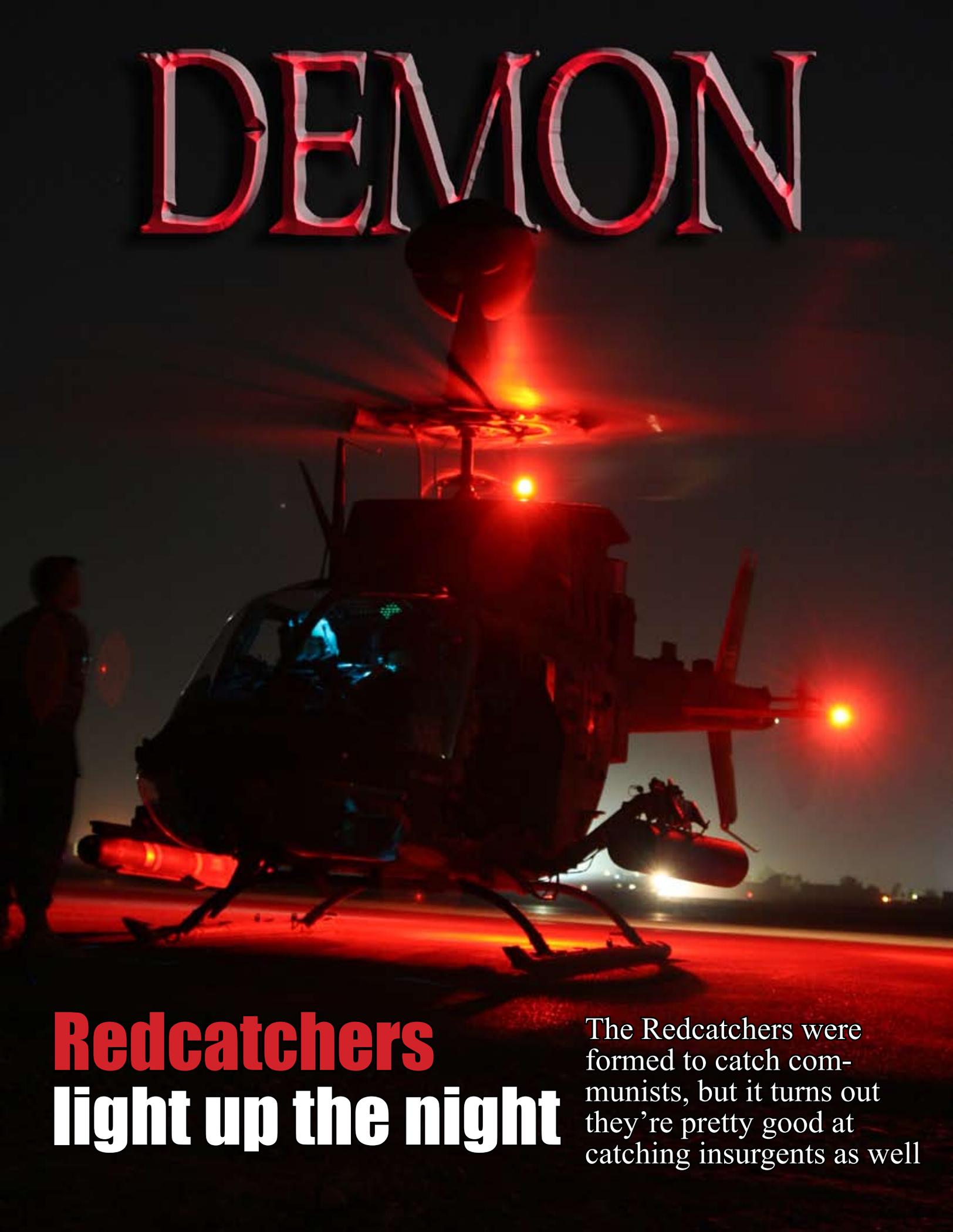


DEMON



Redcatchers **light up the night**

The Redcatchers were formed to catch communists, but it turns out they're pretty good at catching insurgents as well

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"It is exercise alone that supports the spirit, and keeps the mind in vigor." -- MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

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THE MOMENT



Photo by Sgt. Michael Howard



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Making History: 2-1 flight medics are first to get the CMB

On the cover: (Photo by Maj. Enrique T. Vasquez) A OH-58 Kiowa Warrior from Troop C, 4-6 CAV, awaits launch clearance for a night mission on July 20

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Worth the falls. PT in Iraq can be difficult, but the results make it worthwhile

Nowhere is it easier to find yourself on the wrong end of a PT scorecard than the middle of a deployment.

Some sections will still hold mandatory, regular PT sessions for their Soldiers, but for the most part, Iraq and Afghanistan are two of the only places in the military where a Soldier's physical condition are

largely up to that Soldier.

This sudden and (for some) unexpected freedom can be a disaster, or it can be an opportunity.

This is my third tour in Iraq and each time I've seen a disproportionate number of Soldiers end up on the Weight Control Program, and an equally large number of Soldiers come back to their home station in the best

shape of their life.

While the daily PT the Army provides in the rear is not a bad thing in and of itself, it is nearly impossible to tailor a PT program to the needs of an individ-

Doing PT you love can yield better results than the mandatory push-ups and situps.

ual while training an entire company.

Deployments afford Soldiers the chance to get in shape doing something

they love, be it biking, boxing, soccer or weightlifting, and the enthusiasm they can put into doing something they love translates into better results.

Of course, such freedom also makes it that much easier to ditch PT in favor of extra gaming or sleep. PT tests during a deployment make this an unwise course of action.

For those willing to get out, push themselves, and take the occasional fall in the name of fitness and fun, however, the rewards can outweigh the bruises.

— BY SGT. MICHAEL HOWARD

Demon Team, this month we say farewell to the Red Catchers, the first unit of our task force to redeploy after a job well done. In their place we welcome the 6-17th, Sabers, out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska. They will be continuing the mission over Mosul, Tal'afar, and Salah ad Din. They have some big shoes to fill, but I know under the leadership of Lt. Col. Nicholas Snelson and Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Bailey they are more than capable of completing any mission given to them.

In the coming month the TF ODIN leadership will be rotating out, and we look forward to welcoming the new Soldiers and leaders from ODIN III into our task force.

As we enter the final 90 days of our deployment in Iraq, remember that this phase is one of the most dangerous times in any deployment. In the first 90 days the risk is due to inexperience. In the final 90 days the risk is complacency, overconfidence, and a breakdown in discipline.

Soldiers become complacent while conducting missions that have become routine over the past year, and they are overconfident when dealing with the environment, negotiating the terrain, and gauging their physical and mental limits. The long deployment and hard work brings in the temptation to lower standards and disregard discipline due to fatigue and eagerness to get home.

Rethink how we accomplish the mission at every level, and identify

Stay Focused. Team Demon has continued to sustain a blistering pace and has the ability to surge when necessary. Your sacrifices are making a positive impact on Iraq. **Col. Jessie O. Farrington speaks out on remaining focused as we approach redeployment**



Photo by Capt. Eric Teel

and mitigate the seemingly benign threats to you and your Soldiers.

Leaders, realize that Soldiers will become more and more distracted as we continue toward redeployment. This desire to get home will be one more threat to our safety and the accomplishment of the mission in the final

months.

Your units must stay focused on the task at hand, stay mentally in the fight, and finish strong. We have come too far and accomplished too much to finish up the deployment with a catastrophic crash, death or loss of combat effectiveness due to a preventable mishap. We

count on our Soldiers and leaders to do the right thing, and our ground force teammates depend on us to continue to perform until the very last day.

Despite some rough weather in the past months, you continue to get the mission done in support of our ground commanders in Multi-National Division-North. We as a team have been responsible for saving countless lives, both U.S. and Iraqi, through the missions we fly.

We have not only stopped several insurgents emplacing IEDs, but have also played a key role in getting the ground forces to critical locations on the battlefield and assisting in detaining the insurgents.

The final stretch in the deployment provides us with the opportunity to maintain our record of outstanding performance and our reputation for getting the job done.

Keep up the great work flying, fixing, leading, and caring for Soldiers. Let's finish strong. Farewell Red Catchers, well done. Welcome Sabers. Now let's get after it! No Mission Too Difficult, No Sacrifice Too Great. Duty First!

Col. Jessie O. Farrington is the commander of the Combat Aviation Brigade

Standards and Discipline. As the Combat Aviation Brigade team begins to hit its stride, leaders must make a good team better by encouraging and mentoring their Soldiers. **Command Sgt. Maj. Buddy Wallace, the first brigade CSM of the Demon Brigade, speaks out**

The Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division continues to stay the course and move towards the end of our tour here in Iraq. Personnel are in the planning and early executing phases of re-deployment. Elements of the 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment are now arriving as units of 4th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment begin the left seat and right seat rides with their new replacements.

I ask that those involved in the RIP whether they be NCOs or Soldiers as well as the rest of the CAB to support the change of responsibility process. Most of all I want everyone to remain safety and battle focused. Safety continues to be a factor in our daily activities so please watch after one another. I want the NCOs to continue to step up to the plate and take charge.

This summer seven flight medics from Company C, 2-1 GSAB became the first flight medics in the Army to receive the combat medical badge. Most of the seven Soldiers are NCO's, who have achieved a certain level of professionalism and technical competence in the jobs they do. Likewise, there are many experienced senior NCOs in the CAB, who have continued to achieve and move-up within



Photo by Staff Sgt. Franklin Angelo

the NCO corps.

To move-up and become successful NCOs, Soldiers need mentorship. There are many newly promoted junior NCOs, who lack focus and direction. I ask the Senior NCO's to mentor these new NCOs. Pass your knowledge and leave a legacy. Units are only as successful as their NCOs.

If a senior NCO retires or leaves the unit and does not teach others what he knows, his knowledge is lost forever. We must retain the learning curve of our Army.

It is shameful for NCOs to harbor all their subject matter expertise and not share it with the juniors. Even worse is the senior NCO, who lets their subor-

ordinates fail just because he or she refuses to mentor and or train his juniors.

The junior enlisted are in the valley. So throw down a rope to them; I call it the rope of knowledge. But I'm not going to pull you up the hill. Hang on to the rope, and I'm going to coach, teach, mentor and train our young NCO's and junior enlisted.

NCOs stumble, like everyone else. There's no one who hasn't stumbled before in their career. I call them honest mistakes. You learn from mistakes. Pass on the tools the junior enlisted need to succeed. As NCOs we should coach, teach, mentor and train our Soldiers and young NCOs to get to the top of the hill.

And when the junior enlisted troops reach the top of the mountain, pat them on the shoulder and say you're doing a good job. Senior NCOs are obligated to teach and mentor junior NCOs and Soldiers to accomplish the commander's intent and simultaneously develop the leaders of tomorrow coming up through the ranks. Overall, I have been impressed with the performance of NCOs I have met during my battlefield circulation.

Give young sergeants the responsibility, and I promise you, they will not let you down. Give them the authority to be responsible. Along with authority, hold (your troops) accountable. They hold us accountable 24/7. There are no part-time NCOs.

Command Sgt. Maj. Buddy Wallace is the command sergeant major of the Combat Aviation Brigade

Perseverance.

Chaplain (Maj.) Suk Jong Lee talks about complacency, its harmful effects, and how to avoid falling victim to it. **The Combat Aviation Brigade chaplain speaks from the land of Jesus' birth**

As we draw near the end of deployment, one of the concerns our leaders voice is complacency.

Complacency can be the cause of accidents that inflict injuries to our Soldiers.

Webster's dictionary defines complacency as "self-satisfaction accompanied by an unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies."

Complacency tends to set in our personal as well as our professional lives as we become familiar with the people, place and tasks. It may be the primary enemy we should guard against.

The Old Testament is filled with stories that describe the rise and fall of kings as their relationship with God fluctuated.

Even King Solomon who is well known for asking God's wisdom in the beginning of his enthronement fell into the trap of complacency and perhaps arrogance that caused deterioration of his relationship with God.

He became so comfortable and complacent with his circumstances that he didn't know or care he forsook his loyalty to God.

The king who began his kingdom with the reputation as the wisest king on the earth became the cause of the divided kingdoms.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul rebukes the church of Corinth for allowing sin and evil in their midst and embracing it.

Complacency caused their consciousness to be seared, and sexual immorality and divisiveness to become so prevalent in their community that it became a source of heartache and sorrow for Paul.

The Book of Revelation also records that a church in Ephesus was chided for leaving their first love even though



Photo by Sgt. Michael Howard

Holy Hugs Chaplain (Maj.) Suk Jong Lee embraces Pfc. Felicia Moore of HHC, CAB during a gospel service

they have persevered and fought for truth. They became comfortable about their accomplishment and let complacency set in.

For the church of Laodicea, the effect of their compliancy was worse, for Christ said to them, "... I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot.

So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

Those whom I love, I reprove and

discipline; therefore be zealous and repent." (Revelation 3:14-19)

As the people of God became comfortable and complacent in their relationship with God, they reaped the consequences of losing the favor of God in their lives and falling into the trap of sin and evil.

In a similar way, if we take our relationships with our spouse, children and friends for granted, we may experience deterioration of our relationships with them.

In the Army, we are taught to do PMCS on our vehicles on regular basis. We know too well if we don't take care of the vehicle, it will eventually break down.

In the same way, if we neglect to do PMCS in our relationships with God, spouse, children or friends, they too will break down.

May God grant us wisdom to maintain our first love with proper PMCS in our relationships.

Across Iraq.

When infantry Soldiers move into remote areas in Iraq, Army Chaplains are right behind them, providing spiritual and moral guidance. **The unique relationship between Soldiers and the Chaplains who serve them**

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT. DAVID HODGE

Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers operating from combat outposts and joint security stations in the Rashid district of southern Baghdad are always busy with missions or details.

Finding the time to worship in between missions and details can be hard, but chaplains assigned to the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, bring church services to the Soldiers outside the amenities of the forward operating base by travelling all over the battlefield.

"The role of a chaplain on the battlefield is to provide spiritual, moral and ethical well-being to the Soldiers," said Maj. Trenton Lewis, the chaplain for the 1st "Raider" BCT.

"Also, to ensure that Soldiers' rights in combat are not violated. That is their mission."

The chaplains have always focused on Soldiers and families, said Lewis, a native of Tampa, Fla.

While deployed, Soldiers especially benefit from all the attention from the chaplains, he explained.

Lewis stressed that the mission always comes first, a belief ingrained in the mind of any U.S. Soldier, but units are encouraged to allow time for their Soldiers to worship.

"So far, my chaplains have performed admirably," explained Lewis, a veteran with 16 years of service. "They are handling their mission out on the battlefield."

"I'm proud of the brigade's chaplains for being so in touch with the Soldiers out at the JSSs and COPs," Lewis stated.

Fisher said he works to inspire Soldiers and challenge them to become stronger at following Christ.

"The services provide me an opportunity to address some of the issues



Solemn Strummer Capt. Ronny Fisher, the chaplain of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, plays guitar during a field service in the Rashid district of Baghdad

that all Soldiers have experienced during the course of this deployment," Fisher explained. "The Soldiers seriously inspire me."

He carries his acoustic guitar with him wherever he goes and begins each service with music and invites everyone in attendance to sing along.

"The music provides the Soldiers the chance to participate in the service," Fisher stated.

The Soldiers he visits said they appreciate the services he provides.

"Chaplain Fisher has a way of raising my morale, and something about him boosts the other guy's morale too," said Pfc. Andrew Borst, an infantryman from Albany, Ore., assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Bn., 4th Inf. Regt., attached to the 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div., MND-B. "He gives Soldiers a chance to forget about everything going on to worship God."

Fisher attributes the services' suc-

cess to battalion and company-level command teams for enabling him the opportunity to spread the word of Christ.

"I have been really fortunate to work with the commanders and first sergeants," Fisher stated. "They accommodate my chaplain assistant and me around the battlefield to all the right places. I am grateful to be here with the 2nd Bn., 4th Inf. Regt. I love serving with these guys. We have thousands of people praying for us back home."

Fisher's assistant, Spc. Roy Fraiser, HHC, 2nd Bn., 4th Inf. Regt., brings an enlisted perspective to the team and works hard to complete the mission.

"The chaplain's assistant is a key factor in mission accomplishment," Lewis said. "Chaplains could do nothing on the battlefield without a good, solid chaplain's assistant. They keep us alive."

The \$80,000 Question

Congress has made a decision that could radically alter your life. The brand new Post 9-11 Veteran's Assistance Act will foot the bill for the college of your choice

BY SGT. MICHAEL HOWARD

In the course of World War II, some 671,817 men and women had been wounded, and 405,399 had been killed. Hundreds of thousands of dependents were left in need.

Congress responded in 1944 with the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, the "GI Bill of Rights." The bill, which dramatically transformed the concept of veteran's benefits, was signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on June 22. There were three key provisions. The first benefit provided up to four years of education or training. The education package included the payment of up to \$500 a school year for tuition, fees, books and supplies, plus a monthly subsistence allowance. For the first time in American history, Soldiers who had gone to war for their country were given a leg up upon entering the civilian world. When the wave of Soldiers returned home from World War



Photo Illustration by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth and Sgt. Michael Howard

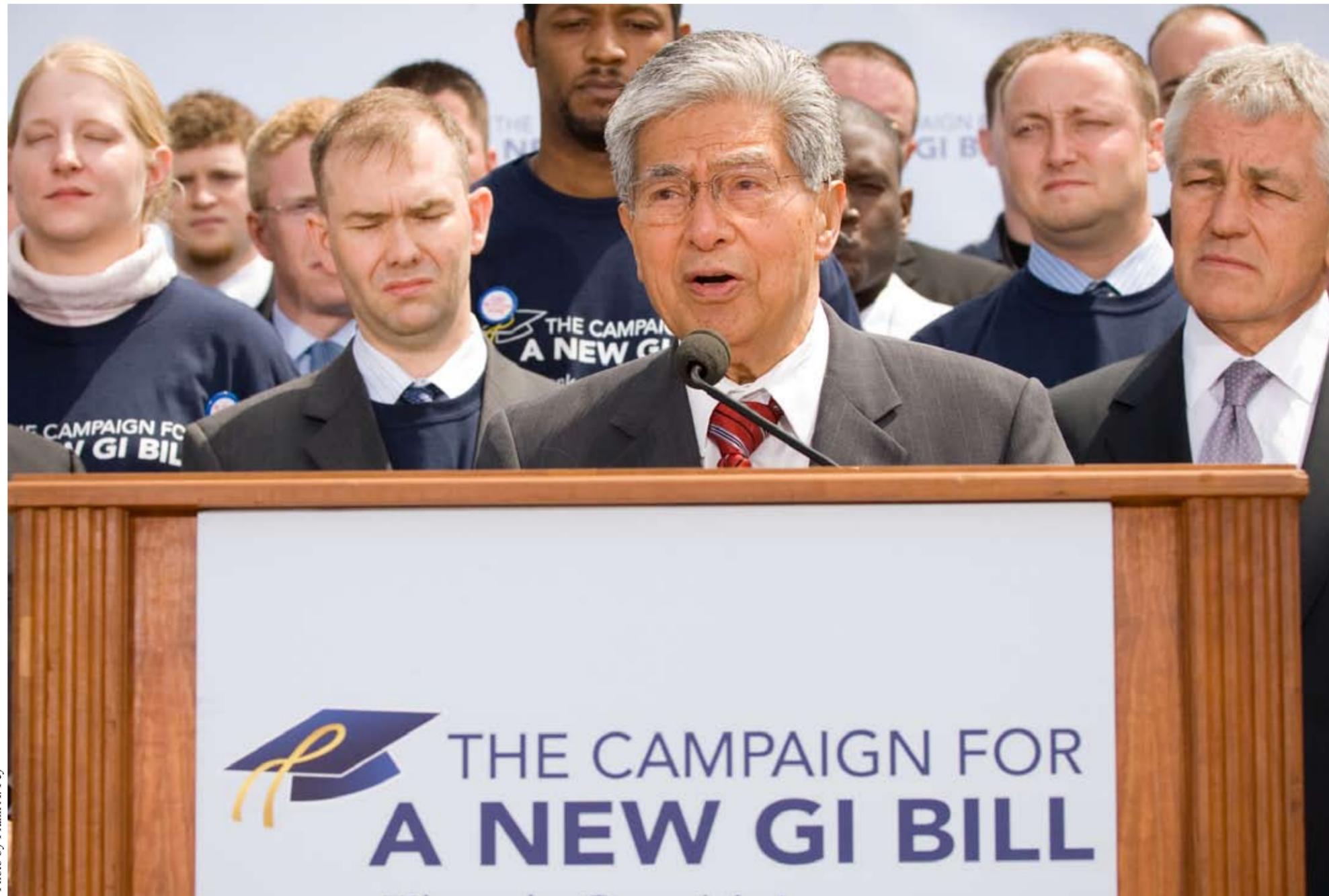


Photo by Frank A. Fey

II, the sweeping educational benefits the bill provided sent a generation of veterans to college that wouldn't normally have been able to go, creating a new middle class, which in turn helped to create the subsequent economic boom. The GI Bill contributed more than any other program in history to the welfare of veterans and their families, and to the growth of the nation's

economy.

Over the years, however, inflation has sharply degraded the purchasing power of what had once been considered one of the most effective pieces of federal legislation ever passed. By 2007, sharply rising college tuition fees made the \$30,800 dollars offered by the Montgomery GI Bill of 1986 seem paltry in comparison to the benefits of the once grand Servicemen's Readjustment Act.

A coalition led by Senator Jim Webb, D-Va. and member's of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans of America,

however, has spearheaded the effort to bring the GI bill back up to speed.

Though the new bill was, just like its predecessor, hotly debated in both houses of congress, and unlike its predecessor, threatened by a veto, it was approved by the Senate May 22. Though President Bush had threatened a veto, he signed the bill into law June 30 when the Senate passed the bill into law by a veto-proof margin of 75-22. The bill's architect is pleased that he was able to benefit troops. "It has been seven years since the 9/11 attacks, and the operating tempo

Catalyst Sen. Daniel Akaka helped lead the effort for a new G.I. Bill

and strain on the troops has not been diminished. It is long past time to do this," Webb said in an Army Times report.

The new package will pay for all tuition and fees, books, and living expenses, and let career troops – who already have their college tuition paid for as active duty servicemembers – transfer their benefits to their family members. Unlike the previous incarnation of the GI bill, which required

servicemembers to pay \$100 per month for their first 12 months of service, there is no enrollment fee. The new bill will offer benefits worth an average of \$80,000, more than double the value of the current bill.

The new bill will pay up to the in-state tuition fees of the most expensive four-year public college or university in the state the servicemember decides to attend school. It will also pay \$100 per month, up to a maximum total of \$1,200 for private tutoring. It will pay up to \$1000 annually for books. It will pay a one-time fee for a licensing or certification test of up to \$2,000. Perhaps most significantly, the program promises a monthly living expense equal to the Basic Allowance for Housing equivalent to that paid to an E-5 with dependents in the zip code the servicemember attends college, an average of \$1,100 per month.

The GI bill enrollment system, which currently requires active duty servicemembers to pay \$100 per month for the first year of their service, has been completely overhauled. The fee ends immediately.

Soldiers in the midst of their \$100 per month payments will see them stop. Those who have already paid the entire \$1,200 will see a refund of sorts, with the money added as a final payment when they exhaust all of their other benefits.

One unprecedented benefit to the GI bill will be the ability to transfer it to family members after a certain length of service. Servicemembers will be able to transfer benefits to their wives after six years and their children after 10 years.

The ability to transfer will not come into effect until the pentagon issues regulations to that effect. Active-duty Soldiers will not be the only ones to benefit from the bill. When reservists or national guard Soldiers serve time on active-duty, they can become eligible for a portion of or all of the benefits. With three months of service, reservists and National Guardsmen get 40 percent of the benefits, with six months; 50 percent, 60 percent after a year of service, 70 percent after 18 months, 80 percent after two years, 90 percent after 30 months and all benefits after three years of service.

THE GI BILL

By the Numbers

100
percent of monthly college tuition paid to servicemembers, matching up to the most expensive in-state public university rate in the state the servicemember attends college

1,200
dollar annual allowance provided to servicemembers private tuition, in increments of \$100 per month

2,000
dollar allowance provided to servicemembers for a one time licensing or certification test

1,100
dollars per month Soldiers receive on average for living expenses, the Basic Allowance for Housing for an E-5 with dependents

1,000
dollar annual allowance provided to servicemembers for books

32,000
dollars in total college benefits went to Soldiers under the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post 9/11 Veterans Assistance Bill's predecessor

80,000
dollars in total college benefits go to the average Soldier, under the Post 9/11 Veterans Assistance Bill

New Opportunities

For more information on the Post 9-11 Veteran's Assistance Act, visit www.gbills.va.gov.

Eyes in the Sky

The information gathering tools of yesterday's generals are in the hands of today's company commander. Here's why

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MAJ. ENRIQUE T. VASQUEZ

Knowledge of what the enemy is doing behind the next hill or village has plagued military commanders since the days of Sun Tzu and Genghis Khan. However here in Iraq, seeing what is beyond the next building, palm tree or embankment is no longer a major concern for ground commanders slugging it out through difficult terrain or in a hostile urban environment.

Assisting ground commanders over the skies of Iraq are the pilots of Troop C, 4th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment flying OH-58 Kiowa Warrior helicopters.

"We are known as the scouts and we are both the eyes and ears of the command and task force," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Attila Herrera, Kiowa pilot for Troop C.

"A large portion of our mission is counter improvised explosive device operations. Whether we are flying in direct support or in-direct support of ground forces our mission entails searching for IEDs," said Herrera.

However, before these scout pilots take-off on any mission whether in support ground troops or just flying a counter IED sortie, they plan and coordinate carefully.

"We start off our day by checking out the log books and ensuring the aircraft have the required hours for the mission we are going to do. Once we verify the aircrafts hours, we go out and perform a thorough pre-flight inspection of the

Red Thunder An OH-58 Kiowa Warrior from Troop C, 4th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, awaits launch clearance for a night mission on July 20. The 4-6 CAV "Red Catchers" are part of the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, flying in support of Task Force Iron, 1st Armored Division, in northern Iraq



Little Bird, Big Eye

An OH-58 Kiowa Warrior crew from Troop C, 4-6 CAV, conducts hover checks before a mission. The 4-6 CAV "Redcatchers" are part of the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, flying in support of Task Force Iron, 1st Armored Division, in northern Iraq

assigned aircraft and the back-up aircraft," said Herrera.

"Troop C, also known as Carnage Troop, flies the latest OH-58D Kiowa Warrior. The primary role of the helicopter is its armed reconnaissance role in support of the troops on the ground," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Lewis, Kiowa pilot for Troop C, 4-6 CAV.

The OH-58 Kiowa has been in continuous use by the United States Army since its introduction in 1968.

Although there is a myriad of aviation platforms such as unmanned aerial vehicles and Apache helicopters to help ground forces, nothing beats the steady eye of intuitive Kiowa pilots watching for an elusive adversary.

Once the preflight checks are com-

plete Kiowa crews head to the task force's battalion tactical operations center of the 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, to receive their information and operations briefings.

"Attention in the TOC, O and I brief, today's mission is bandit recon, alert warning and guidance is the following," says Sgt. Elie Regis, 1-1

ARB battle noncommissioned officer, as he starts his mission orientation brief to Kiowa pilots.

"Pilots are briefed on the five Ws — who, what, where, when and why — in respect to the operations portion of the brief. The crews receive instructions on what the ground commanders want along with any changes in procedures or radio frequencies. Pi-

lots receive any changes in battlespace and updates as to what friendly forces are in the area of operations," said Regis.

Just as the operations officer gives a detailed briefing, so does the intelligence officer. Everything the enemy might be doing or trying to do is briefed.

"We find patterns and trends the enemy might be engaged in like IED, small arms fire and emplacements. We give the pilots an assessment so they know what to look for, how the enemy might act and what to expect," said Staff Sgt. Floyd Perry, 1-1 ARB intelligence analyst.

After the pilots are briefed they make final coordination prior to taking off.

"Once we complete the O and I brief, we return to our command post to conduct a thorough brief on what the responsibilities are for each aircraft, those being the lead and trail," said Herrera.

"We also discuss possible courses of action should we encounter any problems."

Shortly after take-off the flight crews of the OH-58 Kiowa two-seater helicopter, begin to perform their individual and collective duties.

While both are capable of flying the aircraft, the duties of the pilot-in-command and the co-pilot are distinctly different on a combat mission.

"The right seat (pilot) is the primary eyes out and concentrates on air traffic avoidance.

"The right seat directs the flight with regards to where they are going and what the priorities of reconnaissance are," said Lewis.

"The left seat (co-pilot) manages the sensor, and operates both the navigation system and communications within the aircraft."

During a mission individual Kiowa pilots are part of a scout weapons team made up of two OH-58D Kiowa helicopters flying as a pair. Each Kiowa helicopter has a distinct role during a mission set.

The lead aircraft is the primary shooter and navigator. The trail aircraft covers the lead aircraft should the lead take fire. The trail aircraft is the principal communicator with the



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:

Pilots and Preflights Chief Warrant Officers 2 Tobaski Snipes (left) and Justin G. Danniballe, 4-6 pilots, prepare for a mission

Winchester Ready Chief Warrant Officer 2 Tobaski Snipes, locks his M-4 into place

Rock On Chief Warrant Officers 2 Christopher Zimprich Jared Toppenberg, 4-6 pilots., perform hover power checks

ground force commander," said Lewis

"The trail also acts as a second pair of eyes should the lead aircraft identify a point of interest," Herrera.

"The trail aircraft is usually where the air mission commander flies. The AMC basically tells the lead what areas to recon and where to fly," Lewis added.

The co-pilot of the trail aircraft takes the informa-

tion from the ground units and passes it to the pilot to get the Kiowas where they can be used most effectively in the fight.

"The co-pilot in the trail aircraft is also the primary recorder for the mission. He records and enters the data and passes on information relayed by the other flight crews," said Lewis.

He is also responsible for keeping an eye on those

on the ground and working with the ground units.

"There are two methods of interacting with ground forces.

"The first method involves area or zone recons when we are not dedicated to a specific unit but in turn we provide area surveillance in support of the ground battalion commander's intent," said Lewis.

During a zone recon the

scout weapons team flies over major routes, hotspots and points of interest looking for IEDs or suspicious activity.

This provides the battalion commander feedback in support of his larger scheme of maneuver.

The second method of support involves the Kiowa pilots flying in close so they can better support smaller ground units.

"If we are dedicated to a ground unit it is usually a company, troop or platoon size element. When we make contact with these small units the unit commander, whether he is a company commander or platoon leader, lets us know what the mission is and from there we can establish a task and purpose," said Lewis.

The Kiowa pilots know

they are making a difference in the fight no matter what type of mission they are on.

They know this from the reaction of the ground forces who may be driving on a road, patrolling a village or pulling security.

"The ground guys get excited when they see us fly over their convoys, we often hear them over the radio or watch them wave from their positions," said Herrera.



Killer Kiowas

To see more photos of the 4-6 CAV's Kiowa Warriors in action, as well as all of the latest stories and photos of the CAB, visit www.dvidshub.net/units/CAB-1id



Safety first Sgt. Joshua Bell (left) yells "all clear" as he and Sgt. Johnny Bishop, both armaments systems repairmen from Co. D, 1-1 ARB, prepare to check the weapons and electrical systems onboard a AH-64D Apache Longbow

Praise the Lord...

And pass the ammunition. Despite the technological leaps made since the song's creation, Soldiers still have to do the passing. These Soldiers have taken up the mantle

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MAJ. ENRIQUE VASQUEZ

"Pass the ammunition" is a familiar cliché etched in the minds of many servicemembers serving in northern Iraq and it is a rich part of American military history dating back to the attack on Pearl Harbor. During the initial months of World War II the "ammo" cliché became legendary due to a song entitled "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" inspired by a military chaplain.

Today "pass the ammunition" still carries a special meaning for the armaments section of Company D, 1-1 Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment. Despite all the sophistication associated with modern avionics, someone still has to load the ammunition onto the AH-64D Apache Longbows.

The armaments section is responsible for loading and repairing the Apache's main fixed armament, a 30 mm M-230 chain gun. Crews also load the helicopter's AGM-114 Hellfire missiles and Hydra 70 flechette rockets located on its stub-wing pylons. The process to request ammo from the armaments section is simple.

"The helicopter pilots will call gunfighter x-ray (battalion tactical operations center), from there gunfighter x-ray calls and let us know what the aircraft needs to have uploaded in terms of missiles or 30mm ammuni-



Good to go Armaments system repair crews from Co. D, 1-1 ARB inspect and load 30 mm ammunition onto an AH-64D Apache Longbow

tion," said Sgt. Jeremy Rickards, armaments section sergeant, Co. D, 1-1 ARB. "We then call gunfighter 'AHA' (ammunition holding area) and let them know how many rounds we need. They in turn bring the ammo to us on a flatbed where we unload it," related Rickards.

Once the ammo is received, the loading of 30 mm rounds onto the chain gun requires visual inspection of the Apache's weapon system as explained by one repairman.

"Before you load rounds into the gun you have to check for other rounds inside, this prevents accidental discharges from occurring due to gaps between the rounds," said Spc. Carlos Soto, an armament systems repairman.



Armament adjustments Spc. Randall Vankoevinger, an AH-64D Apache Longbow armaments systems repairer from Co D, 1-1 ARB, adjusts a 30 mm M-230 chain gun

“Then you have to bring the remaining rounds to the sideloader, which is where you load the ammo. Only then can you start loading the aircraft with ammo, while checking for gaps between the rounds,” said Soto.

The ammo comes in a tray when we load it onto the sideloader. The sideloader is an electrical and completely automated piece of equipment so it allows us to move the rounds up and down added Rickards. Once the aircraft reaches ammunition capacity a magazine full indicator will notify the armaments personnel the Apache loaded. “When the magazine is full we will lower the rounds to the gun and chamber the first round so the gun is ready to fire when the pilots go fly,” said Rickards.

The gun is adjusted by the armaments personnel, who crawl underneath the aircraft and spin the chain gun until the first round is chambered. Loading the rest of the Apache’s complement of ammunition is also a simple process. However, missile and rocket loading entails careful handling too.

“Loading missiles is a two-man load because each missile weighs 90 to 100 pounds each. Before loading missiles we inspect them for damage

such as pitting, scratches anything that is broken or displaced. Any damage to the missile might cause it to misfire so that is why we inspect them,” said Rickards.

In contrast, flechette rockets require different handling as described by Spc. Soto.

“Flechette rockets have a fuse up

front that you have set up by placing it to the proper station, while making sure the fuse is tight and not loose.”

Loading ammunition is not the armament sections only job, these Soldiers do a lot more when it comes to keeping the aircraft flyable.

“We fix and maintain the weapons systems and everything electrical or

electronic on the aircraft. We have a maintenance NCO who is in charge of the maintenance for us and we have one per shift,” said Soto.

“The maintenance noncommissioned officer determines what needs to be worked on and hands out tasks to the Soldiers,” said Soto.

The maintenance NCO receives input from the aircrews shortly after the helicopters land. The pilots identify faults and pass the information to the maintenance section. The armaments section then takes the pilot’s and maintenance NCO’s assessment and acts on it.

“The line companies Alpha, Bravo and Charlie will bring the faults they have written in their logbooks. We then take that information and go over the faulty systems. Once we review the specific systems we will narrow down the problem to one system,” said Rickards.

“If the problem is something electrical or electronic we will troubleshoot it until we find the broken wire or find out what component is at fault and either replace or repair that component.”

However, if an aircraft cannot be repaired in a timely manner, Rickards explains, they can troubleshoot by swapping a suspected component with one that is good from another aircraft; This is also called the controlled exchange method.

With the exception of the 30 mm chain gun, the armaments section does not work on the mechanical or hydraulic parts of the aircraft but rather concentrates on the electronic compo-

nents.

“The armaments section works on everything electrical such as avionics, wire repairer, ammunition handling system and the counter measure flares,” said Rickards.

“Loading ammunition is only part of the job, our main priority is to get out and troubleshoot that aircraft and make it fully mission capable. Our main focus is on the electrical systems of that aircraft. We will troubleshoot everything electrical up to the continuity of the transducers,” said Rickards.

Transducers are devices which convert an electrical signal into a hydraulic action added Rickards.

Another system the armaments section up keeps is the 30 mm chain gun. Keeping the chain gun in working order takes careful coordination and



Pass it on Spc. Shaun Syverson, (left) an AH-64D Apache Longbow armaments systems repairer from Co. D, 1-1 ARB, passes 30 mm ammunition to Spc. Randall Vankoevinger

inspection of the Apache’s weapons system.

“There are a lot of moving parts on a chain gun, so you have to make sure the gun system is well lubricated and you have to make sure everything is flowing smoothly,” said Soto.

The chain gun gets put through a lot of pressure and torque so everything has to be synchronized,” said Soto.

Cleaning the chain gun is quite important too.

“The gun is cleaned every 14 days. We pull the barrel from the aircraft and take it to the shop to clean it,” said Spc. Boone Cliff, Co. D, armament systems repairman.

“We perform monthly and bi-weekly checks on the gun.”

Although some of these aviation ground crews do not see direct combat they know and understand their job is important because they are often asked if the gunships are flying.

“The infantry guys are always asking us if the Apaches are flying. They always want to know if their convoys are being escorted by our helicopters,” said Soto.

“You can tell the ground guys are often relieved and less stressed when they know the combat aviation brigade’s Apaches are flying.”

These ground crews know they are part of a bigger effort and play a part in accomplishing the mission.

“Everybody helps in some way. If you think about it, the pilots cannot get off the ground without the aircraft being flyable, and we cannot do our mission without the personnel section taking care of our paperwork. It’s one big circle, everybody does their part out here and we are just doing our part too,” said Cliff.

The Flechette Factor. What the U.S. Navy’s rocket revolution of the 1940s does for today’s pilots



Flechette Factoids

- The CAB uses the Hydra 70 family of 2.75 inch rockets
- CAB helicopters can fire smoke screening, illumination, and training warheads as well as flechettes
- 2.75 inch rockets (70 mm) diameter were originally developed in the late 1940s by the Naval Ordnance Test Station at China Lake
- The rockets were to be used as more powerful supplements and replacements for guns in both air-to-air and air-to-ground applications

Over The Top

Rome wasn't built in a day, but the 1/35 armor's contingency operating post was built in a night. How the CAB went into overdrive and performed two weeks of missions in a night

BY SGT. MICHAEL HOWARD

The mission was officially categorized as an air assault, but labeling it as a simple air assault would be doing the pilots and crews of the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division a disservice. They did just about every mission an aviation brigade can do, and they squeezed it all into the space of one night.

This night was the opening salvo of Operation Iron Pursuit. The operation is an extensive and complex series of missions, executed by 1/35 armor, that will limit insurgency resources and provide free medical care for villagers in the Diyala province. Before 1/35 could operate, they needed a base to operate from. The answer was to build a combat outpost overnight, no mean feat.

For the CAB, building a forward operating base meant not only dropping off troops, but also moving more than 35 tons of supplies and building materials in the space of a single night, a task that pushed pilots and aircraft alike to the very limit of their abilities. It was also the largest mission the brigade had undertaken during all their months in Iraq.

"This is absolutely the largest mission this brigade has had since we've been on the ground, because of the number of aircraft, first of all. We had 18 aircraft out there in total, seven Black Hawks, six Chinooks, two AWTs,



How to build a base overnight

It's not easy, but it is possible. From pre-flights to pickup to pushing out the pallets, here's how the Combat Aviation Brigade managed to have a COP in the morning

1. PRE-FLIGHT INSPECTION When heading into a combat situation, pilots and crews have enough to worry about without trouble from their own engines.

2. LOG YOUR FLIGHT This mission is important, but next mission is likely to be just as vital. Diligent logging makes things easier on the crew chiefs.

3. CHECK YOUR WEAPONS The chances are good they'll be in use before the night is over, so find and fix any problems before the meat of the mission.

4. PICK UP AND DROP OFF THE GROUND TROOPS These are the troops with the toughest part of the job. The first trip involves dropping them at a landing zone with basic supplies while they wait for the next load of cargo.

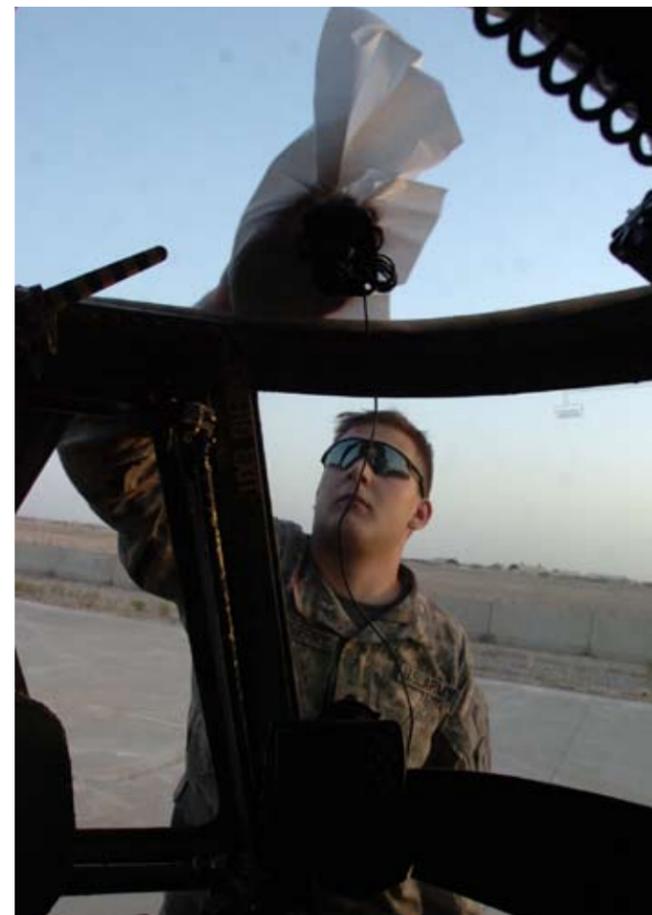
5. LOAD THE CARGO First, sling load your conexes. When those are delivered, you'll come back and load your pallets in the body of the aircraft. Every minute counts. The troops are waiting.

6. DROP THE CONEXES This part is tricky. Stay too close to the ground for too long, and you'll brown out. This is made even harder by the fact that the aircraft is at maxed power.

7. DROP THE PALLETS As light breaks into the sky, the landing is complicated by the fact the enemy can see you. With this accomplished, it's time to race the dawn home.



Fireworks on the ground A crew chief with Co. B, 2-1 GSAB, scans his sector from the back ramp of his CH-47 Chinook



The basics Spc. Taylor Carberry, a crew chief with Co. B, 2-1 GSAB, cleans the windows of his Chinook before the mission



Vigil Spc. Taylor Carberry, a crew chief with 2-1 GSAB, keeps watch on the return to COB Speicher



Pit Stop One of the CAB's CH-47 Chinooks refuels before returning to COB Speicher after the air assault

which is four Apaches. To maintain maximum situational awareness we put an A2C2s helicopter up there with (Brig. Gen. James Boozer) to manage and watch the whole fight," said 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, Executive Officer Maj. Scott Bovee.

As the mission was larger and more complex than any mission before, so too was the planning it entailed. The 2-1 GSAB command was able to get all of their aircrews off their respective flight schedules the night prior so they could go through a full briefing and a full rehearsal, which is a more in-depth procedure than the pilots and aircrews go through before most missions. "We were able to walk through, rehearse every piece of the mission, so everyone had a good idea of what was going to happen before they got out there," said Bovee.

A major factor in the planning phase involved bringing elements from multiple battalions together in a manner

that would result in a seamless mission. "Eighteen aircraft in that airspace meant a complex mission with a lot of moving parts. Three different organizations within the brigade, the 3-1, the 2-1 and the 1-1 were involved in this," said Bovee.

"The biggest internal difficulty is the fact that we are spread across a large base. We are all on slightly different schedules, and you can't just walk over when you have a question. But we have done many, many smaller

'I think we really helped the ground unit, and I think that means we were very successful.'

---MAJ. SCOTT BOVEE, 2-1 GSAB EXECUTIVE OFFICER

operations, so we are all used to working with each other," added Lt. Col. James H. Bradley, Jr., the commander of 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment.

Even after the extensive planning phase, the mission was not without its obstacles. After a smooth flight to the pickup zone, the brigade found the PZ to be dusty, making it difficult for aircraft to get in and out of.

Despite the dust clouds, the extensive training and rehearsals paid off, and there were no accidents getting to or from the PZ. The pilots and crews met up with 1/35 Soldiers at the PZ. When the aircraft land, the troops must be off as quickly as possible. To ensure that is the case, the flight crews broke the ground troops into chalks of 30.

The crew chiefs ran the Soldiers through drills, having them board and deplane as quickly as possible, first with lights, then in darkness. Before the mission, the crew chiefs gave a

safety brief on emergency procedures and crash landing contingencies.

The personnel dropoff went off without a hitch. Again rehearsals before the mission paid off, and no aircraft experienced problems getting to and from their respective landing zones. When the brigade reached the cargo dropoff portion of the mission, however, the CAB got to find out firsthand whether the plan could survive contact with the unexpected.

A brownout is an occupational hazard that comes part and parcel with being a pilot, especially a desert pilot. Rotary wing aircraft, and Chinooks in particular, exert a huge down force. In dusty environments, this down force scatters dust everywhere, obscuring the view of pilots and crew chiefs. It takes a skilled pilot to maneuver during a brownout.

When a pilot happens to be sling-loading a conex weighing several tons, as the Chinook pilots were, the skill required to come out of the brownout

safely increases exponentially.

"The only way to deal with a brownout is to land as quickly as possible, before you kick up so much dust you can't see at all. When you don't intend to land, it can present a problem," said Spc. James Carberry, a CH-47 Chinook crew chief with 2-1, "During this mission, we browned out at 110 feet above the landing zone."

Fortunately, the pilots involved in the mission were all up to the task, and the CAB was able to pick up and drop off the supplies requested by the infantry Soldiers without a single accident.

Aside from the rehearsals beforehand, a major factor in the ultimate success of the cargo portion of the mission was the basic load safety practiced by CAB pilots and crews day in and day out. "We always make sure the load is well lit, especially at night. We had infrared lights and the hookup crew all had chemlights so we could recognize where they were," said Carberry.

"At the end of the day, and I think Lt. Col. Bradley will agree, I think the crews were very proud of what we accomplished. They were very deliberate, and they made great decisions both in each individual aircraft and as a team," said Bovee.

As the dawn broke, the CAB Soldiers looked back on a successful night. The assault went as planned, the pilots were able to put all the passengers on the ground safely. Though the aircrews encountered challenges with both the sling loads and the pallets, they were still able to deliver them.

"We had a lot of different things happen on the PZ that weren't part of the plan, and we had to go into contingencies. The fact that our crews were able to stay safe, get the loads and the people where they needed to be means we accomplished the mission. I think we really helped the ground unit, and I think that means we were very successful," said Bovee.

Medics Land In History Books

Flight medics from the CAB made history when they became the first flight medics in the Army to receive the Combat Medical Badge

BY MAJ. ENRIQUE T. VASQUEZ

Throughout the history of warfare, the combat medic has been called “next to God a soldier’s best friend”. The medics currently serving with Task Force Iron throughout MND-North are no different.

Called “angels in tin hats” by the riflemen of past wars, medics courageously tended the wounded on the front lines. They did not carry weapons, relying instead on a “Red Cross” emblazoned on their helmets and sleeves for protection. The “Red Cross” did not deflect bullets.

World War I claimed the lives of 2,257 combat medics.

Their dedication in WWII was obvious: eight medics earned the Medal of Honor by war’s end. Some 3,061 enlisted medics were KIA in Europe alone.

The introduction of both F.I.B. (Expert Infantryman Badge) and C.I.B. (Combat Infantryman Badge) in November 1943 created an administrative problem and caused wide

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

concern about medical personnel and infantrymen.

Although medical personnel, regularly attached to an infantry unit were running considerable hazards when carrying out their duty, they were NOT entitled to the CIB, though some Commanders did obtain CIBs for the combat medics. Army regulations strictly forbade granting combat awards to medics, since this was against the Geneva Convention and

medics assigned to Company C, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, received the first Combat Medic Badges awarded to MEDEVAC crews for their actions during combat operations in northern Iraq while flying in support of Task Force Iron, 1st Armored Division.

Staff Sgt. Kory Werts, Staff Sgt. Lanier Patterson, Sgt. Ethan Rogers, Sgt. Jovan Salazar, Sgt. Tyrone Jordan, Spc. Nathaniel Northrup and

The CMB recognizes the unique service and selfless sacrifices of medical personnel while in contact with enemy or under fire.

“This is a big deal when you think about the magnitude of this because it is the first time flight medics have received the CMB. It is an interesting point in history,” said Col. Jessie O. Farrington, commander CAB 11D.

Previously, medical personnel who were serving in division-level medi-

lost more than 250 pilots, crew chiefs and medics in the war — a fatality rate of about 40 percent.

In Iraq and Afghanistan the battles have no distinct lines, as any area can become a combat zone without warning. This type of warfare has dramatically altered the traditional support role of MEDEVAC companies, placing their medical personnel into more multiple direct combat situations than any previous American conflict.

for the times when we retrieve patients under fire or treat them while in flight,” said Rogers. “It is very special we are finally being recognized for that time when we work to save a patient’s life,” said Rogers.

The effort to award the CMB to flight crews gained momentum through the recent involvement of Army leadership, who played a major role in pushing for the badge.

“Several months ago I was ap-

“These air [flight] medics go into some very tough conditions and probably face conditions ten times tougher than medics on the ground. What makes this so special is the fact that these flight crews treat patients in the air and to this day these medics and medics like them have never lost a patient in flight,” said Hertling.

During the ceremony Hertling recounted how he wrote a letter to Lt. Gen. Michael D. Rochelle, Deputy

A minute saved is a minute gained
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christian Beck (top) and Spc. Ryan Moya of Co. C, 2-1 GSAB, prepare a UH-60 Black Hawk medical evacuation helicopter for another mission



the non-combatant (i.e. neutral) status of medical personnel.

For the combat medic’s undaunted courage under fire the United States Army authorized the Combat Medical Badge in January 1945. The badge was awarded to any member of the Army Medical Department, pay grade Colonel or below, who was assigned or attached to a medical unit (company or smaller size) which provided medical support to a ground combat arms unit during any period in which the unit was engaged in active ground combat.

The Combat Medical Badge recognizes the unique service and selfless sacrifices of medical personnel. This summer seven U.S. Army flight

Spc. Stacey Dill received the CMB in a ceremony at Contingency Operating Base Speicher on July 28. The seven awardees are all based out of Fort Riley, Kan. and deployed to Iraq with the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division during the fall of 2007.

‘This is the first time flight medics have received the CMB. It is an interesting point in history.’

--- COL. JESSIE O. FARRINGTON, CAB COMMANDER

cal companies, ground ambulance and medical clearing companies, Mobile-Army Surgical Hospital, Combat-Support Hospital and aero-medical evacuation units were not eligible for the CMB. According to Army regulations, flight medics could not receive the CMB.

“In the past the combat medical badge was only awarded to those medics serving with ground units. For one reason or another flight medics were unable to qualify for the badge,” said Rogers.

Still flight medics risked their lives since the inception of the MEDEVAC helicopter. Statistics from Vietnam show how dangerous the job is. The small medical evacuation community



Photos by Maj. Enrique T. Vasquez

Band of Brothers
Command Sgt. Maj Donald Wright, (back center) 2-1 GSAB command sergeant major poses with 2-1 medics, the first MEDEVAC flight medics in the U.S. Army to receive the Combat Medic Badge

“They are willing to go anywhere anytime to do the hard work and it’s just impressive,” said Farrington

“When they get the call they don’t know what they are getting into. All they know is that they are going to save a Soldier’s life, or any human being for that matter. These guys are truly angels of mercy,” said Farrington.

Both male and female flight medics, previously regarded as strictly medical support personnel, are now drawn into the fight against terror extending the opportunity to be awarded the CMB.

“It is sort of a thankless job. Most people think all we do is pick-up and drop-off patients and only give us credit for that. We don’t get credit

proached by Lt. Col. Michael Tetu, 2-1 commander and we discussed the need to do something to recognize MEDEVAC flight crews since they did not qualify for the CMB,” said Maj. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, the Task Force Iron commanding general.

‘What makes this so special is the fact that ... these medics have never lost a patient in flight.’

--- MAJ. GEN. MARK J. HERTLING, TF IRON COMMANDER

Chief of Staff G-1, U. S. Army to see if Army regulations could be changed to allow flight medics to receive the CMB.

“This isn’t right. We need to do something to change the regulations. We have to do something to get these flight medics the recognition they deserve,” Hertling wrote to Rochelle.

The end result caused a change to current Army regulations that now allow CMBs to be awarded to flight medics.

“So these seven people are the first, and I’m very happy to be here to see the ‘Duty First’ Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, be the first to award the Combat Medic Badge to air MEDEVAC medics,” said Hertling.



The greatest test -- Big Red One in WWII

An unprecedented surprise attack on the nation's soil thrusts the Big Red One into its greatest trial of all time

ADAPTED FROM THE BIG RED ONE BY JAMES SCOTT WHEELER

Breaking Point

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor left the United States with virtually no choice but to enter the war

had 1.6 million men under arms, with thirty-six divisions, including three armored divisions, on active service. The U.S. Navy, whose preparations for a war against Japan had begun in 1934, was strong enough to absorb the losses suffered at Pearl Harbor, stop the Japanese fleet in the Battle of the Coral Sea in April 1942, and decisively defeat the Japanese Navy in the Battle of Midway, in June 1942. The U.S. Army Air Forces, made virtually independent in the mid-1930s, had developed the aircraft types that by 1943 would enable American Air Forces to hammer Germany with long-range bombing. Because the Air Force and Navy required two to three years to build a major warship or field an aircraft, the potency of the Navy and Air Force early in the war bears witness to the fact that the United States was not disarmed at the beginning of the war.

The Soldiers of the Big Red One learned of the attack that afternoon. That evening, Gen. Donald Cubbison assured a worried colonel in the War Department that the division was ready to travel to the west coast to defend the nation from attack. Although not sent to California, the division was indeed destined to stay quite mobile in the years to come. On Feb. 14, the division took to road and rail to move to Camp Blanding, Fla., where it was to conduct individual, small-unit and jungle training.

While the division trained in Florida, British and American leaders developed the strategy that ultimately defeated Germany, Italy and Japan. As early as August 1941, Roosevelt and Winston Churchill had agreed that if the United States entered the war the two allies would pursue a "Germany First" strategy. Because Germany's resources were far greater than Japan's, and because Germany was situated in the middle of the most economically developed continent in the world, outside of North America, the American and British staffs concluded that Germany was the most

dangerous foe.

To execute this strategy, the two Western Allies agreed eventually to send American and British armies into northwestern Europe. For this amphibious operation, code-named Bolero, the United States would mass air and ground forces in Britain.

With the Bolero plan in place, the U.S. Army began to identify the first of thirty divisions that it hoped to have in Britain ready for an invasion of France in 1943. The 1st Infantry Division, as one of only eight combat ready divisions in early 1942, was high on the list of units to be sent.

The United States was better prepared for war than at the onset of any previous major conflict in history.

Brig. Gen. Terry Allen assumed command of the Big Red One, and he was promoted to major general in June. Brig. Gen. Theodore Roosevelt continued to serve as the assistant division commander and Col. Norman Cota was the division's chief of staff.

Most of the division traveled to Britain on the Cunard luxury liner, the Queen Mary. The great liner sailed without escort, relying on her speed to evade U-boats. Only when she neared Ireland was she joined by destroyers and cruisers. As the Big Red One crossed the Atlantic, Allied planning changed. Crises in the Soviet Union and North Africa threatened the survival of Russia and the British position in Egypt. In Russia, the German summer offensive seemed capable of destroying the Russians' will and ability to continue the war. In north Africa, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps drove the British out of Libya, captured Tobruk, and threatened the survival of Russia and the British position in Egypt. While the British rallied near El Alamein, Churchill convinced Roosevelt the best way to keep Russia and Britain in the War was to commit American ground forces

to north Africa in 1942. On July 23, 1942, Roosevelt ordered Marshall to prepare for offensive operations in the Mediterranean region. Meanwhile, the Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division trained and prepared for Operation Torch — The Big Red One's fist assault of the war.

In September, the division left Tidworth Barracks, near Salisbury, where it had been stationed and boarded SS Reina del Pacifico bound for Algeria. Surprisingly enough, the first resistance the Big Red One would encounter would come from one of America's erstwhile allies—the French. The Torch plan called for two-thirds of the 1st Infantry Division to land 20 miles to the east of Oran, on the beaches near the small port of Arzew. The 1st Ranger Battalion was attached to the division for the initial assault. The rangers landed north of Arzew. Meeting some resistance, three companies of Rangers landed on the headlands north of Arzew and overcame the defenders of the French batteries there. After daybreak, French sniper and mortar fire from the west of Arzew caused minor difficulties to the Rangers and to naval personnel who had landed to operate the small fort.

Nonetheless, by 6:30 a.m., the area had been secured, giving the 1st a vital foothold. Despite the resistance of Vichy French forces, the 1st's landings at Arzew and Les Andalouses went well and by Nov. 10, Oran had been secured. For the remainder of the year the division's regiments, either operating separately or with French and British units, became acclimatized to combat conditions and continued the piecemeal advance across Algeria and into Tunisia.

On Feb. 14, 1943, Rommel launched an attack against the U.S. II Corps. He hoped to restore the initiative in Tunisia. At first, it seemed that his attack would succeed. The 21st Panzer Division brushed aside the 1st Armored Division as well as elements of the 1st Infantry Division. Eventually, however, the attack was halted and a month later, on March 17, the 1st Infantry launched counterattacks at Gafsa and El Guettar that retook much of the ground lost in February.



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