

"It's pretty quiet out there," Officer Bullock says as his eyes scan the ground and he listens to the police radio. "I'm not at all surprised, given the weather," Officer Galey says.

After an hour, the officers land the helicopter, refuel, fill out paperwork and wait for the next call.

In its 25 years—an anniversary the unit celebrated in a recent ceremony—the section has flown more than 25,000 hours without an accident. Since January 1994, the unit of 15 officers—six pilots, seven rescue technicians who are certified paramedics, and two administrators—operates 24 hours a day.

Park Police formed the aviation section in April 1973. It provides support for law enforcement, emergency medical evacuation for trauma patients, search-and-rescue missions, presidential and dignitary security, and transportation of high-risk prisoners.

Congress funds the unit—part of the U.S. Department of the Interior—that flies about 1,000 hours each year. The unit has two helicopters—Eagle 1, a Bell 412 SP, and Eagle 2, a Bell 206 Long-Ranger. Funding for a third helicopter is included in the \$8.5 million budget for the aviation unit in the D.C. appropriations bill.

The two helicopters have thermal imagers that indicate heat and help officers find criminals hiding in woods or trespassers in federal parks after dark. They also have high-intensity searchlights, which is what the officers focused on the aggressive drivers.

The twin-engine helicopter has a rescue hoist system that has 245 feet of cable and can lift 600 pounds. The officers also have radios on board that allow them direct contact with officers on the ground.

From 1991 to 1997, the unit responded to more than 9,500 calls for assistance, performed more than 2,376 medical evacuations and responded to more than 730 search-and-rescue operations. It assisted on more than 3,360 criminal calls and 979 arrests and provided more than 812 flights for the president and other dignitaries.

"That's why I like it here. There's a variety," Sgt. Duckworth says.

When the helicopters are in the air, the rescue technicians handle the operation while the pilot concentrates on flying.

Officer Galey particularly enjoys the flights chasing fleeing criminals in cars. They are challenging, he says, because while watching sky, the pilot also is forced to divert his attention to the car on the road.

"And you're a little lower than you normally would be. There are a lot of towers to be cognizant of," he said.

Most pilots and rescue technicians agree that the most difficult operations are those involving injured children. "Nine times out of 10, it's because an adult messed up. They are victims of circumstance," Sgt. Duckworth said, sitting at aviation headquarters, where a gray cat has taken up residence and keeps the mice away.

Officer Galey said fewer patients are dying while en route to hospitals because, through the years, medics on the ground have been better trained and are more equipped to stabilize patients before they are put into the helicopter.

guished group of veterans and their families at Triangle Park in the great city of Hialeah, Florida.

Before I spoke, a young man also addressed the audience. I could hardly believe that the young orator was a senior in high school.

Erich Almonte has recently graduated from Chaminade-Madonna College Preparatory and he is currently attending Georgetown University. I am certain that you will agree that his brilliant speech, which I will now recite as he did that morning, captures the essence of what being American is truly about.

Thank you. Good morning members of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, their auxiliaries, Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart, councilmen, and all others here today. Memorial Day is an opportunity for us as Americans to thank and honor those men and women who have served our country in the armed forces, including both of my grandfathers and my father, and especially to honor those who have died in that service. It is a solemn occasion, yet one of celebration, for we know that these individuals did not die in vain. You see, we find one day a year to explicitly thank these men and women, but each time someone exercises his or her right to vote, each day we live without fear, each time we enjoy the freedoms of democracy is a testament to their service and sacrifice. And today I would like to thank these men and women, and their fellows in the American Legion and VFW, for all that they have done. Not only are they Americans to the fullest extent of the word, but they are America personified. And if we really want to see what Americanism is, we need to look beyond mere words to these individuals here today.

I mention Americanism for a reason. I attended Boys State last year, and was privileged to have been selected to give a speech on Americanism for my Boys State city. Today, I would like to share that speech with you, in memory of America's fallen servicemen and women.

Americanism is what it sounds like: the embodiment of all things American, and of America itself. The freedom to choose who we want to run our government, and then freedom to call these people to account for anything they do. Freedom to think, or say, or write what we want, even if it goes against what others think. Freedom to talk to God, whether we call God Abba, or Allah, or Father. Freedom to decide what we want to do with our lives, and then freedom to do it. You cannot have Americanism, or America, without freedom.

This freedom stems from our courage. Courage in defense of our country, whether with weapons, with intelligence, or with heart, the same courage we gather together to honor today. Courage to leave home and friends to make a better life for your family. The courage to follow our ingenuity to the end, like actually injecting someone with small pox to prevent it in the future. Courage in sitting in a tin can on top of a mountain of rocket fuel and saying, "Point me to the moon and light the match." That courage explains why an American flag, and only a American flag, flies on the moon today, as a testament to our courage and spirit, the same spirit that pioneers showed when they crossed an unmapped desert, leaving farmland in their wake.

Americanism is in the diversity that makes us whole, in the integrity of our promises, in the justice of our courts, and in the honor of our souls.

But it does not come for free. No, just ask the colonists; ask the soldiers and their families what its price is. It is not automatic.

Americanism is not in the air we breath or the water we drink, but in each and every American. In the parent and the artist, in the teacher and the plumber, in the police officers, lawyers, politicians . . . everyone.

And you do not find it in a dictionary, nor in a speech, but in each of us. Not only on the battlefield, but the operating room and the classroom. Americanism is that which makes us Americans . . . and that which Americans make it. It implores us to act an not just sit idly by as children starve and marijuana clouds rise. No, Americanism is not in History books, but alive in us, calling out to keep her great, to keep America great! Thank you.

ERICH ALMONTE
May 30, 1998—Memorial Day.

INDIAN FEDERAL RECOGNITION ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN B. SHADEGG

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 5, 1998

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1154, the Indian Federal Recognition Administrative Procedures Act of 1998. The bill would overturn the fair and thorough process which is currently used to determine whether a Native American group should be formally recognized as a tribe by the federal government. It would replace this process with one which is politicized and would lower the criteria for recognition to the point where tribal recognition would have minimal bearing on whether the group is a legitimate tribe.

H.R. 1154 takes the recognition process away from the non-partisan Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and places it in the hands of a commission of individuals appointed by the Administration. This commission will be hand-picked by the Secretary of the Interior without the advice and consent of the Senate. These are radical and troubling changes. The BIA will not longer be in charge of a process which requires professional expertise and clearly falls within the purview of the Bureau. Furthermore, the failure of the bill to require that the Senate provide its advice and consent to the appointment of commissioners circumvents the system of checks and balances imposed on the Executive Branch by Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution.

Furthermore, this bill lowers the criteria for recognizing a tribe. Currently, a candidate group must be able to trace its lineage back to the point that it was first contacted by settler. The group must further prove that they have been identified as an American Indian entity on a substantially continuous basis since 1900. These are important criteria: recognition as a tribe, and the significant benefits which come from such recognition, must be given only to groups which truly qualify as tribes.

The effects of bestowing federal recognition on a tribe are substantial. A federally recognized tribe is granted special rights including the status of a legally sovereign entity. This means that the tribe may no longer be sued by individuals without the tribe's consent and thus takes away the individual's right to obtain legal redress from the tribe. Sovereign status

A TRIBUTE TO OUR NATION'S VETERANS

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 1998

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, last Memorial Day I gave an address before a distin-