

PHOENIX RISING

TASK FORCE PHOENIX

NEWSLETTER

Wife, Mother Serves for Family, Country

By Spc. Amanda Jo Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Twenty-five-year-old Sgt. Autumn Hughes, a Task Force Phoenix S-6 shop non-commissioned officer in charge, was reenlisted by U.S. Army Capt. Philip Haemmerlein at Bagram Airfield Nov. 23.

This is Sgt. Hughes' second reenlistment. The native of Keyser, W.Va., is a signal support system specialist and has been in her Military Occupational Specialty for seven and a half years. Sgt. Hughes will be receiving a tax-free reenlistment bonus and a two-year stabilization at Fort Drum in her current MOS for her reenlistment.

"I reenlisted for the stabilization and because I plan on staying in for twenty years," said Sgt. Hughes, "I serve in the Army for the protection of my Family and my country."

She is currently serving on her third deployment; however, this is her first deployment with her husband, Sgt. Anthony Hughes Jr., who is a native of Syracuse, N.Y., and is also stationed at BAF. He is an intelligence analyst in TF Falcon. Anthony admits deploying with his wife makes some things easier and that he is proud of Autumn and her sense of duty.

"I am extremely proud of what my wife is doing for our country," said Anthony. "She has decided to stay in the Army despite us having a child and still wants to serve. I think that it takes a very dedicated person to do this when given the opportunity to get out because of us being dual military," he said.

Autumn enjoys her job in the Army because it allows her the opportunity to meet a variety of people and get to know them.

As a signal support system specialist,

she helps set up the unit's computer systems. She runs cables, connects printers, manages share portals, and sets up radio sets. It is her responsibility to take care of most things that deal with communication.

Having been in the Army for over seven years, Hughes is familiar with facing challenges and learning to overcome them in a timely manner.

She approaches them with an optimistic vigor that many Soldiers could adapt into their daily regimen to conquer their struggles.

"I take challenges on with a positive attitude," she said. "If I don't know how to fix it – I ask questions. I'm never afraid to ask questions."

The Hughes left behind their 11-month-old baby girl, named Summer, with Autumn's mother. It is a new challenge this Army Family is facing, but Autumn maintains her positive attitude.

"This is the first time I've had to [leave my daughter], and I'm going to admit it is hard, but I know what I'm doing for our daughter and one day she will understand why I had to do it," she said. "There are

times that are harder than some, but I have to push those feelings onto the back burner and keep my head in the game – not only for myself, but for my Soldiers."

Anthony, who enlisted in 2002 with the intent of completing 20 years, misses his daughter as well. He acknowledges that he focuses heavily on his job to complete the mission. He said he knows that photos and videos of Summer are being taken for them to watch when they return home next fall and said his head is fully in the mission here in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom XI.

The Hughes said they know it is not easy to have a dual military Family when they both plan to support and defend the country for twenty years. However, they said they completely support each other in their career goals. Anthony was excited about the reenlistment.

"I am very happy that my wife reenlisted," he said. "I love being a military Family. My wife and I are lucky to be on [Bagram Airfield] so we can see each other," said Anthony. □

This article was also published in:

www.defense.gov,
www.militaryavenue.com,
www.cjtf101.com,
www.yankeemom.com
 and www.cjtf82.com.

Photo by Spc. Nadine Gonzalez



PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Sgt. Autumn Hughes, a native of Keyser, W.Va., is reenlisted by U.S. Army Capt. Philip Haemmerlein, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phoenix, in front of a UH-60 Black Hawk Nov. 23 at Bagram Airfield. Sgt. Hughes, HHC, TF Phoenix, is a non-commissioned officer-in-charge of TF Phoenix Communications shop.

Photo by Spc. Amanda Jo Brown



By Spc. Amanda Jo Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – President Barrack Obama visited Soldiers on Bagram Airfield Dec. 3. Soldiers from Task Force Phoenix who attended the President’s speech, waited outside to go through metal detectors before entering into a large aircraft hangar.

Once inside, service members were greeted with a live band as they waited for their commander in chief. When President Obama finally took the stage, cameras and camcorders were lifted high above the Soldiers’ heads – in hopes of recording a photo of him for the future. TF Phoenix Soldiers remarked on his charisma as he spoke to the crowd of approximately 3,500 service members in attendance.

“I can tell he is a President full of presence. The vibe from the entire audience tied in with the depth of the speech and rekindled the patriotism instilled within those present,” said Sgt. Willis Holley, S-6 noncommissioned officer and native of Augusta, Ga.

Service members attempted to get as close to the stage as possible to acquire the best view of President Obama. Many Soldiers from TF Phoenix were excited they got to see him so close.

“It was great – a once in a lifetime chance of getting to see the president,” said Spec. Monika Kotelnicki, S-1 clerk and native of Colorado Springs, Colo.

Other Soldiers left the hangar that night with feelings of accomplishment and unity after hearing President Obama speak.

“It was a very liberating experience seeing my commander-in-chief. It made me feel more a part of the fight,” said Spec. Raheem Stewart, S-6 clerk and a native of Dallas, Texas.

“As we struggle with shopping lists and invitations, compounded by December's bad weather, it is good to be reminded that there are people in our lives who are worth this aggravation, and people to whom we are worth the same.”

~ Donald E. Westlake



Task Force Phoenix Commander's Corner

Hello Phoenix Families, friends and fans,

As we look forward to this holiday season, I believe we all have so much to be thankful for despite these challenging times apart. I am thankful for the extremely positive, talented young men and women that comprise our ranks and that are willing to make sacrifices for the better good of our nation and for this world. I'm thankful for the *THE BEST* Families we have back in the States who equally make sacrifices that enable our Soldiers to do the incredibly brave, complex and grueling things they do over here on a daily basis (and the Soldiers do it with a smile, everyday).

I am personally thankful for the simple fact that it is sunny, warm and nearly 70 degrees here in Afghanistan. I'm not trying to rub it in - really. I do pray for the families as they battle the Fort Drum snow. So as you all continue to push through this deployment, I encourage everyone to take a moment, contemplate what you are thankful for and know that you all play a major part in something so much greater than your individual selves. Hang in there and Happy Holidays.

"FEEL THE BURN"
LTC Dennis J. McKernan

*"May your walls know joy, may every room hold laughter,
and every window open to great possibility."
~ Mary Anne Radmacher*

By Capt. Blain King



C Company Dustoff

Homemade pizza sale helps raise money for a sick family member

By Spc. Amanda Jo Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Sgt. Andreas Buttner, a crew chief in C Company Dustoff, 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion of Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, displayed his selfless side - not during a combat medical mission, but for a fellow Soldier in C Company on Nov. 13. Staff Sgt. Raymond Jugal, was recently informed that his six-year-old daughter, Johanna, had been diagnosed with Lymphoma, a disease that effects the body's lymphoid tissue.

“Johanna is a very young girl and a disease of this type can overtake her small body very quickly if found too late,” said Staff Sgt. Erika Richardson, a flight medic for C Company Dustoff.

Johanna's Family was originally told that she had a bad case of mumps that would not go away. Her symptoms progressively got worse. Johanna suddenly fell into a coma due to the rapid spread of her undetected condition. The young girl was hospitalized in an isolation room with the hope that she would recover and come out of her coma.

Buttner, a native of Fulda, Germany, knew he wanted to help the Family when he found out what had happened to Jugal's daughter – even though he did not know his daughter personally. He decided to hold a fundraiser at Bagram Airfield by selling homemade pizza to Soldiers in an attempt to help the family with the expenses that were already quickly accruing. He had prior experience with cooking and knew that it would be appreciated by other Soldiers.

“I used to be a chef in a restaurant many years ago and pizza was one of my biggest sales,” said Buttner. “I used to sell between 300-600 pizzas a week made from scratch.”

With ingredients his wife and family sent him, plus some helpful contributions from other people, Buttner and Capt. Melanie Sims, a flight nurse with C Company Dustoff and a native of Eureka, Calif., tackled the pizza-making with high hopes of raising enough money to help the Jugal family's pocketbook.

“The pizza fundraiser wasn't just an excuse to have great homemade pizza,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Nicholas Anderson, a native of San Bernardino, Calif., “It was for a good cause. We hope the Dustoff family was able to make a difference for Johanna and the Jugal Family. Sgt. Buttner had his heart in the right place. Not just for hosting an event that boosted morale, but for wanting to help out a fellow noncommissioned officer and his family.”

After nine and a half hours of cooking pizza, Buttner and Sims had made 40 pizzas, served approximately 33 people, and had raised \$1,180.00 in donations for Jugal's Family.

“The suggestion that was made for a fundraiser by Sgt. Buttner rang out as an act of complete selflessness and kindness toward people he hardly knew,” said Richardson, a native of Chicago, Ill., “I wanted to support him in any way I could. People came from all over [Bagram Airfield] to participate in something they knew would not only help change the life of a fellow Soldier - not wounded by combat, but a father who was wounded by an enemy he couldn't see.”

“Self-sacrifice is the real miracle out of which all the reported miracles grow.”

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson











MAILROOM HOURS

0800-0830 –
INDIVIDUAL MAIL PICK
UP
1300-1400 – UNIT
MAIL PICK UP
1400-1900 –
ACCOUNTABLE AND
BDE MAIL PICK UP

10th Combat Aviation Brigade Mailroom

Ensure you get your mail



Photo by Spc. Amanda Jo Brown
Spc. Daniel Tohill, a native of Plainfield, Ind. and Task Force Mountain Eagle mail clerk, and Pfc. Tanya Singleton, a native of Holly Lake Ranch, Texas and TF Phoenix mail clerk, organize Soldiers' mail.



Photo by Spc. Amanda Jo Brown
Pfc. Tanya Singleton, Task Force Phoenix mail clerk, helps a customer in the mail room Nov. 12. Singleton is a native of Holly Lake Ranch, Texas.

By Spc. Amanda Jo Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- If Soldiers want to ensure they receive their mail as fast as possible, they need to make certain each piece of mail is labeled properly so the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade mail room clerks can sort the mail to the correct unit.

“Mail delivery [can be delayed] by two to three weeks if addressed improperly,” said Spc. Daniel Tohill, a Task Force Mountain Eagle mail clerk.

The mail room receives a lot of mail - especially during the holiday season - and needs the correct information to distribute it appropriately. If a Soldier has registered or insured mail, then the CP obtains a PS Form 3849 that will be given to the Soldier. That item may then be individually picked up by bringing the form with them to the mail room between the hours of 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

“All other mail gets picked up from each unit’s orderly room,” said Tohill.

Deployed Soldiers rely heavily upon their mail. It is a great morale boost when they receive letters from home and care-

- packages. One of TF Phoenix’s mail clerks is Pfc. Tanya Singleton, of E Company, is adamant about getting Soldiers this morale booster.

“It is very important to me to see such a great boost in morale for Bagram Airfield Soldiers each day when I deliver mail. I’m glad I have the chance to work in the mail room. My job as an 89B – which is an ammunition specialist – has helped me transition into the mail room by giving me the organizational and accountability skills I need,” said Singleton.

The 10th Combat Aviation Brigade mail room wants to ensure every Soldier gets their mail in a timely fashion. They ask that every Soldier pay extra attention to detail so they can receive their mail without extra delay. □

Your Address

<i>Last Name, First Name</i>	<i>Smith, Robert</i>
<i>Unit</i>	<i>HHC 3-10</i>
<i>Task Force</i>	<i>TF Phoenix</i>
<i>BAF</i>	<i>BAF</i>
<i>APO, AE 09354</i>	<i>APO, AE 09354</i>

TF Phoenix Updates

Additions to the Phoenix Team

We'd like to welcome the A/1-169th SMUGGLERS (USAR) to the Phoenix Team. They are a 43 Soldier, Command and Control Company equipped with eight UH-60 Blackhawks out of Ft. Bragg, N.C.

We'd also like to welcome detachments from B/1-171 Hawaii Army National Guard equipped with CH-47 Chinooks and assigned to our D and B Companies.

Promotions

- Staff Sgt. Eric Pelkey, C Company Dustoff
- Spc. Nathan Madrigal, E Company
- Spc. Robert Smith, E Company

Reenlistments

- Sgt. Autumn Hughes, Headquarters and Headquarters Company
- Sgt. Andreas Buttner, C Company Dustoff
- Sgt. David Mason, E Company
- Spc. Robert Smith, E Company
- Spc. Rafael Morales, E Company
- Spc. Shawn Stanton, E Company



PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Sgt. David Mason and Spc. Shawn Stanton, both from E Company, Task Force Phoenix, reenlist at Bagram Airfield to stay a part of the Army team.

“It's important for our nation that our military and our society be close together. That's important for democracy. And it's important for recruiting. It's important for retention. It's important for building support for our engagements overseas.”

Anthony Principi - 4th United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

By Capt. Philip Haemmerlein

Greetings Hooligan Families! I hope you are enjoying the onslaught of winter, especially if you are receiving this back at Fort Drum. We are feeling the effects of winter here, mostly at night when the sun goes down. It gets pretty cold, but our hearts are warmed by the many letters and packages we receive from home!

A lot has been accomplished in the past month by your Soldiers. We executed a seamless transfer of authority with our counterparts, sending them home for a well deserved rest. With that we assumed the mission here in Regional Command East, and we haven't missed a beat. Your Soldiers are working tirelessly around the clock (with some time off, I promise) to be the best headquarters for our task force's aviation operations. They are doing a great job, and I could not ask for a better outfit to command.

We celebrated Thanksgiving at the end of last month, and we continue celebrating the holiday season here in December. I know it is tough being away from your Soldier over the holidays, but keep in mind what they are doing for our nation and for Afghanistan. Continue to write letters, cards, emails, and also keep sending packages. The first sergeant and I will ensure that they continue to communicate with you all (we won't yell, I promise)! From every Soldier in this organization, I wish each and every one of you a happy and blessed holiday season.



PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – *Military Gumby holds up the United States of America flag. Gumby is this month's S-1 shop mascot – reminding everyone to remain flexible.*



“Don't ever take a fence down until you know why it was put up.”

~ Robert Frost

A Company

Cleaning up and getting dirty: Regular helicopter wash integral to maintaining readiness

By Spc. Amanda Jo Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan - A Company's Arch Angel Soldiers in Task Force Phoenix, Task Force Falcon conducted a scheduled aircraft wash and a critical corrosion inspection on Nov. 14. Soldiers noted the extent of soil as they approached the UH-60 Blackhawk, prepared their tools, and transported a wash truck to the aircraft's location.

The Arch Angels metaphorically rolled up their sleeves and got their hands dirty with no delay. They began by removing items from the interior of the aircraft. In just a few minutes, they had removed all of the critical avionics equipment, the troop and gunner seats, and the ballistic armor protection system. They removed the hardware and carried the eight separate BAPs – which are floor plates that can weigh up to 40 pounds apiece – with ease outside of the aircraft. After everything was removed, the Soldiers took a hand brush and dust pan to clean loose dirt from the floor.

A typical aircraft wash is tracked within the aircraft's log book. They take place every 30 days unless the aircraft flies on a mission that causes it to become covered with dirt. If everything is readily available, a standard aircraft wash will take approximately an hour and a half to thoroughly complete. Sgt. Julio Santamaria, a native of Sumter, S.C., used a pressure washer to clean the aircraft from top to bottom and from the outside to the inside.

The Soldiers began their component corrosion inspection once Santamaria, a standards instructor for the Arch Angels, was done with the wash. A CCI is done on an aircraft every 90 days in conjunction with an aircraft wash.

“A CCI is meticulous. You have to look at every inch of the aircraft – inside and out – for corrosion,” explained Spc. Amanda Smith, a native of Virginia and a crew chief for A Company.

A group of Soldiers inspected the hardware and major components for corrosion. They utilized wire brushes to remove any oxidation found and treated the item with a corrosion preventative compound. Arch Angel Soldiers were done with both the wash and CCI in just a few short hours.

It takes a dedicated crew chief to stay educated about their aircraft, fly missions in a combat zone, and maintain all the aircraft within the unit.

“Continuing to gain knowledge on the [UH-60 Blackhawk] and maintain the knowledge crew chiefs need to know is one of the most difficult parts of being in a flight company,” said Smith. □

Photo by Spc. Amanda Jo Brown



PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Sgt. Julio Santamaria, a standards instructor for A Company, Task Force Phoenix, stands atop a UH-60 Blackhawk to spray it down with a pressure washer Nov. 14. This is a standard aircraft wash that is completed every 30 days. A wash can take up to an hour and a half if all items needed are available. Santamaria is a native of Sumter, S.C.

B Company

By Capt. Michael Farrel

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan - The month of November has gone by very quickly. The Soldiers of B Company worked extremely hard this month taking over the mission from the Chinook Company from Task Force Knighthawk.

We officially took over on Nov. 12. It has been a whirlwind ever since. B Company seems to be flying Chinooks around the clock to every corner of Afghanistan. To keep up with the fast pace of the missions everyone has to work many hours on the aircraft to keep them flying. In fact because of this fast pace 1st Sgt. William Howard and Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Hasbrouck have resorted to riding bicycles up and down the flight line as a way to keep up with the Soldiers working on the aircraft. Hasbrouck tried to sell me a bicycle but upon further inspection I noted that the bicycle had no brakes. I think he might be trying to send me a message. I am constantly amazed at how hard the Soldiers work so that we can perform our mission here in Afghanistan.

When the Soldiers are not busy working on aircraft many of them have been enjoying their limited down time by going to the Afghan market or Bazaar. There they have been buying modestly priced DVDs to watch back in the B-huts. Also the Soldiers found an old football to throw around on the flight line during the infrequent lulls in the day.

Of course, it is all not fun and games. Twelve Soldiers are currently living down south at Forward Operating Base Sharana attached to Task Force Gambler. I call them every night to see how things are going, and while they do miss being at Bagram Airfield, they are enjoying their time and the missions at FOB Sharana. One thing they can't live without is their mail which we have been bringing down to them almost every day. In fact, we brought about ten packages down the other day and by the time we got back to Bagram Airfield, there was even more mail for the Soldiers at FOB Sharana. Thanks to the spouses and the Family Readiness Group, the letters and packages that show their support never stop coming. We miss you all and know that you are in our thoughts always.



"Humor is a serious thing. I like to think of it as one of our greatest earliest natural resources, which must be preserved at all cost."

James Thurber

C Company 3-10

Rescue from Above!

By Sgt. Damian Schwab

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan -- Sometimes Dustoff helicopters can't just land on a landing zone. Maybe the mountains are too steep or there are too many trees or it's just too dusty to land. Dustoff has the ultimate backup plan for all these situations: the Rescue Hoist. A hoist is a cable machine that can drop our flight medics down. They have more than enough leeway to pick up any hurt Soldier on the battle field with the medic. With the right attachment you can even lift up to three Soldiers at once. Hoist operations are no easy task. It's probably one of the more dangerous tasks we do. It takes great coordination between all four members of the crew to have a successful mission. Normally the medic rides the hoist down to get the patient while the crew chief operates the hoist machine. The two pilots have to be flawless in their hovering and flying skills as to not injure the medic going down while still communicating on the radio and watching out for enemy on the ground.

Dustoff Soldiers have been practicing this past month on hoist operations in order to better prepare themselves for the real deal. It takes a great deal of practice to be able to execute a hoist mission. C Company Soldiers first hoist a 560 pound weight to get used to the process. Then they work with a mannequin to get a closer idea of what it's like to hoist a real person. Once they are proficient with those 2 tasks they move on to the final phase of training; live hoist. They will then hoist down a live Soldier to validate the entire training process. Hoist operations is something that we don't want to do if we don't have to, it's something we must do when all other means to get an injured U.S. Soldier are exhausted. Dustoff Soldiers ensure the success of a hoist mission by relentlessly training. □



FORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan
Dustoff Soldiers train using the hoist machine to be better prepared for their mission in Afghanistan.

“Leaders need to be optimists. Their vision is beyond the present.”

~ Rudy Giuliani

Command Visit



Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Arron Champ, C Company, 1st Battalion, 10th Attack Regiment of Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade.

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Lt. Col. Dennis McKernan, Task Force Phoenix commander and a native of Haddon Township, N.J., travelled Nov. 17 to visit TF Phoenix petroleum supply specialists who are conducting their mission at the forward arming and refueling point at Forward Operating Base Morales-Frazier. McKernan took a moment to take a photo with a few of E Company's Soldiers. From left, Staff Sgt. Tellas Wilson, a native of Columbus, Ga., Spc. Jacob Bush, a native of Panama, Fla., Spc. Christopher Lemoine, a native of Tulare, Calif., and Sgt. Jason Stevens, native of Paden City, W.Va.

"Other things may change us, but we start and end with the family."

~ Anthony Brandt



D Company

*Routine maintenance
keeps the mission going*

By Spc. Amanda Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter maintainers in D Company, Task Force Phoenix, Task Force Falcon, have an important mission here at Bagram Air Field. They complete all scheduled and unscheduled maintenance on Black Hawks to make certain the helicopter is fully operational for each flight crew's daily operations.

A four-Soldier team undertook a scheduled maintenance task Nov. 12. They did it on an aircraft that TF Phoenix acquired here at BAF when they arrived. The Soldiers completed what is called a 40-hour and 120-hour inspection. This inspection should take no longer than four hours to complete with a good four-Soldier team as long as no faults are found while working, explained Spec. Brandon Carney, one of the four Soldiers who worked on the helicopter. Carney is from West Carthage, N.Y.

The team followed step-by-step instructions from the aviation unit maintenance technical manual used for the 40-hour and 120-hour inspection. They completed tasks such as cleaning corrosion off of the bifilars, which are weights that balance the rotor head; a series of torque checks on hardware; and checking wear on pitch control links. Once the task was finished, a non-commissioned officer from the quality control office verified proper measures were taken to do the job correctly.

“After any maintenance done to a bird QC [quality control] must inspect all work that was done to the helicopter to ensure safety and quality of maintenance,” Carney said.

The Soldiers put a lot of effort into the inspection – working to standard, not to time – to ensure the TF Phoenix flight crews have a safe and fully operational helicopter for their role in Operation Enduring Freedom XI. □



Photo by Spc. Amanda Brown
PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- Spec. Brandon Carney, a UH-60 Black Hawk mechanic, asks a maintainer on the ground for a tool from atop a Blackhawk so he can complete his part of the 40 hour maintenance task Nov. 12. Carney is a Soldier in D Company, Task Force Phoenix whose Family currently resides in Carthage, N.Y.



Photo by Spc. Amanda Brown
PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Four Soldiers take a quick break from their 40-hour maintenance task for a group photo in front of the UH-60 Blackhawk in which they are doing repairs. From left, Spec. Daniel Jayne, a native of Santa Ynez, Calif., Spec. James Kelley, a native of Newton, Ill., Spec. Andrew Coghlan, a native of Augusta, Ga., and Spec. Brandon Carney, who is from West Carthage, N.Y. These Soldiers are all 15T UH-60 Blackhawk mechanics in D Company, Task Force Phoenix. They each have deployed previously.

*“You have to learn the rules of the game.
And then you have to play better than anyone else.”*

~ Albert Einstein

D Company

Deploying with a new family

By Spc. Amanda Brown



Photo by Noemi Charles

FORT DRUM, N.Y. – Pfc. Mario and Noemi Charles, both natives of San Angelo, Texas, pose together Jun. 18 after their wedding. The couple are expecting their first child while Mario is deployed to Afghanistan as part of D Company, Task Force Phoenix, Task Force Falcon.

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Pfc. Mario Charles prepared for deployment just like any other Soldier in D Company, Task Force Phoenix, Task Force Falcon; however, his story is a difficult one that many Soldiers face before deployment.

This is Charles' first deployment with his first unit. He is excited about the deployment as he prepares himself for this year long adventure.

"I am ready for it and excited to do something new," said Charles, a native of San Angelo, TX, "It is crazy, though, because I have heard a lot about Afghanistan. I don't know what to believe. I have heard it is good and I have heard it is bad; but whatever the case is, I am ready for it and all the challenges that are coming my way."

So he put on his mental rucksack and headed for the mountains of Afghanistan. Charles left behind his wife, Noemi Charles, whom he married on June 18 of this year. In addition, he found out five months ago that he and his

wife are expecting. His first baby will be born while he is deployed.

Noemi, also a native of San Angelo, TX, is excited to be pregnant, and is in high spirits even though her husband is deployed during her pregnancy.

"I feel happy," said Noemi. "It is by far the most wonderful gift. It's a great joy. I'm excited to find out the baby's sex. I wish I already knew. I feel like a part of me left, but I know he will be back."

No doubt leaving behind a wife is hard - especially one who is pregnant. Charles admitted that he is sad and believes everyone should be able to see their first baby born. He may be sad about the possibility of not being around for his first child's birth, but he asked for leave around the baby's due date with the hope that he will get lucky. His excitement outwardly shows.

"When I found out I was having a baby my eyes got watery," said Mario. "I always wanted a baby. After my sister gave birth to her son, Zachary Charles, I knew then I wanted to have one. I would wake up in the early morning to feed him and put him back to sleep every night. I was going to school and working full-time so I know the hardship you go through for a newborn. In the end, though, it pays off – I hope."

His upbeat humor keeps him grounded and helps raise morale of the Soldiers in his section. A fact that few people outside of his section know is that he enjoys writing poetry and songs on his downtime. This is where his story becomes unique to other Soldiers. Mario decided to begin writing a song for his first born a couple months ago. It is still in the process, but he hopes to complete the song before the baby is born.

He is such an eager father-to-be that he finds light in having to leave his new family for deployment.

"I am excited to know that one day later in life I can tell my kids and their kids that I [deployed to Afghanistan]." □

"Children will not remember you for the material things you provided but for the feeling that you cherished them."

~ Richard L. Evans

E Company

An adventurer finds another journey

By Spc. Amanda Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – “Adventure is not outside man; it is within,” said David Grayson, an American journalist.

This is true for a Soldier in E Company, Task Force Phoenix, Task Force Falcon, who always ventures into new experiences to better himself. Spc. Suk Bum Yoon has accomplished things some people dream about their entire lives, but never seek out to achieve. He is an adventurer at heart.

“I am a very unpredictable person when it comes to my travels. I do it because it’s fun – I want to see as much as I can before I die,” said Yoon.

Yoon, a native of Santa Clara, Calif., is a 39 year old who thrives off of life’s adventures. He graduated high school in 1990 and began coaching volleyball for high school and junior college girls. After four years of coaching, Yoon picked up a couple more jobs joining the Army Reserves as a 63B light-wheeled mechanic and starting a job as a short order cook.

While he was in the Reserves he could not find it within himself to live in one location. The adventurer came out of him and he moved from one area to another. Because of his moving lifestyle, he spent his six years in the Army Reserves serving with three different units. His first unit was 347th General Hospital in Sunnyville, Calif.; his second reserve unit that he served with was 352nd Evacuation Hospital in Oakland, Calif.; and ended his reserve time in 14th Psychological Operations in Mofflefield, Calif.

Yoon loves to try new things and it shows in the jobs that he has held over the years. He has held a job as a welder, a dish washer, an office manager in a warehouse, and even worked at his Families’ gas station during his time in the reserves. Seeking other adventures after his time in the Army Reserves was complete, Yoon separated and began going to college to improve his life.

He attended college where he earned a degree in Computer Science - eager to do something he would enjoy. During the time he spent in college, he made plans to travel to Europe. During his visit he discovered that the foreign countries had a plethora of views on the world. He spent a week touring France and two weeks in Netherlands. Even though it was an expensive trip, Yoon felt it was an experience that was priceless.

When he graduated with his degree and attempted to get into the computer science field in California, there were far too many people with the same degree and he could not find a place to work. Running into this road block did not stop him from exploring the world further. Where he found a dead end in his job he found a door opening for him elsewhere.

He decided to explore the world and travel to South America. He caught a flight into Bolivia to begin his adventure. Yoon backpacked across South America where he saw and experienced things he never had before.

“I almost got stabbed and almost got robbed,” said Yoon, “I even got swindled once.”

On his way to a hotel in Venezuela one night, a homeless man - in his 20’s - came after Yoon with a sharp metal object. As the homeless man swung the metal at him, trying to persuade him to hand over all of his money, Yoon pointed off into the distance and yelled, “Mira la policia!”

As Yoon yelled about police in the distance, the homeless man decided not to push his luck and ran from where he came. He completed his adventure across South America even though he ran into some dangerous situations.

His entire six month trip consisted of beginning in Brazil and then travelling through Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru before arriving back to the border of Brazil and Bolivia. He accomplished the feat of backpacking from the Atlantic Ocean to Pacific Ocean.

“I loved the backpacking,” said Yoon, “Every time I travel it’s a new adventure.”

Yoon sought out a more permanent job when he returned from his experience in South America. He began his search and ultimately found the one he had been looking for in December 2006.

“I decided to go Active [Army] for better opportunity for a stable job,” said Yoon.

Once again, Yoon raised his right hand, but this time he joined the Active Army ranks as an 89B ammunition specialist. His first duty station was at Fort Riley, Kan. He spent a year with 1st Infantry Division before he had a permanent change of station to Korea. Yoon was excited to be able to travel and visit his Family who live there. He was first assigned to 1-2 ATK at Camp Eagle. The unit dispersed south a year after his arrival, where he was then

“I am not an adventurer by choice but by fate.”

~ Vincent van Gogh

E Company

An adventurer finds another journey (cont.)

(cont.)

attached to 4-2 ATK in Camp Humphries, Korea.

A year later, Yoon received another permanent change of station, but this time he found himself as far from his home in California as he could possibly be. He was reassigned to 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division in Fort Drum, N.Y.

Immediately arriving to his new unit, Yoon became eager to be there after he learned that he would be deploying with the unit to Afghanistan in the fall of 2010.

"I was so excited. I couldn't wait to get on the plane," said Yoon.

He knew deploying meant that he would really be able to do his military occupational specialty, since civilians run the ammunition point stateside. Being able to work with ammunition is a thrill for him. He stated that many boys grow up wanting to work with things that go 'boom.'"

"Just handling ammunition is a thrill for me," he said.

When the day came that he walked up the stairs to the plane he was elated. Being a Soldier in Afghanistan became his newest adventure – one that he thoroughly enjoys with a smile on his face. He particularly admires the other six Soldiers that work with him in the shop.

"The other Soldiers who are in my shop work extremely hard and they are a

very colorful team," said Yoon, "They make me wake up in the morning wanting to work hard."

Being in Afghanistan is his newest journey in his life - a new experience and new stories to tell. The biggest challenge he feels that Soldiers face in his job in Afghanistan is making sure the paperwork is kept straight. This means that the Soldiers have to ensure all ammunition is accounted for and on record.

Yoon is modest, even after his travels and experiences. He does not feel as if he is any different than any other person around. He is the type who looks out for other Soldiers and to make them smile even when they are feeling down. If the adventure is within a man, then Yoon is a man who not only enjoys the journey, but will not stop until he is completely fulfilled.

"There are a lot of adventures I have not done," he said. "Until I am satisfied, I will keep travelling," said Yoon. □



Photo by Spc. Amanda Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Spc. Suk Bum Yoon, a native of Santa Clara, Calif., counts 7.76mm rounds in his office Nov. 16. Yoon is a Soldier in E Company, Task Force Phoenix, Task Force Falcon.

"He was a natural wanderer and adventurer - some people are that way."

~ Bernard Anderson

E Company

By Capt. Tim Davis

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Happy Holidays to everyone! I hope everyone is doing well and is in good health and spirits back at Fort Drum, N.Y., and other locations that our Families have moved in preparation for the deployment. The weather here is becoming colder with each new day. Your Soldiers have been doing an outstanding job of completing their individual and collective missions on a daily basis. We are still conducting physical training six days a week, so you should definitely be seeing some significant changes in your Soldiers appearance. Combine that with the dramatic increase in walking everywhere we go and you will have 100 E Company Spartans on your hands upon our return trip to Fort Drum in 11 months. I am extremely proud of each of your Soldiers. They truly amaze me each day with their commitment to completing each mission and their high motivation and spirits. They have already performed great over the first 30

days and we will continue to have an emphasis on safety, to ensure there are no accidents. Your Soldiers are engaged each day.

On a funnier note, I have declared December as mustache month. Most of the E Company Soldiers will be growing their mustaches over the course of the next month, much to your dismay most likely. We are planning on conducting an awards ceremony at the end of the month and giving a day off to the best mustache and the worst mustache. Many of the Soldiers that do not grow mustaches started a week early just to ensure theirs was showing once the kickoff officially started. I've never grown one before and am completely dreading the next month, but it is all in good fun and hopefully we can get a few laughs out of the Soldiers over the next month.

Our Family Readiness Group will also be having another meeting at VV's Mexican restaurant in Evans Mills again later this month. It is a great opportunity to get some information from the FRG and eat some amazing free food while you

are there.

The holiday season can be a hard one for both Family Members and Soldiers, so please ensure that you continue to do the little things, such as sending emails, letters, cards, packages, etc. If your Soldier can't use the items, I'm sure someone else within the company can. I love seeing the look on my Soldiers faces when they receive a package from their spouse, family members, friends or sponsors. There is nothing that boosts a Soldiers' morale more than receiving packages and mail from back home. Keep up the good work. We all appreciate your support. The Soldier's spouse is the hardest job in the Army, and all of you do an outstanding job each and every day.

Keep us in your prayers. Have a safe and happy Holiday Season.

~ Executioner Six!

*"Beside my Brothers and my Sisters I will proudly take a stand.
When liberty's in jeopardy I'll always do what's right."*

~ Toby Keith

Photo by Spc. Amanda Brown



PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Chaplain (Capt.) Robert Hearon, Task Force Phoenix chaplain, and Sgt. Brian MacConaghy, Task Force Phoenix chaplain's assistant, take a moment out of their busy day for a photo Nov. 24.

Financial Peace Class

By Spc. Amanda Brown

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Starting Nov. 29, Chaplain Hearon, Task Force Phoenix chaplain, will be sharing the wisdom of Dave Ramsey's financial peace class with Soldiers.

Soldiers will learn about Ramsey's seven steps to financial stability in a 13 week course. They will learn about budgeting, eliminating debt, saving for their children's college fund, retirement, and other invaluable tools for financial peace.

"The class is about helping Soldiers to see the importance of good financial management," said Hearon.

It is a two hour course being held every Monday in the Aviation Chapel. There are 30 seats available so Soldiers who want to attend must sign up on the sheet on the chaplain's office door.

Soldiers who wish to attend need to ensure they sign up early as there will only be three classes held this year.

Hearon knows from experience that the program works.

"Several years ago when I was a young E-4, I had a lot of financial issues and that's when I found Dave Ramsey's program. Soldiers can be debt free and have financial peace," said Hearon.

The chaplain's assistant, Sgt. Brian MacConaghy, is going to attend the class to improve his financial future. He expressed a common concern about not being able to enjoy his money like he wants to while following the program, but he remains positive knowing that budgeting will be the key.

"I am looking forward to learning how to be debt free by spending the least amount possible," said MacConaghy. □

"We don't need to spend money to go to another country when great ideas exist right here in our area, our state and our country."

~ Mary McGrath

Military Humor

POPULAR PILOT JOKE

Q: How do you know if there is a pilot in a crowded room?

A: Just give him a minute, he'll let you know.

A LETTER FROM A FARMER, NOW AT BASIC TRAINING

Dear Ma and Pa:

Am well. Hope you are. Tell Brother Walt and Brother Elmer the Army beats working for the old man by a mile. Tell them to join up quick before maybe all of the places are filled. I was restless at first because you got to stay in bed till nearly 6 a.m., but am getting so I like to sleep late.

Tell Walt and Elmer all you do before breakfast is smooth your cot and shine some things. No hogs to slop, feed to pitch, mash to mix, wood to split, fire to lay. Practically nothing. Men got to shave but it is not so bad, there is warm water.

Breakfast is strong on trimmings like fruit juice, cereal, eggs, bacon, etc..., but kind of weak on chops, potatoes, ham, steak, fried eggplant, pie and other regular food. But tell Walt and Elmer you can always sit between boys that live on coffee. Their food plus yours holds you till noon, when you get fed again. It's no wonder these city boys can't walk much.

Marches, which the platoon sergeant says are *long* walks to harden us. If he thinks so, it is not my place to tell him different. It is about as far as to our mailbox at home. Then the city guys gets sore feet and we all ride back in trucks. The country is nice but awful flat. The sergeant is like a schoolteacher.

The captain is like the school board. Majors and colonels just ride around. They don't bother you none.

This next will kill Walt and Elmer with laughing. I keep getting medals for shooting. I don't know why. The bulls-eye is near as big as a chipmunk and don't move. And it ain't shooting at you, like the Higgett boys at home. All you got to do is lie there all comfortable and hit it. You don't even load your own cartridges. They come in boxes.

Be sure to tell Walt and Elmer to hurry and join before other fellers get onto this setup and come stampeding in.

Your loving daughter, Gail

It was *that* serious....

A Soldier took his girlfriend to the Army-Navy game, her first football game. They had great seats right behind their team's bench. After the game, he asked her how she liked the experience.

"Oh, I really liked it," she replied, "Especially the tight pants and all the big muscles, but I just couldn't understand why they were killing each other over 25 cents."

Dumbfounded, the Soldier asked, "What do you mean?"

"Well, they flipped a coin, one team got it and then for the rest of the game, all they kept screaming was: 'Get the quarterback! Get the quarterback!' I'm like, 'Hello? It's only 25 cents!!!!'"



“Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all in Task Force Phoenix. I hope you all try to enjoy your holidays in your B Huts, on the flight line, in your offices, in the hanger, in the DFAC, or in the Port-a-Potties. Remember that you have loved ones back home who love and miss you guys and then you have strangers that appreciate your sacrifices for being out here,” said Spc. Nadine Gonzalez, S-1 clerk from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phoenix. Gonzalez is a native of Tumon, Guam.

DECEMBER, 2010

VOL # 1 ISSUE # 3

“The goal is not to change your subjects, but for the subject to change the photographer.”

~Author Unknown



*Photo by Spc. Amanda Jo Brown
PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Capt.
Michael Flint, D Company commander, poses for an
amusing photo Nov. 14. Even some of the command
in Task Force Phoenix enjoy a joke every once in a
while. Flint is a native of Cincinnati, Ohio.*

www.tfphoenixrising.yolasite.com

www.facebook.com/TFPhoenix