

**“OUR SPECIAL FORCES, WERE
OUR NATION’S AVENGING
ANGELS.”
- VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN**



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On the cover:
More than 50 'Horse Soldiers' and their family members followed directly behind the New York Police and Fire Departments and the Port Authority Police Department contingents representing the members of those organizations killed in the World Trade Center attacks.

160TH SOAR (A), 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

By Kimberly Tiscione
160th SOAR (A) Public Affairs

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. - Generations of Night Stalkers, Families and friends recently gathered to celebrate 30 years of Army special operations aviation.

On Oct. 16, 1981, the Department of Defense officially recognized a unit dedicated to providing helicopter support to the nation's special operations forces. That small formation has evolved into today's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne).

An informal event held the day prior to the milestone anniversary afforded an opportunity for founding members of the unit originally known as Task Force-160 to those serving in today's formation to gather for camaraderie, reflection and some well-deserved fun. A small group of Night Stalkers from the unit's 3rd Battalion at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., captured the spirit of the event by cycling

nearly 450 miles from their home base to Fort Campbell, Ky., in honor of all Night Stalkers and to participate in the celebration.

"I couldn't think of a better forum to reflect on our roots and traditions than to provide a venue for our first and current generations of Night Stalkers to connect," said Col. John Thompson, commander of the 160th SOAR(A).

The day started with a symbolic 30K Run that began at Old Clarksville Base, the unit's original home, and concluded at the current regiment work area. Crowds then gathered at a local park for sporting competitions, family activities, musical entertainment and an aerial demonstration by the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Black Daggers Parachute Demonstration Team. Guests were also invited to explore static displays of the unit's specially modified helicopters and talk with crew members. Attendees did pause for a formal

mid-day ceremony that included two significant presentations.

The first was a hand-made plaque delivered by a group of five New York City Fire Department personnel, all military veterans, who wanted to recognize Night Stalker contributions over a decade of deployments supporting the War on Terror. Justin Devine, who served at Fort Campbell years ago, presented Thompson with the plaque made using a piece of steel recovered from one of the World Trade Center towers.

Then, more than 50 Task Force-160 plank holders were called to the stage individually and recognized for their role in shaping and defining the essence of Night Stalking. Thompson attributed today's Army special operations aviation capabilities to the spirit of innovation, commitment to excellence and courage to push the boundaries of rotary wing flight that the founders instilled in our culture.

"The standards that (plank holders) set 30 years ago are still embedded in every Night Stalker today," he said. "The future is sound because of the foundation (they) established. We take personal pride in furthering (their) legacy as we continue to lead and force change to maintain our ability to deploy worldwide and hit a target plus or minus 30 seconds." Night Stalkers have been involved in every major combat operation since Operation Urgent Fury, Grenada in 1983 and participated in many missions that may never be disclosed. October 2011 is also the tenth anniversary of operations in Afghanistan, which included an element of Night Stalkers among the first special operations forces in the country. Today, Night Stalkers remain deployed in support of Operation New Dawn, -Iraq and Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan.



New York City Fire Department personnel Patrick Neville (left) and Justin Devine (right) present Regiment with a plaque recognizing Night Stalker contributions over a decade of deployments supporting the War on Terror during the unit's 30th Anniversary Celebration Oct. 15, 2011. Neville crafted the plaque using a piece of steel recovered from one of the World Trade Center towers and metal from a fire truck at ground zero to the Regiment. (160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment photo)



Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, speaks during the dedication ceremony for the "Horse Soldier" Statue, Nov. 12, near Ground Zero in New York City. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Klika)

'HORSE SOLDIER' STATUE DEDICATED

Story By Maj. Brandon Bissell
5th SFG(A) Public Affairs

NEW YORK – More than 10 years ago, Capt. Will Summers, a former Special Forces team sergeant for the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), linked up and operated with members of the Afghan Northern Alliance just weeks after the 9/11 attacks.

A decade later Special Operations Forces from that mission met at the Winter Garden Hall in Two World Financial Center near Ground Zero as Vice President Joseph Biden, standing before the Ground Zero flag, spoke to the audience assembled for the dedication of a larger than life bronze statue depicting those same Green Berets.

It was this location where members of Task Force Dagger; a joint

Special Operations team consisting mostly of Green Berets from the 5th SFG (A), aircrew members from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (A), and Air Force combat controllers; gathered with the vice president and various New York business leaders and veteran support groups as they unveiled and dedicated an 18-foot statue, entitled *De Oppresso Liber*.

De Oppresso Liber, which in Latin means 'to liberate the oppressed', depicts a Special Forces Green Beret on horseback leading the invasion into Afghanistan in the weeks that followed the World Trade Center attacks. It captures the iconic image of adaptability, skill, and courage that characterized the mission and quality of U.S. Army SF Soldiers.

As the nation's first responders overseas, the Green Berets of the 5th SFG (A) were given the mission to hunt down those responsible for the 9/11 attacks and bring them to justice.

The SF teams faced enormous operational challenges and were required to rapidly adapt 21st century combat technologies and tactics into age old Central Asian models of guerilla and tribal warfare as they partnered with the Afghan tribes of the Northern Alliance.

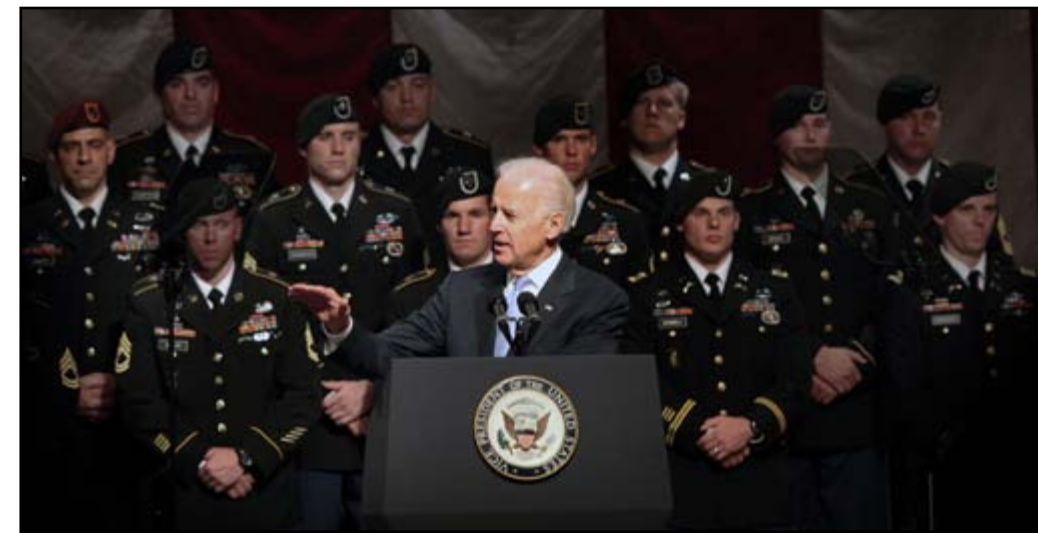
Needing suitable transportation to navigate the difficult mountainous terrain of Northern Afghanistan, the Special Forces Operational Detachments – Alpha (SFOD-A), or A-teams, were provided horses by the Afghan tribes they were supporting. The Green Berets readily accepted this superior

form of mobility and proceeded to assist and advise the Northern Alliance fighters from horseback, similar to the cavalry days of old.

Coordinating military operations while on horseback with local tribal warlords, the Green Berets accomplished in weeks what many thought would take months, if not years; defeating the Taliban and pushing surviving members of al-Qaeda into the mountains of Pakistan. Soon thereafter, the Green Berets would adopt the familiar title of Horse Soldiers.

In honor of the victims of the 9/11 attacks each Green Beret A-Team carried with them pieces of steel recovered from the rubble that was the World Trade Center. At the site where each A-team completed their mission they respectively buried a piece of the World Trade Center steel and a properly folded American flag.

As the first unit to invade Afghanistan and take the fight to those responsible, the burial ceremonies in Afghanistan would forever bond the Green Berets of the 5th SFG (A) to the New York City first responders. It was a bond formed from an under-



Vice President Joe Biden praised the dedication and capabilities of U.S. special operators Nov. 12, as he addresses the audience in New York honoring the Green Berets. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Klika)

standing and an ability to relate to those first responders who risked their lives to go to the aid of others, those who ran toward the World Trade Center, not away, those who were climbing up stairwells, not down them.

So it was only fitting that on this Veterans Day, traveling down the middle of New York's famous 5th Ave., the *De Oppresso Liber* statue and more than 50 'Horse Soldiers' and their family members followed directly behind the New York Police

and Fire Departments and the Port Authority Police Department contingents representing the members of those organizations killed in the World Trade Center attacks.

Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, commander of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and former commander of Task Force Dagger, reminded those present during the dedication ceremony later that evening that this statue is not just a memorial for the Horse Soldiers. This statue is for all those who shared the common bond and responsibility to protect America's homeland – whether it was in New York City, Washington D.C., Shanksville, Pa., or overseas.

Now, a decade later and due to the tireless efforts of many, a statue, designed and sculpted by Douwe Blumberg, found a home near Ground Zero in New York City.

The two World Financial Center will serve as a temporary home for the statue. It will eventually relocate to a site overlooking the 9/11 Memorial and Ground Zero; a fitting, final resting place for the Horse Soldier Memorial Statue.



Master Sgt. Eric Gatlin, center, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) presents a wreath to Vice President Joe Biden and wife, Dr. Jill Biden to be laid at the base of the Horse Soldier statue during the unveiling on Veterans Day in New York City. The statue honors Special Forces Soldiers who rode into the mountains of Afghanistan on horseback after the 9/11 terror attacks. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Klika)

GREEN BERETS HONOR PRESIDENT KENNEDY IN CEREMONY



Special Forces Soldiers from across the U.S. Army Special Forces Command (Airborne) conduct a wreath-laying ceremony to honor President John F. Kennedy's vision and support of the Special Forces Green Berets, Nov. 17, 2011. Soldiers from each of the seven Special Forces Groups were involved in the ceremony to celebrate Kennedy and his patronage of the Green Berets. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tobias McCoy)

**Story By Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Crisp
3rd SFG (A), Public Affairs**

ARLINGTON, Va. – Three days after the death of President John F. Kennedy, Sgt. Maj. Francis Ruddy, a Special Forces Soldier, laid his “Green Beret” upon the grave of the fallen president.

That was Nov. 25, 1963, and the event occurred at Arlington National Cemetery as Kennedy was laid to rest – 43 Green Berets by his side.

Nearly 50 years later, Soldiers of the Green Berets gathered at Kennedy’s grave site Nov. 17, 2011, to once again honor the man who lauded the Army’s Special Forces.

Soldiers from each of the Army’s seven Special Forces groups stood silent alongside Kennedy’s grave site as Secretary of the Army, John McHugh, Brig. Gen. Edward M. Reeder Jr., commander of U.S. Army Special Forces Command, and Army 2nd Lt.

Christopher Kennedy McKelvy, great nephew of the fallen President, laid a wreath at Kennedy’s grave in a ceremony to honor the fallen president’s commitment to the Special Forces Soldier.

Following the symbolic event by Sgt. Maj. Ruddy, the Green Berets would honor Kennedy by laying a wreath at his grave annually. That tradition continued until the late 1980s.

“Our purpose today was to



Green Berets honor the memory of President John F. Kennedy by laying a wreath at his grave.



re-establish the tradition that began when a very special contingent of Green Berets was requested from the Kennedy family to perform the honor guard for President Kennedy’s funeral,” said the Special Forces commander, Reeder, during a luncheon following the ceremony. “Our intent is to honor Kennedy’s unparalleled advocacy of the Green Berets.”

The newly commissioned McKelvy, 24, said the ceremony was “truly a special experience.”

“It was an honor to be invited by the Green Berets to be here. They are great Americans and great heroes,” he said.

During Kennedy’s tenure as president, the Special Forces regiment grew by seven Special Forces groups.

Not long after a visit to Fort Bragg in 1961 with then-Special Forces commander, Brig. Gen. William P. Yarborough, Kennedy authorized the

Green Beret as the official headgear of the U.S. Army Special Forces.

Kennedy sent a message to Yarborough after the capabilities demonstration he received on the visit Fort Bragg. The message in part read: “The challenge of this old but new form of operations is a real one and I know that you and the members of your Command will carry on for us and the free world in a manner which is both worthy and inspiring. I am sure that the Green Beret will be a mark of distinction in the trying times ahead.”

Special Forces Soldiers train at the school which bears Kennedy’s namesake, the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.

7TH SFG (A) SPECIAL FORCES SOLDIERS RECOGNIZED FOR VALOR

Story by Staff Sgt. Brian Anderson
USASOC Public Affairs

EGLIN AFB, Fla. - Green Berets from A Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group Airborne, were recognized for their valorous actions in combat during Operation Enduring Freedom XVI at the 7th Special Forces Group Auditorium, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

Brig. Gen. Steven Duff, U.S. Army Special Forces Command, deputy commanding general, presented 10 Green Berets and a Navy Explosive Ordnance technician with the Bronze Star with Valor while 12 more members of A Co. were presented the Army Commendation Medal with Valor. Purple Hearts were also presented to nine Green Berets during the



Brig. Gen. Steven Duff presents medals to 2nd Battalion Soldiers of the 7th Special Forces Groups(Airborne) at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Dec 12. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Steven Young)

ceremony.

"It was nice to be recognized for our contributions and especially to receive the awards in front our families and friends," said 1st Sgt. Matthew Duffy, Headquarters Support Company first sergeant. "To be able to share this moment with my family really meant a lot to all of us."

Duffy was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor for his actions on September 29, 2010 while serving as the team sergeant for Operational Detachment Alpha -7212. After his senior medic, Sgt. 1st Class Calvin Harrison, and joint terminal attack controller, Senior Airman Mark Forrester were killed while clearing a Taliban strong hold in Shah Mashad, Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan, Duffy marked the landing zone for the medical evacuation of the two casualties along with an Afghan National Army casualty, all while still receiving enemy fire. Duffy

also eliminated two high-valued individuals while helping to eliminate over 20 other Taliban fighters. Duffy said the credit doesn't belong to him alone.

"ODA - 7212 really adapted well to the changing environment we were placed in," he continued. "By the end of our rotation, we had established a permanent presence in the Yahkdan Bazaar, which had been a Taliban headquarters for years and was virtually off limits to any U.S. or GIROA forces when we initially arrived in the area."

Duff pointed to four attributes during his speech as the reasons ODAs like 7212 have found success in their missions.

"A Green Beret is successful because he is a planner of minutia, a manager of chaos, the most highly trained warrior and extremely determined," Duff said.

The ceremony celebrated the heroic actions of members of A Co., but it also cast a shadow over the grim truth of war. Harrison and Forrester were not the only losses suffered during OEF XVI.

Debbie Venetz was present to receive the Purple Heart awarded posthumously for her husband Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Venetz who died January 28, 2011 in Afghanistan while serving as the senior Special Forces engineer sergeant for ODA - 7216.

"He probably wouldn't have thought anything of (the Purple Heart)," Debbie said. "This would have been his fourth. He'd gone through many deployments."

A truth not evaded by Col. Miguel Howe, deputy commander, 7th SFG (A), who acknowledged A Co.'s previous two deployments, OEF XIV and XVI, and their preparation for the upcoming OEF XVIII deployment.

Howe caveated his acknowledgment of A Co.'s rigorous deployment

schedule with America's necessity for battle proven warriors fighting the global war on terrorism.

"Their Strength is truly the strength of America," Howe said. "Our nation, our families are safer because of (Alpha Company)."

The need for men trained and experienced in war, men who make "split-second decisions", who do the right thing is great, said Howe.

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Joshua Christy, explosive ordnance technician attached to ODA - 7212 during OEF XVI, was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor for his actions on August 28, 2011 after moving under hostile fire to the aid of a team member and then evacuating the team member still under enemy fire to a safe area and rendering life saving first aid to the wounded team mate.

"When you are in the situation it is more about the guy to your left and to your right," Christy said. "I felt honored; it is nice to be recognized but

when you are there it is really about keeping everyone safe."

Keeping the war fighter safe has evolved because of the changes in approach to fighting the Taliban. Duffy, who has seen the changes in Afghanistan, said OEF XVI was noticeably more intense than previous rotations due to the strengthening of those oppressed.

"The level of activity displayed by the Taliban really showed how threatened the Taliban was by the Village Stability Operations we were conducting," Duffy said. "I feel they are afraid that by our enabling the locals to defend their own villages, they will lose a lot of their safe havens."

All the warriors of A Co. did not receive Valor awards, but the fact they are what America needs was highlighted by the awards ceremony squeezed in as they prepare to take the battle to the enemy once again. Below is a list of all who were honored at the ceremony.

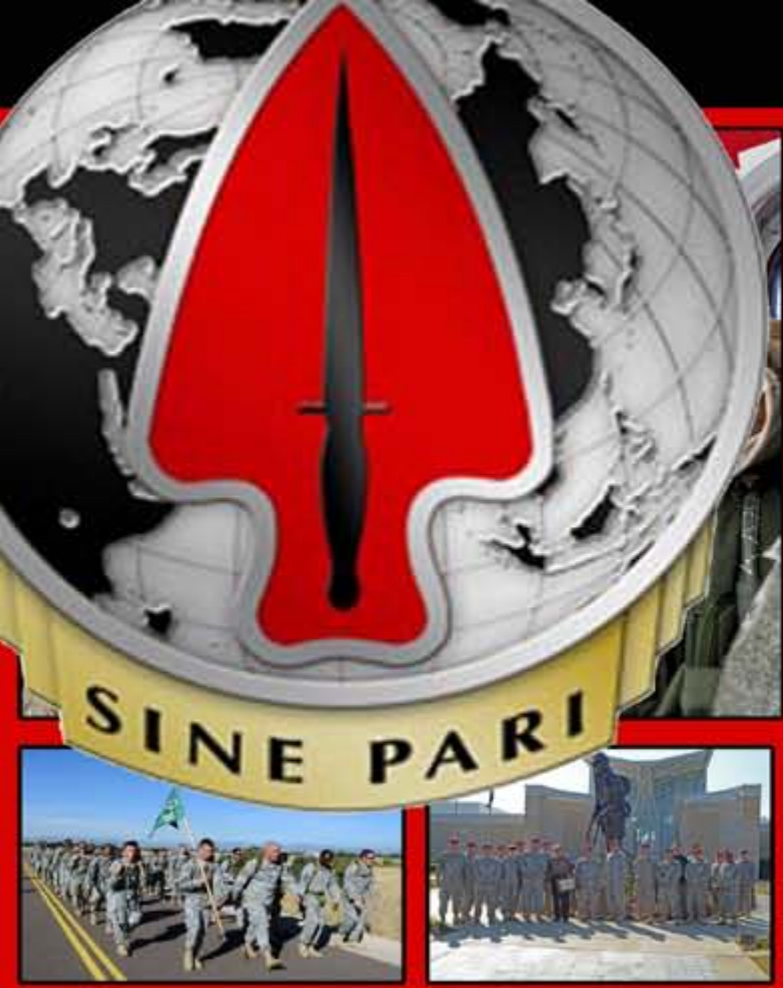


Brig. Gen. Steven Duff presents medals to 2nd Battalion Soldiers of the 7th Special Forces Group(Airborne) at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Dec 12. (U.S. Army photo Pfc. Steven Young)



2nd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Soldiers stand for the playing of the Ballad of the Green Beret at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Dec 12. 7th SFG (A) Soldiers were receiving awards for valor. (U.S. Army photo Pfc. Steven Young)

PHOTOS FROM THE WORLD OF SOF



SON TAY RAID VETERAN MENTORS SOLDIERS

By Mark A. Schulz

MISO Public Affairs

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - About two dozen Soldiers listen quietly, the silence only broken occasionally by the sound of laughter as retired Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Lupyak relays his stories of service in Korea and Vietnam.

Many of the stories that Lupyak relayed to the Soldiers came from his past, including the events surrounding the Son Tay raid in 1970 in which Special Forces were sent in to rescue 65 American prisoners of war.

Though the story topics changed throughout the meeting, the theme stayed the same: psychological operations are an important and integral part of special operations.

Lupyak, who works in the Training Development Division at U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, joined the Army in 1951 at the age of 19 and was sent to the Republic of South Korea to fight in the Korean War. It was there as a member of the 3rd Infantry Division, he received his first taste of psychological operations on the

battlefield when, on his first day, the North Koreans using loudspeakers said, "Welcome back Charlie Company, 15th Infantry Regiment." "They already knew we were there even though we had come up another hill that night in the darkness," Lupyak said. "The enemy was only about 300 meters away and they knew who we were and the name of our company commander."

The American forces were also using psychological operations on the North Koreans. Leaflets had been produced saying that if the enemy gave themselves up they would be treated well.

"You'd be surprised at the number of prisoners we got through those leaflets," he said.

He told one story of a Soldier who screamed because three Chinese Soldiers had walked up to his foxhole while he was asleep. The Chinese Soldiers were lucky they did not get shot, but they did successfully turn themselves in.

When he returned from Korea, Lupyak left the Army but came back after less than one day of working in the coal mines in his home state of Pennsylvania. He completed refresher training and joined the 77th Special Forces Group (renamed 7th SFG in 1960).

The raiding party trained at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., with a camp built that was identical to the Son Tay layout. Lupyak said they rehearsed the raid more than 500 times.

He recalled that there

Left: Command Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Joseph Lupyak relays his stories of service in Korea and Vietnam.

was a subtle form of "psyop" used after their departure from Florida, as a group of Soldiers were left at the base to continue rehearsal as a decoy force similar to that used by the Allies on D-Day.

Before the raid, as there was a bombing moratorium on North Vietnam, U.S. Navy ships bombarded the east coast of North Vietnam with blanks and flares to give the impression of bombs, providing a diversion from the path of infiltration by the American helicopters.

"They thought they were being invaded by the United States," said Lupyak, "so their radar was turned toward the coast. We flew in and never had a shot fired at us."

The full benefits of this operation were not appreciated until 1973 when Lupyak and other Raiders met with prisoners of war who had been released after the war. They met in San Francisco, Calif. and the prisoners were extremely grateful for the effort to save them.

They said that as a result of the raid the North Vietnamese immediately "took all the prisoners from the outlying camps and took them to the Hanoi Hilton," said Lupyak. They said they also received better medical treatment and better food.

Lupyak also said that the raid resulted in the Chinese pulling out their support of North Vietnam and was therefore "the biggest psychological effect on the war." The prisoners said they could have stayed another 10 years in the camps because they knew that the Americans would not forget them.

Lupyak retired from the Army at Fort Bragg in 1980.

Lt. Col. James Hickman, 6th Battalion Commander, thanked Lupyak for talking to the young Soldiers of MISO and "reaffirming my belief in the lineage of what we do."

CIVILIANS HONORED FOR THEIR WORK WITH BRAC



Charles Pimble, center, was awarded the Fort Bragg Department of the Army Civilian of the Year 2011 by George Quigley, president of the Braxton Bragg Chapter of Association of the Army, and Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, commanding general of the United States Army Special Operations Command. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus Butler, USASOC Public Affairs)

Story By Mark Tate
USASOC Public Affairs

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – The United States Army Special Operations Command paid tribute to several personnel for their work with the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) in a ceremony at the command's headquarters building, Dec. 16.

Six individuals were honored for their hard work in the six-year project of moving 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from Fort Bragg to Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

The command's BRAC move, a \$360 million construction project that started in 2005, was wrought with challenges such as moving both Soldiers and their families while continuing the group's operations overseas.

"The challenge to this team was enormous and unique," said Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, U.S. Army Special Operations Command's commanding general. "They brought a unique continuity to the project."

The individuals who received awards were: Larry J. Dannelley, Jr – Meritorious Civilian Service Award, Charles J. Henderson - Meritorious Civilian

Service Award, Robbie Randolph - Meritorious Civilian Service Award, Willie E. Weaver – Meritorious Civilian Service Award, Arthur G. Howard – Superior Civilian Service Award, Kris Taylor - Superior Civilian Service Award Brian J. DiCiancia - Superior Civilian Service Award

"We asked them to do an incredible thing," Mulholland said after the awards were handed out. "We minimized the risks so that the people down range don't have to. It's all for that purpose that we say thank you."

Following the BRAC ceremony, Charles Pimble received the Fort Bragg Department of the Army Civilian of the Year for 2011 by the Braxton Bragg Chapter of the Association of the Army.

He was honored for his work and dedication to the command since he started work in 1993. George Quigley, the president of the Braxton Bragg Chapter, said that Pimble was a renaissance man because of the various tasks that he does for the command.

Mulholland echoed those thoughts and said it would be hard to find someone to fill Pimble's shoes if he left.

"There is only one Charles Pimble," Mulholland said. "He means a lot to USASOC."

"I read the narrative and looked into the mirror and slapped myself three times," Pimble said after receiving the award. "It is extremely humbling to receive this award. I had no idea that the command would nominate me for such a prestigious award. It is an honor"



Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, commanding general of the United States Army Special Operations Command thanks the awardees after the ceremony, Dec. 19. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus Butler, USASOC Public Affairs)



Vice President Joe Biden and wife, Dr. Jill Biden stand at the base of the Horse Soldier statue during the unveiling on Veterans Day in New York City. The statue honors Special Forces Soldiers who rode into the mountains of Afghanistan on horseback after the 9/11 terror attacks. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Klika)