacrifices of the New York fire and police departments and reflected on why we are here in Afghanistan at the fire department's 9/11 memorial ceremony.

In my battlefield circulation and religious support coverage missions, I have the opportunity to meet all sorts of military personnel who do different jobs here. I am particularly exposed to the brave men and women of our brigade and the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment. Since air is the preferred means of movement here, most of the time I see aviators, crew chiefs and door gunners. They stand tall! I am fascinated with the gears and how they prep the UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopters. There are times Spc. Christopher Myrick, my chaplain assistant, and an officer of our B Company,

will make a competition of who can best mimic the sound of a Chinook engine starting.

I also have the privilege to be with infantry units who live in modest, small combat outposts and patrol bases all around Regional Command (South). I shared a tent with a mortar squad in Rath and Shawali Kowt, Afghanistan, and watched them register their mortars. I worked with them a lot, and I thank them tremendously because they made my religious support coverage missions a success.

One does not need a keen eye to notice what they all have in common. Whether they are helicopter crew chiefs, or Stryker air

guards, they just love their trade and are proud of what they do. That is plain and simple. And I thank God for it, because what they do is undeniably valuable to our mission here.

When we see a Stryker or mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle rolling out to do their patrols, we feel more secure.

When I see a helicopter in the horizon or hear its roaring engine, it is like it was heaven sent. Especially if one is in a far-flung combat outpost and carries a Soldier going on rest and relaxation or emergency leave.

Here is my point, and you might share the same view as me.



Courtesy Photo

When I see Strykers moving or Chinooks flying to do their missions, I do not only see the crew chief or air guard, but I also think of those men and women who worked on these trucks or aircraft to make them operational. These are the “behind the scene” Warriors who work at the hangar, motor pool, forward arming and refueling point and tactical operations center. We do not see them, but what they do is as essential as any other task. This is where I always remember and appreciate what Task Force Troubleshooter does. I thank God for who they are and all they do.

In all our operations, whether religious support or tactical operations, teamwork is very essential. We all have a role to play that contributes something to the success of the mission.

But what is the driving force for this teamwork? Conviction

and training could be a big factor. I am more convinced that it is inner-driven, and one may not even know that he or she has it. It is in the character of a Soldier. The right attitude leads to appropriate behavior, and the right attitude that is needed for teamwork is humility. It may not sound so military, but it is reflected in military values. It begets respect and selfless service. Humility is the good habit of recognizing others’ roles in the mission. There are other Soldiers who have contributed something for the success of the mission. It is neither overestimating nor underestimating ourselves; it is rather recognizing that each one has something to contribute. I like the motto “One team, one fight.”

What happens when we do not have humility? The inner sanctum of our character is taken over by pride, self-complacency

and conceit which subsequently leads to contempt of others and comparison among military occupation specialties, services and among international forces. You may have heard the saying “comparison is odious.” Pride, self-complacency and conceit have caused not only mission degradation, but mission failures.

As I continue to pray for our safety and the success of our missions in Afghanistan, foremost in my prayer is to ask God to give us the grace of humility. It is through God’s humility that He came to us; it is also through our humility that we go to Him. It is mysterious, but it is only when we humble ourselves before Him that we understand and recognize all God’s goodness. When St. Augustine was asked which is first among the virtues, he said, “First is humility, second is humility and third is humility.”



# Disabling a live VIRUS

Story by Capt. Joseph Dai, TF Destiny physician assistant

**I**t is that time of year again, when it is important to protect yourself and your Family from a debilitating virus. Army community hospitals and troop medical clinics are currently providing vaccines to Soldiers and their Families to help combat the spread and infection of the flu virus.

The flu shot is required for all active duty Soldiers, unless there is a medical exception.

Influenza, more commonly known as “the flu,” is actually a family of viruses which are prevalent among birds and mammals. These viruses are able to mutate and change rapidly which can result in large seasonal outbreaks, usually semiannually, with one outbreak in the Northern Hemisphere and another in the South-

ern Hemisphere. Not to be confused with the common cold, these outbreaks are responsible for between 250,000 to 500,000 deaths every year with as many as 49,000 of those deaths occurring in the United States alone.

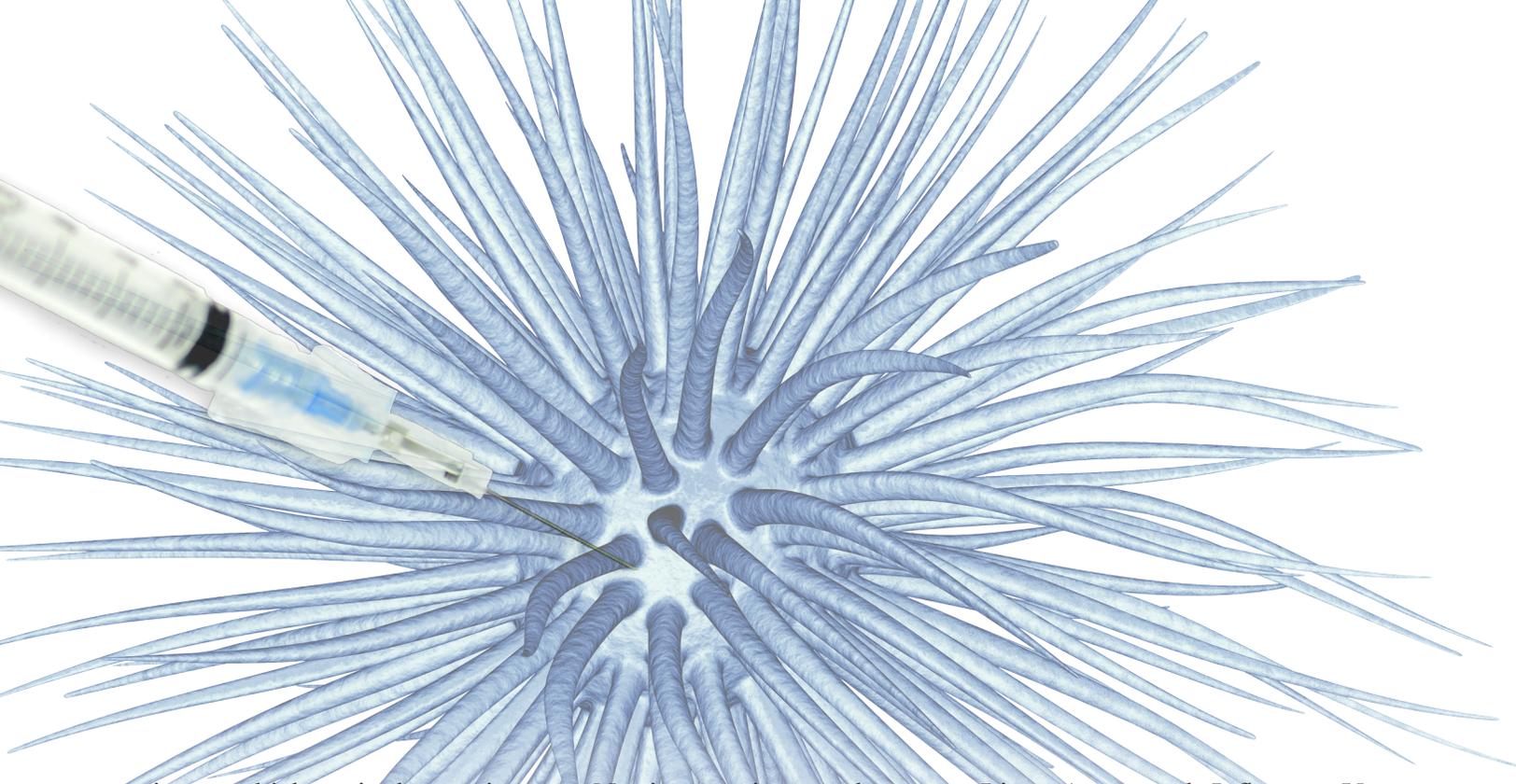
Infrequently, a new strain of influenza crosses from infecting birds or other mammals to infecting humans. People are more susceptible to these new strains. As a result, the infections are spread rapidly and usually more severe and life threatening. When this phenomenon occurs, tens of millions of deaths may occur in a single year.

In April 2009, a new strain of influenza emerged in the United States and Mexico which combined genes from human, bird and pig influenza viruses. This new

strain of influenza was dubbed “Swine Flu” and is officially known as Influenza A H1N1. Shortly after the emergence of this new strain, the World Health Organization declared this outbreak a pandemic for concerns of how rapidly it was likely to spread amongst the global population.

Out of the hundreds of potentially circulating influenza strains, the World Health Organization predicts which ones are likely to become prevalent during the following season and if any strains are likely to become a pandemic. Based on these predictions, a vaccine effective against these strains is developed and manufactured. Most influenza vaccines are effective against three to four strains.

Unfortunately, medical technology has not progressed to a



point to which a single vaccine can cost-effectively be developed against all known strains. This is why someone may still become infected despite receiving a vaccination. Because of influenza's ability to rapidly mutate into new and different strains, a vaccine that was effective the previous season is likely no longer effective. This is why people need to be vaccinated yearly.

In order to maintain the health and safety of our fighting forces, the Department of Defense has mandated that all active duty personnel, and activated National Guardsmen and Reservists receive vaccinations against the influenza virus. The goal of this mandate is to protect our service members from a potentially deadly threat. Just as a Soldier is issued an advanced combat helmet and improved outer tactical vest prior to a deployment to improve survivability against projectiles and explosives, the influenza vaccine is given to offer protection against an emerging pandemic.

Not just service members are eligible for vaccination against influenza, beneficiaries are also encouraged to receive the vaccination.

Most installations offer two types of vaccinations. The first, Trivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccine, is the "flu shot" we are all accustomed to. It consists of a live virus that was grown, usually in fertilized chicken eggs, which is subsequently inactivated by a detergent. The end result is no live viruses present in the vaccine. This particular vaccine is safe to administer in everyone from the age of six months and older. Even pregnant women may receive this vaccine since no live virus is present. Reactions that may be experienced after receiving the injection include soreness, redness and swelling at the injection site. Low-grade fever and body aches may also occur. If these symptoms are to occur, they usually happen shortly after administration and last for one to two days.

The second vaccine is the

Live, Attenuated Influenza Vaccine. Also known as the "Flumist," it is inhaled through the nose. This vaccine consists of a live virus that is not as virulent or harmful as the unaltered strain. This vaccine may be safely administered to people ages two through 49. Pregnant women and those without normal functioning immune systems should not receive this particular vaccination due to the presence of a live virus.

People with allergies to eggs should not receive either vaccine. Children may experience minor side effects such as a runny nose or mild wheezing. Headaches, vomiting, muscle aches and fevers were also reported in children, although these side effects are very uncommon. Side effects in adults include runny nose, headache, sore throat and cough.

Flu season is approaching soon. Help protect yourself and your Family from a debilitating and potentially deadly disease. See your Army community hospital or troop medical clinic for your vaccination!



# Cash Reward

Story, photos and graphics by  
Spc. Tracy R. Weeden, TF Destiny  
public affairs noncommissioned officer

## Turning bright ideas into hard earned cash

**F**ORWARD OPERATING BASE WOLVERINE, Afghanistan – Two Task Force Eagle Assault UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilots made a vital submission to the Army Suggestion Program while deployed to Iraq in 2006, which was worth a \$10,000 reward.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Merle Goodall, TF Eagle Assault Black Hawk standardization instructor pilot, along with Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Lemons, former TF Eagle Assault Black Hawk maintenance test pilot instructor, made the suggestion to redesign the pilots' ballistic armor wing panels on the Black Hawk.

The suggestion would save lives and save the Army big bucks.

They explained that the panels are critical to the safety of the pilots, passengers and aircraft. Without them, the Army could lose an \$8 million aircraft along with the lives of Soldiers if the pilots were to get shot and lose control of the aircraft, said Goodall. The armor panels are critical for safety but also present a danger.

The panels are a dual armor plate system which slide back and forth allowing the pilot to enter and exit the cockpit. A lever is placed on the outside of the forward plate that unlocks the plate to slide it backward. Because of the location of the lever, the pilots need assistance to operate it once they are in the cockpit.



The problem with the armor panels is once the pilots are seated in the cockpit, they do not have the ability to open or close the armor plates themselves, said Goodall. Also, the panels were not designed to withstand all the sand the Black Hawk kicks up in the dusty environment here, making it very difficult to move the panel back and forth.

The trouble this creates in an emergency situation, like a crash or a fire, is the pilots are unable to exit the aircraft on their own, said Goodall. This leaves the pilots to decide whether they want to survive a bullet or a crash.

Black Hawk pilots appreciate the added safety the armor panels provide, but they are also aware of the risk the panels create.

It is good protection unless the aircraft were to catch fire leaving the pilots no way to get out, said Chief Warrant Officer Ronnie Coyne, A Company, TF Eagle Assault Black Hawk pilot. It would



**Right: Chief Warrant Officer 4 Merle Goodall, TF Eagle Assault UH-60 Black Hawk standardization instructor pilot, forces the aircraft's pilot ballistic armor wing panel to retract after dirt has jammed the gliding mechanism.**

be better if it were redesigned for the pilot to operate.

Because pilots were questioning the use of the armor panel, Goodall and Lemons decided they would take a stand.

"It's an issue which we thought was serious enough to make the effort to suggest a new design of the armor panel," said Lemons.

Because there were no fatal incidents caused by these panels malfunctioning prior to the suggestion, it was initially overlooked, said Goodall. It was an in-house problem that only pilots understood.

"We highlighted the fact that one crew from the Tennessee National Guard was involved in an accident which resulted in a pilot crawling over the center console because he could not retract his sliding armor panel in order to escape the aircraft as it began to burn," said Lemons. "As he was running away, the aircraft became engulfed in flames."

When this team made the suggestion for the redesign of the armor panels four years ago, the suggestion went through a process of review procedures. Goodall was invited to Redstone Arsenal, Ala. to help the aircraft engineers understand the problem, enabling them to redesign a more efficient armor panel.

"Suggestions are evaluated by a subject matter expert locally or forwarded to higher headquarters for proper review and evaluation by a SME at that level," said Gail Linkous, Plans, Analysis and Integration Office management and program analyst, at Fort Campbell, Ky. "All suggestions that are recommended for adoption are reviewed and approved by the deputy garrison commander and forwarded for further review if warranted."

The suggestion was picked up throughout the Department of Defense, because the Army is not the only branch of military this will affect.

"The armor panels will be refitted on all Black Hawk variants DODwide," said Goodall.

He was told they would begin installing the redesigned armor panels by fiscal year 2011.

"Knowing that something will benefit the Army and our fellow Black Hawk pilots, creating a safer aircraft to operate in future combat operations, is well worth the effort," said Lemons.

Goodall would like for everyone to understand the impact of the Army Suggestion Program, he said. He often sees crew chiefs using new tools and procedures from first-hand knowledge and wants to encourage them to help others through their suggestions to make operational changes Armywide.

"There is always the possibility to do our work at a lower cost, with greater efficiency, quality and/or customer satisfaction," said Linkous. "The Program is designed to improve morale by providing individuals with the opportunity to voluntarily take part in the improvement of operations and the quality of life within the Army."

The Army Suggestion Program also provides cash incentives up to \$25,000 for adopted ideas that save government resources.

Suggestion submissions are beneficial to the Army and the Soldier.

Changes can be made within the organization and major cash rewards can be earned. All rewards for suggestions entered in a combat zone are tax exempt.

"The amount of the award is



Knowing that something will benefit the Army and our fellow Black Hawk pilots, creating a safer aircraft to operate in future combat operations, is well worth the effort.



*Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Lemons*

prove a knob that kept breaking on the horizontal situation indicator, a piece of avionics equipment. Although the knob only cost approximately \$5, they could not replace just the knob, and had to replace the entire device costing the Army approximately \$12,000 a piece.

He received \$5,000 for that suggestion and the opportunity to visit the Pentagon to be presented his award.

No matter how big or small the suggestion may be, it can contribute greatly to the Army and other Soldiers, so do not hesitate to submit it.

“The Army Suggestion Program is not a venue for simply submitting a problem, you are also required to submit a solution,” said Linkous.

In order to be heard, ensure the submission provides an explanation of the current procedure, proposed procedure and the benefits of adopting the new procedure.

Goodall and Lemon’s knowledge, detailed description of their submitted suggestion and concern for their fellow Black Hawk pilots won them each \$5,000. Their suggestion contributed to the protection of pilots, service members and government funds.



**Chief Warrant Officer 4 Merle Goodall, TF Eagle Assault UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter standardization instructor pilot, sits in the pilot seat of a Black Hawk to demonstrate how the pilots’ armor panel is hard to function in that position.**

determined by tangible and/or intangible savings, the value of benefit and extent of application,” said Linkous.

Ideas can be submitted online via the Army Suggestion Program Web site at <http://armysuggestions.army.mil>.

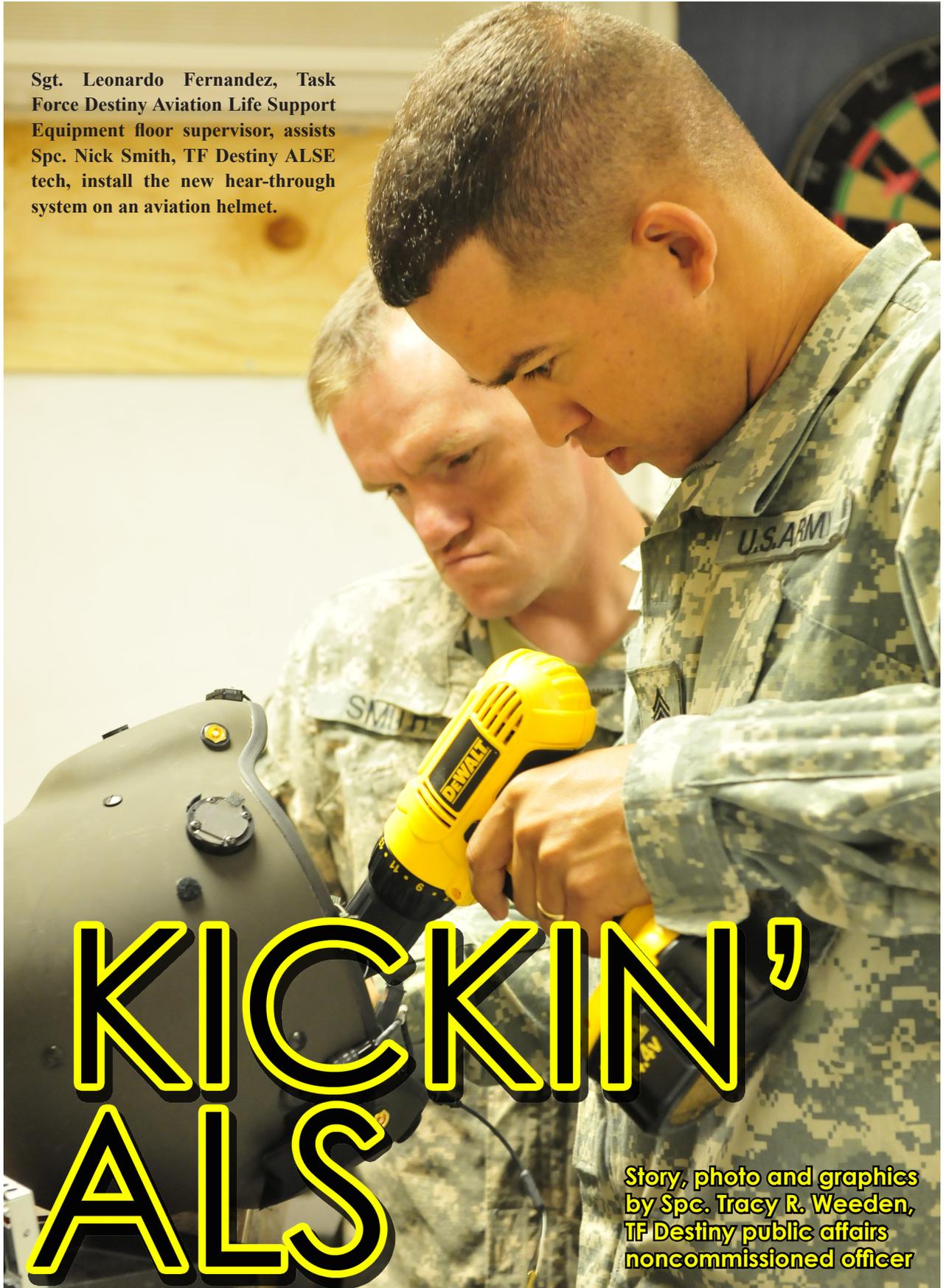
Linkous encourages Soldiers to submit their ideas, as well as

commanders to promote the Army Suggestion Program within their unit, she said.

This is not the first suggestion Goodall has made which saved the Army money and the Soldiers time who serve beside him.

Five years ago, he won the Military Suggestion of the Year for making a suggestion to im-

Sgt. Leonardo Fernandez, Task Force Destiny Aviation Life Support Equipment floor supervisor, assists Spc. Nick Smith, TF Destiny ALSE tech, install the new hear-through system on an aviation helmet.



# KICKIN' ALS

Story, photo and graphics  
by Spc. Tracy R. Weeden,  
TF Destiny public affairs  
noncommissioned officer

**T**ask Force Destiny's Aviation Life Support Equipment shop is continually making transformations to improve the safety and endurance of pilots and crew members.



**Spc. Nick Smith, Task Force Destiny Aviation Life Support Equipment tech, looks through a drawer of ALSE supplies to find what he needs to fill the aircraft first-aid kit he is assembling.**

ALSE enhances and sustains the security of aviation crew members and passengers by providing life saving equipment and individual protection. ALSE integrates comfort into items designed to provide Soldiers with an increased chance of survivability during an aviation emergency.

Upon arriving in theater, the ALSE shop supervisors consulted with crew members to find out what equipment they preferred and tracked down the highest quality products to meet their needs, said Sgt. Leonardo Fernandez, TF Destiny ALSE floor supervisor.

ALSE is steadily advancing the standards of aviation equipment for TF Destiny crew members and the Army.

“We are bringing in equipment for the first time in the Army,” said Staff Sgt. Harry Lopez, TF Destiny ALSE noncommissioned officer in charge.

New products requested by ALSE must be rated and approved by the Air Warrior. Air Warrior is the Army’s ALSE product manager whose mission is to provide crew member equipment system integration, lighter weight, increased survivability and a higher potential for improved mission performance at an overall reduced cost.

“We have a good working relation with them,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Luke Kleckner, TF Destiny ALSE officer in charge. “They value our opinion.”

The ALSE shop intends to relieve stress from the crew members’ job by providing them with safe, functional and reliable equipment.

“We manage high volumes of equipment updates and changes to make the front and back seaters’ job easier,” said Kleckner. “When we give them what they

want, it makes a world of difference.”

Because crew members are constantly maneuvering in their gear, it is important for them to feel safe and comfortable.

The new helmet liners, helmet hear-through system and Primary Survival Gear Carrier used by the crew members of TF Destiny are all new and advanced products approved by Air Warrior for the U.S. Army, said Fernandez.

Improvements to the helmet increase comfort and functionality.

The helmet has built-in earmuffs which deter noise from the ear, while the hear-through system allows crew members to flip a switch and hear outside noises, said Fernandez. Additionally, the PSGC is lighter and more flexible.

Not only is the ALSE shop contributing to the improved quality of crew members’ equipment, but they are also improving the organization

through better customer service and satisfaction.

Trained ALSE techs were requested from each TF

Destiny battalion to support one of the first brigade-level ALSE shops in the Army's history, said Fernandez.

Normally the ALSE program is managed at a battalion or company level.

The ALSE techs have met certification requirements, said Fernandez. They all have aviation specific military occupa-

tion specialties and have completed a training course to learn how to inspect, maintain and repair ALSE gear.

They support every crew member within TF Destiny, to include the crew members at smaller forward operating bases where they provide techs for service.

The ALSE shop is responsible for keeping and maintaining an accurate record of all individuals' and aircraft life support equipment within the brigade, said Fernandez. However, the crew members are responsible for bringing their life support equipment to ALSE for service when necessary.

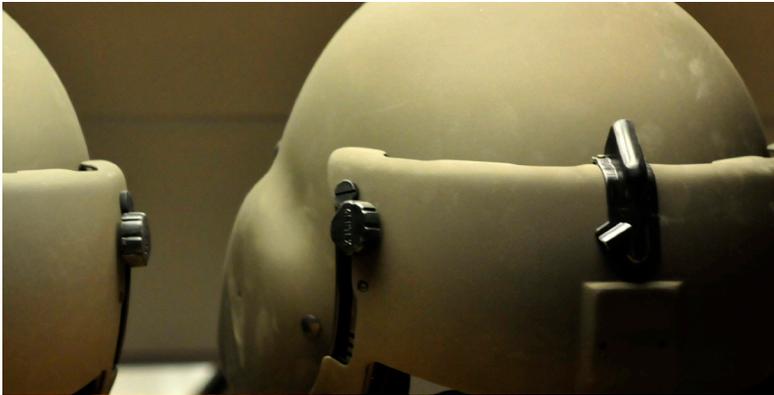
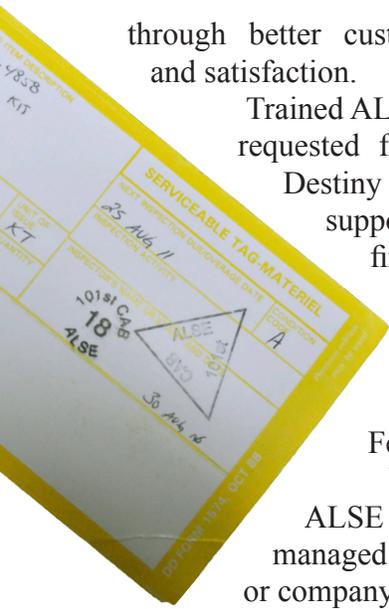
Each aircraft has an assigned

Aircraft Modular Survival System, which contains equipment such as: chemical light sticks, food and water rations, a survival manual, parachute cord, bandages and blankets.

"AMSS kits have all sorts of survival gear," said Spc. Nick Smith, TF Destiny ALSE tech. "Your imagination is the limit. If you need to survive, you'll find exactly what you need to make it."

Crew members are also assigned individual life support equipment that consists of body armor, a helmet and a PSGC, which is a vest and harness system worn over the body armor.

The PSGC has two survival





**Pfc. Kyle Doucette, Task Force Destiny Aviation Life Support Equipment tech, assembles a first-aid kit Sept. 3 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.**

pouches, one inserted on either side of the vest. One contains first-aid supplies together with medications, and the other stores signaling devices. Because medications expire and equipment gets damaged, these vital items must be inspected and kept up to date.

“It’s important that crew members bring in their gear every 180 days so their gear can work at optimum efficiency at all times for their safety,” said Smith.

First-aid kits are also mounted inside the aircraft for easy access in case of an emergency and must

be maintained regularly to assure items are accounted for, in good condition and not expired.

“First-aid kits must be inspected annually,” said Smith.

First-aid kits contain items such as: an eye patch, eye ointment, bandages, iodine, smelling salts, gloves, razor blades and water purification tabs.

“We supply the crew members with everything possible to save or sustain life,” said Fernandez.

All of the equipment supplied and maintained by the ALSE shop

is essential to the mission of TF Destiny. They provide comfort and confidence to the pilots and crew members flying in the unpredictable environment of Afghanistan.

“The ALSE shop is making the mission happen,” said Lopez.

The ALSE shop is open 24 hours a day, providing crew members with immediate support to carry on their mission. No matter what time of day, they are available to make adjustments and improvements to the equipment which keeps the pilots and crew chiefs of TF Destiny safely flying.

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

## Women's Equality Day

# Celebration

Sgt. 1st Class Edwin Hernandez, TF Destiny EO advisor  
Defense Switch Network phone: (318) 421-6067  
E-mail: edwin.hernandez@afghan.swa.army.mil

Words by Pfc. Adriana M. Pedro

### *We are your mothers*

Your grandmothers

Your educators

Your lovers

Your daughters

Your wives

Your women

The Hebrew says:

The woman came from a man's  
rib - not on his feet to be stepped  
on; not on his head to be superior,  
but on his side to be equal, under his  
arms to be protected and near his  
heart to be loved

We endure pain

To give you life

Stand in shadows

While you remain in the light

So why do we have to fight for you  
to look past the curves

And realize that the window to our  
soul is not our hips but our eyes

Maybe even our smile

Thru hurt and betrayal

Our smile is like our veil

They say behind every strong man

Is an even stronger woman

So why do the strongest of the  
strongest get treated like a child  
with dreams to fly?

Let us fly!

So that one day we may quote

Maya

Because like dust

We shall rise

Rise into the face of politicians

And reclaim a piece of this land  
that is ours

Because just like Mother Nature

We are women too

Despite popular belief

We are not condemned to wash

clothes in a pot

Or stand behind a stove that is hot

We are your equal

Your better half

1+1=1

So check your math

Follow the bible leave your mother  
and cling to us

Give us the respect we have earned

Because in this world of lust

We are more than just our hips, thighs  
and bust...



Courtesy photo

Pfc. Adriana M. Pedro, Task Force Shadow paralegal, recites her poem on women's equality day Aug. 26, during the Task Force Destiny celebration at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

# 101st Combat A

## Body *Mind* & Spirit

**E**ntering the building is more refreshing than one might have thought. The air is cool, and the hint of pine-scented cleaner lingers in the air, which is a refreshing escape from the hot, dirty and foul sewage pond polluted air outside. The lighting is dim and soft, so that the eyes must adjust, and the atmosphere is calm.

At first glance it appears to be some sort of museum or memorial.



gade

Graphics and words blanket the walls all around the long room.

It so happens to be a tribute to the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division and Task Force Destiny. The words are that of their rich history, and the graphics pay tribute to the men and women of their fighting forces.

Immediately after entering, a technician will ask “How can I help you today,” forcing the mind back into the present moment. You are not in a museum; you are at the brigade aid station.

The Task Force Destiny Consolidated Aid Station provides top of the line medical care and training to all its Soldiers deployed here in support of Operation Enduring Freedom while increasing morale and pride within the unit.

The driving force behind the exhibits on the waiting room walls is to give Soldiers something to be proud of and remind them why they are here, said Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jeff Sliva, TF Troubleshooter medical platoon leader and aid station noncommissioned officer in charge.

But appearance is not everything; it is what is inside that counts.

“Not only do we present history and pride to our Soldiers, but we provide the best medical care available,” said Sliva. “That is something to be proud of.”

Also known as the Role 1 clinic, the Destiny Aid Station has surpassed the standards for patient care. The term “Role” is used to describe the different tiers in which medical support is organized.

“We provide stateside medical service in a deployed environment,” said Sliva. “We actually exceed Role 1 capabilities.”

Role 2 and Role 3 medical facilities are equipped to provide additional specialties such as radiology, dental, laboratory testing, behavioral health, optometry, emergency and operation capabilities, which Role 1s normally do not provide.



**Pfc. Brandon Landon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Destiny medic, takes a noncommissioned officer's blood pressure.**



brigade doing their job to the best of their ability.”

Behavioral health care supports the overall mission by improving productivity of Soldiers by helping them overcome whatever they may be struggling with.

Having the behavioral health office located directly inside the aid station has several benefits.

Soldiers can seek behavioral health care in privacy by simply going to the aid station. The doctors are able to collaborate to provide prescriptions if necessary, and Soldiers do not have to go outside the brigade for treatment, said Wilson.

Another specialty this Role 1 provides is their capability to perform flight physicals, which is essential to an aviation unit.

Flight physicals must be done by flight surgeons and are required for all flight personnel, such as pilots and crew chiefs on flight status, every year on the month of their birth, said Birchfield. Also, every time a crew member is sick, in a mishap or sees a health care provider that is not a flight surgeon, they must renew their flight physical.

“No other Role 1 here has the ability to perform flight physicals,” said Birchfield.

Since arriving here, they have ordered a hearing booth to perform hearing tests on the spot. Hearing tests are required for the initial flight physical.

It will be the second hearing

However, TF Destiny's Role 1 provides behavioral health services.

“We are the first CAB (Combat Aviation Brigade) in the Army's history to deploy with their own psychologist,” said Maj. Patrick Birchfield, TF Destiny brigade flight surgeon.

Behavioral health care is a

combination of evaluation and therapy services providing Soldiers help dealing with adversity to improve the well-being of their body, mind and spirit.

“The command is committed to the welfare of their Soldiers,” said Capt. Chris Wilson, TF Destiny brigade psychologist. “My goal is to keep everyone in the

booth available in Afghanistan. Currently, all hearing tests must be done at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, said Sliva.

In addition to providing top-notch medical care to troops, medics at the TF Destiny aid station are constantly conducting training.

They do group training exercises every Thursday, which count toward the medics required continued education hours and emergency medical technicians license, said Sliva. By Nov. 1, every medic will be EMT recertified and have over 70 continued education hours.

The medics also do training at the Role 3 hospital here for additional experience.

“My Soldiers have had rotations through the ER (emergency room) and OR (operating room),” said Sliva. “They were able to help with surgeries and trauma patients.”

The medics also manage to train every Soldier within the brigade in Eagle First Responder, a combat life saving course, which must be renewed yearly.

They have recertified approximately 2,800 Soldiers while here and will continue training until every Soldier has recertified, said Sliva.

In addition to training, medics from different battalions come together to man the aid station, which is open 24 hours a day to care for Soldiers medical conditions or emergencies.

Even though they treat patients’ ailments, their main mission is to prevent them and stop them from debilitating Soldiers, said Birchfield.

Sick call is a standard procedure used throughout the Army to care for Soldiers’ routine visits

and maintain a consistent schedule for the medics. They make sick call available twice a day, which allows Soldiers to adhere to their demanding work schedules.

Sick call is scheduled Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. On Sundays, sick call is from noon to 1 p.m.

“We work around the clock, but use sick call to channel patients,” said Sliva.

Soldiers who are due for immunizations may come to the clinic at any time of the day to receive them.

When TF Destiny’s medical personnel first arrived here, there was a limited supply of vaccines in the clinic, said Sliva. Since taking over, they keep ample stock of the proper amount to provide inoculation for the entire brigade.

The aid station has revamped their entire working environment, from their waiting area to their medical data transmission system, to better care for their Soldiers.

The medical data transmission system allows the medics to check patients in by scanning their military identification card from one computer, enter their medical information on a different computer and allow the provider to check it from another computer.

This allows the provider to review the patients’ medical information before seeing them to get a preliminary assessment of their condition, said Sliva.

Not only does the computerized system provide better patient care, but also more efficient record keeping.

Within two hours after a patient is seen, the record of that visit is transmitted back to the

United States through the Defense Department’s electronic health records database, called the Armed Forces Health Longitudinal Technology Application, said Sliva.

They are also able to access the Medical Protection System that tracks all immunization, medical readiness, and deployability data for all Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians and contractors who are cared for by the aid station.

Overall, the computerized medical data transmission system took them almost two months to set up because of the complexity, said Sliva.

They will also use a computerized system to conduct Soldiers’ post-deployment health assessments, said Birchfield.

Post-deployment health assessments must be done within 30 days of redeployment.

“Our goal is to do the post-deployment health assessments before we leave theater so that Soldiers do not have to spend time away from their Families when they return,” said Birchfield.

The Soldier will fill out an electronic form and then see a provider to complete their assessment, he said. If there are any concerns, the Soldier will be scheduled for a follow-up appointment upon their return.

The TF Destiny medics are dedicated to providing the best care to Destiny Soldiers and civilians while in theater. Their mission is to keep troops healthy so they can accomplish their mission.

“You come for medical treatment in a third-world country and receive first-world medical care,” said Birchfield. “When Soldiers get unfettered access to physician assistance and a face-to-face treatment, it raises their morale and lets them know they are cared for.”

# Face *of the* Brigade

A surge of military and civilian traffic passes through the U.S. Army rotary wing terminal at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan introducing to them the face of Task Force Destiny.

The TF Troubleshooter Movement Control Team, an element of Destiny, coordinates passenger and cargo travel.

Providing rotary air support

for Regional Command (South), they have enhanced an operation that efficiently manages incoming and outgoing movement of space available and air movement request for personnel and cargo, in addition to providing professional and courteous service.

Anyone needing to travel by Army helicopter must go through the MCT to get a flight, said 2nd

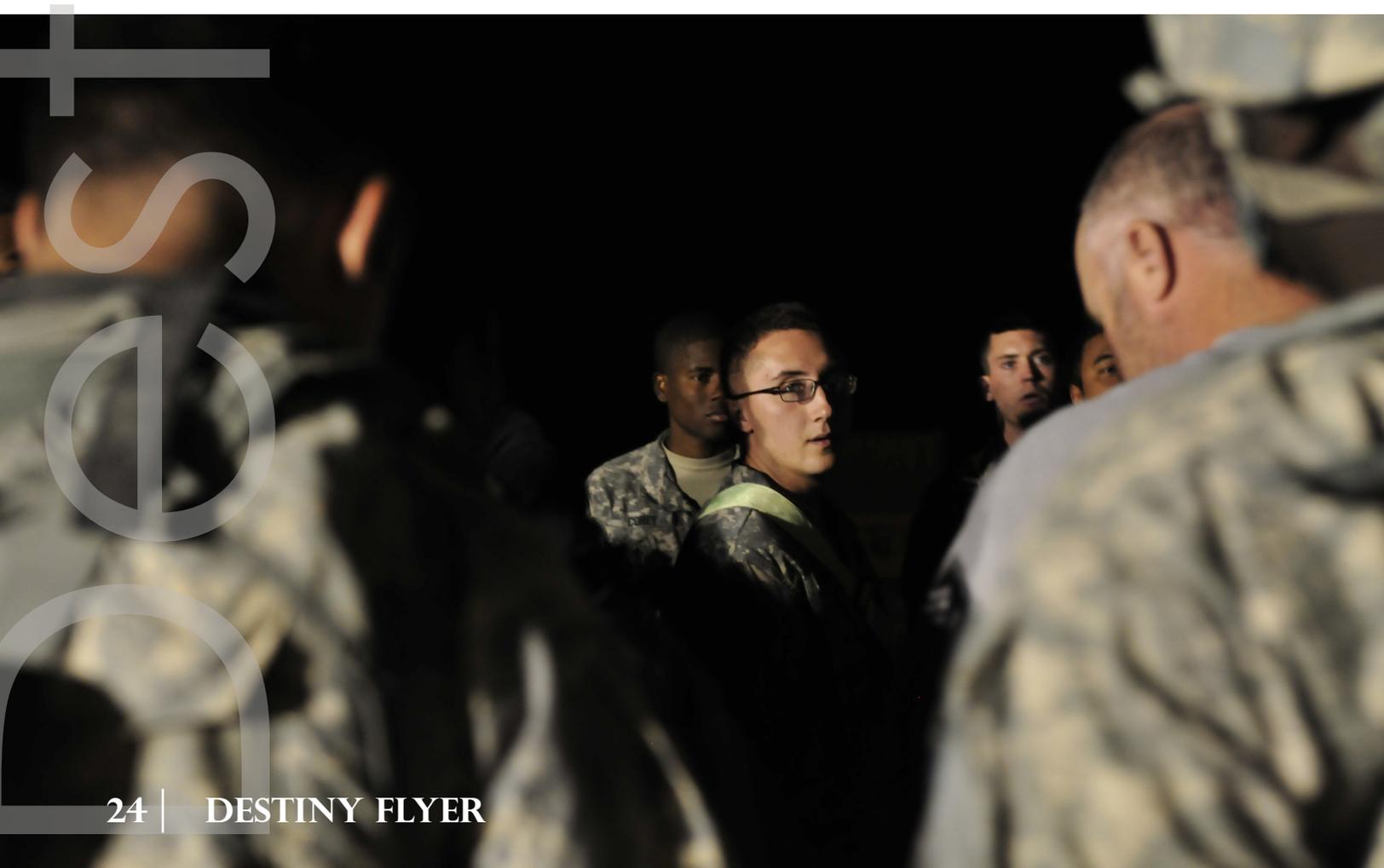
Story, photos and graphics by Spc. Tracy R. Weeden, TF Destiny public affairs noncommissioned officer

Lt. Geoff Carmichael, A Company, TF Troubleshooter MCT officer in charge. Customer service is a major part of the MCT personnel's job because they interact with various forces and levels of authority.

TF Destiny will help transport foreign and domestic armed forces, whether it is an individual Soldier or an entire unit.

They can move approximately 400 people and 30,000 pounds of cargo on a busy day, said Sgt. Jacqueline Racy, A Co., TF Troubleshooter MCT noncommissioned officer in charge. That is excluding troop size elements being transported to or from their duty location.

**Spc. Sean Harney, A Company, Task Force Troubleshooter Movement Control Team pax runner, conducts a roll call of passengers before escorting them to a CH-47 Chinook helicopter at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan Sept. 30. The Soldier in charge of the mission will conduct two different roll calls before the flight.**





**Spc. Robert Eayre, A Company, Task Force Troubleshooter Movement Control Team pax runner, escorts civilian and military personnel to a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter Sept. 30.**

Whether passengers have an air mission request or are flying space available, the MCT Soldiers are responsible for getting them transported.

The MCT treats all passengers and cargo movements fairly by using the “first come, first served” method, said Sgt. Jeremiah Wallace, A Co., TF Troubleshooter MCT shift leader. Air mission requests guarantee a passenger or cargo load will be transported on a certain flight, while space available passengers and cargo will be sent according to their place on the sign-in roster.

Passengers must arrive and sign-in two hours in advance of the scheduled flight in order for MCT personnel to efficiently manage their transportation.

An MCT Soldier is assigned to each mission, said Wallace. A mission refers to the route aircraft travel, which could make up to seven trips per day.

The Soldier assigned to a mission will make sure cargo is

properly loaded, personnel are accounted for and communicate mission-essential details with the crew members of the flight.

“Pax runners” are the Soldiers responsible for getting passengers onto the helicopter and managing the passenger loads, while cargo personnel are responsible for loading, unloading and registering cargo loads leaving and arriving Kandahar Airfield, said Carmichael.

The MCT organizes the movement of cargo essential to the Soldiers and their mission such as ammo, food, mail, mechanical parts and supplies.

Soldiers load and unload cargo using 10,000 pound capacity forklifts they were trained and certified on, said Cpl. James Blair, A Co., TF Troubleshooter cargo personnel team leader. They must also be trained and certified as a ground guide, which allows them to assist the forklift driver.

Two ground guides are required to direct the forklift safely.

The MCT has created a designated cargo holding area which did not exist before they arrived, said Wallace. They now have an efficient way of shipping and storing cargo.

The MCT has made several more changes to improve their operations and customer satisfaction since arriving to Kandahar Airfield.

“When we first arrived here, we had no radios to communicate with the aircraft,” said Blair. “We went three to four months without communication and still pushed out cargo and passengers efficiently.”

However, now that they have radio communication with the aircraft, they have full knowledge of what to expect when the aircraft lands here. This allows them to prepare cargo and passengers more adequately.

“We are more productive now that we have improved operations,” said Blair.

They have also simplified communication between units.



**Spc. Robert Eayre, A Company, Task Force Troubleshooter Movement Control Team pax runner, assists a forklift driver and CH-47 Chinook helicopter crew chiefs load cargo Sept. 30 in preparation for a night mission transporting both cargo and passengers from Kandahar Airfield, to an outlying forward arming and refueling point.**

“We now have better communication procedures with the brigade TOC (tactical operations center) since we have set a standard for operations,” said Carmichael. “We established one chain of communication so that the battalion TOCs must now go through the brigade instead of contacting us directly, making it easier to coordinate flight information.”

Not only is it more proficient, but also progressive.

The MCT has also improved customer satisfaction by installing an air-conditioning unit and television in their passenger waiting area, making the passengers’ experience more pleas-

ant and comfortable, said Carmichael.

It is important for the transportation of Soldiers and cargo to run smoothly, which is why the MCT has made the effort to improve their operations. They represent Task Force Destiny and the United States of America to all customers who come through the rotary wing terminal.

“We also coordinate transportation of VIP missions for foreign and domestic dignitaries, as well as commanding generals,” said Carmichael.

They have assisted in the movement of Afghan President Hamid Karzai, the Honorable Robert Gates, United States Sec-

retary of Defense and Gen. David Petraeus, International Security Assistance Force commander, to name a few.

MCT Soldiers frequently receive coins from VIPs who appreciate their professional and respectful service, said Carmichael.

Although you do not see these Soldiers unless you need to get from point A to point B, you will truly appreciate their services when they get you where you need to be.

The MCT is improving transportation operations to satisfy the demanding missions and operational tempo of fellow fighting forces and the civilians who work alongside them.

# HISTORY

## LEGEND of THE DIAMOND and TAIL-BOOMS



**Story and graphics by Spc. Tracy R. Weeden,  
TF Destiny public affairs noncommissioned officer**

**T**he black diamond worn on the helmet of Task Force Destiny Soldiers is an iconic part of their uniform and history.

The legend began in World War II, when the 101st Airborne Division created tactical helmet insignias to help reassemble the paratroopers on the ground.

After jumping into Normandy on D-Day, the troops were divided over miles of terrain. If they were unable to recognize each other, it would be difficult to regroup.

The four infantry regiment commanders pulled cards from a deck before D-Day, which is why they were labeled with card suites, said John O'Brien, Fort Campbell, Ky. installation historian at Don F. Pratt Museum. Some additional symbols were later added to designate other assets within the division.

At the end of World War II, the 101st was deactivated and helmet symbols were abandoned.

When the division was reactivated, it was reorganized several times, finally being designated as an air assault division.

The 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Destiny, was constituted in 1968 at Camp Eagle, Republic of Vietnam under the 101st Airborne Division, which makes their helmet symbol history different than their brother infantry units.

Helmet markings were rarely seen after World War II, said O'Brien. However, in Vietnam, tail-boom markings were used to designate aircraft.

The tail-boom marking of the 101st Aviation Battalion helicopters was the diamond.

"It appears to me that the 101st Aviation Regiment and the 159th Aviation Brigade can trace their helmet symbols not to the deck of cards scheme of World War II, but to the tail markings of Vietnam," said O'Brien.

Helmet markings were rees-

tablished for esprit de corps and unit pride after the attacks on 9/11.

Helmet markings came back into use the summer of 2001 when Capt. Jim Page, 1st Brigade Combat Team assistant operations officer, recommended they readopt the club patch, said O'Brien. By 2003, as units were deploying to Iraq, the other brigades were adopting their units' patch and gluing it to their helmets.

Units who did not have one of the initial helmet patch designs adopted symbols representing their lineage, such as tail-boom markings.

All units within the division now wear the markings on their helmets to pay tribute to their rich heritage.

The 101st Airborne Division is one of the most esteemed and decorated divisions in the U.S. Army. Adorned with unit awards and historic symbols, Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division wear their pride on their helmet.

Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Edwin Hernandez, 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Destiny equal opportunity advisor  
My lucky Charm Ernie:

All began Nov. 24, 1993, during a four-day Thanksgiving weekend. My nine-month-old daughter Sherly caught a real bad stomach virus. My wife and I took her to the U.S. Army National Training Center, Medical Center, Fort Irwin Cali., where I was stationed. Once in the clinic, the doctor prescribed medication for the stomach pain and drinks to help with hydration. Sherly did not respond to the treatment and had to be taken back to the hospital the next day. We almost lost her due to dehydration. Sherly spent the next three days under observation at the hospital.

I bought Ernie for her Nov. 26, to be her companion and as something to make her feel better. She loved Ernie and kept him until August 1996 when I received permanent change of station orders to the Multinational Force and Observer in Sinai, Egypt. This was an unaccompanied tour.

My daughter, now 3 years old, told me, "Dad, I want you to take Ernie with you because I know he will take care of you like he took care of me."

That was Ernie's first trip. After that, he had three combat tours and two more unaccompanied hard duty tours.

Ernie is now deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom X-XI, to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

Silvester the Looney Toons cat is also deployed with Ernie.

Hernandez was born in Chicago, Illinois and his favorite NBA team is the Chicago Bulls.

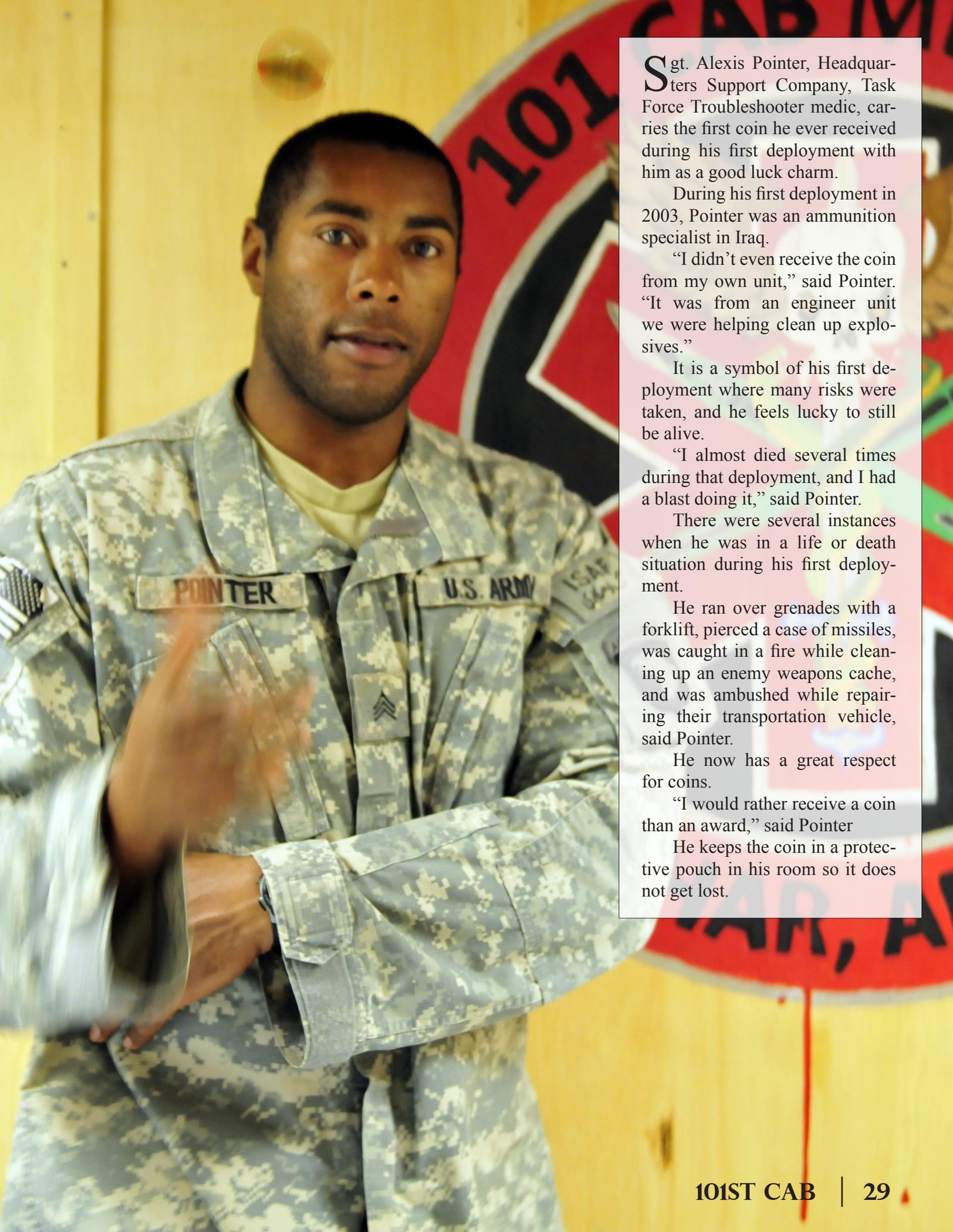
When Michael Jordan retired from the Bulls, he starred in the movie Space Jam in 1994.

Michael Jordan and the Looney Toons were fighting to save the Earth against space aliens via a basketball game during the movie.

My wife bought me the Silvester stuffed toy and he has been with me since then. He has the same combat tours and hard duty unaccompanied tours as Ernie.



# Voices of Destiny



Sgt. Alexis Pointer, Headquarters Support Company, Task Force Troubleshooter medic, carries the first coin he ever received during his first deployment with him as a good luck charm.

During his first deployment in 2003, Pointer was an ammunition specialist in Iraq.

“I didn’t even receive the coin from my own unit,” said Pointer. “It was from an engineer unit we were helping clean up explosives.”

It is a symbol of his first deployment where many risks were taken, and he feels lucky to still be alive.

“I almost died several times during that deployment, and I had a blast doing it,” said Pointer.

There were several instances when he was in a life or death situation during his first deployment.

He ran over grenades with a forklift, pierced a case of missiles, was caught in a fire while cleaning up an enemy weapons cache, and was ambushed while repairing their transportation vehicle, said Pointer.

He now has a great respect for coins.

“I would rather receive a coin than an award,” said Pointer

He keeps the coin in a protective pouch in his room so it does not get lost.

Sgt. Jeremiah J. Rutledge, D Company, Task Force Shadow unit supply noncommissioned officer in charge, has shared all of his deployments in the company of a moose.

Back in 2005, Rutledge was getting ready for his first deployment. This required an explanation to his then, 10-year-old daughter.

“I was explaining to her that I was going to Iraq, it was far from home — and far from her,” said Rutledge.

She immediately went to her room and came back with a plush moose. She asked her daddy to take “Mike the Moose” so he would always have a part of home with him.

Mike is currently on his third deployment, this time to Kandahar Afghanistan.

“He and I are present at all webcam chats with the family,” said Rutledge. “We are both still in one piece. Great work Mike!”



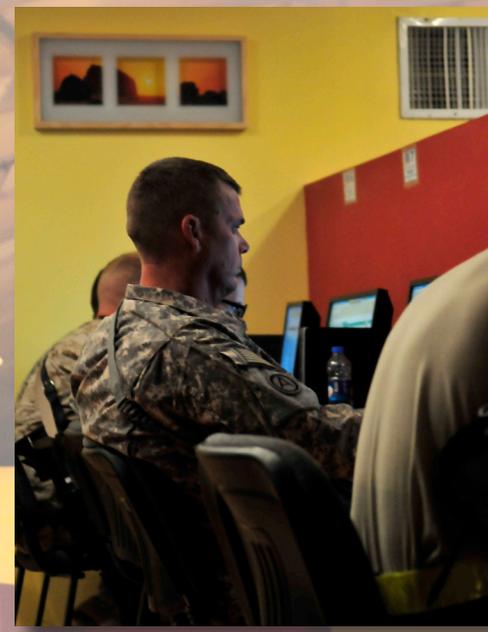


Spc. Christopher Myrick, Headquarters Support Company, Task Force Troubleshooter chaplain assistant, deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan in the protection of his Great Grandmother's cross.

"I received the cross at my Great Grandmother's funeral," said Myrick. "My Aunt Ann walked over to me and handed me the cross, saying 'your Grandmother wanted you to have this'... she said it would bring me God's protection while I was deployed."

Myrick is experiencing the protection of this old cross his Great Grandmother wore every day while he is deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom for his first deployment. He has been in the Army for two years

"I love my Family, and I love doing what I do," said Myrick. "I miss you Grandma ... And I must say, I believe you were right."



**U**nited Service Organizations Inc. opened a new center at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan Sept. 17, offering service members and civilians some comfort of “home” while they are here.

The new USO center is open from 7 a.m. to 1 a.m., seven days a week.

It is divided into ten separate areas.

A self-service cafe allows people to unite over a cup of coffee or snacks. The tables can be arranged to suit the needs of group meetings. There is also a television if you just want to sit and watch a show with a cup of joe.

The reading lounge with a fireplace provides a comfortable place to relax and unwind. Decorated like a living room, this place is bound to make you feel at home.

Three private United Through Reading booths are available where service members can

record themselves reading a book to a child.

USO will send the video of the recording and the book to the child on your behalf, said Larry Cooke, USO center director. The staff is knowledgeable and able to help service members select books for specific age groups.

With 18 satellite phones and 20 computer stations, the USO gives Soldiers the ability to stay connected with loved ones back home.

If you are calling to the United States, no phone card is needed and the phone call is free, said Cooke. If there is a waiting list, everyone will be allowed 20 minutes on the phone and 30 minutes on the computers, otherwise your time will not be limited.

There is a section for video games, containing nine Sony PlayStation 3 terminals, two Nintendo Wii stations and several oversized bean-bag chairs.



A separate room with two musical instrument based game systems is provided.

Taylor Guitars donated acoustic guitars to the USO center for service members to play there.

Two living room style TV lounges and a 30-person movie theater, allow Soldiers to relax like they are at home.

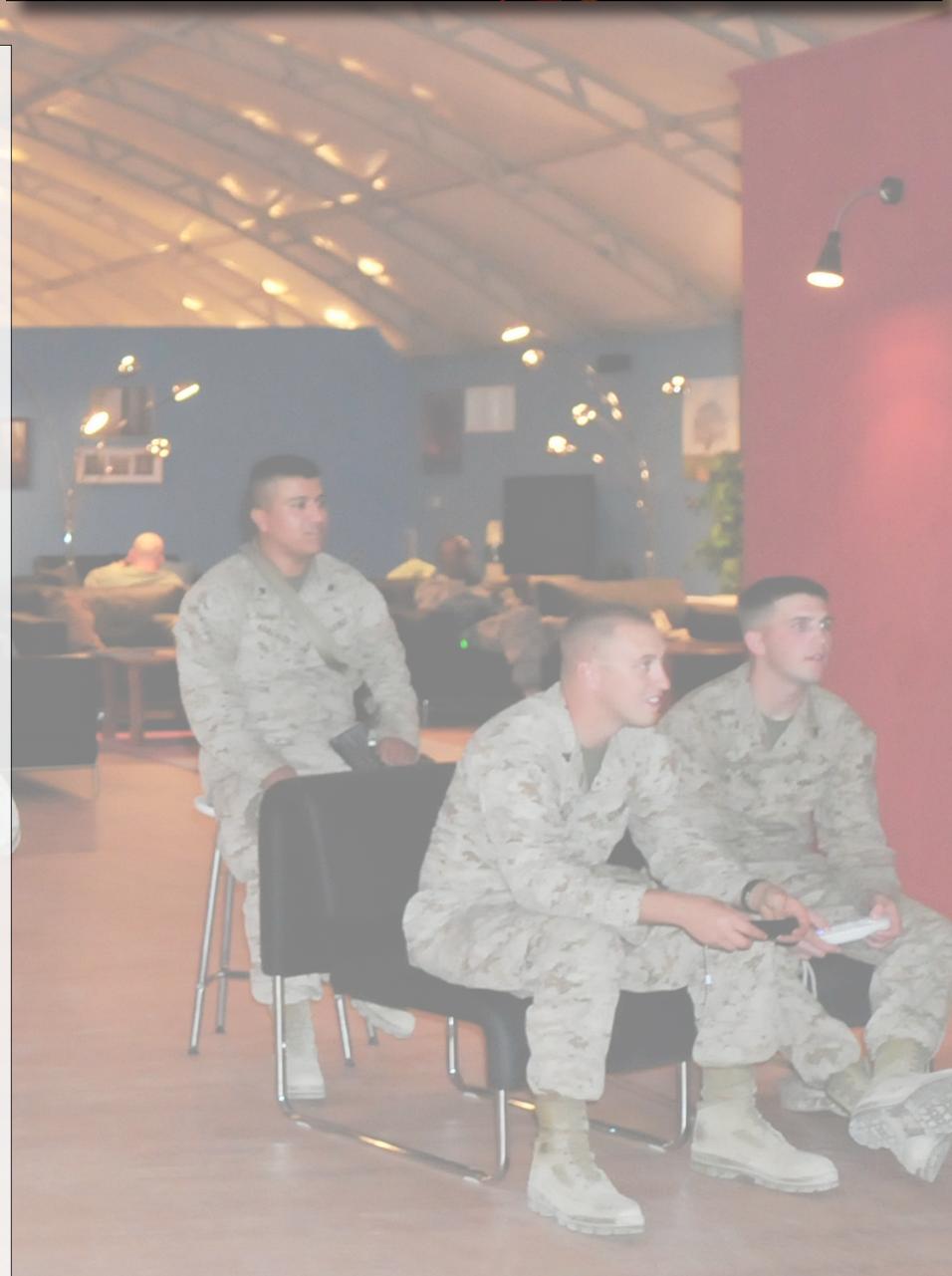
The movie theater is equipped with recliners, said Cooke. Anyone can request a movie they want to see.

On certain occasions, such as Halloween, they plan on playing themed movies, he added.

At the back of the center is a secluded area for reading or playing board games. The center has a supply of books and games for service members to choose from.

A private room with book shelves, sofas and a central coffee table can be utilized as a game room, meeting area or quiet space.

Over all, the new USO center supplies the deployed service members and civilians as many amenities as possible to make them feel at home, or give them an opportunity to unwind while connecting with loved ones back home.



# STAY FLYING *On The* WINGS OF DESTINY

Story by Master Sgt. Michael D. Brown,  
*TF Destiny senior career counselor*

The Army Retention Program is ending another successful year of retaining quality Warriors. The mission was to retain 60,000 Soldiers. More than 66,000 Warriors and their Families have since reenlisted to remain on the Army team.

Job security, benefits and the state of our national economy caused many Families to reconsider separating from the military.

Successful recruiting and retention triggered a policy change in April that decreased the number of reenlistments to help refrain from exceeding the authorized strengths.

The policy will lift Oct. 1 allowing



Staff Sgt. David Girdler, D  
Company, Task Force Eagle  
Assault AH-64 Apache re-  
pairer, reenlisted on a UH-60  
Black Hawk helicopter for  
six years Aug. 3

*Photos by Staff Sgt.  
Jaqueline Fahie*



*Above*

**Left: Spc. Keith Sallee, A Company, Task Force Eagle Assault UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter repairer, reenlisted for six years at Forward Operating Base Wolverine May 26.**  
**Right: Sgt. Charles Stanley, E Company, Task Force Eagle Assault petroleum supply specialist, reenlisted for six years at Forward Operating Base Wolverine June 24.**

Soldiers with an expiration, term of service date of Jan. 1 to Sept. 30, 2012 to reenlist for all options they qualify for. As a reminder, Soldiers within a window of 90 days prior to ETS are not eligible to reenlist without an exception to the policy.

The Army has implemented a new static reenlistment window for the upcoming fiscal year versus the two years prior to ETS dates Soldiers are accustomed to. This creates a smaller eligible population. The Army Retention Program's mission for FY 2011 is projected to be approximately 38,000 to 40,000 Soldiers.

Normally, a decreased bonus program and fewer incentives results in the retention of fewer Soldiers. Since the beginning of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, the Army increased the number of Soldiers retained. Large bonuses and more incentives were needed to achieve the set goals. The strength of forces are satisfactory at this point making big bonuses and additional incentives no longer required.

There are no changes in the bonus program to date.



**Staff Sgt. Tabvarnishia Boyd, E Company, Task Force Eagle Assault logistics sergeant, reenlisted for an indefinite term at Forward Operating Base Wolverine June 25.**

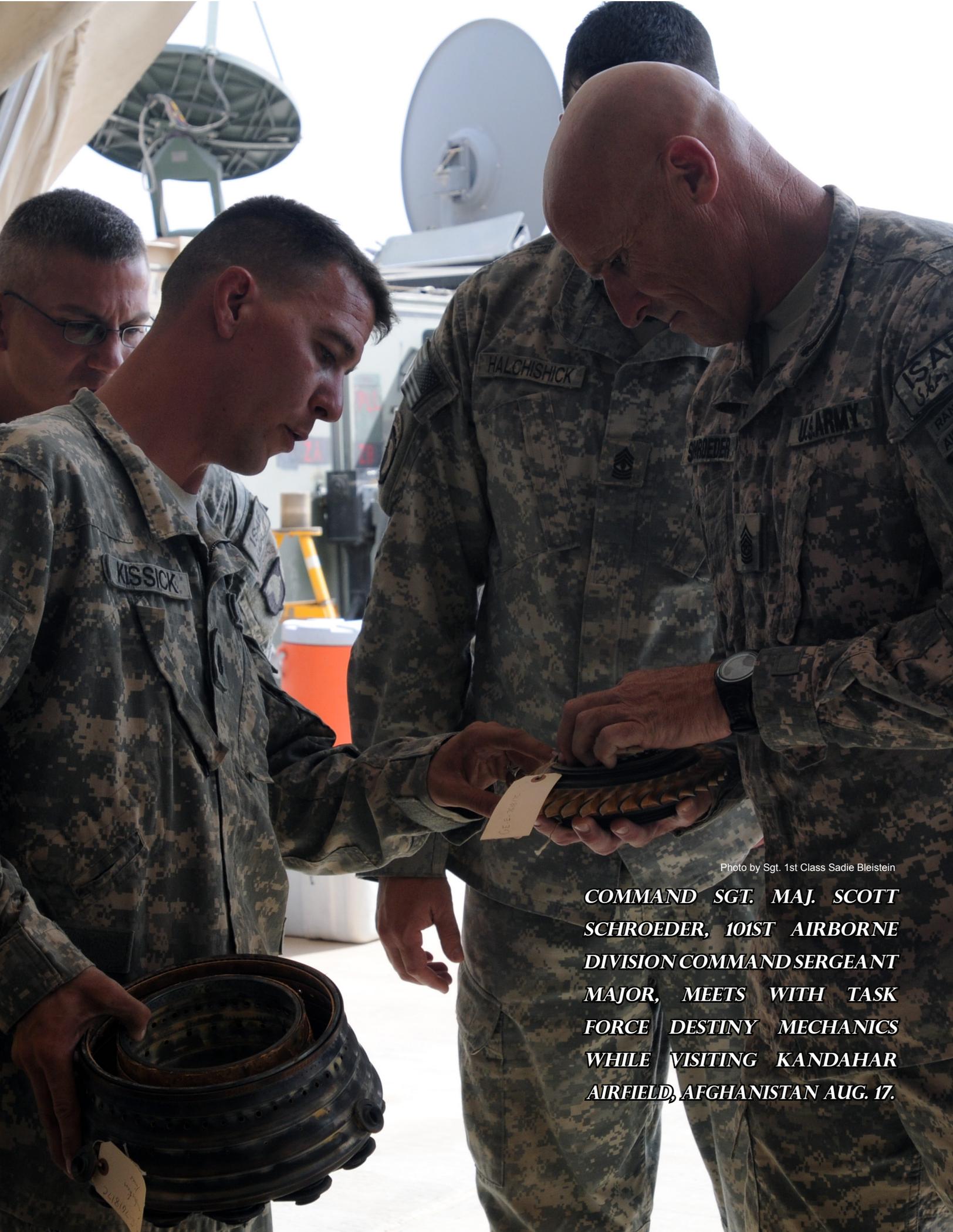


Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Sadie Bleistein

**COMMAND SGT. MAJ. SCOTT  
SCHROEDER, 101ST AIRBORNE  
DIVISION COMMAND SERGEANT  
MAJOR, MEETS WITH TASK  
FORCE DESTINY MECHANICS  
WHILE VISITING KANDAHAR  
AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN AUG. 17.**