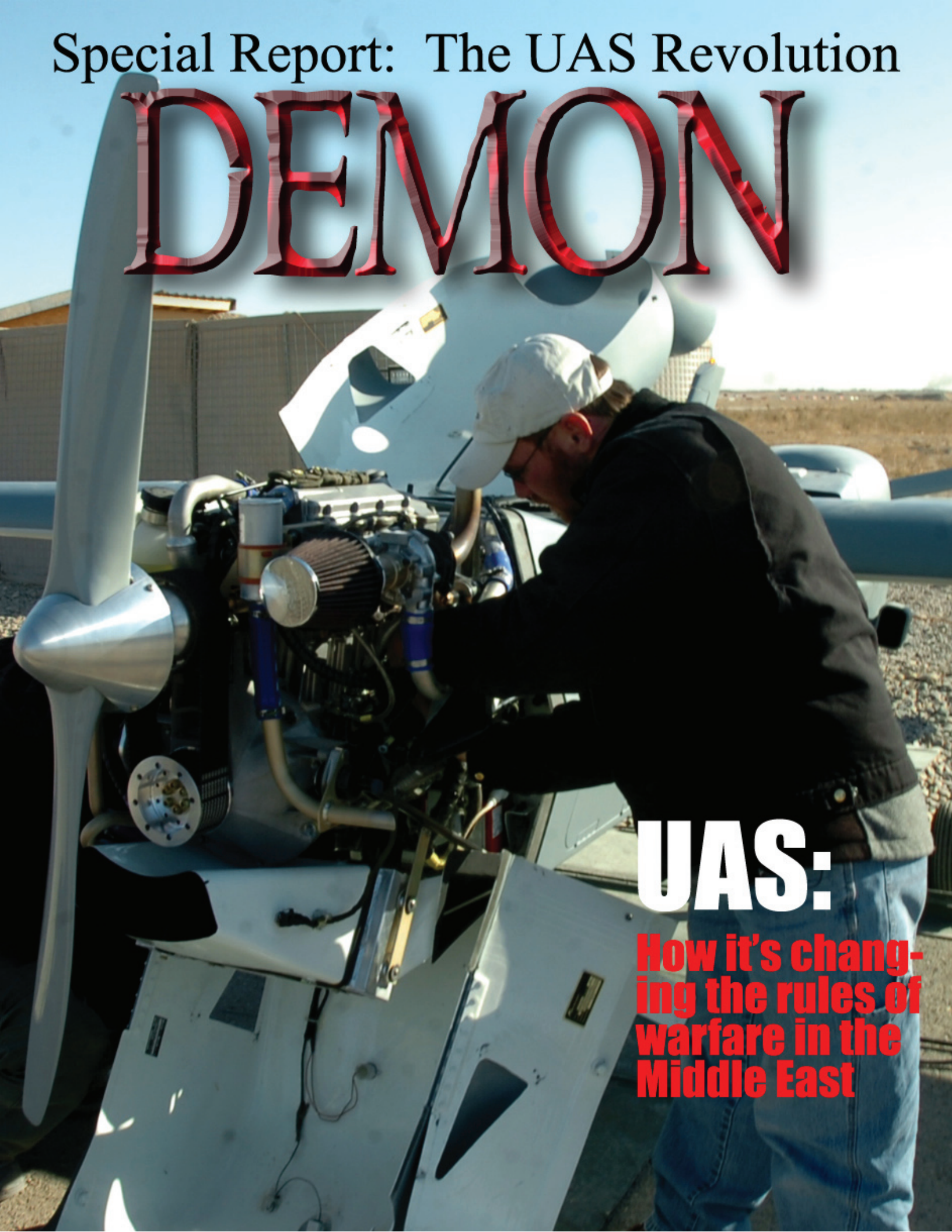


Special Report: The UAS Revolution

DEMON



UAS:

How it's changing the rules of warfare in the Middle East



4 | MAKE A DIFFERENCE The importance of knowing your Soldiers

BRIEFING

6 | CHAPLAIN Chaplain Lee's take on rumor mongering



Chaplain Lee speaks out on rumors, Page 6

3 | THE MOMENT The pulse of the Combat Aviation Brigade

5 | STANDARDS AND DISCIPLINE Command Sgt. Maj. Wallace speaks out on standards and safety

7 | WORLDVIEW: CHINA Adm. Keating travels to China



Adm. Keating Mends fences, Page 7

3-1 AA

20 | THE MOVERS AND THE SHAKERS Nightmares have never been so painless

Touchdown: 3-1 takes you where you need to be, Page 20



Final Flight A 41-year career remembered, page 24

SPECIAL REPORT: UAS

COVER

8 | PRETTY FLY FOR UAV GUYS 4-6 Cav is taking the fight to IED emplacers. The Demon takes a look at the reason

TF ODIN

24 | 1.6 YEARS IN THE COCKPIT Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerry Ventrella reflects on the trials, tribulations, and joys of a 41-year career

601st ASB

30 | GIVING GROUND TROOPS A VOICE The 601st ASB goes signal

11D HISTORY

31 | BIG RED ONE -- THE BEGINNINGS The precursor to the 1st Infantry Division



Workhorse 3-1 keeps the CAB Moving, page 20

On the cover: (Photo by Spc. William Howard) Nick Nicholson, makes an adjustment on one of a newly acquired Hunter unmanned aerial vehicle's dual 800cc Mercedes Benz engines



Flying High: 4-6 Cav uses the Shadow 200 to great effect, Page 16

Brigade Commander	Col. Jessie O. Farrington
Brigade Command Sergeant Major.....	Command Sgt. Maj. Darrell E. Wallace
Brigade Public Affairs Advisor.....	Maj. Enrique T. Vasquez
Brigade Public Affairs Officer	Sgt. 1st Class Jeff L. Troth
Demon Layout	Spc. W. Michael Howard

This is an official Army newsletter, authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1, and published by the 1st CAB, 1st ID Public Affairs Office. Editorial views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the CAB, 1st ID. All submissions to the Demon are subject to editing. The Demon can also be found at: www.1id.army.mil.

"To engage a target, you have to see it first." -- MAJ. GEN. JIM SIMMONS, MNF-I DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL

Briefing

THE MOMENT



Photo by Spc. Michael Howard

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles are the future of aviation. **Showing a Promise it has hinted at for over a decade, the Army's UAS program is finally taking off**

IEDs, or improvised explosive devices, have become the primary terrorist weapon in Iraq. So far, about 81,000 of them have been used, mostly against U.S. troops. It wasn't always this way. In 2003, the year former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was overthrown, insurgents used only 3,000, according to Jim Dunnigan, a published expert in the military

field. As the insurgency realized that IEDs were the only tactic available to them that could not be easily countered by American Soldiers, they came to increasingly rely on them. IEDs now comprise the primary front in the war in Iraq. And the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division is going to be the unit that neutral-

izes it. Maj. Gen. Jim Simmons, Deputy Commanding General of MNF-I, based near Baghdad Airport at Camp Liberty, calls UAS

The threat of IEDs will likely taper off, thanks in part to the CAB

a "big breakthrough." Deaths from IEDs have declined the past two months, coinciding with the time the Army stepped up UAS

involvement in Iraq. The CAB is achieving its success by using UAS to put its helicopters in the right place at the right time, and to direct helicopter strikes against the oblivious IED emplacers. With its enhanced observation capabilities, the CAB is on the verge of making a huge dent in the IED problem. As insurgents realize that they cannot emplace IEDs without a serious risk of death, the threat of IEDs will likely taper off, thanks in part to the efforts of the CAB.

Demons, you are an exceptional team, brought together during extraordinary times. Your dedication, bravery, and professionalism have made a distinct difference in the fight here in Iraq.

As we enter the New Year, the brigade is completing its first 120 days in theater. This period of time is historically the most dangerous part of the deployment. A new, unfamiliar environment coupled with a high op-tempo increases the odds that the unit will have problems. We have passed through this phase relatively unscathed, and I want to thank all of you for your diligence and hard work. Attention to detail by each and every Soldier has kept us safe. Keep up the great work.

I have been thrilled with the quality of maintenance and work being performed. Maintenance is sustaining a grueling program of phase work and routine maintenance, support elements are providing efficient, seamless assistance, and crews are manning mission after successful mission.

Whether working late into the night on QRF missions or aircraft maintenance, our Soldiers morale is high. I am humbled by the positive

Teamwork is the key. Through attention to detail, motivation, and hard work, the CAB is sustaining the fight and providing unparalleled support for troops on the ground. **Col. Jessie O. Farrington speaks out on teamwork, safety, and motivation**



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

attitudes in our brigade. Leaders, sustain morale by ensuring adequate rest to prevent burn-out, and providing appropriate feedback, especially for a job well done.

Environmental leave provides a much needed rest. Make sure that you

have a plan and that you do not take unnecessary risks during your time away. Your family and friends are awaiting your return. Don't reward their patience by injuring yourself behind the wheel or by having an alcohol related incident.

As we enter the sustainment phase of operations in Iraq, the risk, though lessened, is still present and should be remembered in your daily duties. Stay vigilant as you fly, maintain, and support the CAB mission.

I challenge you to maintain the same alertness and diligence that you have shown so far. Take a look at your operations. Ensure that you and your Soldiers are not taking inappropriate shortcuts in day to day maintenance and inspections in order to save time or due to overconfidence.

Finally, the Demon Brigade is not only a part of history; you are making history. I rely on every Soldier to successfully perform our mission in Iraq.

Be safe, continue doing great work, Happy New Year, and don't forget to send flowers to your loved ones for Valentine's Day!

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

Complacency causes casualties. Almost five months into deployment is time to be alert for complacency on and off duty. It can cause equipment loss and even personal injuries. **Command Sgt. Maj. Buddy Wallace speaks out on keeping Soldiers alive and in the Army**

During the past few months in Iraq I've made my way to many different sections and have been very impressed with the level of commitment I've seen throughout the Brigade. From the flight line to the SSA I have talked to our Soldiers at all hours of the day and night. I have not heard a single Soldier complain about their work load or the cold. I have spoken to our Soldiers at the different FARP locations. They work in some of the harshest conditions, and they are glad to be doing their part in this fight.

Leaders at all levels I am sure you have already noticed this but I feel it needs to be said, the Demon BDE has a fantastic group of Soldiers who are willing to do what is needed in order to get the job done. It's our job to ensure our Soldiers are resourced and trained in order to get the mission accomplished, but we also have an inherent responsibility to ensure the welfare of our Soldiers and their Families.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

We have been hard at work for almost five months and many things have become routine! Now is when complacency will start to become a factor in our day to day operations. Leaders at all levels must be on the lookout for individuals taking

short cuts to get the job done. Watch out for each other and ensure everyone is doing what is right. Being an Army at war means the Soldiers will continuously be exposed to risk, but it is our responsibility to reduce that risk as much as possible.

I also want to especially thank those of you that have made the decision to stay in the Army at this trying time in history. I greatly appreciate your dedication. In my many years in the Army I have witnessed hundreds of reenlistments, I was especially pleased to stand along side Demon 06 and see a group of Officers in the mighty 601st ASB, reaffirm their oath of office.

I want to thank all of you that have made the decision to stay in the Army. Many times a Soldier is asked why he or she decided to remain on the Army team. I have heard everything from "to better myself"; "I love my country"; "to gain more job experience"; "my family" and even "I love the Army"! I am here to tell you that LEADERSHIP plays a huge part in a Soldiers decision to stay on the team. We must ensure that our Army stays strong and we continue to keep talented Leaders and Soldiers on the team, and keep these brave and trained fighting men and women in our formations. Many thanks to you and your Families for all that you do and the hardships that you endure daily.

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

The consequences of rumors. Chaplain (Maj.) Suk Jong Lee talks about rumor mongering and the pain it can cause Soldiers and families. **Demon Redeemer speaks** from the land of Jesus' birth

If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check. James 3:2

"Gossip destroys the Family Readiness Group," says the AFN public announcement by the USA-REUR Chaplains. The Webster Dictionary defines "gossip" as "rumor or report of an intimate nature." And "rumor" is "talk or opinion widely disseminated with no discernible source" or "a statement or report current without known authority for its truth."

I have seen as a rear detachment chaplain in Germany how rumors have caused so much pain and disruptions in Soldiers' lives and their relationships. Even here in Iraq, I hear things that make me wonder and question the motive of those who start and spread rumors. Sometimes I wonder if there is a rumor about me that I am not yet aware of. Worse yet, I wonder if I am guilty of starting a rumor without realizing it.

The first rumor in the Bible is started by the serpent who posed a question to Eve saying, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" (Genesis 3: 1) Eve tries to explain to the serpent that they may eat any fruits except "fruit in the middle of the garden" for when they eat or touch they would die. The serpent responds "You will not surely die.



Photo by Spc. Michael Howard

Gospel Truth: Chaplain (Maj.) Suk Jong Lee delivers her sermon during the gospel service at Victory Chapel here

For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen 3:4-5)

The serpent planted doubts in Eve's mind about the goodness of intention of God and Eve fell for it. She proceeded not only to eat the forbidden fruit for herself but also gave it to Adam to eat. The result, as we all know, was they were kicked out of the Garden of Eden and they had to pay the consequence of falling for the serpent's gossip about the God's intention. The purpose of the serpent, it seems, was to put doubt in Eve's mind so that it could erode the ideal relationship God and Adam enjoyed. The serpent might have

been jealous. The consequence of the serpent's trickery was not only the demise of the ideal relationship between God and Adam, but also its everlasting and hostile relationship with people.

I wonder what may be our motives when we are involved in a rumor mill, whether we are responsible for starting one or spreading one. Would it be that like the serpent in the Genesis story, we are jealous or envious of others' relationships? Or are we trying to control the lives of others through calculated manipulation? We may be destroying relationships of those we spread rumors about, as well as our own relationship with them.

Worldview: China. In response to U.S. port denials, Adm. Timothy Keating heads to China to discuss the issues and mend fences. **How Keating plans to provide U.S. vessels with a safety net in Chinese waters**

COURTESY DEFENSELINK

The top U.S. military officer in the Pacific is slated to travel to China to help bolster the two countries' military relationship and iron out issues, including those over China's recent port denials to U.S. Navy ships.

Navy Adm. Timothy J. Keating, commander of U.S. Pacific Command, will leave his Honolulu headquarters, Jan. 12, for the four-day visit, his second visit to China since taking command in March. James Shinn, sworn in Jan. 10 as the new assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific affairs, will join Keating.

While in China, Keating is slated to meet with senior officials from the Central Military Commission, the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Guangzhou Military Area Command and the Foreign Affairs Ministry. "This trip is an opportunity to meet with key leaders and build relationships that will ultimately ensure greater cooperation and collaboration across the spectrum of military-to-military relations," Keating said.

Discussions are expected to include China's denial of a Thanksgiving port call to Hong Kong by U.S. aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk battle group. Keating told Pentagon reporters days after the Kitty Hawk incident that he's concerned by the port visit denials, calling them "perplexing and

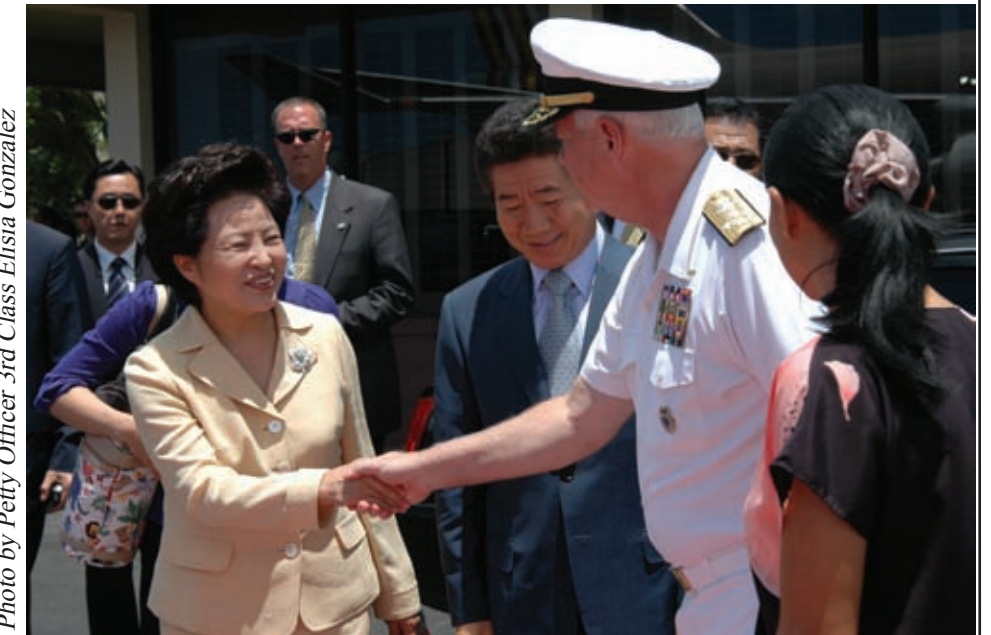


Photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Elisia Gonzalez

Friends in High Places: Adm. Timothy J. Keating greets South Korean First Lady Kwon Yang-suk and President Roh Moo-hyun

troublesome."

The incident came on the heels of what the admiral called an even more troublesome situation: China's refusal to admit two U.S. minesweepers into Hong Kong to seek refuge from a brewing storm.

The Patriot and Guardian were operating in international waters when fierce weather conditions drove them to seek shelter in Hong Kong, Keating said. China refused their request, forcing them to get refueled at sea so they could return to their home port in Sasebo, Japan.

China's denial of their request violated "an unwritten rule among seamen that if someone is in need, regardless of genus, phylum or species -- you give them safe

harbor," Keating said.

A senior defense official said this week on background that the misunderstanding that led to the port visit denials signals the potential for much more serious misunderstandings in the future that could have strategic consequences if not cleared up now. The bottom line, Keating told reporters in November, is that solid communication between the United States and China will help reduce the potential for misunderstanding. This will leave "less room for confusion that could lead to confrontation, to crisis," he said.

"That's our goal," he said. "To get there, we reduce the chance for misunderstanding."

Pretty Fly for UAV Guys

4-6 CAV is taking the fight to IED emplacers. The Demon takes an inside look at their secret weapon

BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD

UAS: Taking off

A RQ-7 Shadow 200 unmanned aerial vehicle takes off for a night mission. 4-6 maintains 24-hour surveillance over the Mosul skies

Photo By Spc. Michael Howard

It's hard to believe that such a small aircraft can make such a big difference in the future of Iraq. But despite their size, unmanned aerial vehicles are paying huge dividends in the battle against the insurgency and sectarian violence that has been plaguing Iraq.

The unmanned aerial vehicles of the Unmanned Aerial Systems Platoon, 66th Military Intelligence Company, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment out of Ft. Hood, Tx. are continually flying over the skies of Northern Iraq – acting as the eyes of the 4-6 Cavalry Regiment. They play an essential role in the sensor-to-shooter link, a revolutionary new battlefield concept that streamlines both target identification and the clearance to fire process.

Before the advent of UAS, getting positive identification and clearance to fire required helicopters to get close enough to insurgents to warn the insurgents of their presence. Today, PID and clearance to fire can be obtained long before the insurgents have any inkling they are being watched. The clearance process can go two ways; sensor-to-shooter or shooter-to-sensor.

In the traditional sensor-to-shooter link, a UAS operator sees activity that seems suspicious. He gets in contact with the 4-6 CAV battle captain. The battle captain hands the footage off to an intelligence analyst, who gets positive identification and makes the determination of hostile intent. Once the determination is made, the analyst hands the feed back to the battle captain. The battle captain hands the feed back to the UAS Platoon. The UAS Platoon contacts Troop A, widely known as Thug Troop, a troop of Kiowa



Warrior recon helicopters. The UAV Platoon walks 4-6's Thug in on the target, and then lasers the target. "Our laser is like a spotlight coming out of the sky that points to the target, but the target can't see it," said Sgt. Marcus Centron, the UAS Platoon mission commander and unit trainer.

The Kiowa pilots see the laser pointing to the target, designate the target with their own laser

designators, and fire. The insurgents never realize anything out of the ordinary was happening.

The shooter to sensor link works in a similar manner, only it begins with the Kiowa seeing something suspicious first, said Centron. "Basically what happens is, thug will fly by, they'll see something that looks funny. They'll call up our element and say, 'UAS, we see something suspicious.' Then

we take a look at it, get PID and get back to thug, "roger. You have clearance to fire."

Today, UAS plays a central role in aviation operations. However, Centron said that the current role of UAS is only the beginning. "Our role in the command post of the future is limitless. We have so many other aircraft coming out. Shadow right now is just the start. We've got Warrior coming

out. Soon, we're not going to need Kiowas. We're not going to need anyone. When we get positive

'Our role in the command post of the future is limitless. Unmanned, I believe is the future.'

--- SGT. MARCUS CENTRON,
UAS MISSION COMMANDER

'TALS makes landing the aircraft a nearly effortless process.'

--- CPL. TIM GAUDET, STANDARDIZATION OPERATOR

THE NUMBERS

Both the Shadow and some Hunter UAVs utilize the tactical aircraft landing system, a revolutionary auto-lander that eliminates human error from the accident equation.

5,000 Ft.

Altitude at which the TALS takes over flight operations from unmanned vehicle operators

200 Ft.

Width of airspace operators must maneuver Shadow UAV into before TALS takes over the landing

17

Percent of UAV landing mishaps attributable to human error before the advent of TALS

Happy Landings: Kimberly Wiggins, a Hunter unmanned aerial vehicle operator with Northrop Grumman, recovers a Hunter unmanned aerial vehicle at COB Speicher



Hard Earned

UAS platoon maintainers work to prepare a Shadow UAV for liftoff. Several hours of work are involved in each launch. Since UAS is such a new field, the Army pulls its maintainers from several MOSs, including generator and light wheel maintainers

new checklist, a brand new way of doing things. Not only that, but we've got new equipment for our aircraft, and new equipment for our shelters. We've got a new [control] system, that will let us fly a Hunter or a Shadow.

We face constant change. At all times we're learning and at all times we're studying. It's almost like we're always in AIT, in a sense," said Centron.

Despite constantly pushing the envelope in many of their aviation techniques, the UAV Platoon still uses the same tried and true method for running UAV missions that the

TOUGH PACE

Number of maintenance hours required for each hour of UAV flight:

12

army has used since the mid-'90s.

There are two officers involved in each flight. There is the air vehicle operator, who flies the aircraft, and the payload operator, who controls the camera. The launch and recovery site is separate from the pilot site. Forward sites at Marez and Tal Afar are capable of receiving the handoffs and completing missions in their areas of responsibility. "As long as we have a line of sight, we can hand off the bird," said Cpl. Timothy T. Gaudet, the standardization operator for UAS platoon.

After a launched UAV reaches

the proper altitude, the launch team hands the pilots the controls of the aircraft. The AVO's fly the mission and hand the bird back when the mission is complete. Then the crew chiefs take care of the landing. They do the recovery on a runway next to the launch site.

'We've got military intelligence. We've got generator mechanics. We've got engine mechanics. We've got a lot of knowledge coming together.'

--- SGT. MARCUS CENTRON, UAS MISSION COMMANDER

The UAS operators have many similarities with other pilots. They have crew rest cycles, do constant flight training to keep their skills sharp, and must progress from readiness level three to readiness level one before they can fly solo.

"If we're standing behind them, then we're considered the pilot in command, because we're the most knowledgeable pilot present. When they're readiness level one and we as instructors feel that they are confident and knowledgeable to fly the aircraft by themselves, then that's when they can fly alone," said Gaudet.

The operators have 90 days to progress through each level. It is possible to progress more quickly, but the time limit is 180 days. The standardization operator decides when operators are ready to progress.

In some ways learning to fly UAS can present some challenges that standard aviators don't face.

"I was signal before this. And when I reclassified to UAS, I realized that UAS incorporates a



Photo illustration by Spc. Michael Howard

Fine Tuning

Sgt. Marcus Centron, the UAS Platoon mission commander and unit trainer, makes a final inspection of a Shadow UAS before its launch. "The engines are very complex. Luckily, we've got very, very skillful mechanics working on them"

lot of signal into it. And you still have to be aware of all the signal elements. We've got so many antennas and cables; you basically have to be a signal officer to be part of this shop. Not only that,

HIGH MAINTENANCE

Numbers of flight hours before a Shadow undergoes an engine replacement:

300

we're under the same requirements as all aviation pilots. Because we're going to be flying with them. We're brethren now.

"Not only that, but you have the aircraft. Our maintainers are

excellent. We've got military intelligence. We've got generator mechanics. We've got engine mechanics. The engines are very complex. Luckily, we've got very, very skillful mechanics working on them. We've got to know the computers on the aircraft. We've got a lot of knowledge coming together, it's a combined effort. And the job itself? Very difficult. It takes a while to learn it. And it's a perishable skill. The moment you stop flying, you'll lose the skill," said Centron.

Despite the difficulty inherent in their jobs, the UAV Platoon has come together within their first weeks of deployment and excelled. Already they are outpacing their predecessors by a factor of four.

"The unit we replaced had 36 engagements in the year they were down here. Within two weeks of getting here, we took what the last unit taught us and perfected it. In the first two weeks that we've been here, we had six engagements. They had about three per month. We're already up to 16 confirmed kills in a month," said Centron.

Though the platoon is off to a substantial start, Centron, Gaudet, and the rest of the platoon know they must continue their pattern of excellence. They know lives are at stake.

"People might make fun of us, saying we're sitting in a shelter, looking at a digital screen, but it's not easy. You have to stay sharp, which is why we have crew rest. Our stakes are high. If we let an IED emplacer walk, he can go free to kill again. It's a serious business. But it's also a privilege. I get to save lives. I get to watch over my comrades. I get to watch over Soldiers from the skies," said Centron.

They're not Pretty...

Photo By Spc.
Michael Howard

Full-time Job

Nick Nicholson, a Hunter maintenance specialist with Northrop Grumman, checks the oil of a newly acquired Hunter unmanned aerial vehicle's dual 800cc Mercedes Benz engines. The maintainers provide a full system inspection every 75 hours of operation and an outright replacement of the engines every 300 hours

**Liftoff**

An MQ-5 Hunter unmanned aerial vehicle takes off for a flight

But they're plenty Busy

The Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division's Unmanned Aerial Systems program is living (or perhaps robotic) proof that an idea doesn't have to be fancy, flashy, or even new to be a huge factor on the battlefield.

Though their program was canceled in 1996 after three years of development by a TRW/Israel

Aircraft Industries team, the US Army's MQ-5 Hunter unmanned aerial vehicle has never been busier.

CAB Soldiers are flying the vehicles around the clock through the skies of Iraq, providing military leadership with intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and even lethal strike capabilities – the only such capabilities in all of Iraq.

Even so, the primary offensive use of the vehicles is in a real-time melding of military intelligence and attack helicopters like the AH-64 Apache, said Maj. Tom Rude, the CAB, 1st Infantry Division executive officer. "We have a radio on the Hunter, which allows our aircraft to talk directly with the Hunter operator. Then that Hunter relays back to the operator."

More than a decade after their original release and five years after their discontinuation, the Hunter UAV is back from the grave, flying thousands of hours and going stronger than ever

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD

Passing the mission over to the helicopter is generally preferable to directly engaging insurgents with UAVs.

"Hunters can directly engage insurgents on the ground. We don't prefer this, as we would rather use UAVs to direct our (Apache) Longbows and have them engage the enemy. But if the weather is bad, or the Longbows are too

far away, we can use Hunters to engage them directly," said Rude. The CAB has the only three Hunter UAVs with a weapons platform in Iraq. On a mission-specific basis, the platform is armed with the GBU-44/B Viper Strike munition.

Viper Strike is a 44-pound, three foot long variant of Northrop Grumman's unpowered, laser-guided Brilliant Anti-Tank

OPTEMPO

Number of Hunter UAV flight hours in northern Iraq to date:

15000

munition with a 2.3 pound high explosive warhead.

Rude says that such close coordination with manned, rotary wing strike assets today plays a major part in the CAB's operational planning, especially counter-IED operations. "UAVs are providing us with much more capability than we have had in the past. They dramatically increase

our ability to observe the area of responsibility, and the more we are able to see, the better we are able to do our job. Unmanned systems, including Hunter, are tightening the kill chain.”

As for the Hunter’s ability to strike its own targets, video from a Hunter UAV shows a successful Viper Strike attack on IED emplacements on Major Supply Route Tampa, on Sep. 17.

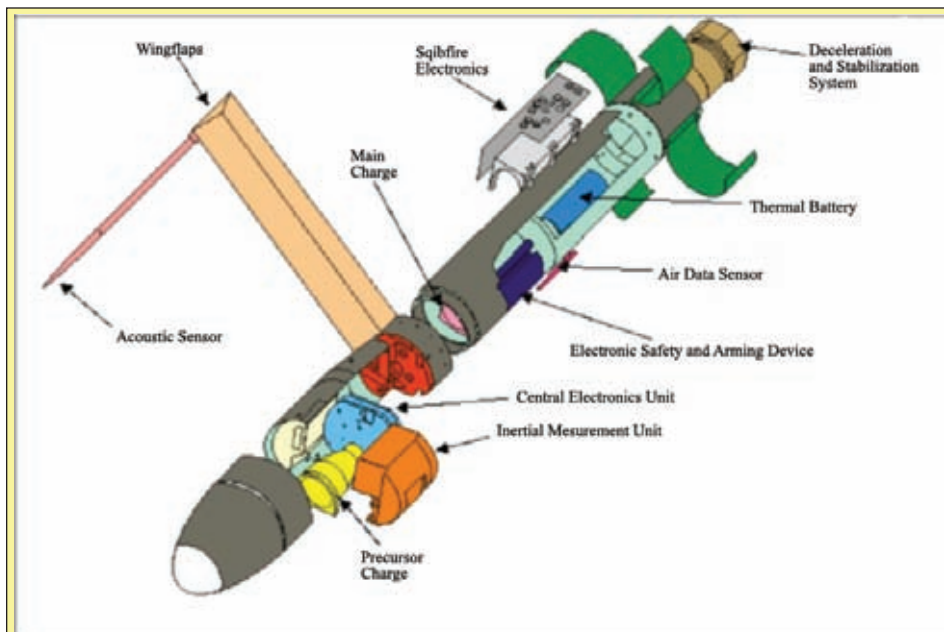
However, the strike is one of

‘If we can reduce the IED threat, the general level of everyone’s well being improves drastically.’

--- MAJ. TOM RUDE, CAB 11D EXECUTIVE OFFICER

only two that have been carried out to date (the other on Sept. 1, 2007). Rude said the CAB, who has been in theater less than three months, is still working to refine the tactics, techniques and procedures necessary to perform unassisted strikes. Along with perfecting TTPs, the CAB is working to train Army Soldiers to use Viper Strike. The Geneva Convention prohibits the Northrop Grumman contractors who support UAV operations from actually deploying the munition, Rude said.

Interestingly enough, though the Hunter UAV program was killed for a perceived lack of reliability, commanders on the ground today cite the Hunter’s reliability as one of the platform’s major selling points. “It’s been very reliable for us,” said Rude. Capt. Jake Roper, the UAS Commander, agreed, adding, “Getting parts for the



Inside Viper Strike

The Hunter UAV uses a munition specifically designed for the unique requirements inherent in urban operations

Viper Strike is a small, precision-attack munition with guide/glide fins and a 4-pound High Explosive Anti-Tank, or HEAT warhead. It is a gliding munition capable of stand-off precision attack using GPS-aided navigation and a semi-active laser seeker.

It is intended for operations that require a flexible angle of inclination (steep or shallow), particularly in mountainous terrain or built-up areas where

strict rules of engagement are in force.

Viper Strike has a unique top-down, pinpoint capability to attack urban targets precisely. Its small size and precision provide for low collateral damage in cluttered urban environments, day or night. The weapon requires a “man in the loop” to lase the target, either from the ground in sight of the target or directly by the UAV, controlled from the ground station.

system has not been a problem, and the vehicles aren’t prone to trouble.

“I think the Hunter is definitely a reliable UAV,” Roper said. “It’s a lot more practical with the [operational tempo] that we’re doing.”

Much of the Hunter’s newfound reliability is likely due to strict

aviation standards in terms of maintenance and upkeep. This means a full system inspection every 75 hours of operation and an outright replacement of the UAV’s dual 800cc Mercedes Benz engines every 300 hours.

“The constant watch over the aircraft engines means that the



aircraft are available to constantly watch over the Iraqi people. The counter IED fight is still a major concern. UAS are playing a huge role in defeating IEDs, and effectively defeating IEDs allows us to provide security for the Iraqi people, and that’s one of our top concerns for the future of Iraq.

Also, by providing better security, we are able to better enhance governance here in country,” said Rude.

The hunters make it easier to maneuver for both US forces and the Iraqi Army, police, and people. UAS also makes everyday life safer for the Iraqis. “If we can reduce

Pre-Flight

Top: Loren Jean, a Hunter crew chief with Northrop Grumman, calls off a flight check for a Hunter unmanned aerial vehicle
Bottom: Hunter UAV close-up

the IED threat, the general level of everyone’s well being improves drastically.” Rude said.



Touchdown

Three 3-1 AA Nightmare Black Hawks land at COB Speicher with loads of troops from Tal Afar

The Movers and the Shakers

Thanks to 3-1's fleet of Black Hawks, Nightmares have never been so painless

STORY BY MAJ. ENRIQUE T. VASQUEZ



Sentry

Pfc. James Nally Company B, 3-1 keeps watch as his UH-60 Black Hawk ferries passengers to their destinations

Photo Illustration by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

Photos By Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

In northern Iraq, when American Soldiers step onto a new outpost or move to a critical part of the battlefield they often arrive via the UH-60 Black Hawk, a medium lift utility helicopter and the workhorse of Army aviation.

Managing and operating these highly sophisticated marvels of modern avionics are the men and women of the 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment. Known as the “Nightmares,” these air and ground crews work all hours of the day and night, moving troops to various destinations as part of the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division’s sustained air operations effort.

Before any mission takes off, 3-1 AA crews check and verify each integral component of their aircraft to ensure it is safe to fly.

“We conduct pre-flight checks, looking for show stoppers, and for deficiencies that might keep the aircraft from flying. The pilots do the run-ups.”

“They get the auxiliary power unit going and load the fills [radio codes] and check the radios. The pilots turn the blades, do an engine HIT (Health Indicator Test) check and get ready to fly,” said Sgt. Charles Ceideburg, Company B, 3-1.

After the Black Hawk pilots are satisfied, the crew chiefs take over and ensure passengers safely board the aircraft.

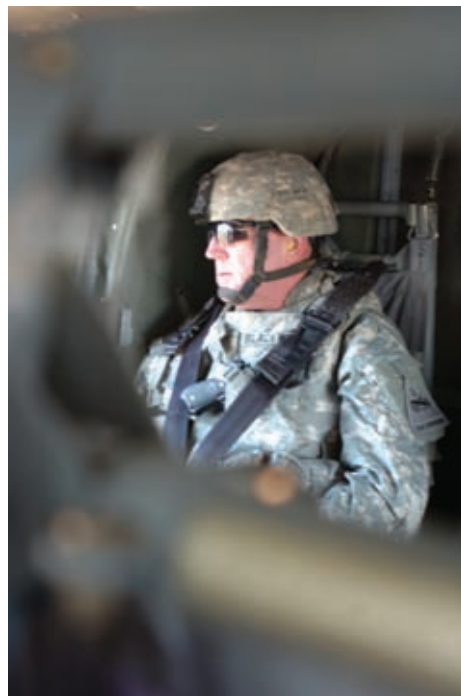
“We make sure those approaching don’t (endanger themselves while boarding), so we make sure they enter and exit from the 3 and the 9 o’clock position. We then make sure everybody is secure (seatbelts fastened), and nobody is going to fall out of the

aircraft,” said Ceideburg.

“Passenger safety is not really an issue with us as long as they get their seatbelt on and follow the directions of the crew chief,” said Spc. Jacob Norotsky, Co. B, 3-1.

Unlike flight attendants back home, a crew chief is trained to protect his or her passengers.

“Everybody here is qualified to fire their weapon, a M240 door gun used for the security of passengers,” said Norotsky



Safe and Sound

Division IAD MND-N Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Blackwood sits in the back of a Nightmare Black Hawk as it flies over the Iraqi countryside, transporting him from FOB McHenry to FOB Paliwoda

“So, you might as well be getting in your van back home and going to the grocery store, we are going to keep you that safe.”

Crew chiefs must remain proficient with their door guns, since they often have to stand ready to support combat missions outside the wire. “Air assaults are something we do to bring the

fight to the insurgents instead of them bringing it to us. It’s an achievement for us because we know we are bringing the fight right to the insurgents doorstep by getting the troops there,” said Sgt. Fredrick Benuzzi, a crew chief with Co. B.

“I have great respect for the guys we’re dropping off because they are really doing an awesome job,” said Benuzzi.

Another facet of the Nightmare’s battlefield mission is the transport of injured soldiers.

“We also conduct casualty evacuation and medical evacuation, which are pretty important in moving Soldiers off the battlefield and getting them to hospitals,” said Benuzzi. Using Black Hawks to move troops has two major advantages over ground transport.

“The aviation mission is one of the most important on the battlefield right now because we move Soldiers rapidly, and it is safer than traveling on the ground. By flying, Soldiers avoid IEDs,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kenneth Biddulph, pilot, Co. B.

“You keep everybody off the ground. Not everybody has to convoy back and forth, and bypass IED’s, the number one killer of soldiers nowadays,” said Ceideburg.

Overall, moving Soldiers in Iraq via the Black Hawk benefits the Army and the Soldier.

“It is safer to fly with us than any mode of travel in Iraq. We are going to keep Soldiers off the roads so they don’t have to worry about IEDs,” said Norotsky.

Nightmare Express

A Nightmare Black Hawk flies over the Iraqi countryside, transporting troops from COB Speicher to Balad



Flight of the Old Dog

Chief Warrant Officer 4
Gerry Ventrella lands his
aircraft after his final flight
in Iraq



TF ODIN

1.6 Years in the Cockpit

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerry Ventrella has battled Charlie and cancer in his 41 year career

STORY BY SGT. 1st CLASS JEFF TROTH

The wheels of the C-12 touching down on the tarmac meant more than just the end to another mission for Task Force ODIN – it also marked the final flight for a Soldier that has served his country for over 41 years.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerry Ventrella's final flight in Iraq was marked with a curtain of water for him to drive through and members of his company, Company B, Task Force ODIN, lining the runway and saluting him as he taxied by the morning of Dec. 30. Once his aircraft was parked and all the post cockpit flight checks complete, Ventrella stepped from the aircraft with camera in hand to capture on film those that were there to congratulate him.

During a plane side ceremony, Col. Jessie Farrington, the commander of the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, presented Ventrella a certificate and coin from Maj. Gen. Mark Hertling, the 1st Armored Division commander.

Lt. Col. James Cutting, the commander of Task Force ODIN, also presented the chief warrant officer a certificate for safety achievement for over 14,100 accident free flying hours.

Ventrella, a reservist assigned to the 244th Aviation Brigade, at Fort Sheridan, Ill., said that both certificates were indeed an honor and an unexpected surprise.

Flying an airplane in Iraq was something that the young 18-year-old Ventrella, who left for basic training Oct. 24, 1966, had not expected. Back then he didn't know where Iraq was, nor did he expect to be a pilot.

"I came into the army as a helicopter mechanic and went through UH-1 and CH-47

mechanic school," said Ventrella. "I was part of the first CH-47B units that was stood up at Fort Benning, Ga., and Fort Sill, Okla."

While his unit was building up for a deployment to Vietnam he and two others who had been together since mechanic school applied for and were accepted to flight school. Upon graduation

'I asked him why he chanced coming in. He told me that he wouldn't have been able to sleep that night if he hadn't tried to get me out.'

--- CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER
4 GERRY VENTRELLA, PILOT

from flight school in February 1969 they went to Vietnam and flew UH-1 Hueys with the 1st Cavalry Division.

Less than a year later, the young pilot had his worst experience in the military. During a mission his helicopter was hit and he had to do a precautionary landing in a field. The copilot and the gunner took the barrels from the M60s and got on their sister ship. The helicopter was to return shortly and pick up Ventrella and the crew chief.

"I had my pistol and the crew chief had two magazines for his M-16," said Ventrella.

The helicopter that took his copilot and gunner back to base was supposed to return to pick up the other two, but hostile fire in the area made getting to him dangerous, so many attempts were aborted. As the sun was setting and it looked like Ventrella and his crew chief would be spending



All Wet

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerry Ventrella drives under the traditional stream of water to celebrate his final flight in Iraq

Camaraderie

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerry Ventrella's fellow aviators salute him after his final mission in Iraq

the night in unfriendly territory, a CH-47 landed despite the heavy gunfire.

"I asked him why he chanced coming in. He told me that he wouldn't have been able to sleep that night if he hadn't tried to get me out," said Ventrella. "We sling loaded my Huey and he took us back to the base."

Ventrella flew for two more months over the jungles of Vietnam before his tour was up and he headed stateside.

"I reported to Fort Eustis, Va., where I taught UH-1 mechanics rotary wing aerodynamics, flight



controls and test flight procedures," the pilot said.

He was discharged from the Army April 1, 1971, but could not stay away from flying and joined the Army reserves less than a year later. While a Reservist, the Chicago resident increased his knowledge of aircraft by attending the Army's accident investigation course at the University of Southern California. He became a

Department of the Army Civilian and then an FAA inspector for about 4 years, then took the DA job back and was a flight instructor for fixed and rotary wing aircraft.

When his reserve slot ended in 1991, and his DA job was eliminated in 1996 Ventrella chose to remain in the Individual Ready Reserve 'in case they had a call up and needed people.' He continued flying through his civilian company

that he owns.

"I have been a civilian pilot all along and I do a lot of contract work. I work as a substitute for companies," said Ventrella. "I am also a flight instructor and an FAA examiner and I work 3-4 days a month as a weather observer at Midway (International Airport, Chicago)."

Just as things were taking off with his Department of the Army career he was grounded due to cancer. He knew that with his experience and training he could still work around aircraft, but knew that the cancer could keep his feet on the ground and not in the air like he had been doing for over 30 years.

After a couple surgeries and chemotherapy, scans showed no traces of the cancer. He then passed the FAA's flight physical and the tougher Army flight physical.

"The blood pressure requirements are more stringent for the Army physical and they also look at your past medical history, like cancer," Ventrella said. "I am thankful that I was able to get through the physical and that my health was good enough that I was able to serve again.

"When I found out that I had passed my physical and could fly again I thought of the gift of flight and how extremely fortunate I am," he added. Because of this he got involved with organizations like the Aircraft Pilots and Owners Association and the Experimental Aircraft Organization which have programs to introduce flying to children.

"I participate in these programs and just try to share the gift of flight. Mentor people, bring them into aviation," he said.

Passing the physicals meant he



Leaving a Family

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerry Ventrella poses with his flight crew. From left, Ventrella, Sgt. Daniel VanLangenhoven, Spc. Matthew Lee, and 1st Lt. Sean McNeal



Thanks and Praise

Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division commander Jessie Farrington presents Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerry Ventrella with a IAD unit coin

'I participate in these programs and just try to share the gift of flight. Mentor people, bring them into aviation.'

--- CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 GERRY VENTRELLA, PILOT



Leaving a Life Behind

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gerry Ventrella exits his aircraft one last time after flying his final military mission

could maintain his IRR status, which was a good thing because in October 2005 he got mobilized and rejoined the 244th Aviation Brigade. They sent him to the tactical operations course and gave him a refresher course in the C-12 before he deployed to Iraq and joined Task Force ODIN a year ago.

The warrant officer is the first to tell you that his mission in Iraq was nothing like his first deployment.

“In Vietnam we were going directly into hot LZs with troops and pulling them out,” he said. In Vietnam he got to see the impact he was having on the troops, during his time over the skies of northern Iraq he considers himself

and the rest of the task force as “behind the scenes type of people.”

“But I know from past experience of seeing what people do with aerial intelligence information we are doing a service to the people on the ground,” Ventrella said. “We provide information on routes or structures and in most cases we have no idea

what the information is going to be used for. I suppose it is to be used by an infantry unit when they are going into an area and need an overall view that they can’t get from the ground.”

Ventrella said that while in Iraq the thing that has impressed him the most has been the young crew members he has flown with and

served the past year with.

“You tend to think of the younger generation as being rebellious, they think they know more than they do, and they have an attitude problem, but then I come in and am very pleasantly surprised by the younger people,” he said. “You normally don’t see or hear about kids that have the strong work ethic, that try to improve themselves and that try to do the right thing. But, I have seen a lot of that in the military. I have seen a lot of good things with this upcoming generation.”

The Soldiers that Ventrella says he has been lucky enough to serve with in Iraq will always be a part of him and no matter how much time passes “we are going to have our get-togethers.”

“CW4 Ventrella is always willing to share his aviation knowledge and experience to make the company and the task force a better organization,” said Maj. Mike Milo, executive officer for Company B. “His positive attitude, work ethic, and, above all, friendship will be greatly missed.”

Ventrella is on his way back to the states and the 244th, where he will be the tactical operations officer and fly training missions until he retires in September.

He may be hanging up his Army aviation wings, but he is not staying on the ground. “I will continue working and flying in the civilian sector,” said the warrant officer. “I still have the schools that I am affiliated with.”

As he prepared to leave Iraq and go back to the states, Ventrella said he was thankful that the cancer had not grounded him and that he was able to fly missions in Iraq.

“I am just thankful that I was able to get back in and serve once again.”

Giving Ground Troops a Voice



Four Soldiers have been training to enable communications and network operations for Soldiers deployed throughout the theater

STORY BY 1ST LT. JOSH HOWELL

Establishing effective command and control for units on the modern-day unilateral battlefield in Iraq is a mission that four Soldiers in Company C, 601st Aviation Support Battalion are ready to do.

Sgt. Leland Webb, Sgt. Jamey Milo, Spc. David Lewis, and Spc. Troy Clayton are the 601st Aviation Support Battalion's Tactical Command Post Node Team. They are prepared to deploy off Contingency Operating Base Speicher at a moment's notice to assist in the fight against insurgents.

The team has been working daily to develop and improve their technical skills on their Command Post Node and other networking equipment in order to be at full tactical readiness for operations during the remaining months of their Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment. The CPN system provides all types of data and telephone communications capabilities. These systems generally support battalion-sized units and can be attached to tactical elements to allow the unit commander the flexibility to

organize continuous full spectrum operations anywhere on the modern battlefield.

Webb and Milo, both multi-channel transmission system operator/maintainers and Lewis and Clayton, information technology specialists, have been training daily by setting up their assigned STT in different areas in order to be fully trained with the complexities of establishing initial ground communications with orbiting satellites, known as "Peaking and Polling."

"We found out through multiple exercises that attention to detail is the key to success," said Clayton. "Minor things could lead to disaster."

There is a lot of trust among us. The NCOs don't micro-manage us, they trust us with what we are doing.

--- SPC. TROY CLAYTON, NETWORK OPERATOR

He added that when dealing with communications, taking care of the "details" is imperative. He continued, "This stuff (CPN and STT equipment) is so sophisticated, one broken wire could have tremendous consequences."

While their equipment is essential to completing the mission, it doesn't run by itself.

"Lewis and Clayton have really stepped up," said Milo. "Everyone pulled their weight."

"There is a lot of trust among us," said Clayton. "The NCOs don't micro-manage us, they trust us with what we are doing."

The team has increased their cohesiveness by cross-training on each other's jobs. "Everyone has their own job, but everyone needs to know each other's job," stated Lewis. He continued, "We cannot afford for us two to be the only ones who know the networking systems. Webb and Milo cannot be the only ones who know the STT. We know each other's jobs in case something happens to one of us."

"It's a complex job, setting-up a CPN; especially calibrating the STT and adjusting the generator,"



Photo by Cpt. Paul Baldwin

Networking

Spc. Troy Clayton and Sgt. Jamey Milo of Company C, 601st ASB, work on Command Post Node equipment

Spc. Milo added.

Webb said that the team set up and tore down their equipment around 15 times during the first week of their training. They have been training for nearly 4 weeks

now.

"We want to do it at 100 percent—not a hodgepodge," Spc. Clayton said. "We are going to do it to meet and exceed the standard."

The members of the TAC CPN team have been training and operating with the knowledge that they could be called up at anytime to travel to another FOB in northern Iraq to set up their

communications package.

"We are like the communications QRF (Quick Reaction Forces)," said Sgt. Webb.

When asked about any excitement or apprehension on the possibility of going outside the area of COB Speicher in order to set up their TAC CPN, they admitted that they all were excited about their possible missions.



Big Red One -- The Beginnings

Newly minted Gen. John Pershing takes the first steps in molding a formless mass of fighting men into a trained and deadly division

BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD

The roots of the 1st Infantry Division are inextricably tied up with the history of both Gen. “Black Jack” John J. Pershing and the Mexican Punitive Expedition. The core elements of the 1st ID were forged in the combat of the Mexican campaign, and the then Brig. Gen. Pershing made his bones as a general there, being freshly promoted from the rank of captain.

The Mexican Punitive Expedition was also the catalyst that solidified the notion that the Army’s current structure, based around the regiment, was inadequate to meet the demands of combat during the

Humble Beginnings

Then 1st Lt. Benjamin D. Foulois at the controls of a Wright aircraft, equipped with a radio. Foulois eventually rose to the rank of Brigadier General, commanding the Army’s Air Corps

outset of the 20th century.

The Mexican Punitive Expedition centered around charismatic leader, and already legendary bandit and guerilla, Francisco “Pancho” Villa of Chihuahua. Trouble with Villa had been growing since 1915, when the United States government disappointed Villa by siding and giving its official recognition to the Carranza government of Mexico. Feeling severely betrayed by the U.S. government, Villa, in a fit of rage, ordered his men to attack Columbus, N.M.

At approximately 4:17 am on March 9, 1916, Villa’s guns thundered and his men attacked Columbus, New Mexico and the local detachment of the U.S. 13th Cavalry Regiment. They killed 14 American Soldiers, 10 citizens, burned the town, took many horses and mules, seized available machine guns, ammunitions and necessary merchandise were removed from shops, before they quickly slipped back into the darkness to Mexico, having lost five men captured and suffered 80 dead or mortally wounded.

Reaction was immediate. Word reached Washington, D.C., within hours of the attack, and on March 10, Maj. Gen. Frederick Funston, commander of the U.S. Army’s Southern Department at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, sent a message urging a relentless pursuit of Villa’s force. President Woodrow Wilson and his cabinet met that morning and agreed unanimously that Villa had to be brought to justice.

Command of the expedition went to “Black Jack” Pershing, a veteran cavalryman with a proven record against insurgent Apaches and Filipino guerrillas. A strict disciplinarian, Pershing combined mature judgment, political sensitivity, and aggressive leadership, characteristics that would serve him well in the coming months. Funston gave Pershing the 7th, 10th, 11th, and 13th Cavalry; the 6th and 16th Infantry; and two batteries from

Pershing took the lessons learned in Mexico and used them to prepare his Soldiers for WWI. These men eventually became the Big Red One.

the 6th Field Artillery for his command.

The man who is credited with creating the 1st ID also had command of the equivalent of the first “Combat Aviation Brigade.” His force included the U.S. Army’s only operational airplane unit, the 1st Aero Squadron. Eight Curtiss JN-3 biplanes - or “Jennies” - were flown into Mexico, primarily on scouting and communications missions.

The squadron flew 540 missions between 15 March and 15 August, 1916, the average mission length being 36 miles. Their greatest contribution was maintaining communications between Pershing’s columns, which penetrated 700 miles into Mexico. Pilots accomplished this while flying the 1916 Jennie-2, which was so underpowered by its 100-hp engine and flew so low, it drew fire

from the ground.

Pershing divided his force into two columns to seek out Villa. Pershing made his main base encampment at Casas Grandes, Chihuahua. Due to disputes with the Carranza administration over the use of the Mexico North Western Railway to supply his troops, the Army employed a truck-train system to convoy supplies to Pershing’s encampment. The 1st Aero Squadron pulled double duty, playing a large role in maintaining these motorized columns.

Eventually, the expedition bogged down due to its lack of success and tension with Mexican officials and citizens.

While the expedition did make contact with Villista formations and killed two of his generals, it failed in its major objectives, neither stopping border raids nor capturing Villa. However, between the date of the American withdrawal and Villa’s retirement in 1920, Villa’s troops were no longer an effective fighting force, being hemmed in by American and Mexican federal troops and money and arms blockades on both sides of the border.

Ultimately, though the campaign was not a success, the invasion may have been a fortuitous decision all the same. On April 7, 1917, the U.S. declared war on Germany, and combat veterans were in great demand. The hardened veterans of the Mexican expedition were the men Pershing knew, and built the 1st Expeditionary Division around.

Pershing took the lessons learned in Mexico and used them to prepare the Soldiers of the 1st Expeditionary Division for WWI. These men eventually became the 1st Infantry Division—The Big Red One.

RESPECT

Treat people as they should be treated



"He who feels the respect which is due to others cannot fail to inspire in them regard for himself, while he who feels, and hence manifests, disrespect toward others, especially his inferiors, cannot fail to inspire hatred against himself."

— General John M. Schofield

U.S. ARMY
CALL TO DUTY
BOOTS ON THE GROUND



U.S. ARMY

1

ARMY STRONG.

ARMY
VALUES