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2013

FALCON SUMMIT



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FALCON SUMMIT

JUNE 2013

Falcon Summit is published in the interest of the servicemembers of the 10th Mountain Infantry (LI) Division's Combat Aviation Brigade.

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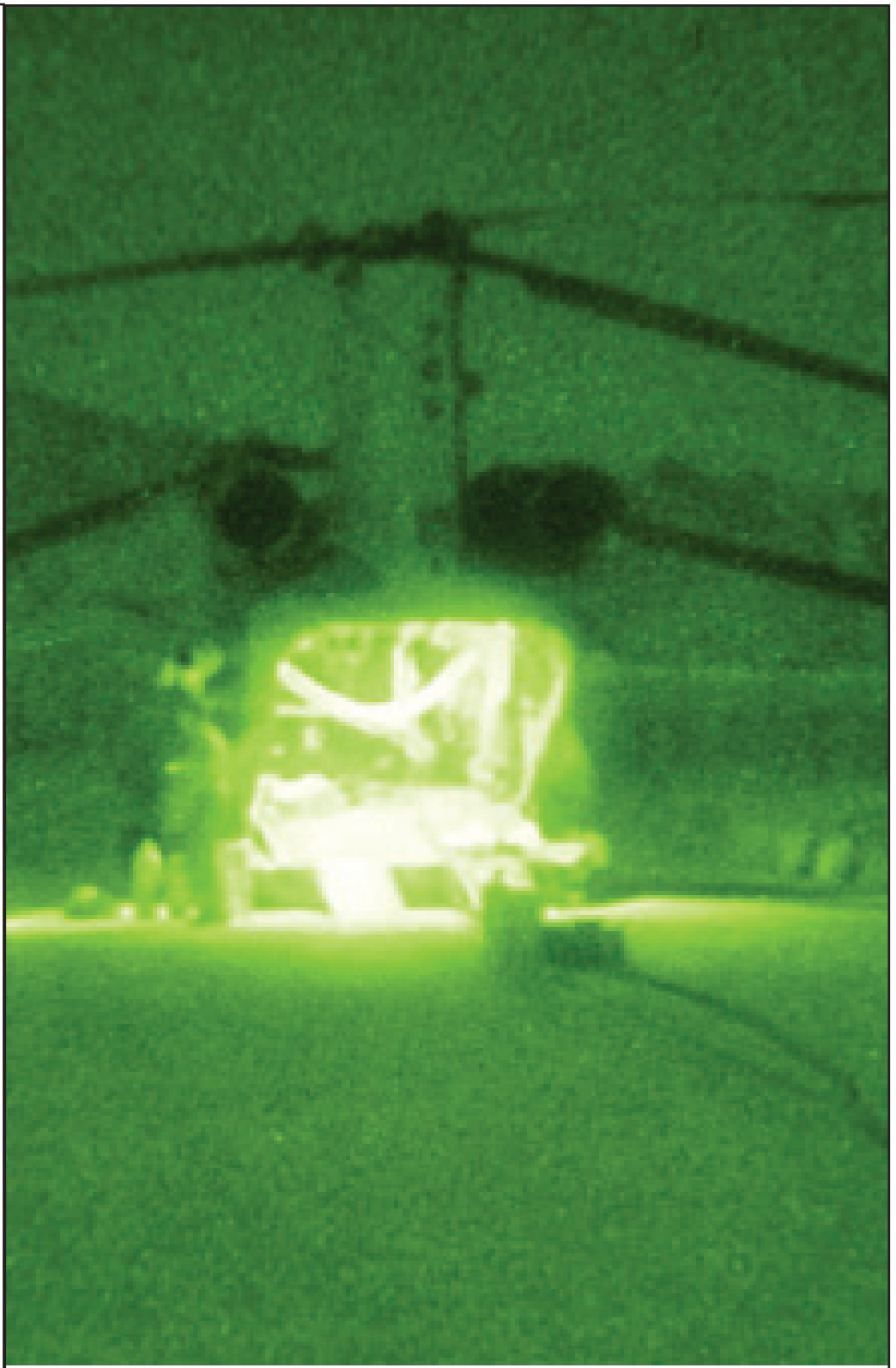
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COVER PHOTO

A CH-47 Chinook helicopter moves into position as Soldiers prepare to hook up a slingloaded communications satellite,



Soldiers of E Company, 1st Battalion (Attack), 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Tigersharks, operate a fuel point called a Fat Cow in which an internal tank inside a CH-47 Chinook helicopter can be connected to hoses and pumps in order to refuel other helicopters. (Photo courtesy of Task Force Tigershark)

From Falcon 6:

Families, Friends, and Soldiers of 10th CAB and Task Force Falcon,

We are now officially two months into our deployment and I could not be more proud of the outstanding service and sacrifices of our great Soldiers. Our personnel and equipment are adapting exceptionally well to the grueling conditions and rising temperatures common to this part of the world, and I am confident we will continue to meet any demand asked of this phenomenal task force. Our success is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our fine Soldiers during the countless weeks, days, and hours spent preparing for this endeavor; Task Force Falcon is comprised of the finest aviators, maintainers, and support personnel the Army has to offer.



The success we are experiencing downrange would not be possible without the support of our families in the rear. Your support and dedication are critical to our mission; you are the backbone of our formation. Our Family Readiness Groups have done an outstanding job of providing resources for our families and keeping them informed of our activities while deployed. I encourage everyone to take advantage of their Family Readiness Group and participate in the great events they coordinate like the 10th CAB Walk to Afghanistan and the Run for Resiliency. Also, be sure to “like” our 10th Combat Aviation Brigade Facebook page, we have new pictures and stories posted continuously from across the task force.

Our Soldiers are at the forefront of the coalition’s efforts here in this critical time in Afghanistan’s history. Their efforts will leave a lasting impact on the people of Afghanistan, and play an instrumental role in the outcome of this war. This is a team effort, and we would not be where we are today without the contributions made by every single aviator, maintainer, and support personnel in this task force. CSM Cuomo and I could not be prouder of you, or more honored to serve by your side!

FLY TO GLORY!
COL David J. Francis
Task Force Falcon
10th Combat Aviation Brigade
Falcon 6

From Falcon 65:

Families, Friends, and Soldiers of 10th CAB and Task Force Falcon,

With the first few months of our deployment behind us, I am proud to say the 10th CAB Soldiers are performing admirably. Task Force Falcon continues to put the best aircraft and crew in the air around the clock. This is no small accomplishment and is a testament to the dedication of our aviators, maintainers, and support personnel. Our personnel are working around the clock to ensure we provide the best possible aviation support available to commanders on the ground and the people of Afghanistan.

I would like to take a moment to thank our families and all the folks that support them in the rear. Task Force Falcon has one of the best support systems and is instrumental to our success here. Our Family Readiness Groups have done an exceptional job of keeping our loved ones informed and providing assistance when needed. I would like to thank you for not only your unwavering support but for

From Falcon 7:

Families, Friends, and Soldiers of 10th CAB and Task Force Falcon,

Task Force Falcon is well on its way to writing a crucial chapter in Afghanistan's history. Our Soldiers are at the forefront of this effort and are performing admirably. I ask that leaders continue to care for their Soldiers and set the standard high. This means doing what is right regardless of who is watching. Keep caring for our Soldiers; they are our nation's best.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our families back home. Your continued support provides us with the motivation needed to continue the fight and return home safely. I encourage our families to take advantage of the resources that are available to them at our home stations. Our Family Readiness Groups are a tremendous asset and are doing a phenomenal job of keeping our families informed.

your resiliency as well.

I ask that all of our personnel continue to maintain the high standard expected of Task Force Falcon Soldiers. Years later you will be able to reflect back on this deployment and be proud of your sacrifice and hard work in the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade. Your sacrifice is why our Army is one of the most revered institutions in our country.

FLY TO GLORY!

CW5 Jeffrey Fitzgerald
10th Combat Aviation Brigade
Chief Warrant Officer of the Brigade
Falcon 65



Thank you to all the families, friends, and Soldiers of this great task force. We are armed with the best Soldiers this nation has to offer. I am honored everyday to serve alongside these brave men and women.

FLY TO GLORY!

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



The Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain (MAJ) Jerry Johnson

Greetings again to everyone from Bagram. As we continue on into the second major phase of this deployment, it is important for both the Soldier and the family members to keep heading in the same direction emotionally. The summer is a chance for the families back home to enjoy some fun activities that take everyone's mind off of the separation. For us, my wife Carrie brought our soon-to-be senior son Tommy to NYC for three-plus days of college hunting and Broadway shows. She will have another adventure in August when she drives down to Fort Jackson to see our ROTC cadet son Jeremy graduate basic. And our youngest Jimmy gets to spend a month with grandma and grandpa. Our oldest Bradley transfers to SUNY Plattsburgh in August, which will be another adventure, from the apartment in Watertown to dorms. You get the idea. All of us have family activities during the summer that are sure to be fun and make the time go by.

Nevertheless, if you do have children they will still experience varying degrees of sadness during the deployment. The DOD has put together a 45 page resource entitled, "Guide for Helping Children and Youth Cope with Separation." For parents, one of the important concepts to grasp early on is "Most children perceive separation from a parent as stressful. But not all children perceive the event, or respond to the event, similarly. When you help children adjust to separation from a parent, remember that children of different ages and varying experiences with separation react to separation differently" (p. 6). We are now solidly in the Deployment Phase of this separation. The guide has this to say:

The day of departure, military personnel are regarded as dedicated, self-sacrificing, and courageous, especially during wartime.

After the event fades, however, the community goes on while families struggle with grief and new responsibilities and routines.

Some family members may reach different levels of

adjustment; some develop coping skills and are ready to resume their lives with renewed resiliency and hope. Some may struggle with past problems and new conflicts while others may continue to suffer from feelings of depression.

The majority of families eventually reach a "new normal" in daily life activities without the deployed spouse or parent (p. 7)

Our concern as caregivers is to watch this third bullet carefully, both here in theater and back home. This is why we have assets like the MFLCs, Rear Detachment and Family Life Chaplains, medically-based counseling resources, and even your FRG leadership. Soldier and family members alike, as you do your morale calls, facetime or Skype, facebook and e-mail interactions, do "azimuth checks" on each other to see how things are going. Are any of you isolating yourself away from other people because you are extremely depressed? Are you able to live normally and function in daily tasks, whether they be related to work, school, or the extra household load? If no, reach out for help, please do. The guide also lists some of the positives that can be cultivated from the separation:

Fosters maturity—military children have more varied experiences than non-military children.

Provides opportunities to acquire new skills and develop hidden interests and abilities by taking on responsibilities in a parent's absence.

Encourages independence—youth and teens learn to be self-starters and more resourceful.

Prepares for future separations and building new friendships.

Strengthens family cohesion among siblings and the remaining parent. For some military families, the emotional adjustments during separation can lead them to discover new sources of internal strength and support. (p. 9 – taken from National Center for Children Exposed to Violence, accessible via military.com)

Our four boys have become more independent with each deployment as they have gone through the teen years. As a result they have all developed life skills that will serve them quite well in the future as they go off on their own. Those of you with younger children may not see as much obvious growth in these areas because they are more reliant upon you for basic day-to-day needs. We now have three who drive, as a simple example. My wife has help in doing errands that is not present in a home with younger kids. I close with some practical tips to consider:

Keep your children informed.

Share your own feelings.

Provide extra support and reassurance.

Involve children in planning how to cope.

Reach out to others.

Take advantage of existing resources.

Address concerns that a loved one may be injured or killed.

Be willing to discuss the concept of death.

Recognize and respond to changes in behavior.

Be aware of youngsters at higher risk.

Maintain good communication between home and school. Try to maintain a sense of family routine despite changes.

Encourage your child to express any fears or anxiety he or she may be experiencing—and listen carefully. Reassure your child that these arrangements are only temporary.

Try to maintain a sense of family routine despite changes.

Answer questions with accurate information and relate it to the children's worries.

Discuss Friends' ideas and correct misinformation.

Encourage open expression of children's feelings through talk, play, drawings, etc.

Be aware of your own emotional reactions around your children.

Do not rely on your children for emotional support. (p. 17, from LifeCare, Inc. National Association of School Psychologists, and National Center for Children Exposed to Violence).

As we go through the next few months of this deployment, remember that we are all on the same team. There is no thing as "I" in team, regardless of the size and age breakdown of your family. Whether you are on your first separation or fifth like our wonderful newly-minted SGM Kolodgy, you have to practice common sense relationship skills to cope with the reality that one member of the family is indeed half a world away. More offerings shall come in future months. Enjoy the summer.

Take care everyone, Many Blessings, Chaplain Jerry





The Profession of Arms and the Professional Noncommissioned Officer

Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond F. Chandler, III

None is more professional than I.” This first phrase from the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Creed has been the motto of our corps ever since a group of senior NCOs struggled to put into words the desired core values of an NCO back in 1973.

Now, almost half a century later, we struggle to understand how 10 years of war has changed our Army and our NCO Corps. There is no question we are a more versatile, adaptable and resilient force. Our soldiers have changed after years of facing unique stressors. We must take a hard look at ourselves to truly understand what it means to be a part of the Army profession.

According to the 2011 Army Posture Statement, the American professional soldier is an expert and a volunteer, certified in the Profession of Arms and bonded with comrades in a shared identity and culture of sacrifice and service to the Nation and the Constitution. A soldier adheres to the highest ethical standards and is a steward of the future of the profession.

There is no question that our soldiers are professionals. The very definition of professional is found in our Warrior Ethos, the NCO Creed, and the Army Values. To me, a professional performs all tasks to a high standard of skill, competence, and character. However, some still question whether a soldier is a professional or belongs to a profession.

First, to be a professional, you must have specialized knowledge. Our soldiers receive this knowledge throughout their Army career in the form of professional military education. Secondly, professionals live by a code of ethics, which soldiers have in our ethos and Army Values. Finally, a professional puts his or her service before their income. I am sure each of you can attest that our service in the Army has nothing to do with a paycheck. Therefore, there is no question that our soldiers belong to the Army profession, just as doctors, lawyers, and accountants belong to theirs.

Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond F. Chandler, III, was sworn in as the 14th Sergeant Major of the Army on 1 March 2011.

PHOTO: U.S. Army SFC Aaron Beckman, assigned to the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command (JMTC) NCO Academy, and SGT Robert Murray, assigned to JMTC, walk toward the next task, Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, 12 August 2009. (U.S. Army, Gertrud Zach)

Nevertheless, our profession is unlike any other in the world. Our soldiers are asked to uphold and defend the ideals and values of the United States. They are the standard-bearers for the Nation and the tip of the spear in combat. Our professionalism is based on a relationship of trust between our Army and the American people. You don't have to look too far back in history to see what happens when we lose our professionalism and, with it, the trust of the American people.

This professionalism and trust is part of our Army culture. This culture is a system of shared attitudes and values and is the spirit and soul of our institution and part of our Army ethic. The Army Blue Book sums up our ethic:

“Being a Soldier means conducting yourself at all times so as to bring credit upon you and the Nation— this is the core of our Army culture. Our Army is a unique society. We have military customs and time-honored traditions and values that represent years of Army history. Our leaders conduct operations in accordance with laws and principles set by the U.S. Government and those laws together with Army traditions and values require honorable behavior and the highest level of individual moral character . . .” Our NCOs play a vital role in our Army ethic. NCOs are the best soldiers in the formation and always lead from the front. A unit without a strong NCO loses the ability to fight and win our Nation's wars. Today's professional NCOs are more important than ever, as they are routinely asked to accomplish more now than any time in the past.

The NCO Corps continues to be the envy of all other armies in the world. Personal courage, integrity, loyalty, and devotion to duty have long been the hallmark of our corps. Our NCOs have done an exceptional job as members of the Profession of Arms, being adaptive, agile, and creative on the battlefield.

A great example of our professional NCOs is Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester, a Military Police (MP) soldier from the Kentucky National Guard. Hester became the first female soldier awarded the Silver Star since World War II for her actions in Iraq in 2005. During a firefight, Sergeant Hester and a few of her fellow soldiers from the 617th MP Company fought off more than 30 insurgents armed with assault rifles, machine guns, and rocket-propelled grenades, killing 27 and capturing 7 more.

After 10 years of combat, we are well versed in combat operations, but we have allowed our garrison skills to suffer. I am sure everyone has read Chapter 3 of the Army Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention Report. This chapter discusses “The Lost Art of Leadership in Garrison” and talks about our lack of accountability and discipline. This is NCO business.

I know that our Army has been strained and stressed by 10-plus years of war. With 12- and 15-month deployments and little time between to reintegrate with family, it was inevitable that some skills would degenerate. In addition, many of our platoon sergeants joined the Army after 9/11, and they only know an Army at war, which makes for a dangerous recipe. However, now, as we begin to spend more time in garrison, our NCOs must again become the standard-bearer in the unit. We must instill a sense of pride, discipline, and accountability in our soldiers. This will not come during the normal duty hours. Our NCOs must remember that being a leader is a 24-hour job.



Being an NCO also means a total embodiment of the Warrior Ethos and the Army Ethic. Our soldiers need uncompromising and unwavering leaders. We cannot expect our soldiers to live by an ethic when their leaders and mentors are not upholding the standard. These values form the framework of our profession and are nonnegotiable. Values, plus the Warrior Ethos, guides the way we conduct ourselves as professionals. We must be the uncompromising standard-bearer for our soldiers.

As we continue through this year, I want each of you to think about what it means to be a professional NCO and how we fit into the Profession of Arms. What lessons have we learned in the last 10 years?

(U.S. Army, Markus Rauchenberger)



U.S. Army SFC Aaron Beckman from Charlie Company, 7th Army NCO Academy, assembles a weapon during the 7th U.S. Army Joint Multinational Training Command 2009 Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Competitions, 15-19 June, Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany.

how has the Army and the NCO Corps changed since 9/11? What do we, as NCOs, need to do to fix our skills while in the garrison environment. Your answers will form the foundation of our corps as we move into the future.

“I am proud of the Corps of noncommissioned officers.” We owe it to our soldiers to continue setting high standards and instilling discipline in our units. We do this so our Army professionals stay strong and our legacy is never tarnished. We have learned from the mistakes of the past and have now set our sights on the future. Our soldiers, our Army, and our Nation rely on us to protect our profession and with it, our way of life.



Armament platoon night-shift noncommissioned officer Sgt. Talin Angel, conducts training with Spc. Gage Smolko, Spc. Gigi Disasi, and Spc. Kole Lewsaden.

Shadow crew provides meals for TF Phoenix night shift personnel at Bagram

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

It is just after midnight as Sgt. David Ortiz sits down to enjoy his lunch and catch a few scenes from a recently released movie on the large screen TV slightly off to his right. Ortiz, a CH-47 Chinook mechanic with D Company, 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, works the night-shift in a maintenance hangar just outside the Mountain Eagle Café.

The Mountain Eagle Café is a long wooden building just between D Co., 3-10 GSAB maintenance hangars and B Co., 277th Aviation Support Battalion's hangar, where a handful of Soldiers provide midday and midnight meals. Although there is a large dining facility just over a mile away, the Mountain Eagle Café is the facility of choice for Soldiers and civilians who work nearby.

According to Sgt. Kasey Kastenbaum, the café's team leader, four of his Soldiers serve more than 300 meals each lunch and more than 200 meals are served at midnight meal with just two of his Soldiers. He rotates his Soldiers in pairs so they can get a full night sleep every other night.



Spc. Amandajo Santos, a food service specialist with Headquarters Support Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, serves a midnight meal to a Soldier June 6, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Santos is one of five Soldiers ensuring Soldiers and civilians working in the 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Phoenix, area have hot nutritious meals at lunch and midnight meal. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

The meals they serve are picked up from a nearby dining facility in large plastic containers called mermites, which keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. The Soldiers then set up the serving line with a well-balanced meal which includes meat, a starch and vegetables as well as various desserts and drinks.. At the conclusion of meal, the mermites are returned to the DFAC.

Ortiz, who is also a maintenance team leader, said he eats at the Mountain Eagle Café every day. He attributes the café's popularity to convenience, morale, and safety.

"They could serve us meals ready to eat but morale would go down," he said. "Anything else is too far. I don't want my Soldiers walking in the dark for

safety reasons. In addition to keeping morale high, the meals also cut down the time Soldiers are away from their work site."

Kastenbaum said he takes a lot of pride in what he and his team provides and constantly looks for ways to improve the facility. He recently created curtains for the café's windows, and table aprons, from linen. "We are boosting morale," he said. "Soldiers can get away from their work for awhile and have plenty of time to eat."

Kastenbaum's team may be lean on personnel, but the nourishment and convenience they provide contributes tremendously to the welfare of those who work in the TF Phoenix maintenance area. Especially those who work the night shift. 🇺🇸

A new chapter for senior aviator, unit recognizes career in retirement ceremony downrange

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

With only about two months until his retirement, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Bob Cuyler did not have to deploy with the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade in May, but he told the brigade commander that he wanted to spend his last two months in the Army with his fellow aviators downrange.

Fellow aviators, staff members and Soldiers celebrated Cuyler's career and thanked him for his numerous contributions to the unit and Army aviation during a ceremony June 28, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Cuyler's family was able to watch the event via video teleconference from Fort Drum, NY.

During the nearly two months he spent in Afghanistan, Cuyler, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter instructor pilot, shared his expertise, experience and passion for aviation as an advisor with the fledgling 337th Afghan Air Force Squadron in Kabul, part of the 10th CAB's partnership in building the squadron's air assault planning capabilities.

"I believe our most significant mission is getting the Afghan Air Force up and running," Cuyler said. "On the individual level, the Afghan pilots are just as good as us; some of them better."

Cuyler began his career in 1983 with the New York Air National Guard working in civil engineering for eight years. After an additional year as a civil engineer in the NY Army National Guard, he went active duty Army in 1992 and attended the Warrant Officer Flight Training Program.

"I wanted to be a technical expert in a particular job and it was appealing to be able to stay in that job until I retire," Cuyler said.

And now, after 21 years, he has decided to step away



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Bob Cuyler, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter instructor pilot with 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, and an advisor to the 337th Afghan Air Wing Squadron, takes a look at an antique pistol which Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jeffrey Fitzgerald, 10th CAB/TF Falcon Chief Warrant Officer of the Brigade, is about to hand him as a retirement gift from the unit. Leaders and colleagues of Cuyler, in addition to his family by way of video teleconference, celebrated his career and thanked him for his contributions to the unit and Army Aviation, during a ceremony June 28, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

from the Army and begin a new chapter in his and his wife's life.

"I have mixed emotions," he said. "I hate leaving the job because I enjoy doing it every day. This is the next chapter in our life and I promised my wife that family will come first in this chapter rather than the needs of the Army."

Cuyler said he plans to continue flying "in some form or fashion", but he and his wife's ultimate goal is to transition to a family-run business.

Col. David Francis, 10th CAB commander, had met Cuyler on two previous deployments and said he was excited to come to the brigade and find him still with the unit. Francis pointed out that he was Cuyler's sixth brigade commander in his 12 years with the unit. With Cuyler's departure from Afghanistan approaching, and

though there will be a retirement ceremony at Fort Drum, the commander and Cuyler's colleagues did not want him to leave without a ceremony in his honor.

"I get to be here with the honor of talking about him as he gets set to retire," Francis said. "I did not want to miss the chance to explain to his family the importance of what he has done for this brigade. He has been a mentor and a teacher. He has mentored me and he has mentored general officers, on the impact on future aviation. This is his fifth combat tour. The experience he brings very few people are able to match."


Cuyler has been a trailblazer as the first Army aviator to return to duty after having his entire colon removed in 2007. Typically such a procedure results in a discharge from the Army, but after months of physical therapy, a medical board cleared him to return to his duties. To raise awareness for others who have gone through similar procedures, Cuyler ran 39 half marathons during his 2010-2011 deployment to Bagram Airfield. Through his advocacy, other Soldiers with similar circumstances have been able to continue their careers.

As Cuyler addressed his colleagues one last time, the mentor in him was evident as he reminded his listeners that they are conducting operations during the summer fighting season and the rising heat will compel aviators and leaders to make wise planning decisions.

"What is most important is bringing everyone home," he cautioned. "That calls for safe, efficient mission accomplishment."

At the conclusion of his ceremony, Cuyler looked at the flat screen across the conference room on which his wife, daughter, mother and father-in-law looked on; his son, who is currently conducting Air Force training, was linked into the ceremony from a laptop just in front of him.

"It's time to focus on my family," he said. "I've missed about seven years of my children's lives. What you have sacrificed means a lot to me."

And to his wife, "The goal for the rest of my life is to thank you for all you have done." 

Around the Ravens AO



A Soldier from C Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, 10th CAB/Task Force Falcon, loads cargo into a helicopter at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Most of C Co. Soldiers are communications specialists but are currently managing the Raven Rotary Wing Terminal at BAF. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Soldiers from C Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, visit with a young boy at the Korean Reconstruction Team Hospital at Bagram Airfield. The Soldiers were given a tour of the facility which is run by both Korean and Afghan medical professionals and serves hundreds of local Afghans daily. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

Soldier on 5th deployment with 10th CAB promoted downrange, Family watches ceremony from Fort Drum

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

Just a couple months after the 9-11 attacks in 2001, then Staff Sgt. John Kolodgy arrived at Fort Drum, NY, from an assignment in Korea. Ever since that move the northern New York base would become home for him and his family. Within two years of his arrival, Kolodgy deployed with the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade for the unit's first deployment to Afghanistan.

Presently, he is on his fifth deployment with the unit, its fourth to Afghanistan; working in the same building at Bagram Airfield in which he worked his first deployment.

During that first deployment in 2003, Kolodgy was promoted to sergeant first class, the first senior noncommissioned officer rank; and on June 22, 2013, he was promoted to the highest senior noncommissioned officer rank; that of sergeant major, in nearly the same spot as the former promotion.

“If you look up leader in the dictionary, that’s whose picture you should see,” said Col. Francis. “He is an absolutely outstanding leader and he’s the epitome of an NCO”

“It’s kind of full circle,” Kolodgy said. “I started my senior NCO career in this building and it could be my last senior NCO rank.”

During Kolodgy’s promotion ceremony, Col. David Francis, 10th CAB and Task Force Falcon commander, recognized the Kolodgy family, who



Col. David Francis, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade and Task Force Falcon commander, congratulates newly-promoted Sgt. Maj. John Kolodgy after his promotion June 23, at Bagram Airfield. Kolodgy has deployed with the 10th CAB five times, including in 2003 when he was promoted to sergeant first class in the same building as his recent promotion. Kolodgy serves as the 10th CAB operations sergeant major. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

were able to witness the ceremony via video teleconference, for their tremendous contributions to the unit and to the Fort Drum community. Francis noted that he is honored to be Kolodgy’s sixth 10th CAB commander and added that he had met the new sergeant major during an earlier deployment; the impression Kolodgy had made on him had not been forgotten.

“If you look up leader in the dictionary, that’s whose picture you should see,” Francis said of Kolodgy. “He is an absolutely outstanding leader and he’s the epitome of an NCO. He hasn’t lost the energy in training young Soldiers with passion and expertise. He has touched not only everyone in this room but those on the other side of the ocean as well.”

Kolodgy joined the Army in 1989 to become an aeroscout observer. He would fly alongside the pilot in an OH-58A Kiowa. He said his father

played a significant role in his career. Few people knew of the aeroscout observer occupational specialty but his father knew and let him know that it was the job to take.

“There were only two slots per state allowed for that job and I just happened to get it,” Kolodgy said. “Basically it’s an enlisted co-pilot that is focused on the tactical piece; radios and calls for fire. “Occasionally I would dismount and conduct dismounted observation on hilltops to call in air-strikes.”

Sgt. Maj. Kolodgy served as an aeroscout observer for eight years, until in 1997 when the Army required two officers in the cockpit rather than an enlisted Soldier. Two months after becoming an aviation operations specialist, Kolodgy was promoted to sergeant. Since that change, in addition to a three year stint as a company first sergeant, he has served 13 years in battalion and brigade aviation operations; Kolodgy currently serves at the 10th CAB operations sergeant major.

In addition to the promotion ceremony, the family celebrated another milestone the previous day. Just nine hours before his promotion ceremony, around 3 a.m., Sgt. Maj. Kolodgy was able to proudly watch his daughter Beth’s graduation from Indian River Central High School.



The Family of Sgt. Maj. John Kolodgy looks on from Fort Drum, NY, via video teleconference, during his promotion ceremony June 22, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. This is Kolodgy’s fifth deployment with the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

Renegades conduct NCO board



Foreground, from left, Spc. William Key and Spc. Tiffany Arca, human resources specialists with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, prepare for their promotion board June 25, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Spc. Tiffany Arca, a human resources specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, recites the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer at the conclusion of her promotion board June 25, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

From TF Dragon command team:

Another month has come and gone for Task Force Dragon as we continue our mission here at FOB Fenty, Afghanistan. This month has proven to be busy with the continuation of our retrograde efforts in the Kunar Valley and Nangahar province, while still providing around the clock aviation support to coalition ground units. This month the task force will say goodbye to the 2d FSMP (Forward Support Medical Platoon), C Company, 2-149th Avn Regt (Drifter Dust-off), who have completed their tour in Afghanistan. It has been a pleasure working with this very professional and proficient group of men and women. We want to wish Drifter Dust-off good luck in their future endeavors, mission accomplished, and a job well done! They will begin their relief in place later this month with a FSMP platoon from C Company, 3-238th Avn Regt, Michigan Army National Guard.

With the deployment nearing two thirds of the way through, we continue our efforts in battling complacency and training our Soldiers on Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention (SHARP). Our Task Force Dragon mayor cell has taken every step necessary to add additional lighting around the living areas and work areas. We also have stepped up our force protection measures to ensure all Task Force Dragon Soldiers remain safe and vigilant throughout the rest of the deployment. The days at FOB Fenty have begun to warm up and we saw multiple days of temperatures reaching above 110 degrees Fahrenheit this past month. We expect the temperatures to remain hot well into September, but the Soldiers have plenty of ice cold water at designated water points along the flight line and all you can eat ice cream at the dining facility.

The Iron Soldiers of Task Force Dragon appreciate all of the support from our families and friends back home. We also cannot be more grateful for the Task Force Falcon family incorporating us into the team. The support we have received since the transfer of authority has been non-stop and much appreciated. The Dragon team is ready to continue working hard over the next few months and continue representing 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, and El Paso, Texas. First to Strike! Fly to Glory!

LTC Glen E. Heape
Task Force 1-501st Aviation Regiment
Task Force Dragon
Dragon 6



Spc. Edgar Flores, an AH-64 Apache helicopter armament repairer with D Company, 1st Battalion (Attack), 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, installs a 30-millimeter M230 Chain Gun onto an Apache June 18, at Forward Operating Base Jalalabad, in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. TF Dragon, an aviation unit from Fort Bliss, Texas, is flying with 10th CAB/TF Falcon in Operation Enduring Freedom XIV. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

Two HH-60 Black Hawk medical evacuation helicopters from C Company, 2nd Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, take off from Forward Operating Base Bostic in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. The MEDEVAC unit is from the Texas Army National Guard and is flying with the 10th CAB/TF Falcon for Operation Enduring Freedom XIV. (Photo by Sgt. Brittany Armstrong, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



An armament specialist with B Company, 1st Battalion (Attack), 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, loads a rocket into the launcher of an AH-64 Apache helicopter June 19, at Forward Operating Base Jalalabad in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Sgt. Armando Avila, 1-501st Aviation Regiment)

10th CAB Chinook platoon provides significant lift for task force

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

A platoon of CH-47 Chinook aviators and maintainers from B Company, 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, based at Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan, are providing heavy lift capability for Afghan and Coalition Forces in the northeastern area of Regional Command - East.

The aviators are flying in support of 1st Battalion (Attack), 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, an AH-64 Apache helicopter unit of the 1st Armored Division's Combat Aviation Brigade from Fort Bliss, Texas. TF Dragon is also augmented with a UH-60 Black Hawk



A CH-47 Chinook helicopter flown by aviators from B Company, 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, flying for Task Force Dragon, transports cargo from Jalalabad Airfield in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, May 10, during a night mission. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class John Brown, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division)

“Our Soldiers are proving day in and day out why they are trusted to execute the highest profile missions in theater,” said Capt. Brandt Anderson, B Co. 3-10 GSAB, commander.

helicopter company and a medical evacuation platoon.

“As the only heavy assault/lift asset in Task Force Dragon, it falls on our (aviators) to execute major air assaults in support of Afghan National Security Forces and partnered forces while also supporting two security forces advisory brigades, TF Bastogne and TF Longknife, retrograde operations,” said U.S. Army Capt. Brandt Anderson, B Co., 3-10 GSAB, commander. “It is not uncommon for Colossal to conduct an air assault of

Afghan and Coalition troops and then execute a follow-on mission of a series of sling loads retrograding forward operating bases.”

No other rotary aircraft in the task force's inventory can carry as much as the Chinook. According to U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Bryan Schroeder, a flight engineer and platoon sergeant, the aircraft can carry between 5,000 to 15,000 pounds, depending on environmental conditions such as heat and altitude.

“Because of the Chinook's engines and aircraft design, we can lift more weight,” said Schroeder. “We bring heavy lift assets which is important in Afghanistan because of the high altitude and high temperatures.”

The advantage that the Chinook has over fixed-wing aircraft is it does not require a runway in order to deliver passengers and cargo to a remote base. The Chinook can descend into an established landing zone, or, if necessary, a non-standard landing zone. Its aviators train to be able to land on two, or even one wheel; a pinnacle landing; when a suitable flat area is not available. Due to these capabilities passengers and cargo can be delivered and picked up quickly.

“We can also load internal vehicles up to an



A CH-47 Chinook helicopter flown by aviators of B Company, 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, ascends from parking at Jalalabad Airfield in Nuristan Province, Afghanistan. TF Dragon is commanded by 1st Battalion (Assault), 501st Aviation Regiment, based out of Fort Bliss, Texas, and is flying for 10th CAB/TF Falcon. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class John Brown, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division)

unarmored Humvee,” Schroeder said. “It can be backed in for an assault in about 15 minutes and off-loaded in less than a minute.”

Not including its four crew members, the Chinook can carry 33 personnel. Depending on the mission, the aircraft can be configured to carry mixed loads of both passengers and cargo. And cargo which is too large to fit inside the Chinook can be slingloaded externally on one or more of the aircraft’s three hooks.

The Chinooks and their crews continue to be in high demand in the hot mountainous northeastern area of RC – East, especially at this time of retrograde of Coalition Forces and equipment out of Afghanistan. Each crewmember is averaging about 85 flight hours a month according to Schroeder.

Since assuming their mission in May, Anderson said his aviators have already facilitated the closure of five forward operating bases in the Nangarhar, Laghman, Konar and Nuristan region while at the same time conducting numerous major air assaults.

“The Soldiers are all working 12-hour days performing maintenance out on the flight line, flying missions in the most demanding environment on the planet, only to complete maintenance once again when their mission is complete,” Anderson said. “It is an incredibly diverse mission that our Soldiers are performing and one that is absolutely critical as we work to complete the mission here in Afghanistan. Our Soldiers are proving day in and day out why they are trusted to execute the highest profile missions in theater.” 🇺🇸

Iron Warrior AO, FOB Mazar e Sherif

Members of Provincial Reconstruction Team Kunduz practice unloading a simulated casualty from a Task Force Iron Warrior HH-60 medical evacuation helicopter near Forward Operating Base Kunuz in Kunduz Province, Afghanistan. TF Iron Warrior is flying with the 10th CAB/TF Falcon for Operation Enduring Freedom XIV. (Photo by Chief Warrant 2 Mark Fernandez, 2nd Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Iron Warrior)



Two CH-47 Chinooks from Task Force Iron Warrior, a Pennsylvania Army National Guard unit, fly across the sky as the sun sets in northern Afghanistan. TF Iron Warrior is flying with the 10th CAB/TF Falcon for Operation Enduring Freedom XIV. (Photo courtesy of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ellen Smith, 2nd Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Iron Warrior)

A crew chief with Task Force Iron Warrior ties down a CH-47 Chinook at sunset in northern Afghanistan. TF Iron Warrior is flying with the 10th CAB/TF Falcon for Operation Enduring Freedom XIV. (Photo by Chief Warrant 3 Heather Tatum, 2nd Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, Task Force Iron Warrior)



Tigershark AO FOB Salerno



On the 237th Anniversary of our nation's independence, Lt. Col. Chad Ward, Task Force Tigershark commander, administered the oath of reenlistment to six Soldiers. From left, Staff Sgt. Richard Conklon, D Co.; Staff Sgt. Paul Dayes, 328th MP Det.; Sgt. Darrie McNabb, E Co.; Sgt. Barry Tulledge, HHC; Sgt. Steven Parmenter, D Co.; and Spc. Cecilio Hurtado, E Co. (Photo courtesy of Task Force Tigershark)



Two HH-60 Black Hawk medical evacuation helicopters from C Company, 2nd Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Dragon, take off from Forward Operating Base Bostic in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. The MEDEVAC unit is from the Texas Army National Guard and is flying with the 10th CAB/TF Falcon for Operation Enduring Freedom XIV. (Photo by Sgt. Brittany Armstrong, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



Spc. Mandy Esparza, an AH-64 Apache helicopter repairer with D Company, 1st Battalion (Attack), 10th Aviation Regiment, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, conducts repairs on the rotor system of an Apache June 26, at Forward Operating Base Salerno in Khost Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

Knighthawk AO, FOB Shank



Chief Warrant Officer 2 John Bourland, a UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter pilot assigned to C Company, 2nd Battalion (Assault), 10th Aviation Regiment, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, discusses flight mechanics with Spc. Garrett Pillow and Spc. Andrew Jackson, June 27, at Forward Operating Base Ghazni in Ghazni Province, Afghanistan. Pillow and Jackson are Black Hawk crew chiefs assigned to C Co., 2-10 Avn. Regt. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

Spc. Marlon Zapata and Pv2 Rene Navarro, assigned to E Company, 2nd Battalion (Assault), 10th Aviation Regiment, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, fuel a CH-47F Chinook helicopter July 6, at the forward arming and refueling point on Forward Operating Base Shank in Logar Province, Afghanistan. Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



A CH-47F Chinook helicopter crewed by members of 2nd Battalion (Assault), 10th Aviation Regiment, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, sling loads a cargo pallet June 27, from Forward Operating Base Ghazni in Ghazni Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



SPC Dendtler wins Knighthawk Soldier of the Quarter

Congratulations to Spc. Kristopher Dendtler, winner of Task Force Knighthawk's Soldier of the Quarter Board.

Dendtler, an infantryman with F Company "Pathfinders", 2nd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, TF Knighthawk, has been in the Army just over three years. He said he enlisted while taking a break from college.

"I always wanted to join so I said, 'why not?' and joined before the war was over," Dendtler said.

Dendtler chose his occupation because he wanted to be somebody who makes decisions on the spot.

"I like being in the fight," he said. "I like being able to get outside and see the people of Afghanistan and to see first-hand what our country is doing over here for this country."

Dendtler is on his second deployment having deployed previously with 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Infantry (LI) Division.

During his off time, Dendtler said he works out, repels, trains, and goes to the range.

He attributes winning the board to his dedication toward studying the material and knowing his job. Participants scored points based upon how each performed on an Army Physical Fitness Test, marksmanship, and their responses to the board members' questions on military subjects.

Phoenix AO, Bagram Airfield



An AH-64 Apache helicopter armament repairer assigned to B Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, Task Force Phoenix, guides an Apache into the forward armament and refueling point at Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan. (Photo courtesy of Task Force Phoenix)

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Andrew Ward and Chief Warrant Officer 5 Michael Mogg, OH-58 Kiowa helicopter pilots with C Company "Blue Max", 1st Battalion (Attack), 10th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Phoenix, hold the 10th CAB flag outside a Kiowa before a flight from Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan.



An aviator returns from a mission as rain clouds move over Bagram Airfield in Parwan Province, Afghanistan. Because of the dryness of the area, most of the rain evaporates before reaching the ground. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



Maj. Thomas Hussey, left, B Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon, commander, administers the oath of Reinlistment to Sgt. Morgan Ryker and his wife, Spc. Adriana Ryker, July 1, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (Photo courtesy of Task Force Phoenix)

A CH-47 Chinook helicopter makes a dusty landing at a remote base in eastern Afghanistan July 10. The Chinook was crewed by members of the Oklahoma Army National Guard which is flying with Task Force Phoenix. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)



A CH-47 Chinook helicopter flown by aviators from B Company, 1-129th Aviation Regiment of the California Army National Guard, transports an M777A2 Howitzer from Forward Operating Base Sharana in Paktika Province, Afghanistan. The unit flies in support of Task Force Phoenix of the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/Task Force Falcon. (Photo by Capt. Pete Smedberg, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade)

