

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
Ladd Elementary School
School Service Award

B Co. 4/123 AVN.

has earned special recognition for
Outstanding School Service and is hereby granted
this Certificate of Award for

Outstanding Volunteer service for Ladd's Birch Hill Snow Day

In witness whereof our signatures are hereto affixed.

Given this 29th day of February nineteen hundred and 96.

Kathie L. Cook

Kathie L. Cook, Principal

Sheryl A. Coe

Sheryl A. Coe, PTA President

The Sugarbears

B CO 4/123 AV REGT FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER BY LINDA CYR, FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP LEADER

The Sugarbears would like to extend our welcome to the newest members of our company. We hope that you will find your tour in Alaska an enjoyable one. If you have any questions or need information on the happenings at Fort Wainwright, please do not hesitate to call me at 456-2197.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP INFORMATION

- B Company's Family Support Group (FSG) meets the second Tuesday of each month. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 12th in the company classroom at 7:00 pm. We are attempting to schedule a representative from Army Family Team Building as a guest speaker. A flyer, as a reminder, will be distributed at the end of the month.
- The FSG point of contact when I am not available will be Angela Brown at 356-1635. Many thanks goes out to Angela for volunteering her support.
- We are planning a FSG car wash / bratwurst fundraiser to be held on Saturday, March 2nd at Hangar 1 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. We need all the support you can give to this fundraiser as the monies raised will eventually go to the various parties and celebrations we hold throughout the year. Points of contact for this event are Mr. David Sitzes and his wife Lori. They will need volunteers for the planning of this event, as well as all the hard workers we know are in this company. Please give your support in any way you can. Mike and I thank the Sitzes for all the efforts they will be putting into this fundraiser. With your help, we know it can be a very successful and fun event.
- We now have a "Meals on Wheels" Committee which are spouses who volunteer to make meals for families in the company in times of emergency need. If this is something you are interested in being a part of, please contact me at 456-2197.
- B Company's days to volunteer in the Thrift Shop in February are: Tuesday 2/20 and 2/27. Hours are from 10 am to 3 pm, however, volunteers are asked to work the amount of time that is best for you. Child care is paid for. Please let me know if you are interested in working those days. Please contact me or Angela Brown at 356-1635.

FEBRUARY SPOUSES COFFEE GROUP

B Company's coffee group, as most of you know, is a combined group of both officer and enlisted spouses. Every spouse in this company is invited to participate in these get togethers. This month's coffee will be held on Wednesday, February 28th. Details will follow in a flyer. If you do not receive a flyer, please contact Tiffany Kenney @ 356-3456, Angela Brown @ 356-1635 or Grace Carmichael @ 356-3852 for information.

POST INFORMATION AND HAPPENINGS

4/123 AV Battalion Lending Closet has been very successful. Please remind those leaving that if they want to get rid of any winter clothing, please drop it off at the Lending Closet at Battalion Headquarters. If you are new to Fort Wainwright and do not have the winter clothing needed, stop by the Battalion Headquarters and see if there is anything that you need. Keep the clothing as long as you need it and when you are through, or able to purchase other clothing, just return it to the lending closet at headquarters. Point of contact is the Chaplain. For after hours, if the Chaplain is not available, Mr. Russ Hillpot at 356-1391 also has keys to the closet.

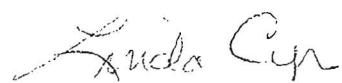
TAX TIME AGAIN! The JAG Tax Office is now available to handle your computerized tax forms. 4/123 AV Battalion's day to use their service is every Friday until April 15th. They can assist you with your basic tax needs. The JAG office is located near Hangar 1.

OPERATION BREAKAWAY! 28-31 March 1996. Shopping in Anchorage. This trip is for military spouses only. Bus transportation provided. Lots of fun, recreational activities. Cost to be determined. Point of Contact is Jesse or Sandy at 353-4227/7298.

Crossing guards for railroad tracks on Gaffney will be put in this summer. The crossings will have lights and crossing arms that will come down.

Emergency Child Care. The FSG Child Care office and CDS Central Registration maintain a listing of providers who are certified to provide around-the clock care. Families normally make arrangements with providers individually. But in an emergency, a commander or other designated person may act on behalf of the FSG in arranging for care. You must register the child with CDS. Parental signatures are required. For more information contact FSG Child care at 353-6266. For assistance with FSG emergencies contact ACS at 353-4227 or the AER worker can be reached after hours at the American Red Cross.

Arts and Crafts Center announces their 2nd annual **SPRING FLING CRAFTS BAZAAR**. It will be held on March 30th from 1000 to 1500 hrs at Bldg. 3727 on Neely Road.





The lead HART crew approaches Mount McKinley, where two Spanish climbers were rescued by the HART crews from Company B, 4th Battalion, 123 Aviation.

HART crews rescue climbers, earn Air Medal

By Spc. Dan Strauch
Fort Wainwright Public Affairs Office

FORT WAINWRIGHT -- It was a quiet June morning in Hanger 1 when the call for help came in to Company B, 4th Battalion, 123rd Aviation. Three Spanish mountain climbers were stranded 1,000 feet below the summit of Mount McKinley and the U.S. Park Service helicopter was broken down.

The High Altitude Rescue Team rescued the climbers while operating at dangerously high altitudes and landing on perilous glaciers. The crews broke the previous high altitude rescue record of 18,300 feet set by the Army in 1988.

Eight soldiers from the HART earned the Air Medal for rescuing two mountain climbers who were stranded on a cliff near the summit of Mount McKinley.

More often awarded in combat, the Air Medal is a prestigious decoration recognizing heroic service in aerial flight.

"We had an hour and a half to prep the aircraft with an internal fuel tank and the required oxygen for flying at altitudes above 10,000 feet," said Staff Sgt. Antonio Hernandez, noncommissioned officer in charge of the team.

As a pre-flight procedure the two crews, each consisting of two pilots and three crew members, discussed the risks involved in the rescue effort and the fact that the climbers were at an altitude where the HART had never before attempted a rescue. "We're a team that relies on each other, so our communication is critical," said Hernandez. After accepting the mission, the crews readied two CH 47 "Chinook" helicopters for the rescue. "We always take two crews in the case of an emergency or mechanical malfunction," Hernandez added.

Taking off from Fort Wainwright, the team flew 120 miles to the staging area at Talkeetna. There they picked up three professional climbers who volunteered to climb down 300 feet and bring the Spaniards back up to the aircraft. "At Talkeetna we found out that one of the climbers tried to climb for safety and had fallen 4,000 feet to his death," said

Hernandez. "They were experienced climbers, but they had never climbed in arctic conditions and didn't know what to expect."

After leaving Talkeetna the aircraft sped toward Mount McKinley's north face. The first crew identified a large flat area suitable for landing that they referred to as the "Football Field." The crew made its first attempt to land, but encountered strong turbulence that almost blew them into the side of the mountain. "We were going along at 100 knots and suddenly stopped in midair. The gust blew us completely sideways," said Hernandez. Headed that unforeseen weather conditions on the mountain create unpredictable dangers. "Mount McKinley is so large that it creates its own weather, making for high-risk situations."

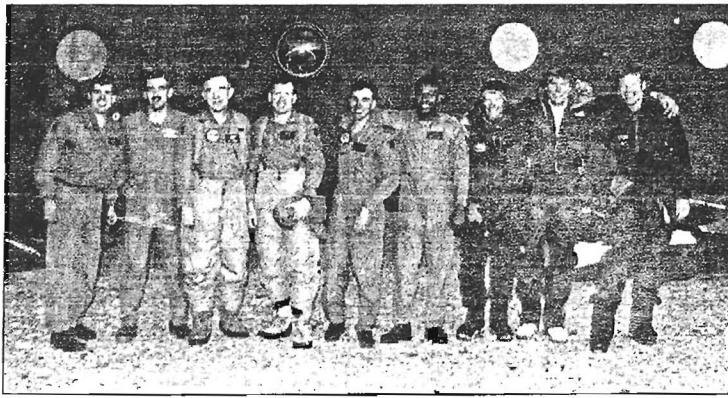
The crew pulled up and recalculated its fuel and power. The Chinook circled the summit for nearly an hour to burn off excess fuel and again attempted to land. "There still wasn't enough power to make the landing. We circled the summit one more time and made a successful landing at 19,600 feet," said Sgt. Robert Baychu, flight engineer. After dropping the

rescuers off, the crew flew back down to the base camp at 7,000 feet to wait for the climbers to get the two surviving Spaniards back up to the Football Field.

The second crew then flew to the Football Field and picked the climbers up. Oxygen was administered to the survivors on the 45-minute trip back to Talkeetna, where they were flown to a hospital in Anchorage. "Both of the climbers had frostbite on more than half of their faces and were suffering from dehydration," said Hernandez.

Although the award has significant meaning to the crew members, the satisfaction of saving the climbers is more important. "Receiving the award is great, but knowing that two lives were saved through our efforts is the real reward," said Baychu.

The three civilian volunteers who went with the HART team were Marc Twilight, Alex Lowe and Scott Bascus. Members of the HART receiving the Air Medal were Capt. Jason Turner, Chief Warrant Officers Bill Barker and Rob Morris, Staff Sgt. Antonio Hernandez, Sgts. Bruce Cain, Robert Baychu, Daniel Snyder and Spc. Rodney Corwin.



Members of the HART crew and civilian volunteers who performed the rescue on Mount McKinley from left to right are: Staff Sgt. Antonio Hernandez, Sgt. Bruce Cain, Chief Warrant Officers Bill Barker and Rob Morris, Sgts. Daniel Snyder and Robert Baychu, Marc Twilight, Alex Lowe and Scott Bascus.

Photos provided by the 123rd AVN BN

UNIT HISTORY

1996 SUPPLEMENT

1 OCTOBER 1995 TO 1 OCT 1996

BRAVO COMPANY 4-123RD AVIATION REGT.

FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA

PREPARED BY:

MELVIN D. FLYNN
CW2, USA
UNIT HISTORIAN

GARDON 50E

E-7

AVIATOR FLYING HOUR SUMMARY

NAME	RANK	ALASKA	PH47	MVR	TOTAL
ALBERTSON, TODD P.	SGT	200	299	41	799
ARGO, DAVID W.	SPC	19	18	0	19
BARDOCK, MYRON F.	CW5	951	3202	3	4204
BAMEFORD, THOMAS M.	1LT	63	499	174	652
BENDER, RICHARD J.	SSG	122	1119	170	1119
BOOTH, CHRISTOPHER S.	SGT	171	171	0	171
BRENDY, PATRICK S.	SGT	47	711	0	778
BROOK, JEROME P.	CPT	12	67	21	658
BROWN, WILLIAM P.	1LT	103	254	68	1876
BUCHANAN, STEPHEN J.	CW2	30	577	10	1243
BUSCH, DENNIS S.	CW2	349	751	43	923
CABALLERO, ERIC	SSG	700	700	30	700
CAFFEY, ROY D.	SSG	97	782	141	824
CAIN, BRUCE E.	SGT	511	877	105	877
CHALSTROM, JOHN E.	SSG	155	423	10	423
COMMERFORD, TIMOTHY R.	CW2	430	906	115	1111
CRAVENS, DAVID K.	SSG	143	725	0	725
CRUMPLER, KEVIN L.	CW2	192	401	171	1694
CRUZAN, MANDEE L.	PFC	146	146	0	146
CYR, MICHAEL P.	MAJ	160	530	78	1178
DARBS, WILLIS N.	CPT	182	468	27	747
DEASON, PAUL G.	SSG	127	837	60	914
DEFAGO, SAMUEL J.	PFC	140	140	20	140
DIOTTE, GERALD R.	CPT	230	603	115	877
ELIZONDO, RUSSELL J.	1LT	174	334	45	429
FARIANEK, JASON D.	SGT	237	237	41	237
FALCON, JOSEPH J.	SGT	129	509	109	528
FLYNN, MICHAEL D.	CW2	757	939	92	2778
FRIND, RICHARD R.	CW4	1072	1979	101	3053
FRANCIS, MAURICE	SGT	220	506	33	506
GASLIN, ROBIN	MAJ	10	703	51	2847
GOLDSMITH, DAMIAN M.	SSG	63	760	45	740
GROENER, HARVEY H.	SSG	85	151	5	191
HAHN, RONALD J.	SGT	6	6	0	6
HALDEMAN, JEFFREY S.	SGT	176	303	30	303
HASBROUCK, KENNETH A.	PFC	152	152	22	152
HAWKINS, RANDY R.	CW3	34	1736	301	2439
HAYS, RUSSEL E.	CW2	271	271	145	416
HELVICK, SHAWN M.	SPC	90	90	0	90
HERNANDEZ, ANTONIO JR.	SSG	293	291	82	491
HILLIARD, RUSSELL F.	CW4	517	1217	234	1772
HOBACHETT, TROY D.	SSG	194	653	77	653
HYDE, MICHAEL W.	CW2	398	1150	97	1345
KENNEDY, CHRISTOPHER M.	CPT	131	645	73	809
KENNICK, JAMES W.	SSG	217	1526	426	1526
KINMAN, RONALD D.	CW3	975	567	104	1146
KIRBY, BRYAN J.	SGT	199	199	23	199
LEAKE, JOHN M.	CW3	244	2105	50	2179
MCDOWELL, SCOTT D.	CW3	348	385	618	2873
MCQUEEN, TIMOTHY S.	SPC	250	250	74	250
MENDOLA, VINCENT E.	SSG	16	425	3	428

AVIATOR FLYING HOUR SUMMARY

NAME	RANK	AI ASKA	FH47	NVS	TOTAL
MOHLER, KELLY D.	CW3	364	341	347	1052
MORENO, MICHAEL	SGT	102	102	0	102
MORRISS, ROBERT L.	CW3	642	2997	197	3250
MC CREA, SCOTT M.	CW2	7	80	18	1572
NAULT, FORREST F.	CW2	93	556	85	1080
NORRIS, BRIAN K.	SPC	396	390	73	390
O'TOOLE, MATTHEW J.	PFC	99	99	0	99
ONEY, LUGH N.	SAT	84	820	91	470
ORTIZ-FIGUEROLA, IVAN A.	SGT	186	186	0	186
OXENFORD, BRAD L.	SAT	64	64	0	64
PAULSON, JEFFERY S.	SRA	62	104	0	104
PICCININT, DAVID A.	SGT	113	586	87	686
POTYOKO, DAVID J.	CW2	455	458	130	1043
PRATT, CHARLTON	SPC	321	321	45	721
PRATT, MARK A.	CPT	77	1710	249	1976
ROBINSON, DOUGLAS W.	CPI	10	10	0	10
SCHAFFER, JAY D.	SAB	194	1007	29	1030
SHEPPARD, JEREMY D.	SPC	23	439	102	589
SITZES, DAVID L.	CW2	211	1433	208	1470
SNYDER, RANDI L.	SAT	385	788	131	799
STARLING, ENOCH	SRA	254	1527	539	1731
STEFANTIDES, EDWARD R.	CW2	65	1062	320	1447
STEWART, RANDALL J.	CW2	326	658	141	921
STONEKING, TRIVY A.	SRA	14	105	0	105
TIDDEY, EDWARD L.	SAT	97	1007	102	1017
TONNER, SHERRI L.	CPT	40	1133	47	1430
TRIVITT, ALLEN L.	CW5	26	1944	0	3504
VANDUZER, JAMES R.	CW3	353	394	221	2314
VANGUILDER, DAVID D.	CW2	342	687	94	851
VERLEY, DALE A.	CW2	590	1192	279	1361
WALTERS, DRIGIAS F.	SAT	225	225	0	225
WESLOWSKI, CALVIN R.	CW2	61	111	14	111
YARDY, AARON	SFT	113	299	57	369

AC

CE

7635 @ 46 - 165 hrs
 21045 @ 46 458.

1076 @ 46 465
 21403 @ 465

11219 @ 35 AK 303.

CH 17, 906

34419
 10701 15242 @ 36 1718.

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SAFETY

Alaska, austere on a grand scale, unforgiving yet beautiful. It is here that 4-123d AVN conducts business on a daily basis despite the constant challenges of the environment. The arctic summer is brief but intense while the arctic winter is a study in endurance. Both seasons demand top performance from the aviators and crews stationed here. A typical winter mission is to fly a multi-ship operation under NVG's in marginal weather and blowing snow with sub-zero temperatures into an unimproved landing zone. In addition to normal training and support, the summer brings a flurry of activity which includes glacier operations, High Altitude Rescue Team (HART) missions, continued Military Assistance to Safety and Traffic (MAST) missions, and increased state and federal environmental support missions. Injury free, successful accomplishment of these missions depends on a quality, proactive safety program. 4-123d AVN has one of the best programs in the Army (encl. 1).

The battalion flew 6,101 hours in FY 96. Over 900 hours of this time was under night vision systems. Missions included: "Arctic Strike 96", Cobra Gold Support, HART missions, MAST missions, and aerial gunnery ranges. There were no aviation related injuries for FY96 and no class A, B, or C, aviation accidents for the period. There were no A or B ground accidents.

The Royal Air Force and the United States Air Force engaged in a joint training exercise during the summer of '96. During one of the engagements a British Jaguar crashed into the local mountains totally destroying the aircraft (the pilot was uninjured) and causing a great deal of damage around the impact site. In close cooperation with the British Government, CH-47Ds from B Co. were called upon to remove the wreckage and fly crash crews and inspectors to and from the site (encl. 2).

A key factor in 4-123ds safety equation is the outstanding medical support provided to members of the battalion. In tribute to this excellence the battalion flight surgeon, Major Walter J. Lawrence, was recently recognized as "Flight Surgeon of the Year" (encl. 3).

The battalions METL is: Deploy Rapidly, Conduct Tactical Movement, Conduct Assembly Area Operations, Conduct Air Assault Operations, and Conduct General Support Operations. Rapid deployment capability was demonstrated during DRB and training exercises conducted this year (encl. 18). Helicopters from the battalion conducted Tactical Movement by participating in an ASE range this year. In conjunction with the Air Force, pilots from different companies in the unit flew a variety of scenarios attempting to elude F-15, F-16, and AWACS aircraft. Mission profiles included set routes and maneuver boxes and provided invaluable experience with MODE 4 interrogation/reply procedures. This training was so effective that the battalion ASE officer, CW2 Kevin Crumpler, was awarded the prestigious Army Aviation Association of America ASE "Trainer of the Year" award (encl. 19). The battalion conducted Assembly Area and Air Assault operations during aerial gunnery ranges. 4-123d proved its ability to Conduct General Support Operation during Cobra Gold (encl. 20) and "Arctic Strike 96"; at one point the temperature dipped to minus 63F (encl. 21).

RL progression is a priority in the battalion and at any given point during the year 92%-95% of the unit's assigned aviators are RL1. These aviators executed several high-visibility missions this year. In addition to the Burnt Mountain seismograph mission, and MAST missions, the battalion provided invaluable support to the BLM during Alaska's worst wildfire in recent years--Big Lake (encl. 22). The Chinooks flew heavy equipment and VIPs in support of the fire fighting efforts and trained on water bucket operations.

As a result of the remoteness of the local flying area, pilots generally have very limited options in the event a precautionary landing is necessary. This often forces pilots to land miles from any available support. As a result of this, the battalion executed three aerial recoveries of downed aircraft--all with no injuries and no damage (encl. 23).

With a nod to the future and the Combined Arms team, the battalion participated in "wet wing" operation training with the Air force--the operation involves refueling two aircraft simultaneously from a C-130. Using night vision systems, aircraft from individual companies flew to a remote site, landed, briefed, and completed the mission--real world training with real world applications (encl. 24).

LEADERSHIP

4th Battalion, 123d Aviation Regiment, leads the way in Alaska and in the Army. The battalion's long string of successes is a continuing tradition of command related activities. Sponsorship, Family Support Groups, continuing education, physical conditioning, awards programs, and community service places a high demand on everyone from section leaders to the battalion commander.

Esprit de Corps is a necessity in any effective unit. Forged through care and fostered by the mutual hardships associated with the Alaskan interior, 4th Battalion families have a strong sense of Esprit de Corps and, consequently, an outstanding retention program. 4-123d exceeded both initial- and mid-term reenlistment goals. The battalion dining facility has been awarded the "USARAK Dining Facility of the Quarter" award for the past twelve quarters in a row and recently won the highly coveted Connelly Cup in USARPAC competition (encl. 8).

4-123d has one of the best, most innovative Family Support Groups (FSG) in the Army. The FSG holds monthly leadership meetings and quarterly family meetings during which briefings are conducted on subjects ranging from medical and dental programs to cold weather safety. Once a year there is a spouse appreciation day. During this event soldiers spouses are invited to "come to work". Activities include helicopter orientation flights, flying the UH-60 flight simulator, driving a SUSV, familiarizing with the M-16, and eating in the mess hall (encl. 9). For many spouses this is their first taste of military work days. During operation "Arctic Strike 96" the FSG "activated" its own operations center and offered situation briefs to family members. Weather updates and cultural information were also available to soldiers' families. An E-MAIL center was set up that allowed soldiers to send messages home or family members to send messages to soldiers. The program was an unqualified success and is one of the many reasons that the 4-123d FSG is one of the best in the Army.

Continuing education is a concern that the command meets through bimonthly professional development classes for both officers and NCOs. The battalion also sustains a formal Leadership

Driving is a very hazardous undertaking in Alaska. The roads are consistently poor--frost heaved, pot-holed, and covered with snow and ice for seven months of the year. In recognition of this, the battalion has developed a very thorough drivers training program and pursues an aggressive safety oriented dispatch procedure which includes filling out a risk assessment for each mission (encl. 4). The company commander is required to personally sign all off-post dispatches. The battalion also supports a safety awards program for safe drivers and aircrew members.

The POL section did an outstanding job this year pumping over a half-million gallons of fuel incident free. In a recent inspection conducted by the EPA the 23d was given an excellent rating for the administration of the airfield hazardous waste collection point.

The cold, crisp winter nights often make for spectacular views of the Aurora Borealis as it plays across the evening skies. Colorful and inviting, it is in sharp contrast with the ever present, dark specter of cold weather injury. The unit safety program combats this menace by requiring all new soldiers to attend a battalion sponsored Arctic Light Individual Training (ALIT) course (encl. 5). Additionally, the unit sends a large percentage of service members to the Air Force's "Cool School" for even more in-depth training (encl. 6). Realizing that the soldier is not the only family member exposed to the elements, the battalion conducts cold weather briefings and maintains a severe weather lending closet that provides needy battalion family members high quality clothing free of charge.

This summer the battalion sponsored a community "safety fair" (encl. 7). Soldiers and families gathered on Ft. Wainwright for a day of fun and safety education. Numerous booths were setup with safety tips and information on subjects ranging from bow-hunting to fire safety.

Service members and their families are the heart of the battalion. Consequently, safety is of paramount importance. An aggressive safety program, coupled with top to bottom chain of command support, continues to be the cornerstone upon which 4-123d is built.

MISSION

**Be Prepared to Deploy Worldwide to Provide
Heavy-Lift Helicopter Support.**

METL

Deploy

Conduct Air Assault Operations

Conduct Air Movement Operations

Sustain Unit Operations

Men Equipment Time To Task Success

"Conduct General Support Operations"