

Aero's 2009 Calendar ¹¹

We did some versions of this shot with ME lying on the floor helping to support the gun so Deandra wouldn't tire of holding it for shot after shot. As it turned out, this shot – which was the very first one – was the best. Deandra was holding the gun unassisted in this shot. Wow!

If you recall my review of the Dillon Precision 2009 Calendar in our December 2008 issue, you know that Mike Dillon met Deandra in one of his favorite restaurants, where she works as a hostess while she attends school. She also happens to be the late Nyle Leatham's grandniece, and is quickly becoming yet another Dillon favorite.

Miss May is Carly. While she's attending school, she's working for Dillon Aero in the shipping department, doing HER part to support the troops by sending them the very best in force-protection weaponry. In this shot, she's posing with the M-134D as mounted on Dillon Aero's GMC Yukon. Nice close up...of Carly, that is.

Miss June is Cathy, sportin' two M-134s on Dillon Aero's versatile UH Tri-Mount external beam mount for the UH-1H helicopter. This particular mount enables extreme flexibility in mounting the guns, and while mounting two on each side of a Huey would (literally) be a blast, it's probably not going to happen in the field. We just did it because...well, because we could, and because we thought it would look cool! Not that Cathy really NEEDS anything else to look cool, you understand.

Miss July is Ashley, showcasing one of Dillon Aero's fixed-forward-firing-position M-134D mounts for the OH-58 Kiowa helicopter.

One potent package, and I haven't even STARTED talking about Ashley, yet! She's wearing MultiCam® utilities from Crye Precision and non-issue black footwear, and looking really good doing it.

Miss August is Cathy, apparently reflecting on the power of the Dillon-Aero-equipped SUV. Like all of us, Cathy would MUCH rather reflect on it than be on the receiving end of it!

Miss September is Deandra, sitting in the gunners seat of a UH-1H Huey, armed with an M-134D in Dillon Aero's UH Aft Mount. Dillon Aero manufactures three external beam mounts for this old war bird, which has been serving steadily since its first flight in 1956.

Miss October is Christina, in a studio shot of the Dillon Aero Naval Post Mount, which is serving proudly in the force-protection role for capital ships in foreign ports. No more USS Cole incidents on Dillon Aero's watch...PERIOD. As a former Coastie, this is by far my favorite application for the M-134D. Every time I look at this mount, I feel a bit homesick. Or seasick. Or something like that.

Miss November is Carly, with a recently designed Dillon Aero mount for the AH-6J "Little Bird" that's lighter, stronger and simpler than the plank mount it's to replace. What'll they think of next? Stay tuned!

Dillon Aero's 2009 calendar ends much like it began, with a beautiful lady in a basic-black evening gown in front of a basic-O.D. green HMMWV. In this case, however, Miss December is Cathy. P

CATHY'S 'SUPPORT THE TROOPS' CHARITY PROJECT

As I'm laying out this month's issue, Cathy Rankin is working on a project that will benefit our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. She's producing a calendar that will salute all of America's Armed Forces, and a percentage of the money raised will be donated to military charities. Following is an excerpt from an e-mail she distributed on Election Day:

"I received an email a few weeks ago that sent chills up my spine. Apparently, there was an insurgent attack in Iraq in June. A building was destroyed, completely burned out and full of rubble, and we actually lost some of our men. But inside, on a burnt, blackened wall, was one item that somehow remained intact – a current 2008 Dillon Aero Calendar hanging there, with singed corners and all. Most of the pages had been burned away, but clear as day, the month of October, which happened to feature a picture of me, was still there, and completely recognizable. Someone, I have no idea who, took a picture of the outside of the building, and then the calendar still hanging inside. I have no idea who hung the calendar there in the first place, either.



"Here were these brave soldiers, fighting in the most horrible situations, and this simple little calendar picture somehow represented something so American to them. I can't begin to understand how and why this comforts them, but somehow it does, and I am beyond honored and humbled to think I contribute to that in whatever small way..."

"I'm in close contact with some of the parents here in the U.S. who have military charities that supply donations for equipment and things that the troops need, but don't always get. One charity in particular, www.newengland-warriors.com is close to my heart, because it was started by a father whose son, a Marine sniper, has literally risked his own life numerous times in Iraq to save children and families caught in the terrorist crossfire. They asked me to work with them, which I gladly did without question. Their charity raises money to get extra supplies for these guys."

Cathy said the calendar will be available for purchase sometime in January on her website:

cathyrankin.com