



# Wings of Destiny

## OEF XII - XIII



### February 2013

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Task Force Shadow: SPC Frank Lovejoy

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# Destiny-6

## COL Paul Bontrager



### Message From the Pilot in Command



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - COL Paul Bontrager, Commander, Task Force Destiny prepares to take off for a patrol in an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, Jan. 5, 2013. (Photo by SGT Duncan Brennan, TF Destiny public affairs)

Hello again Soldiers, Family and friends of Task Force Destiny, and a happy Valentine's Day to all!

As we are already half-way through February, we have passed the toughest part of winter over here in Afghanistan we are certainly looking forward to warmer weather.

Congratulations to Task Force Saber and Task Force Troubleshooter who are in the process of returning home earlier than planned after performing magnificently throughout this deployment. While both of these battalions will leave several individuals behind to continue the fight, most Soldiers from these units get to return early to loved ones at home. As we anticipated, the changes our unit has endured during this deployment are continuous as America winds down this war. We will remain ready for additional changes in the coming months and let everyone know what to expect as soon as we are able.

While each Family communicates to each other in their own ways, as we prepare for the return of all of our units we will rely on a few methods to pass return information that have proven most reliable, namely call-down rosters and the IRIS messaging system. Please double check that your respective Family Readiness Group volunteers have correct and accurate con-

tact information for whoever needs to receive timely information.

It was wonderful to see the photos from the Half-Way Home Dinner the Family Readiness Group held at Fort Campbell. Kelly told me of the great turnout and support she received. Thanks so much for all that were able to attend. As the "We Can Do it" theme for this event so aptly captured, these events help strengthen the bonds that are so important when times are tough. I am sure the upcoming "Diamond Mud Dash" event will serve a similar purpose, which is critical as we near the end of this deployment. After our return please save the date of July 18 when we will hold a formal evening event in Nashville -- details forthcoming.

In closing, know that all the units within Task Force Destiny are performing exactly how you would want and expect. While these are hard tasks and difficult times, our Soldiers conduct their duties with the highest honor and professionalism...if only you could see them as I do; I know you share this feeling of pride, while yet being humbled to be counted as belonging to this great unit. God bless you all. Wings of Destiny, Air Assault.

Paul Bontrager  
Destiny 6





# Destiny-7

## CSM Harold Plattenberg



### Leading From the Front



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan-CSM Harold Plattenberg watches the Brigade Staff conduct the "Cupid Shuffle" with COL Paul Bontrager, Commander, Task Force Destiny, during a birthday celebration. (Photo by SGT Duncan Brennan, TF Destiny public affairs)

Yet another milestone has passed here in the Task Force Destiny as we have begun to close out operations in areas throughout Afghanistan. Much thanks is given on behalf of myself and my Family to the Soldiers and their Families for the continued support in the last couple of months. We can only wait in anticipation for the welcome home ceremony that awaits all of us as we step off the planes at Fort Campbell in the coming months. Some of us will be coming sooner than others but it will not take away from our ability to do our job over here and your continued support from back home is instrumental to us completing our jobs over here.

The Wings of Destiny Families are truly amazing people that are the foundation of this organization, and you mean everything to us over here. It is great to see each of you taking time out of your busy schedules to attend events such as the half-way ball to be amongst friends and help each other through this time. We continue to support such efforts while deployed

and also want to let you be aware that your efforts are not unnoticed over here.

As we approach the Easter season we need to continue to keep each family member of the Wings of Destiny in our prayers and thoughts. A strong support network is a very key part to us finishing strong. With things changing everyday over here, remember to stay current with the changes through the support network established through the rear detachment as they will have all the current and updated information, please keep the false information from spreading. We are doing extremely well over here as we continue to thrive off of the support that you provide.

I am extremely honored to tell each of you that your Soldiers make me proud to say that I am their CSM. Their efforts are making a difference in a part of the world that relies on them to provide them with a chance at a better way of life. We will see each and every one of you as soon as we close out this chapter in our latest Rendezvous with Destiny.



# Destiny-65

## CW5 Robert Purdy



### Message From the Cockpit



FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHANK, Afghanistan - CW5 Robert Purdy shows off the Old Abe patch on PFC Eric Wagner, F Company, Task Force Eagle Assault, Pathfinder. PFC Wagner grew up near CW5 Purdy's home town.

Destiny Soldiers and Families, as I type this we sit at roughly 3 months to go until we are all back together. Although we all look forward to the day we can be reunited, there is still much work to be done here in Afghanistan and we must stay the course of high standards and enforced discipline as we answer the call of our great nation. Traveling across our vast area of responsibility I am amazed at the tasks the Soldiers of Destiny accomplish daily. You all complete your duties with a professional execution that is both humbling and inspirational. Our brigade is something special, not just a unit, more than a "band of brothers and sisters," we are nothing short of family that cares and looks after one another while continuing to strive for greatness in achieving our tasks. Outside organizations notice what we have and wish they could capture it. Soldiers in other units we work with ask daily about being part of the 101st Airborne and the 101 CAB. When others emulate what you do and wish to join your organization, then you know that we are some-

thing special, Destiny.

Although it is difficult not to look at the calendar and count the days, try not to get too far ahead and realize the importance of what is left to do. We have the honor of serving our Army and our Nation at a historic time. As the history books are written, and the final chapters of the war in Afghanistan are penned, you will know that you played a significant role in the closure of America's longest war. You have set conditions for giving the people of Afghanistan an opportunity for a better life, a brighter future, and the security that they will not again reside under the oppressive fist of the Taliban. You have done this while proudly wearing the patch of one of our nation's greatest and most storied divisions. From the soil of Normandy to the mountains of the Kunar, our division has always performed with honor and distinction. Our period in history is no different. I proudly stand with you in the phalanx as we set the line of freedom's frontier and prepare for our next rendezvous. God bless you all.





# Destiny Chaplain

## CH (MAJ) Billy Graham



**Count Your Blessings**



Guest column by: CH (CPT) Nathan White  
TF Eagle Assault Chaplain

In his book, *The Tipping Point*, author Malcolm Gladwell analyzes societal trends as varied as fashion trends, disease outbreaks, and rashes of suicidal behavior and finds that a small group of people, sometimes even a single individual, can spark an epidemic for good or for evil. In case after case he convincingly shows the amazing impact that a very small group of people can have on a much larger community.

It gives me hope to know that a small group of people can make a difference. It means that my life is not without purpose and that I can make a significant difference with my life. It does not take a majority to bring about radical change; it begins with just a few. I can be one of those few!

The author of the book of Hebrews reminds us, faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see (Heb. 11:1 NIV). It is easy to believe in something that is clearly right in front of you, but it takes faith to believe in what is about to be.

Faith means venturing into the unknown and into the uncomfortable. Anything significant in life must be achieved through faith since faith, by definition, takes courage. In the end it takes faith to see change.

Sometimes we can wonder if our lives can make a difference in this world, in our organization, or in the lives of those around us. It can be hard to see any perceptible changes and it is easy to become discouraged. But when we look again, we can begin to see the many ways, some small, some big, that this world and the people around us are better for our being here.

When we get discouraged and feel disappointed, let us take a look around and realize that each of us has the power to make a difference in the lives of so many around us. We may not feel like we do much to bless others, but even a word of encouragement or a simple "Hello" can change someone's day. Could that person next to you be in need of a kind word? Is there a more significant change you would like to see take place? Start making steps towards it in faith. You never know, it could make all the difference in the world.



# Task Force No Mercy



SGT Griffin receives an award for his outstanding work as the supply sergeant for E Company, Task Force No Mercy. His responsibilities include managing the company property book, conducting inventories on a monthly basis and serving as the expert on the Command Supply Discipline Program. (Photo by SPC Ross Michael Noffsinger, TF No Mercy UPAR)



Unmanned Aerial Vehicle operators and maintainers, from F Troop, Task Force No Mercy prepare a UAV for launch at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, Feb. 7, 2013. (Photo by SPC Ross Michael Noffsinger, TF No Mercy UPAR)



KHOST, Afghanistan –Soldiers from Echo Company, Task Force No Mercy stand outside of the Soldier of the Month board at Forward Operating Base Salerno on January 25, 2013. (Photo by SPC Ross Michael Noffsinger, TF No Mercy UPAR)



# Task Force No Mercy



KHOST, Afghanistan – SGT Silvestre Alaniz, a Corbin, Ky. native, gets promoted on February 1, 2013 at Forward Operating Base Salerno. He is an aviation operations specialist for Task Force No Mercy. SGT Alaniz belongs to Headquarters Headquarters Company, Task Force No Mercy. (Photo by SPC Ross Michael Noffsinger, TF No Mercy UPAR)



Left: Fuelers from Echo Company, Task Force No Mercy, fuel an AH-64 Apache Helicopter at the Forward Armament and Refueling Point at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, Feb. 7, 2013 (Photo by SPC Ross Michael Noffsinger, TF No Mercy UPAR)



Below: KHOST, Afghanistan – Soldiers from Bravo Troop, Nomads, Task Force No Mercy move a CH-47 Chinook helicopter, February 3, 2013 in FOB Salerno. The Soldiers were still outside working on the Chinook despite the cold rain. (Photo by SPC Ross Michael Noffsinger, TF No Mercy UPAR)





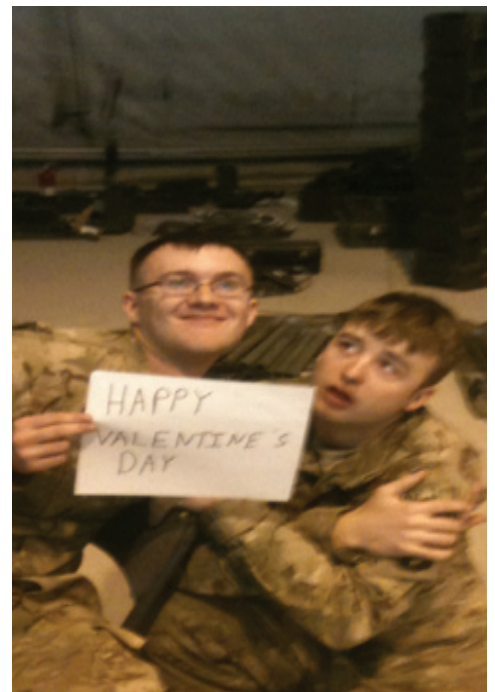
# Task Force Saber



Above: FOB Fenty, Afghanistan- Soldiers from Task Force Saber contemplate life in one of the most historic cavalry units in the Army at Forward Operating Base Fenty, Afghanistan. (Photo by SGT Alcone J. Levier, D Company, TF Saber, avionics repair NCO)

Left: FOB Fenty, Afghanistan- PFC Richard Dejong a Pensacola, Florida, native, shows holiday spirit while packing equipment for redeployment to FT. Campbell, KY Jan. 17 2013. Dejong serves an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle operator with F Troop, Task Force Saber. (Photo by SGT Timothy Fry)

Right: FOB Fenty, Afghanistan- SGT David Kennedy, a Duluth, MN., native, and SPC Charles Froese, a West Chester, Ohio, Native show their holiday cheer while packing equipment for redeployment to FT. Campbell, KY Jan. 17 2013. SGT Kennedy serves as an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle operator/instructor operator with F Troop, Task Force Saber. (Photo by SGT Timothy Fry)





# Task Force Saber



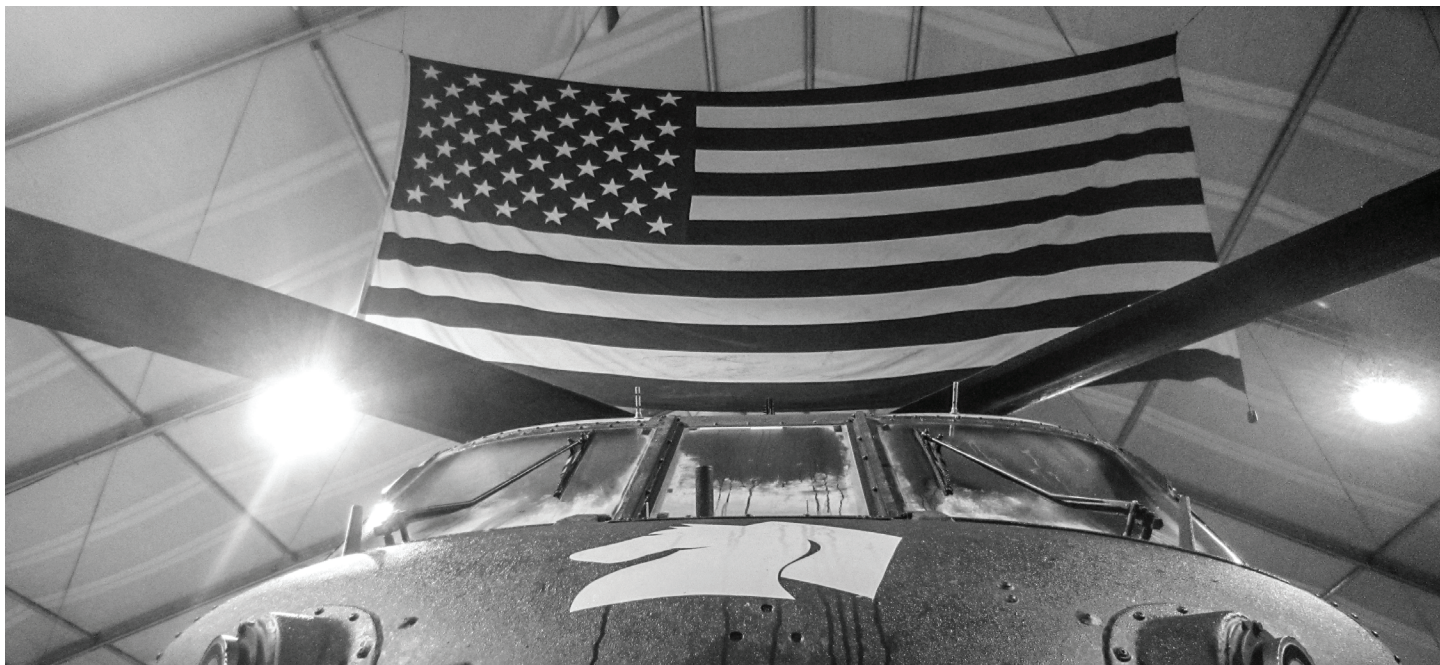
Above Left: "I wish my wife a Happy Valentine's Day. I miss you very much."

Jalalabad, Afghanistan – SPC Leslie Graham works on the rotor head of an AH-64D. Graham serves as a crewchief for C Company, Paladins, Task Force Saber. (Photo by 1SG Jairo Lopera)



Above Right: "We may be gone in Afghanistan, but our hearts are still with you. Happy Valentine's Day." Jalalabad, Afghanistan – CW2 Josh Hart celebrates another successful AH-64 mission. Hart serves as a pilot for C Company, Paladins, Task Force Saber. (Photo by 1SG Jairo Lopera)

Below: A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from B Company, Lancers, Task Force Saber undergoing maintenance in a hangar while a U.S. flag hangs from the ceiling. (Photo by SGT Alcone J. Levier, D Company, TF Saber, avionics repair NCO)







# Task Force Troubleshooters



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - SPC Michael Bradford, B Company, Task Force Troubleshooters, AH-64 Apache helicopter mechanic is interviewed by Greg Williamson from the Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle newspaper on conducting a 500-hour phase maintenance on an Apache helicopter. (Photo by SGT Duncan Brennan, TF Destiny public affairs)

## Task Force Troubleshooters Continues the Mission and Remembers Family

By 1LT Christopher Landrum

For the Soldiers of Task Force Troubleshooters, February brings the six-month mark of the deployment and Valentine's Day, a chance to remember their loved ones while far from home.

While spending Valentine's Day away from loved ones can be stressful, many Soldiers from the task force will be home sooner than expected as part of the scheduled drawdown.

"There is some sadness about being away from home," explained CPT Jabbar Colbert, the commander for Charlie Company, "but we remember that each day

brings us closer to being back with our loved ones."

Even though many Soldiers will return early, the task force is still responsible for completing their mission and supporting Task Force Destiny. As a result, the Task Force is leaving their aviation maintenance company behind with attached Soldiers from other companies.

"We're nearing the end [of the deployment], and we know these last few months are critical," said MAJ Shoshannah Lane, commander of Bravo Company. "We are still supporting the remaining aircraft with maintenance, night vision goggle services, component repair, etcetera."

Despite leaving part of the Task Force in Afghanistan, their commander, LTC Benjamin

Bahoque, is optimistic about the upcoming months.

"Our Troubleshooters have excelled and will continue to excel throughout this deployment until [the end]. Even though some Soldiers will remain, the silver lining is that before Task Force Destiny's handover is completed all Troubleshooters will be reunited at home with their families."

As the Task Force prepares to come home, LTC Bahoque offered his thanks to the families left behind.

"We thank our families for their endless support, love, and prayers. Their support is the reason for our success."



# Task Force Troubleshooters



Above Left: BAGRAM, Afghanistan – SPC Virgil Faafili, A Company, TF Troubleshooters, prepares kicker boxes at the TF Troubleshooters Supply Support Activity as part of the transition of the SSA to defense contractors. (Photo by 1LT Charlie Anderson, TF Troubleshooters)

Above Right: BAGRAM, Afghanistan – CPT Lance Crow, HSC, Task Force Troubleshooters prepares school supplies while volunteering at the Cat in the Hat Language Arts Center on Bagram Air Base.

Below: BAGRAM, Afghanistan – SPC Ashley Havercamp prepares a Kiowa Warrior for transport at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (Photo by MAJ Shoshannah Lane, TF Troubleshooters)







# Task Force Eagle Assault



FOB Shank, Afghanistan – From left to right: 1LT Derek Casteluccio, SPC Tyler Bryant, and SGT Daviann Dunn of E Company, Task Force Eagle Assault eagerly open care packages sent by friends and family.

## The Joy of Care Packages

By CPT Jackie Chang

The days in a deployed environment can seem to drag on. One part of the day, however, certainly stands above the rest: mail call. Through the support of family and friends back home, TF Eagle Assault Soldiers have received a steady stream of care packages big enough to feed a small town. These packages can make the difference on a bad day or offer respite during a mundane day.

1LT Derek Castellucio of E Company shares his many packages with the rest of the Soldiers at the forward arming and refuelling point (FARP) and makes sure to thank everyone that sends a box.

“Everyone looks forward to 1600 mail call. Out at the FARP, we don’t have many food options, so the ramen noodles, chips, and macaroni cheese go a long way. I enjoy writing thank you letters and sending pictures to the people that send us stuff. It adds a little extra touch.”

Soldiers have received gifts above and beyond the typical snacks, toiletries, and reading materials. SPC Stephen Hawkins of HHC received a brand new iPad through the program “iPads for Soldiers.” “I was shocked to see what was inside the package. I was really appreciative, especially given the cost of one of these things. There is not a day since I received the iPad that I don’t use it.”

SSG Joshua Gordon of F Company along with support of

several pipe companies/retailers created Pipes for Troops. Through his program, the Pathfinders received individual boxes, each containing a pipe, pipe tobacco, cleaning supplies, and a carrying case. There are 300 more pipes on the way for distribution.

The generosity of the American public towards our Soldiers knows no bounds. The Soldiers of TF Eagle Assault give thanks many times over to our family, friends, and complete strangers that dedicate their efforts to ensure that we remain entertained and well fed and greatly increase the morale of our fighting force.



# Task Force Eagle Assault



Above: FOB Shank, Afghanistan – TF Eagle Assault Pathfinders pose with their new pipes as part of a program created by SSG Joshua Gordon, F Company. (Front row, L to R) 1LT Michael Bell, SGT John Phillipi, SPC Keith McMorran, 1LT Thomas Kenny, 1LT Andrew Ng (Back row, L to R) SGT Shea Goodnature, SPC Benjamin Hanawalt, SSG Joshua Gordon, SSG Brendan Dougherty

Below: The Commander of C Company, Task Force Eagle Assault, CPT Brandy Fields, receives the Guidon from LTC Chuck Rambo, Commander, TF Eagle Assault during a change-of-command ceremony at Forward Operating Base Shank.





# Task Force Shadow



We are starting to see evidence of our inevitable return home, here at Task Force Shadow. Between our freshly painted murals in the Command Group Conference room (depicting 101st CAB leaving and 10th CAB coming in) to all the 10th Mountain patches we see around the area. It is a welcomed sight with Valentine's Day just around the corner, and us as Soldiers so far from home. This just goes to show us that we will be in our loved ones arms soon.

As we move closer to our reunion we think back on the time we have spent here, the laughs, the tears, and the sweat! The chance to serve our country, and honor that it brings makes our home coming that much sweeter.



BAGRAM, Afghanistan – PFC Ruiz, a California, native admires the Command Group Mural for Task Force Shadow Jan 25th, 2013. Ruiz serves as a Chinook mechanic. (Photo by SPC Frank Lovejoy)



# Task Force Shadow



Above: BAGRAM, Afghanistan – SPC John Lutjen, A Company, Task Force Shadow clears snow off the stabilator of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, Jan. 12, 2013. (Photo by SGT Duncan Brennan, TF Destiny public affairs)

Below: BAGRAM, Afghanistan – CW2 Jeremie Spencer, A Company, Task Force Shadow, UH-60 Black Hawk pilot takes a break from cleaning up the snow when a fellow pilot starts to shovel snow and slush in his direction at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, Jan. 12, 2013. (Photo by SGT Duncan Brennan, TF Destiny public affairs)







# 12th CAB



Above: MEZAR-I-SHARIF, Afghanistan - LTC Ruiz, Commander, Task Force Ready pins an end of tour award on a Soldier in his battalion at a ceremony at Mezar-I-Sharif, Afghanistan. TF Ready is based in Katterbach, Germany and is part of TF Destiny.

Below: MEZAR-I-SHARIF, Afghanistan - CW4 Santee, left, congratulates SPC Fitzgerald, right, on a successful tour in Regional Command - North. Task Force Ready provides general support aviation and MEDEVAC support to ground forces operating in RC-North.







# HHC, 101 CAB



Above: BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - SFC James Radebaugh, brigade ground maintenance and facilities NCO stands at attention with COL Paul Bontrager, Commander, Task Force Destiny, during his promotion to Master Sergeant, Jan. 2, 2013. (Photo by SPC Michael Newell, HHC, TF Destiny UPAR)

Above Left: BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - SPC Kyle Morales, HHC, Task Force Destiny, RTO, receives congratulations from CPT Bimi Hoxha, Commander, HHC, Task Force Destiny, HellCats, on his battlefield promotion at a ceremony at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, Feb. 1, 2013. (Photo by SPC Michael Newell, HHC, TF Destiny UPAR)



Left: BAGRAM AIRFIELD Afghanistan - SSG Shannon Syfrett, brigade paralegal NCO prepares to be promoted to Sergeant First Class by 1SG Ronald Schlangen in a ceremony at 101st CAB headquarters, Jan. 2, 2013. (Photo by SPC Michael Newell, HHC, TF Destiny UPAR)





# Task Force Shadow Warrior



FORWARD OPERATING BASE KUNDUZ, Afghanistan (Jan. 14, 2013) - CPT Chris Bowers from Johnstown, PA and CPT John Freeman from Orlando, FL both with Task Force Shadow Warrior return to their home base at FOB Kunduz in the early evening for refueling following escort duty of a cargo operation. (Photo by Jonathan Lindsay, Embed, TF Shadow Warrior)

## Task Force Shadow Warrior Celebrates Valentine's Day and Unexpected Reminder of Freedom

By CW2 Ellen Smith

With Valentine's Day quickly approaching, many of the Soldiers of Task Force Shadow Warriors are quickly solidifying last minute gifts for their loved ones back home. The usual stock of flowers, chocolates and cards are being sent.

However, several Soldiers of TF Shadow Warriors have chosen a non-traditional way to celebrate their love. Many have foregone the holiday altogether, opting instead to celebrate their relationships throughout each day instead of on one specific day. No matter how or when the display of thought and affection is shown, it is indeed a deeply personal and unique situation for each Soldier and his/her loved one.

Though a deployment can often prove very challenging for many relationships, often many find the separation strengthens the bond and commitment between loved ones. It is a learning experience for the Soldiers serving in Afghanistan to compare and contrast our ability to openly and eagerly show our love to any person we choose.

At Valentine's Day, we celebrate our love in a country with very different social norms and values than our own. This contrast provides an interesting and unexpected opportunity to appreciate the freedoms that we enjoy as American citizens the same freedoms that we are privileged and honored to defend.

Elements of the 1-104th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion arrived at Forward Operating Base Kunduz in December 2012 to assume the role as an Attack Battalion Task Force in RC-North, known as Task Force Shadow Warriors. The unit is part of the 28th Combat Aviation Brigade, 28th Infantry Division of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard.



# Task Force Shadow Warrior



Left: FORWARD OPERATING BASE KUNDUZ, Afghanistan (Jan. 14, 2013 - CW2 Brandon Krahmer, B Company, Task Force Shadow Warrior "Big Windy" pilots his CH-47F Chinook during cargo operations in RC-North. Krahmer is a native of Crosby, TX. (Photo by Jonathan Lindsay, Embed, TF Shadow Warrior)

Below Right: FORWARD OPERATING BASE KUNDUZ, Afghanistan (Jan. 10, 2013) - SSG Tom Bowser, from Annville, PA, an AH-64D Longbow crew chief, B Company, Task Force Shadow Warrior, FOB Kunduz, climbs an Apache tail to service the tail rotor gear box. (Photo by Jonathan Lindsay, Embed, TF Shadow Warrior)



Above Left: FORWARD OPERATING BASE KUNDUZ, Afghanistan (Jan. 24, 2013) - SPC Saul Grandinetti, D Co., Task Force Shadow Warrior, from Reading, PA at FOB Kunduz wires a subsystem on an AH-64D Longbow 30mm cannon mount. (Photo by Jonathan Lindsay, Embed, TF Warrior)

Right: FORWARD OPERATING BASE KUNDUZ, Afghanistan (Jan. 24, 2013) - AH-64D pilot, 1LT Gail Hepler from Greensburg, in the front seat, and CPT William Ryan Webster, from Harrisburg, PA taxi into the FARP at FOB Kunduz for refueling before returning to escort an aerial cargo mission in RC-N. They are aviators with Task Force Shadow Warrior (Photo by Jonathan Lindsay, Embed, TF Shadow Warrior)

