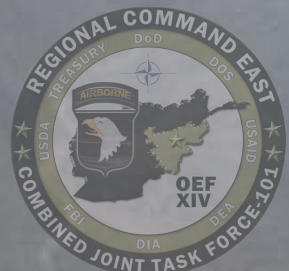


FALCON SUMMIT

SEPTEMBER 2013





Message from the Commander Colonel David Francis, "Falcon 6"

To the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade Family:

We are now halfway through our deployment to Afghanistan and going strong. Your Soldiers are performing admirably and exemplify the Army Values in all that they do. CSM Cuomo and I are extremely proud of every member of this Task Force and are honored to serve shoulder to shoulder with them as we do our part to write a bright new chapter in the history of Afghanistan. Make no mistake about it, the good people of Afghanistan are now in the lead in securing their country and grateful for the sacrifices your Soldiers are making.



Since assuming responsibility for our mission here in May, Task Force Falcon has flown over 75,000 hours, conducted over 5,000 aviation missions, moved over 65,000 passengers, and closed numerous outposts in support of retrograde operations, all while providing security for ground forces. Although the aviators flying these missions receive a lot of the applause, this remarkable accomplishment would not be possible without the work of our world class maintainers

and support personnel. Their tireless and thankless efforts have kept our aircraft in the sky around the clock. Thank you for the work you do; it is noticed and appreciated.

The support we have received from the Family Readiness Groups, Fort Drum community, and the North Country has also been nothing short of phenomenal. Programs like "Adopt a Platoon" have kept our Soldiers supplied with many of the luxuries of home that are not available in theater, and have let them know their service to our country is appreciated. CSM Cuomo and I are constantly amazed by the support our Soldiers are receiving from home and recognize that we are extremely lucky to have these systems in place while the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade is overseas. Thank you for your unwavering support; the impact you have had on this task force is immeasurable.

We welcome B Troop, 6-6 Cav., and elements of the Hawaii and Missouri National Guards who have joined us and have assumed responsibility of air operations in their areas. The 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, from the 1st Armored Division, is wrapping up their 9-month deployment, their final five months as part of 10th CAB. We thank them for the terrific job they've done and wish them a safe and joyous return to their loved ones.

The hot summer months here in Afghanistan are almost behind us, but the mission is far from over. Task Force Falcon will tackle every endeavor with continued passion and intensity and will finish this deployment strong. I would like to take this opportunity to again thank all of our Soldiers from the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, the National Guard and the other Army units that comprise Task Force Falcon, as well as our Families and Family Readiness Groups at our home stations; you are the reason this deployment has been a success.

FLY TO GLORY!
COL David J. Francis
10th Combat Aviation Brigade
Task Force Falcon
Commander

10th CAB celebrates unit's history



Col. David Francis, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade commander, opens the 48th birthday celebration of the unit at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan, Aug. 21. The 10th CAB traces its lineage to Fort Benning, Ga., where the unit was constituted into the regular Army as the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 10th Aviation Battalion, Aug. 21, 1965, and activated two years later. The 101st Airborne Division band, behind Col. Francis, provided entertainment. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Soldiers of the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade gathered here Aug. 21, to celebrate the unit's 48th birthday, at Bagram Airfield, with a barbecue and entertainment by the 101st Airborne Division band.

"It's fitting that we take the time to celebrate this great brigade's birthday this year, in the unit's fourth and likely final time in Operation Enduring Freedom," said Col. David Francis, 10th CAB commander, said, opening the event. "This deployment may well close another chapter in a long and distinguished history."

Although the unit has called Fort Drum, NY, home for over two decades, the 10th CAB actually traces its lineage to Fort Benning, Ga., where the unit was constituted into the regular Army as the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 10th Aviation Battalion.

See *BIRTHDAY* on page 4



FALCON SUMMIT

SEPTEMBER 2013

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TASK FORCE REAPER
Mazar e Sharif
LTC James Schreffler
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COVER PHOTO

An AH-64 Apache helicopter flies through a valley in eastern Afghanistan.

10th CAB partnership with ANAF marks progress



An all-Afghan Mi-17 helicopter crew rehearses an air assault mission in a flight simulator Aug. 24, at Kabul, Afghanistan. 10th Combat Aviation advisors are assisting Afghan helicopter pilots with developing best practices for planning air missions to include integrating intelligence, command and control and weather. (Courtesy photo)



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kyle Cheeseman, a 10th Combat Aviation Brigade air assault advisor to the Afghan National Air Force, answers an Afghan flight crew's question prior to an Mi-17 flight simulator session Aug. 24, in Kabul, Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)

Message from the Chief Warrant Officer of the Brigade

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jeffrey Fitzgerald

Falcon Friends and Family,

Another month has passed and Task Force Falcon continues to provide top-notch aviation support to our customers all across our area of operations. Our Afghanistans partners appreciate our efforts in assisting the Afghan National Security Forces



to secure their country. There is no other foreign military that can do what 10th CAB does. The sheer amount of hours we have flown, passengers we have moved, and maintenance phases we have completed are astounding. We are extremely proud of every member of this task force; it takes a team of highly trained professionals to keep our aircraft in the air in the conditions we face in Afghanistan. I ask that we finish the second half of this deployment strong and maintain our focus as we head into the home stretch.

I can't say enough about the support we have received from our families, the Fort Drum Community, and the North Country. Our shelves remain fully stocked with care packages as a constant reminder of the people back home that appreciate our efforts. Thank you for keeping us in your thoughts and for your unwavering support and dedication.

FLY TO GLORY!
CW5 Jeffrey Fitzgerald
10th Combat Aviation Brigade
Chief Warrant Officer of the Brigade
Falcon 65



<https://www.facebook.com/10thCAB>



Command Sergeant Major's Corner

Command Sgt. Maj. Chad Cuomo, "Falcon 7"

Falcon Friends and Family,

We have reached the halfway mark of our deployment and are as strong as ever. Our Soldiers have tackled every task with enthusiasm and the professionalism expected of 10th Combat Aviation Brigade and Task Force Falcon Soldiers. I am extremely proud of the work being performed and the sacrifices made by our Soldiers. As the summer fighting season comes to an end, I ask that every member of this Task Force remain vigilant and aware of their surroundings. It is crucial that we battle complacency and that leaders continue to enforce the standards. You know what right looks like.



I would also like to use this opportunity to thank the Families back at our home stations. You have heard this before, and it is true: you are the back bone of this organization. Your support and dedication to Task Force Falcon is a tremendous enabler. You fuel our efforts in Afghanistan and give us the strength to go the extra mile. I would encourage all of you to take advantage of the reassures made available to you by your Family Readiness Groups as we head into the final months of our deployment.

FLY TO GLORY!

CSM Chad Cuomo
10th Combat Aviation Brigade
Task Force Falcon
Falcon 7

BIRTHDAY continued from page 2

ion, Aug. 21, 1965, and activated two years later. The unit performed valorously during the Army's efforts in Vietnam and would receive numerous commendations and awards.

After its deactivation in 1980, at Fort Lewis, Wash., the unit would be constituted as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, April 1, 1988, and activated at Fort Drum, NY. The brigade was activated at Griffiss Air Force Base, in Rome, NY, July 2, 1988, and would move to its current home at Fort Drum two years later.

Units from the 10th CAB provided support for Hurricane Andrew relief in South Florida, Operations Restore Hope and Continued Hope in Somalia, Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, stabilization force missions in Bosnia and Kosovo, and most recently,

Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. The unit has deployed to Afghanistan four times and Iraq once.

"The legacy we leave will form the foundation upon which this unit's future commanders, aviators and support personnel build their future successes," said Maj. Jonathan Shaffner, 10th CAB executive officer. "Future generations of warriors will draw upon the heroic deeds of 10th CAB Soldiers, past and present."

The event was a brief respite from the daily routine and allowed the Soldiers from numerous sections to get together and recognize the unit's history. The 10th CAB is coming up on the halfway point of its 9-month deployment to Regional Command –East, Afghanistan.



You're the news!

This news magazine belongs to the Soldiers of Task Force Falcon

Send us photos, stories, and ideas for future coverage, and see your unit's accomplishments highlighted on our Facebook page and in future editions of the Falcon Summit

Email: pete.smedberg@afghan.swa.army.mil, todd.pouliot@afghan.swa.army.mil



Selfless Service

Task Force Falcon chose the theme of selfless service for the month of September. Over 80 aviators from the task force earned valorous awards from the unit's previous deployment to Afghanistan. Sgt. Julia Bringloe, a flight medic, became just the seventh female to earn the Distinguished Flying Cross. These aviators performed heroically under enemy fire. The story below was published Sept. 14, 2012 and is about one of several of the unit's valorous award ceremonies in 2012.

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot,
10th Combat Aviation Brigade

Ten aviators received medals for valor, for their actions in Afghanistan, during a ceremony Friday at Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield. Awardees included two members of a medevac crew – a pilot and a flight medic – who earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for their extraordinary actions while evacuating 11 wounded personnel over a three-day operation.

On April 26, 2011, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Kenneth G. Brodhead, the unit's standardization pilot, and Sgt. Julia A. Bringloe, flight medic, and their crew received a call to evacuate several wounded Soldiers in the Watapur Valley. The mission involved Brodhead and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Erik Sabiston, pilot in command, holding the aircraft in a steady hover so Bringloe could be lowered by hoist, which was operated by Spc. David Capps, crew chief. All are members of C Company Dustoff, 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment.

"After reaching the ground, I did a rapid assessment of the patient with leg shrapnel (and) deemed him stable, but with a tourniquet in place, I chose to lift him out on the sked," Bringloe said.

Soon after dropping their patient off at the nearest forward surgical team facility and refueling, the crew received another call.

They flew back to the Watapur Valley with another medevac helicopter in the lead. The lead aircraft made a one-wheeled landing on a qalat but began taking fire. The aircraft would have

to return to a nearby base.

As Brodhead and Bringloe's crew waited for enemy fire to be suppressed, they received a call to pick up a Soldier suffering from severe dehydration. This Soldier was preventing his unit from moving to help another unit in contact with the enemy, so the crew asked for and received clearance to pick up the dehydrated Soldier.

Bringloe said there were two things that made this mission one of the most challenging extractions she could imagine.

"One, it was dusk and any daylight was disappearing fast, but it was still too bright to utilize our (night vision goggles)," she said. "Two, they were in a very steep draw surrounded by 80- to 100-foot trees."

Bringloe was lowered to the ground, where she assessed the patient and secured him to the jungle penetrator. As they were brought up by the hoist, about halfway up, Bringloe and her patient began to swing toward a tree.

"I stuck my leg out to cushion the blow and my calf smashed between the metal (jungle penetrator) and the tree," Bringloe said. "I pushed off the tree to swing in the opposite direction to avoid getting tangled in the branches, and soon we cleared the tree tops to start forward flight while Spc. Capps cabled us up."

The patient was taken to a nearby FST facility, the crew refueled, and Bringloe took a look at her leg and washed out the gash on her shin.

The crew then headed back to the Watapur Valley, where ground troops were still taking fire. AH-64 Apaches provided suppressive fire for the medevac extraction.

With Bringloe and Capps guiding him in, Brodhead executed a one-wheeled landing on the qalat.

"Sgt. Bringloe and Spc. Capps expertly guided me into the one tiny area that was suitable for landing," Brodhead said.

As soon as the left wheel touched the roof, Bringloe opened the cabin door and motioned for the casualties, loaded them, and closed the door so they could egress as fast as possible.

"For this entire mission, the ground troops and gunships were providing heavy and effective suppressive fire," Brodhead said. "We later learned that one of the casualties likely would have died if he had not been evacuated when he was."

The following morning, the crew responded to a call to pick up three more Soldiers.

"The mission had to be done fast because of the potential enemy in the area and the high hover my pilots had to execute," Bringloe said. "All three patients were moved without incident,



Sgt. Julia Bringloe, a flight medic assigned to Company C DUSTOFF, 3rd Battalion (General Support), 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, receives the Distinguished Flying Cross from Maj. Gen. Mark Milley, 10th Mountain Division commander, during a ceremony Sept. 7, at Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield, Fort Drum, N.Y. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

See *SELFLESS SERVICE* on page 6



SELFLESS SERVICE from page 5

but it took a bit longer since I was trying to facilitate moving their gear with them to free up the Soldiers that remained on the ground. Although it was a difficult place for my pilots to hold a hover, they did it without moving an inch. And Spc. Capps, being new to hoist operations, was really getting the hang of it.”

Bringloe assessed her patients and no further en route care was needed. The crew dropped off the patient, refueled and returned to the valley to pick up a Soldier who had twisted his ankle and was preventing his squad from moving from their position.

“Although the injury was not urgent, their situation was,” she said. “Elements getting locked into one position was proving to be detrimental to the situation, and we really wanted to prevent that.”

The crew spotted the Soldiers below, and Capps lowered Bringloe to them. On the ground, Bringloe secured the patient and herself to the JP. As they were lifted, Bringloe used her feet to kick the JP away from a 20-foot boulder. The crew brought the patient to a nearby base and was forced to shut down for the day to fix a mechanical issue.

“It was frustrating to be so close to clearing the battlefield,” Bringloe said.

On the final day of the operation, April 28, 2011, the crew returned to a qalat on which they had made a one-wheel landing two days earlier.

“The qalat was taking effective fire, and weather was moving in with thick cloud layers,” she said.

After AH-64 Apache helicopters were able to suppress enemy fire, Bringloe was lowered down to the qalat where she was able to successfully evacuate the casualty. As she prepared to be hoisted back to her aircraft, the troops on the roof with her started yelling and waving her away.

“I heard gunfire coming from the east,” she said. “I was taking fire as Spc. Capps cabled me up.”

Weather conditions continued to worsen, yet the crew was called upon one last time.

“We flew back to the valley only to find the weather conditions further deteriorating,” she said. “We proceeded to cautiously poke our way into any hole in the clouds that we could.”

They eventually found an opening, and Bringloe was lowered to the ground once again. As she was cabled back up, she looked up at her aircraft and saw that it was becoming enveloped by clouds.

“I knew my pilots were flying on instruments alone when I saw the tree tops disappear in the clouds,” she said.

Brodhead, who has served in the U.S. Army for 26 years,

spoke very highly of his crew.

“Without them, you wouldn’t be talking to me right now,” he said. “Eleven hoists were performed, and three platoons were supplied with desperately needed water and IV fluids. The crew was engaged twice.

“CW2 Sabiston managed this mission load wonderfully. He performed with skills well beyond his years and experience. “Spc. Capps performed his first through 11th live combat hoist over those two long days. His first hoist was good. His last hoist was great.

“Sgt. Bringloe’s accomplishments during Operation Hammer Down were nothing short of heroic. She rode the hoist over and over again without hesitation. She was slammed into a tree and had her leg gouged. She was hurt worse than some of the patients that we were evacuating.”

Although the number of women in aviation continues to grow, it remains a predominantly male field.

“I always try to conduct myself as a Soldier, not a female Soldier,” Bringloe said. “I hope my efforts show other female Soldiers that if you work hard you can accomplish great things.”

Col. David Francis, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade commander, called the actions of the awardees shining examples of what it means to live the Warrior ethos.

“What we didn’t hear about is that every one of these Soldiers got up the next day and did it again,” Francis said. “And they got up the day after that, and almost every day until the end of their rotation, and did it again until the mission was complete. It’s an honor to recognize them today.”

Eight aviators were presented Air Medals with Valor during the ceremony. Aviators who received the award were Maj. Richard P. Tucker, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Richard Arnold, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Burton T. Schieffler, Sgt. Phillip K. Vaughn, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Francesco M. Foschetti, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Patrick C. Reape, Sgt. Jason R. Leaders and Sgt. Jonathan L. Stretch.





Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain (MAJ) Jerry Johnson

Greetings again to everyone from Bagram. It is hard to believe we are now approaching the second half of the deployment. Last week when I sat down with COL Francis, he mentioned to me that reintegration is one of the big themes he wants me to focus on until we hit Fort Drum this winter. In previous newsletter pieces I have talked about



some of the concerns pertaining to separation, in addition to integrating some of the themes from our Community Outreach Working Group, such as Teamwork in August. Well, September's theme is Selfless Service, and what better way to think about this Army value than to reflect on the home? Most of us are now going to be thinking about our marriages as reunions approach. Both Soldier and Family Member have been serving selflessly for the past several months, and in many cases through multiple deployments. As we focus back to marriage, we

all need to ask ourselves if we are prepared to be that Selfless Servant in a few months. If you have not started to think in these terms, start now. Others, who are not married, take what you can from principles we share.

One of my favorite marriage books is Willard Harley's *His Needs, Her Needs*. Dr. Harley has been a counselor and therapist in the Minneapolis area for more than three decades. This program focuses on the positive, while his companion volume *Love Busters* focuses on what happens when couples stop caring for each other and act in destructive ways that destroy their marriage. I hope we do not have to face that when we return home in the winter. Harley's premise is simple, and based on counseling thousands of couples: if both husband and wife intentionally attempt to make each other happy (i.e. act like Selfless Servants of the other's needs), they will have an irresistible love for each other. This is similar to what Dr. John Gottman says in the "Sound Marital House" I discussed previously, only Harley says that in general there are five basic needs that men and women consider to be most important.

Essentially, each of the five needs for the husband is balanced by a corresponding need that is expressed by the wife. Harley acknowledges that in perhaps 20 percent of marriages a woman's need mirrors or is greater than the husband in one of these five areas, and vice versa, so he does not want us to stereotype anything. Also, while it is true that men have five needs that are the most common and women do as well, the partner should still try to express that characteristic toward the other regardless of gender. This is Harley's "Marital Golden Rule." Finally, Harley would assert that the communication and problem solving strategies we teach in programs like PREP or The Five Love Languages only work if the two people are best friends, or soul mates. And we must be selfless to be best friends. Here goes, see if you agree or not:

According to Harley's research, here are the five most important needs for men:

- **Sexual Fulfillment** – men in general have a stronger desire for the physical part of the sexual relationship. Care needs to be taken to avoid too many generalities.
- **Recreational Companionship** – men desire for their wife to be a "playmate" in a sense when it comes to doing activities. Of course many women want their husbands to do things like go shopping, take part in their hobbies, and engage in conversation. Men tend to like adventurous outdoor activities or have their wife enjoy watching games

with them, etc.

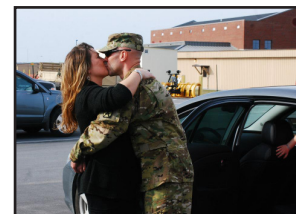
- **An Attractive Spouse** – Harley is not trying to be chauvinistic, despite what some may say. He is saying that a wife who "does not let herself go" has greater self esteem and a husband who is more proud of her. Remember men that you should not "let yourself go" either.
- **Peace and Quiet – Domestic Support.** Again, women need domestic support as well. This has changed with more women working outside of the home. Men in general do not handle conflict as well as women due to their emotional make up, and thus when they are at home they function better when controversy is not always at the forefront.
- **Admiration** – Women also want respect, but generally speaking this is a source of emotional stability for the husband more than the wife. From the Judeo-Christian standpoint, Ephesians 5:33 says, "However, let each of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband." This can be misapplied, so beware of your attitude, especially husbands. You are still to serve as well!

Here are the five most important needs for women:

- **Affection** – Women are more relationally-oriented than men, and the intimate part of the relationship is not based so much on physical pleasure as it is on developing a bonding, a oneness with their husband. So men, if you want sexual fulfillment you better show affection toward your wife non-stop. When you return home, romance her again.
- **Conversation** – According to Les and Leslie Parrot, men usually speak to get a report (i.e. just the facts), whereas their wife wants rapport (to build a relationship). Men often need to work on eye contact, body language, and removing distractions like the television to give their wife undivided attention. Studies show women use about 10,000 words per day, while men can get by with about 5,000.
- **Honesty and Openness** – This does work both ways, but again in the majority of marriages the wife has a harder time trusting her husband. Men often try to cover their tracks when controversial issues come to the forefront; additionally they tend to not want to make themselves emotionally vulnerable so they can shut down the communication process. We need to work on this to communicate better.
- **Financial Support** – With the changing of our society, this is like domestic support in that there are fewer "traditional" households. But Dave Ramsey is correct in saying that money represents a scorecard for men and a security blanket for women. Therefore if you have money issues the wife will usually be a lot more stressed than her husband, and this will affect the other areas of the marriage.
- **Family Commitment** – Closely connected to this desire for security through financial stability is the need to the husband to also be a good father, and just as dedicated to the family as he is to his job. Now in about 90% of cases in today's Army it is the husband who is deployed and the wife who is at home with all of the family responsibilities. As we get ready to redeploy I plan to drill deeper into this issue. Men especially, prepare to engage and reconnect.

Just like some of the other marriage materials I have presented and will present, Harley speaks of the "emotional love tank" that needs to have regular deposits and rare withdrawals to be creating a strong marriage, with an irresistible love. So as we are a few months out, husbands and wives ask yourselves how you can meet your spouse's emotional needs, whether they mirror Harley's majority profile or not.

Take care everyone, Many Blessings, Chaplain Jerry





From "Reaper 6"

LTC James Schreffler

Family, Friends, Soldiers, and Loved Ones of 1st Attack (now TF Reaper):

I can't believe it has been over a month since we arrived here in country and got to work, finally doing what we have trained to do for years. Your Soldiers continue to do an awesome job meeting the mission and accomplishing the objectives of our chain of command while enabling the Afghan military and government throughout RC-North.

We held the Transfer of Authority ceremony in mid-August in which we took over responsibility of all U.S. aviation operations in RC-N from 1-104th ARB of the PAARNG. I want to thank the Shadow Warriors for all their efforts here and for ensuring that we had a good hand-over process.

Since taking over aviation operations here, the transition has been seamless. We have been working side by side with our Active Duty members of the task force. My hat is off to all the units from the 501st Aviation Regiment and the 127th ASB who will be heading home soon. Your professionalism and hard work has been outstanding and will have a lasting impact on RC-N. It has been a pleasure serving with you through the past couple of months.

The 1-135th elements have written another chapter in unit history this past month as all elements have received their "combat patch". This patch is awarded to the Soldiers to place on their right shoulder to indicate the unit they served under in combat. HHC, D Co (-), E Co (-), A Co and B Co have all been awarded either the 35th ID or the 10th Mountain Division patch to wear. C Co has been awarded the 1st ID patch. Check the company and battalion Facebook pages for pictures of this important tradition.

On the home front, I continue to see dialogue back and forth regarding the addressing of mail to your Soldiers. Remember, the recommendation to not put rank on packages/letters and to use the rear det. as the return address is just that, a recommendation. It is made solely to enhance the security of the Soldiers and their families at home. As I stated previously we have a large number of local nationals that work on our base and just don't want unauthorized personnel to have access to personal information or home addresses.

I also want to dispel rumors about Soldiers not being fed. I assure you, the Soldiers of TF Reaper are well taken care of and there is no shortage of food here. We constantly receive care packages of all kinds of goodies here as well. Just a reminder to everyone in the Task Force to keep these snacks in your work space. It is a violation of General Order #1 to have any food in your living tent. Food attracts mice which in turn bring disease and snakes!

This week we had a surprise delivery. Two huge boxes of baseball gloves, bats and balls arrived for the unit. The College of the Ozarks baseball team and psychology dept gathered all these donations during a special event held for the 1st Attack team. It was quite a sight to see everyone digging through the boxes, grabbing a mitt and heading outside for some catch. Thank you CofO for remembering and supporting our troops!

Thank you all for the tremendous support you provide to the Soldiers of TF Reaper and 1st Attack!

Fly to Glory!



REAPER



Soldiers of Task Force Reaper’s B Company, 127th Aviation Support Battalion, 1st Armored Division’s Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, pose with their German Armed Forces Badge for Weapons Proficiency (Schutzenschnur) certificates, beside member so the German Maintenance of the Combat Service Support Aug. 18, at Camp Marmal in Balkh Province, Afghanistan.

Schutzenschnur; German marksmanship qualification honors TF Reaper maintenance unit’s partnership with German counterpart

By Staff Sgt. Amber Wilson, 1-135th Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, Task Force Reaper

CAMP MARMAL, Afghanistan— German soldiers of the Maintenance of the Combat Service Support from Bavaria awarded Soldiers from Task Force Reaper with the German Armed Forces Badge for Weapons Proficiency (Schützenschnur) in a ceremony Aug. 18.

German Army Capt. Christopher Wallner, commander of the MCCS, hosted the event at the German Compound of the camp with his American counter-

part, Major Bryan Zesiger of Task Force Reaper’s B Company, 127th Aviation Support Battalion, 1st Armored Division’s Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon.

The two military leaders have created a partnership of teamwork and cultural education for their troops through the experiences they have created while in country. They have provided each other tours of their work areas and discussed the similarities and differences of ground versus aviation maintenance.

“Sharing unilateral training with other (International

Security Assistance Force members) helps to create strong teamwork and lasting partnerships,” Zesiger said.

The two military leaders have created a partnership of teamwork and cultural education

In honor of their camaraderie, Wallner and his troops provided the Americans with the German Marksmanship qualification. The Soldiers were required to shoot targets using three German weapons: the G36 service rifle, the P8 pistol, and the MG3 machine gun.

Upon successful completion of the event TF Reaper Soldiers received silver and gold medallions on a silver rope based on how they performed.

The competition was established in 1954 for the soldiers of the German armed forces and Allied nations. The history of the medallion-and-lanyard award originates back to the Eighty Years’ War, when Spanish musketeers carried ropes, often worn over one shoulder. This concept transferred to awarding cords as decoration in the early 18th century. Later, after the cord became an

See PARTNERSHIP on page 10



Major Bryan Zesiger, B Company, 127th Aviation Support Battalion, commander, and German Capt Christopher Wallner, Maintenance of the Combat Service Support commander, pose for a photo on a German armored tracked vehicle. W provided a tour of his unit's facilities after a German marksmanship badge ceremony Aug. 18, at Camp Marmal in Balkh Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Amber Wilson, 1-135th Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, Task Force Reaper)



Sgt. Isaac Krout, an AH-64 Apache helicopter maintainer assigned to B Company, 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment serving under 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, looks up from his work. (Courtesy photo)



Members of the German Northern Response Unit move a simulated patient to a waiting Task Force Reaper helicopter during medical evacuation training with American forces. (Courtesy photo)



Task Force Reaper crew chiefs prepare to respond to a 9-line medical evacuation request during medical evacuation training. (Courtesy photo)



Task Force Reaper medic, foreground, and crew chiefs transport a casualty in a UH-60 Blackhawk medical evacuation helicopter. (Courtesy photo)

PARTNERSHIP from page 9

official military award, it was adapted to an award for proficiency in marksmanship.

After the ceremony concluded, the participants enjoyed a meal together provided by the German hosts. Wallner and Zesiger plan to continue their partnership and teamwork for the remainder of their concurrent deployment.





DRAGON

From “Dragon 6”

The time has come for Task Force Dragon to say goodbye to the Task Force Falcon Team. We have begun our final month here on FOB Fenty and preparations are already underway to transfer around the clock aviation mission support to Task Force Tigershark. We would like to take the opportunity to thank Task Force Falcon for all their unwavering support during this deployment. It has been an honor and privilege to serve side by side with such a professional organization.

I am happy to say that the men and women of Task Force Dragon are determined to finish strong and bring everyone home safely to their family and friends anxiously awaiting back at Fort Bliss, Texas. It is hard to believe that eight months have passed and although time has flown by, the Dragons have accomplished so much. We have helped retrograde efforts in the Kunar Valley and Nangarhar province to supporting Afghan led forces during a tough fighting season. Afghan forces are becoming more confident everyday that they will be able to defend Afghanistan on their own. In the last two months we have welcomed A Company, 1-135th ARB, Missouri National Guard and B Company, 6-6th to the Task Force Dragon family. We wish both units good luck as they continue the mission and provide support to coalition ground units.

Our Soldiers have taken part in a historic transition during Operation Enduring Freedom. I am extremely proud of each and everyone’s hard work throughout this deployment. I know they are all looking forward to the cold cervezas and time spent with family back in El Paso, Texas. We will continue to keep the Soldiers and families of Task Force Falcon in our thoughts and prayers. Adios and Buena Suerte!

First to Strike! Fly to Glory!

LTC Glen E. Heape
Task Force 1-501st Aviation Regiment
Task Force Dragon





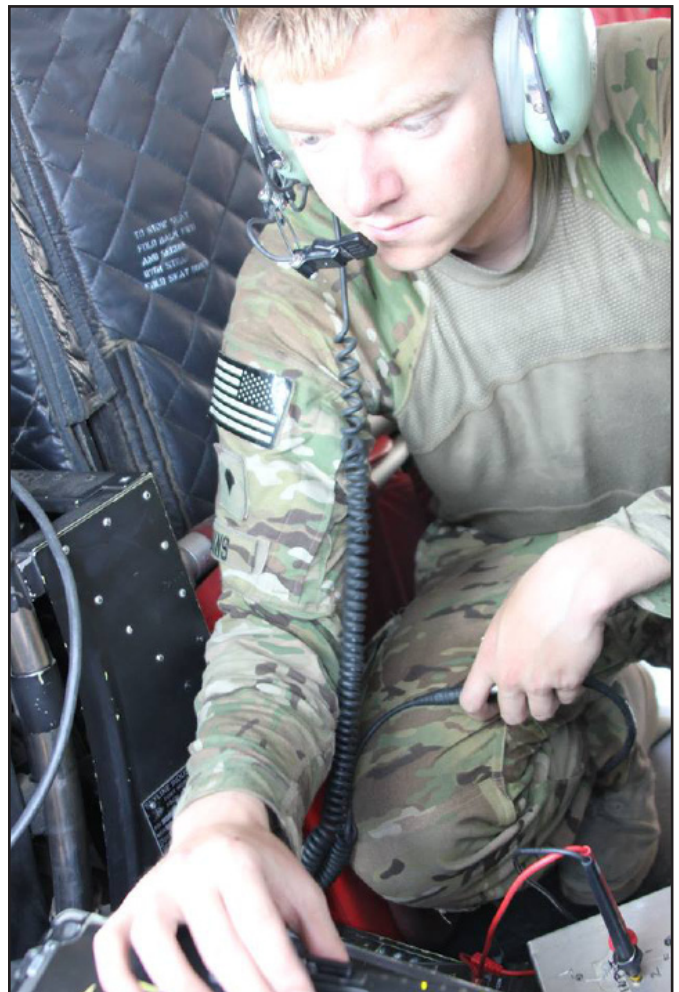
An AH-64 Apache helicopter from B Company, 1st Attack/ Reconnaissance Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, attached to 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, departs the forward arming and refueling point at Forward Operating Base Fenty, Aug. 10. (Photo by Sgt. Armando Avila, 1-501st ARB, TF Dragon)



Spc. Joseph Horton, a CH-47 Chinook helicopter repairer assigned to B Company, 3rd Battalion (General Support), 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, attached to 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, assists a fellow Soldier in readjusting the thrust of a Chinook after its engine was replaced. (Photo by Sgt. Armando Avila, 1-501st ARB, TF Dragon)



Spc. Shaina Joseph, a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear specialist assigned to C Company, 3rd Battalion (Assault), 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, attached to 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, inspects her ammunition before a mission. (Photo by Sgt. Armando Avila, 1-501st ARB, TF Dragon)



Spc. Erik Jenkins, an avionics maintainer, assigned to B Company, 3rd Battalion (General Support), Task Force Dragon, attached to 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, makes adjustments to the thrust of a CH-47 Chinook helicopter at Forward Operating Base Fenty in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Sgt. Armando Avila)



TIGERSHARK



Spc. Shane Montgomery and Spc. Ethan Burke, AH-64 Apache helicopter armament, electrical, avionic, systems repairers assigned to Task Force Tigershark, load an AGM-114 Hellfire missile after completing maintenance on the Apache. (Courtesy photo)



A flight medic prepares to be lowered by hoist from a UH-60 medical evacuation helicopter during training at Forward Operating Base Orgun E. A crew chief, who operates the hoist looks for possible hazards before lowering the flight medic. The crew is from the Massachusetts/New Hampshire National Guard which is attached to 10th Combat Aviation Brigade. (Courtesy photo)



Spc. Ethan Burke, an AH-64 Apache helicopter armament, electrical, avionic systems repairer assigned to Task Force Tigershark, loads 2.75-inch Folding Fin Aerial Rockets onto an Apache after maintenance. (Courtesy photo)



Lt. Col. Chad Ward, 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, Task Force Tigershark, commander, affixes the 10th Mountain Division patch to the right shoulder of a Soldier from B Troop, 6th Squadron, 6 Air Cavalry Regiment, signifying the Soldier's deployment with the unit. B Troop., 6-6 Air Cav. arrived to Forward Operating Base Fenty in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, earlier in September to provide additional aerial reconnaissance capabilities to Task Force Tigershark. (Courtesy photo)



Sgt. Darrie McNabb, an ammunition noncommissioned officer assigned to E Company, 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, Task Force Tigershark, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, inspects ammunition palletized for movement at Forward Operating Base Salerno in Khowst Province, Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)



Pfc. Jess VanBuren, an AH-64 Apache helicopter repairer assigned to B Company, 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, Task Force Tigershark, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, loosens a bolt in preparation to remove the number 2 engine gear box Sept. 6, at Forward Operating Base Salerno in Khowst Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th CAB)



Aviation Maintenance unit hosts suicide awareness run/walk

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade

KHOWST PROVINCE, Afghanistan (Sept. 13, 2013) – “Until it hits you, you don’t realize that suicide is around you all the time,” said U.S. Army Capt. Christopher McFarland, commander of 10th Combat Aviation Brigade’s D Company, 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, Task Force Tigershark. “Every 13 minutes a person in America takes their life.”

Suicide affects a large segment of our population. According to Department of Defense statistics, a member of the U.S. military commits suicide nearly every 17 hours. In the Army, the effects of suicide can be far-reaching due to the close relationships among its members. Soldiers from D Co., 1-10 Attack/ Reconnaissance Bn., conducted a Remembrance Run/Walk Sept. 7, at Forward Operating Base Salerno, to raise suicide prevention awareness and to remember a fallen comrade.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Francisco Andrade and his wife, Maria Guadalupe Andrade, a former Soldier, met Joshua Taylor during AH-64 Apache helicopter maintainer advanced individual training in 2005. The three of them completed AIT together, were assigned to D Company, 3rd Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd CAB, deployed to Iraq in 2008-2009, and after redeployment, moved to Fort Drum, N.Y., where the unit was redesignated 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, 10th CAB, TF Tigershark.

Maria Guadalupe Andrade completed her enlistment and left the Army, and in 2010, Staff Sgt. Andrade and Taylor, who was a sergeant at the time, deployed to Afghanistan with TF Tigershark. When the unit returned a year later, Taylor had decided to complete his enlistment and become a civilian. Andrade said he received the news from Taylor’s former first sergeant that he had taken his life about a month after he left the unit.

“I called my wife immediately and informed her,” Andrade recalled. “To both her and I it was like losing a family member.” The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention conducts suicide awareness walks across U.S. college campuses each year. Maria Guadalupe Andrade decided to participate in one such event at a campus in Utica, N.Y., by forming a team to raise money in the name of their fallen friend. She and her husband discussed it over Facebook and he told her he would run whatever distance she planned to do.

When McFarland, who had been Taylor’s platoon leader during the previous deployment, heard what Maria Guadalupe Andrade and her husband were doing, he decided to organize a Remembrance Walk/Run for U.S. Army Sgt. Joshua Taylor; not only to honor his memory, but to raise awareness for suicide prevention. He said he wasn’t really surprised by the number of Soldiers who participated.

“We’re a really close-knit unit,” McFarland said. “At this time in our deployment with my formation right now, I wanted to

pass it along that someone’s always there to give you a hand. Of course we’re continually driving hard but if you have to take a knee, let someone know; a chaplain, a mental health provider, somebody’s out there to listen to you. You may be the only one to notice and be able to intervene.”

Nearly 100 Soldiers woke up before sunrise for the 4-mile run/walk which opened with a prayer by TF Tigershark U.S. Army Chaplain (Capt.) Wonhyo Kim. McFarland spoke about his memories of Taylor, the purpose of the event, and encouraged all in attendance to look out for one another and to seek help if necessary.

Soldiers who wished to share their personal experiences of losing someone close to them articulated the pain left behind after a suicide. Two Soldiers shared their personal experiences. Andrade spoke of his and his wife’s friend and former member of the unit, and how difficult it was to come to grips with his suicide. U.S. Army Sgt. Lindsey Schroeder, a production control noncommissioned officer, lost her mother to suicide at a young age and spoke of the pain of losing her.

“It was painful to talk about,” Schroeder said in an email. “That was the first time in 14 years that I have talked about it in a public setting. My mother was a veteran herself, and would appreciate that her story is being used to help raise awareness with troops,”

Once the runners made their way to the starting line, a moment of silence was recognized, and then they were off.

“Honestly, I initially only expected that just me and a few others would run,” Andrade said. “It gave me a really great feeling to see so many came out to show some commemoration for one of our fallen comrades and bring about more suicide awareness.”

Andrade’s wife’s goal was to raise about \$500. She ended up raising \$1,425.00 which will be donated to The American Foundation for Suicide Awareness in Sgt. Joshua Taylor’s name.



Capt. Christopher McFarland, commander of the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade’s D Company, 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, Task Force Tigershark, speaks to participants of the unit’s Remembrance Walk/Run Sept. 7, at Forward Operating Base Salerno in Khowst Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



KNIGHTHAWK



An HH-60 Blackhawk helicopter from C Company DUSTOFF, 3rd Battalion (General Support), Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, lands at the point of injury during a medical evacuation in Kapisa Province, Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)



The crew of a UH-60M Blackhawk from 2nd Battalion (Attack), Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, wait as a petroleum supply specialist assigned to E Company, 2-10 Battalion (Assault), TF Knighthawk, refuels their helicopter Aug. 20, at Forward Operating Base Shank in Logar Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th CAB)

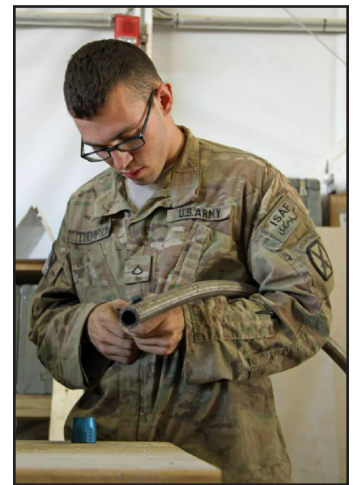


From left, Sgt. 1st Class Nathan Hunt and Sgt. John Martin, assigned to D Company, 2nd Battalion (Assault), Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, examine a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter part Aug. 16, at Forward Operating Base Shank in Logar Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by 1st Lt. Cory Albertson, Task Force Knighthawk)



From left, Spc. Max Haslip, Spc. Michael Collins, Spc. Wend-pouire Dakoure, and Pfc. Edwardo Gonzalez, petroleum supply specialists assigned to E Company, 2nd Battalion (Assault), Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, fuel an AH-64 Apache helicopters at a Jump Forward Arming/Refueling Point. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Connor Power, Task Force Knighthawk)

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kyle Cheeseman (rear) and 1st Lt. Andrew Hicks (front), both UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter pilots assigned to 2nd Battalion (Attack), Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, conduct pre-flight procedures prior to a personnel movement mission Aug. 20, at Forward Operating Base Shank, Afghanistan. (Photo by Capt. Pete. Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Cpl. Freidland from 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, attached to Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, performs maintenance on an AH-64 Apache helicopter at Forward Operating Base Shank in Logar Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Christopher Koth, C Company, 1-501st Aviation Regiment)

Pfc Chase Thompson, an aircraft pneudraulics repairer assigned to D Company, 2nd Battalion (Assault), Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, prepares a hose duiring maintenance at Forward Operating Base Shank in Logar Province, Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)



PHOENIX

UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters from Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, sit on the flight line at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan, Aug. 31. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



A 10th Combat Aviation Brigade CH-47 Chinook helicopter from B Company, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 149th Aviation Regiment, prepares to sling load a container Aug. 24, at Forward Operating Base Orgun-E, in Paktika Province, Afghanistan.(Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

AH-64 Apache helicopter maintainers assigned to C Company BLUEMAX, 1st Attack/Reconnaissance Battalion, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, walk an Apache into a hangar for maintenance. (Courtesy photo)





Spc. Alexander Stampley, an aircraft armament/electronics/avionic systems repairer assigned to B Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, Task Force Phoenix, prepares to assist pilots of an AH-64 Apache helicopter back out of the Forward Arming/Refueling Point at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)



A UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter crewed by 1st Lt. Chuck Nadd, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Darren Dreher, Staff Sgt. Bruce Klechner, and Sgt. Jay Herring, all members of Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, flies over Kabul Province, Afghanistan, while conducting a personnel movement mission, Sept. 4. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



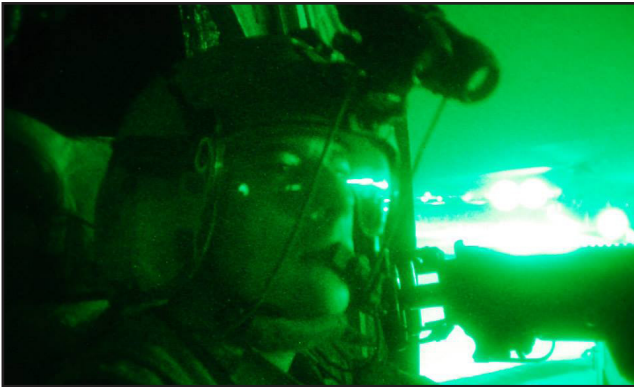
U.S. Marine Sgt. Maj. James Booker, International Security Assistance Force senior enlisted advisor, presents a coin to Sgt. Holger Sonntag, and aircraft electrician assigned to B Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Aug. 28, at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Spc. Hal Brown, a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter maintainer assigned to B Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, performs maintenance on the rotor system of a Blackhawk. (Courtesy photo)



Spc. Tyler McConnell, a crew chief assigned to B Company, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 36th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, supervises a Soldier loading an all-terrain-vehicle onto a CH-47 Chinook helicopter Aug. 31, at Camp Phoenix. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Staff Sgt. Ernie Botello, a CH-47 Chinook helicopter flight engineer assigned to B Company, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 36th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, communicates with pilots of his aircraft while taxiing Aug. 31, at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Kevin Lucia, a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter pilot assigned to A Company, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 104th Aviation Regiment, attached to Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, makes adjustments to communication equipment prior to launching on a personnel movement mission Sept. 4, at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Spc. Luis Ramos, a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter crew chief assigned to A Company, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 104th Aviation Regiment, attached to Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, prepares his equipment prior to a personnel movement mission Sept. 4, at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Robert Cudd, a CH-47 Chinook helicopter pilot from B Company, 2nd Battalion (General Support), 36th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, conducts start-up procedures prior to a personnel and equipment movement mission Aug. 31, at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Falcon Perspectives

Do you have a unique perspective you would like to share? Send it to the 10th CAB Public Affairs Office and you may see your story in the Falcon Summit. PAO: pete.smedberg@afghan.swa.army.mil or todd.pouliot@afghan.swa.army.mil

Downrange dad, son share experiences of deployment

By Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade

I've had many unique experiences during my three deployments. As a public affairs noncommissioned officer, I've written about Soldiers who have served with their family members downrange, but I never imagined that I would ever be serving in a combat zone with one of my children. The horrific events which led to Operation Enduring Freedom unfolded before my son's eyes one morning 13 years ago when he was a fourth grader preparing for school and a phone call prompted his mother to turn on the TV. The two of them saw the first World Trade Center Tower in flames and soon after, a second airliner slamming into the second tower. From then on he said he remembers constantly being interested in the news and what was happening in Afghanistan.

In 2005, when I decided to reenter the Army, my son Andrew took a keen interest in the history of the units and bases I would be assigned to. I didn't realize it when he was growing up but he told me recently he had wanted to join the military for many years. He said he was drawn to the U.S. Marine Corps at the age of 17 when a Marine recruiter called him and invited him to visit his office. Andrew said he was captivated by the notion of earning the mythical status of becoming a U.S. Marine and he decided to enlist because of the values and honor of being a Marine, and because no one else in the family had done it.

It was then when I probably should have considered the possibility of both of us being deployed to Afghanistan. Soon after high school graduation, Andrew left for boot camp June 21, 2010, exactly 22 years after I shipped out to U.S. Army Basic Training. Throughout boot camp he would listen to his drill instructors talk about their experiences in combat in places such as Fallujah and Ramadi during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Hearing about their experiences made Andrew want to deploy and experience the military operations he had been hearing about most of his life.

"I wanted to do something for my country, something that would set me apart from everyone else," he said in an email.

Upon completion of his military occupational specialty training to become a landing support specialist, he was assigned to a Marine Reserve unit in San Jose, Calif., where there were no deployments on the horizon. When volunteers were sought to augment active duty units, Andrew would let it be known that he was ready and willing to deploy, but he was repeatedly denied. Finally, a spot for him became available in

2012 and he would deploy with Combat Logistics Regiment 2 from Camp Lejune, N.C.

Before I visited him at his base in August, my son and I had not seen each other since Christmas 2012. Soon after, he left for Camp Lejune to prepare for his scheduled deployment. I deployed to Bagram Airfield in May and a couple months later Andrew deployed to Helmand Province. I remember once he arrived in theater, sharing notes with him on our new common experiences; the transient tents, the chow halls, the passenger terminals. After a day of regular email messages, I became quite worried when I didn't hear from him for a mere 24 hours. It turned out he was catching up on sleep after his long flight. Needless to say, I can empathize with families back home.

At his base, an undulating patch of sand and rock with broad views of the surrounding desert and distant villages, Andrew is responsible for ensuring that passengers flying in and out of his base are properly manifested and escorted to and from their aircraft. When I visited him I was very proud to see him perform his duties with passion, professionalism, and discipline. As a father, I was also pleased to see how well he got along with his colleagues and how he interacted with fellow Marines and passengers who stopped by for assistance. In a conflict where there are no front lines, a certain amount of danger exists no matter where one is in this area of the world. Naturally, it is difficult knowing that my son may be in harm's way. I try not to think about it. But when I do, I consider that he's doing what he is doing for similar reasons that I am. And that helps me accept it.

There is a unique bond between those who have deployed to war zones such as Afghanistan. Veterans may try to talk about their experiences to those who have not deployed but there is a particular ease when sharing experiences with someone who has also been there. My son and I will now always have that bond.

There are no civilian-contracted dining facilities at the base my son works. Instead, in a relatively small tent, a handful of Marines are tasked with cooking and serving hot meals at breakfast and dinner; meals-ready-to-eat are available for lunch and midnight meals. Cold showers are taken in another tent. But despite the meager conditions, Andrew said he loves being out there and hopes he can stay there for the remainder of his seven-month deployment. He enjoys the camaraderie among those with whom he serves; one of his favorite activities out there is "family dinner night" when one of his fellow Marines cooks marinated chicken on an improvised barbecue.

I am extremely proud of my son's decision to serve in the military. I had no say in what branch he should choose and I will not disclose what I would have chosen for him if I had. Despite being a U.S. Army Soldier, myself, I am proud of his decision. But most of all I am proud of his passion for what he is doing.