



TASK FORCE MULESKINNER



April 2014

10th Sustainment Brigade

Issue 2

THE 10TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION



Supporting the Climb!

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The official 10th Sustainment Brigade publication

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MULESKINNER CORNER



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Muleskinners, Family and friends, Task Force Muleskinner is approaching its 90-day mark as part of this deployment. The Muleskinner Team continues to do amazing things as part of our sustainment and retrograde support mission across the Afghan theater. Our

Soldiers are amazing and the American Soldier fighting spirit is alive and well across the formation. There is a lot to be proud of as we continue to sustain both U.S. and coalition forces.

On any given day, our Soldiers provide critical sustainment support consisting of food, water, clothing, tools, weapons, fuel, construction material, ammunition and repair parts just to name a few. Soldiers also provide services such as human resources, finance, postal, aerial delivery operations, maintenance and mortuary affairs support across the Combined

Joint Area-Afghanistan. As the single sustainment brigade in theater we coordinate, execute and influence logistics support at all levels.

April marked a historic month in Afghanistan and the Muleskinner team did its part with enabling the citizens of Afghanistan to successfully execute their election by ensuring that our forces were well postured with sustainment stocks during this period. The Afghan's success is attributed to the hard work of all U.S. and coalition forces working together for a common goal.

Many thanks to

the Family members and friends for the support you provide your Soldier while deployed. Your emails, packages and phone calls go a long way with ensuring the resiliency of the Muleskinner team.

Finally, the brigade is committed with ensuring that safety and the welfare of all of our Soldiers is our number one focus. We do this by enforcing good discipline and standards across the formation. By doing this, and instilling a sense of pride, we reinforce our commitment to all who serve under Task Force Muleskinner.



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Soldiers and Families, thank you for your tremendous support during the past 90 days, our mission has been to work ourselves out of a job, with an aggressive get-it-done-now attitude, as we set the conditions

for future operations.

We currently have small mission teams in more than 30 different locations. This requires leaders at all levels to understand their operational environment, learn quickly and make sound decisions as they lead, manage and influence change in their location and stay nested with the overall Muleskinner mission.

This difficult mission requires our leaders to lead by example and earn the respect of their Soldiers

and leaders by creating a positive organizational climate, maximizing resources, inspiring others by building their teams to execute at a high level of excellence and extending their reach outside their own organization, while keeping safety in mind at all time.

Safety is not only a leader's business, but everyone's business. With that being said, the brunt of the burden of fixing enforcing and preventing falls on the NCO, the one who spends most of his time where

the rubber meets the road with the enlisted Soldier executing our Army's most dangerous missions, and for that reason alone our responsibility must always be to train and enforce safety, preservation of the force and combat power by creating and sustaining a safety culture of NCOs and Soldiers acting with discipline initiative and always thinking safety first.



Task Force Muleskinner hosts Best Warrior Competition

Sgt. Joshua Fritz, a Frankfort, Mich. native, motor transport operator assigned to the 96th Transportation Company, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, qualifies on his assigned weapon while Command Sgt. Maj. Jose A Castillo, senior enlisted leader of the 10th SBDE watches closely during the weapons qualification portion of the Best Warrior Competition March 22 on Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. The competitors qualified by shooting at paper targets after receiving a safety brief and instructions by the range noncommissioned officer in charge. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs NCO)

Story by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage
10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 10th Sustainment Brigade hosted a best warrior competition March 22 here to identify the most qualified Soldiers to represent the Muleskinner brigade in a future 1st Theater Sustainment Command Best Warrior Competition.

Soldiers competed in a two-day competition consisting of six events to earn the title of best warrior in the Muleskinner brigade.

There were two categories Soldiers were able to place in, best NCO and best Soldier.

“Boards and competitions are the way we select the best of the best while assessing their talents and recognizing them for their outstanding efforts,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Jose A. Castillo, senior enlisted leader of 10th SBDE. “Through inspections, assessments of character, evaluations, competitions and performance is how we should assess talent while assisting them in their quest to be better leaders.”

The competitors’ day started by getting their height and weight recorded before conducting an Army Physical Fitness Test. The APFT consisted of the three original events; push ups, sit ups and a two-mile run as well as a pull up event.

Pfc. Alissa Grant, a Greenville, S.C. native, wheeled vehicle mechanic assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Special Troops Battalion, 10th SBDE, had the highest APFT score of 294.

Sgt. Steve Morales, a Ventura, Calif. native, ammunition specialist assigned to HHC, 10th STB, scored the highest out of the NCOs competing with a score of 280.

Once everyone completed the APFT, they were given time to conduct personal hygiene and eat breakfast before the next event.

The second portion of the competition was a written test consisting of 30 questions ranging from general military knowledge to military history. The competitors also had to write an essay explaining what

it means to them to be the leader they want to be led by.

Morales and Pfc. Monty Green, a Chase City, Va. native, human resource specialist assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, took first place for the written portion of the competition.

Immediately following the written test, Soldiers conducted the warrior task portion of the competition.

Competitors were required to disassemble and reassemble an M240 and M2 .50 caliber machine gun as quickly and efficiently as possible. They were closely monitored and timed by Soldiers of the brigade's command security team.

Grant was the fastest Soldier to complete this task taking 2 minutes, 27 seconds on the M240 and 2:41 on the M2.

Sgt. Joshua Fritz, a Frankfort, Mich. native, motor transport operator assigned to the 96th Transportation Company, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, was the fastest NCO on the M240 with a time of 1:07.

Sgt. Teary Ing, a Fresno, Calif. native, allied trade specialist assigned to HHC, 10th STB, was the fastest NCO on the M2 with a time of 4:07.

After the last Soldier reassembled the weapons, everybody was bussed to the qualification range for the next portion of the competition.

Sgt. William Morgan, a Glens Falls, N.Y. native, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist assigned to HHC, 548th CSSB, said he likes doing this kind of training because it's fun and it's what being a Soldier is all about.

At the range, Soldiers received a safety brief and instructions for the next challenge. The competitors shot at paper targets to qualify on their assigned weapon.

Green scored the highest out of the Soldiers at the range with a score of 37 out of 40.

Fritz shot 39 scoring the highest of the NCO competitors.

Then after the range, the competitors were released for lunch and given instructions to meet at the brigade later that evening for the final event of the day.

Competitor's donned their improved outer tactical vest, advanced combat helmet, assigned weapons and a 20-pound ruck sack in preparation for the 10-kilometer ruck march around the base.

After receiving a safety brief and prayer from the brigade chaplain, the Soldier's rucks were weighed

before the start of their final event.

Some Soldiers ran portions of the march while others kept a steady pace.

Drenched in sweat, Morales sprinted through the finish line in 1 hour, 8 minutes. He was the first NCO to finish the ruck march. The second competitor to finish the ruck march was 11 minutes behind him.

Morales said every time he thought he heard footsteps behind him he would push himself harder and faster until he couldn't hear them anymore.

Spc. Dedreck Rucker, a Conroe, Texas native, human resource specialist assigned to HHC, 10th STB, was the fastest Soldier to complete the ruck march with a time of 1:22.

The first day of the competition was complete leaving the competitors exhausted physically and mentally.

The following day, the competitors arrived at the brigade ready to stand in front of a board of senior leaders throughout the brigade.

"I'm studying for the NCO of the month board so all that knowledge has helped me prepare for this," said Morales.

At the end of the day, there could only be one winner for each category. The board members reviewed the scores from each event and incorporated them into their decision.

"It was a tough competition," said Morales. "I really pushed myself and really enjoyed the challenge."

Morales and Grant proved to be the best Soldiers to represent the Muleskinner brigade and will continue to train and better themselves in preparation for the 1st Theater Sustainment Command Best Warrior Competition.



Sgt. Steve Morales, a Ventura, Calif. native, ammunition specialist assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Special Troops Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, conducts the sit up event of the Army Physical Fitness Test as part of the Best Warrior Competition while Sgt. Wilbur Deshields, an Akron, Ohio native, wheeled vehicle mechanic assigned to the 96th Transportation Company, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th SBDE, holds his feet. Morales scored the highest on the APFT out of the NCOs competing with a score of 280. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)

Groomed to be a leader

1st Lt. Robyn Moore, a native of El Paso, Texas, platoon leader and convoy commander assigned to the 51st Transportation Company, 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs NCO)

Story by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage
10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Not every Soldier joins the military with leadership skills. Some have to learn these qualities throughout their military career while others might feel they are born with them.

The Army defines leadership as influencing people by providing purpose, direction and motivation while operating to accomplish a mission and improving the organization.

1st Lt. Robyn Moore, a native of El Paso, Texas, platoon leader and convoy commander assigned to the 51st Transportation Company, 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, has been a leader since she was in high school and has applied her strengths and lessons learned to her career and positions in the Army.

“In high school, I was extremely involved with every sport possible,” said Moore. “I played softball, soccer and was the team captain of my golf team.”

She said she is a very competitive person and always wanted to better herself and her team. “I would always have to be the best and I think that helped with being the team captain always pushing to get to the next level,” said Moore.

The next level came by means of joining the U.S. Army. She said that by being an Army brat, she couldn't picture herself doing anything other than serving her country.

“I joined the Army because I wanted to do great things for America,” said Moore. “If I didn't join the Army, I would have gone to some other government agency.”

Moore said she likes being an empowered woman in the military.

“Growing up, my father has always been huge a role model for me,” said Moore. “Watching him excel in the military influenced me.”

She said that she has been able to identify the good qualities in her father and tries to apply them to herself. Her father is a command sergeant major in the Army.

“I credit my leadership skills to my mother and father,” said Moore.

She said her mother was always a strong willed and independent person and feels she gets that from her mom.

“I kind of get the best of both worlds,” said Moore.

There isn't always a good mentor within arm's reach but she likes the idea of being able to call her father if she needs any guidance about a difficult situation.

Leaders are often called upon to make hard decisions. She said she will always strive to make the hard right over the easy wrong.

“My main focus as a leader is to uphold the standards that are already in place and to improve the overall organization the best I possibly can,” said Moore. “With the tools I've been provided, I feel I have

made some improvements.”

Moore’s actions have not gone unnoticed. “She constantly wants to improve everything she does and bring the best to any team she’s a part of,” said Moore’s father, Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Moore, senior enlisted leader of the 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade. “A natural leader who just continues to drive on even when she’s told it can’t be done, she will find a way.”

Seniors and subordinates have spoken speak highly of her.

“She is always willing to go above and beyond,” said Capt. Stephen Hughes, a native of Draper, Utah, commander of the 51st TC. “Willing to do what it takes and then some to improve the organization.” Army values are a big part of being a Soldier and a leader. Moore knows it and identifies with two in particular.

“The two most important army values to me are integrity and personal courage,” said Moore. She said she has applied personal courage to herself after doing some of the things in the military. She likes integrity because it encompasses so many of the Army values.

“I read a lot of military history books and books on leaders in the military,” said Moore. “I try to learn from the mistakes they have already made.”

Since her commission in May 2011, she said

she has come across two issues as a young female officer.

“I feel like I have to prove myself a lot more because I am so young,” said Moore. “I was commissioned when I was only 20 years old and being a female can really add to that.”

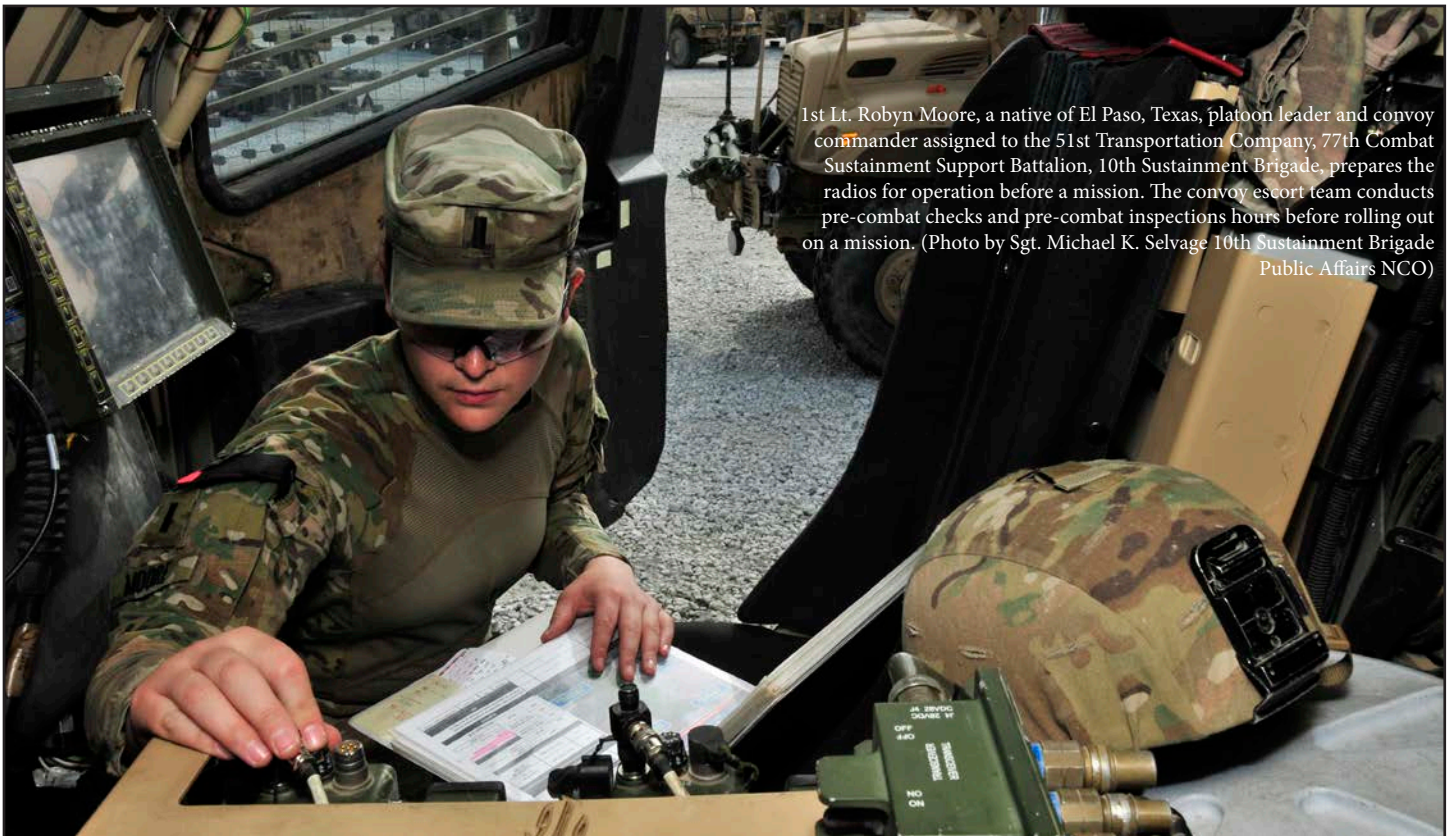
Each time she has had to overcome any barriers because she is a female, she said it helped empower her even more, but not all Soldiers see gender as a barrier. “I don’t think her being a female has impacted me whatsoever,” said Sgt. Antrell Bender, a native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, team leader assigned to the 51st TC. “I believe that if a female can carry her own weight, especially being in a male dominated profession, I’m totally for it.”

Moore said she hasn’t noticed any issues being a female in her company. An issue that has been brought in the past has been about physical strength, such as carrying a male Soldier in full combat gear. After explaining or showing how she has done the tasks, some males still have come back with a rebuttal, she said.

She said she feels she has earned the respect of her Soldiers and they fully support her.

“I believe it makes her look better being a female and carrying her own weight in a male dominated profession,” said Bender.

Moore says she really has a fantastic group of



1st Lt. Robyn Moore, a native of El Paso, Texas, platoon leader and convoy commander assigned to the 51st Transportation Company, 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, prepares the radios for operation before a mission. The convoy escort team conducts pre-combat checks and pre-combat inspections hours before rolling out on a mission. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs NCO)

female Soldiers as well.

“I have to reinforce that as a female Soldier you have to do a lot more and make it look easy,” said Moore. “I never let my female Soldiers fall under the set standard.”

Moore ensures she is a visible leader by assisting Soldiers with their needs when she can.

“I’m a strong runner,” said Moore. “Back in Germany, I would offer help to anyone who needed help with their run.”

She said she would offer up her weekends to help her Soldiers improve their run or any task they needed assistance with.

“I help with proofreading papers for school and with any school work,” said Moore.

Moore also encourages her Soldiers to continue their education and better their career. She has talked to and provided guidance to many Soldiers who are considering going to airborne school.

“She has definitely motivated me and has given me different things to consider for my career,” said Bender. “She definitely takes care of her Soldiers.”

Moore is in charge of two convoy escort teams and knows that, although she is a leader, she is also part of a team.

“There are several things that make her a

good leader,” said Bender. “For one, she comes to us as NCO’s and asks what it is that we expect from her as leader. She doesn’t micromanage. She will delegate the different duties and obligations to us and allows us to delegate those duties out. As long as the tasks are accomplished or completed, she has no issues.”

Bender said she goes above and beyond to make sure things are 100 percent when performing her duties. He said Moore is very diligent by ensuring she is taking her time to make sure everything is done right.

“We haven’t had any issues with our convoy escort teams since she has taken the role of convoy commander,” said Bender.

Soldiers in her unit are not the only ones who notice that she is value added to the organization.

“Lt. Moore’s convoy has been the go-to convoy if we ever have a difficult mission or any complicated route or load,” said Hughes. “Her team can go out there and handle anything that gets thrown at them.”

On the road conducting convoy operations or helping a Soldier with their school work, Moore has improved herself in many aspects of leadership and continues to further improve herself throughout her career.



1st Lt. Robyn Moore, a native of El Paso, Texas, platoon leader and convoy commander assigned to the 51st Transportation Company, 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, conducts a radio check to ensure communication is established with the other trucks within the convoy escort team. The escort teams provide security for convoys as they support the sustainment mission throughout Afghanistan. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs NCO)

THE 514TH SUPPORT MAINTENANCE COMPANY RETURNS TO AFGHANISTAN



Capt. Dewey A. Courtney, a Dallas native, left, company commander of the 514th Support Maintenance Company, and 1st Sgt. Michael D. Green, a Mount Juliet native, 514th SMC senior enlisted leader, uncased the company colors during a transfer of authority ceremony on Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan March 26. The company assumed responsibility over maintenance and recovery operations throughout Regional Commands east, North and Capital. (Photo by Sgt. Danielle Doucette, 514th SMC)

Story by 1st Lt. Sylvia McDonald
514th Support Maintenance Company UPAR

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 536th Support Maintenance Company, from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, relinquished their authority over field-level maintenance and recovery support operations in Regional Commands – East, North and Capital to the 514th Support Maintenance Company, from Fort Drum, N.Y., during a transfer of authority ceremony here March 26.

Capt. Dewey Courtney, a Dallas native, 514th SMC company commander, and 1st Sgt. Michael Green, a Mount Juliet native, 514th SMC senior enlisted leader, uncased the 514th SMC colors, symbolizing the unit's assumption of responsibility for the areas of operations.

“We are excited to assume

the mission and appreciate the smooth RIP/TOA process with the 536th SMC,” said Courtney.

The mission is nothing new for the 514th SMC as the unit supported Operation Enduring Freedom in 2012. Due to the quick return to theater, the unit was able to retain Soldiers, who are on their second tour, and benefit from their experience.

“The transition from the states to Afghanistan has been made much easier on the new Soldiers due to a combination of excellent training and the experience we have in the company,” said Cpl. Nikolas Huber, an Allentown, Pa. native, 514th SMC training room NCO.

The TOA ceremony was overseen by Lt. Col. Agosto Hector, commander of the 77th Combat

Sustainment Support Battalion, Task Force Garita. Also attending the ceremony were Col. Willie Rios III, the 10th Sustainment Brigade commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Jose A. Castillo, 10th SBDE senior enlisted leader.

Courtney concluded his address by assuring the leadership of the 10th SBDE that the 514th SMC will continue to uphold the standard set by the 536th SMC.

“Over the last eight months, we have trained hard for this deployment and now it is time to execute the mission,” said Courtney. “We are excited about the opportunities we have and look forward to making history here in Afghanistan. The company is prepared and ready to accomplish the mission.”



Staff Sgt. Rorie Short, left, Rochester, N.Y. native, airdrop supervisor, and Cpl. Ravonne Pertee, Miami native, lane chief, both assigned to the 647th Quartermaster Company, guide a bundle rigged for an airdrop mission on Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. The rigger team supports airdrop missions throughout Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)

Airdrop mission declines, riggers continue support

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra
10th Sustainment Brigade PAO

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – It has been documented that Afghanistan has an austere environment that at times can make it difficult to get supplies to Soldiers on the battlefield. The terrain can be unforgiving to convoys and missions may take longer than anticipated. That doesn't mean hope is lost. There is a team who might be able to assist. They call themselves riggers.

Soldiers assigned to the 647th Quartermaster Company, 10th Special Troops Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, assist with resupplying the warfighters by supporting the aerial delivery

mission throughout Afghanistan. However, some of the Soldiers assigned to the rigger team have deployed to Afghanistan in supported Operation Enduring Freedom in the past and they have seen a noticeable decline in aerial delivery requests since then.

“As more forward operating bases are closing and locations are decreasing, so is the mission,” said Staff Sgt. Rorie Short, Rochester, N.Y. native, airdrop supervisor assigned to the 647th QM CO.

Aerial delivery historical data shows a steady decrease in air drops in the past three years. Chief Warrant Officer 3 Joseph S. Vierwinden, Fresno, Calif. native, 10th SBDE senior airdrop systems

technician, said he doesn't expect to deliver more than 1 million pounds of supplies to conventional forces this year.

The use of aerial delivery to support a commander's intent, whether it's a tactical mission or a sustainment function, is still an asset.

“The airdrop mission has been successful by providing an alternate means for the ground forces to be resupplied,” said Vierwinden. “We have to look at each means of moving supplies and determine which method is the best course of action.”

Cpl. Ravonne Pertee, Miami native, lane chief assigned to the 647th QM CO, said he was able to

go out on one of the missions and see the result of the rigger team's hard work first hand.

"You get a better appreciation of your work knowing that you are helping the troops on the ground," said Pertee.

Pertee was deployed to Kandahar from 2010-2011 and his missions consisted of container delivery system aerial delivery drops, which are bundles ranging from 550-2,200 pounds delivered by Air Force aircraft. During his current deployment, he is also able to support the low-cost, low-altitude drops, which consist of lighter loads.

The CDS or LCLA aerial delivery asset allows the commanders flexibility when it comes to resupplying the troops.

"Mission success is getting needed items to the ground forces by the fastest means possible so they can carry on with their mission," said Vierwinden. The riggers have been successful with their mission but it wasn't due to any one individual.

Spc. Chavartae Raymond, Lakeland, Ga. native, parachute rigger assigned to the 647th QM CO, credits the team's success to great leadership and teamwork. Soldiers rig each bundle to standard to ensure the load reaches its destination in good condition.

Even with all the support the riggers have provided the warfighter, they would like to increase their support to more troops by reminding commanders of the aerial delivery asset.

"Our biggest challenge is letting the units in the fight know what our capabilities are," said Short. "To let them know that we can deliver what they need in a short period of time in a very safe manner."

Whether it's an emergency or a standard resupply mission, the riggers have made it a point to support the warfighter day or night. They are the experts at rigging supplies, equipment and vehicles for airdrop. They perform technical, routine and in-storage rigger-type inspection on cargo, extraction and personnel parachutes as well as other airdrop equipment; professional Soldiers making a difference.



Spc. Courtney Girven, left, East Point, Mich. native, and Spc. Demetrius Marino, St. Augustine, Fla., both parachute riggers assigned to the 647th Quartermaster Company, secure a bundle of supplies before attaching a parachute on Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. Riggers perform technical, routine and in-storage rigger-type inspection on cargo, extraction and personnel parachutes as well as other airdrop equipment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)

Task Force Workhorse earns combat patch

Story and photo by 2nd Lt. Kelsey Hagler
10th Special Troops Battalion UPAR

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – When Soldiers report to a new unit, one of the first things they may do is to ensure they are wearing the correct patch on their left shoulder. With time, some may wonder why their right shoulder seems void of unit pride.

The 10th Special Troops Battalion conducted a combat patch ceremony here March 29, which marks the third time Soldiers have had the opportunity to earn the right to wear the unit patch on their right shoulder.

The combat patch, officially known as the Shoulder Sleeve Insignia-Former Wartime Service, is authorized for wear after 30 days of service in a combat theater.

“My team and I understand the hardships that you are currently enduring with being away from Family members and loved ones, not to mention everyday regular life,” said Lt. Col. Gregory E. Sanders, 10th STB commander.

The work of the Soldiers during their time deployed does not go unappreciated by the command. “You have my sincere gratitude for your service, support and sacrifice to our nation,” said Sanders. “I ask that each and every one of you wear this distinguished patch on your right shoulder with much pride and honor.”

For some Soldiers, this is the first time receiving a combat patch.

“It felt awesome getting a patch for the first time,” said Pfc. Alexandra Ramirez, human resources specialist assigned to 10th STB. “It’s a memorable moment in my life.”

She said her time with the unit will be something she won’t forget.

“The unit is great,” said Ramirez. “All the people I’ve met keep me motivated and I’m going to remember them when I leave.”

The patch displays a jagged snow-covered mountain peak under a deep blue sky, which represents the cold, brutal, mountainous conditions the 10th Light Division (Alpine) Soldiers trained for and faced during World War II. At the center of the patch is a gold polestar with the four points of the



Lt. Col. Gregory E. Sanders, 10th Special Troops Battalion commander, places the 10th Sustainment Brigade patch on the right shoulder of Capt. Catherine DiDomenico, Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander, as a part of the 10th STB combat patch ceremony. This ceremony marks the third time in history the 10th SBDE patch has been authorized for wear as a combat patch.

star corresponding to the four points of the compass, which represents the worldwide scope of the brigade’s logistic support missions. Superimposed over the star are two crossed red bayonets. The bayonets are from the previous shoulder sleeve insignia of the 10th Division Support Command and are crossed to represent the Roman numeral 10.

A professional in the combat zone, the home front



Sgt. Tasha Kreger, a native of Pine City, Minn., motor transport operator assigned to the 114th Transportation Company, 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs NCO)

Story by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage
10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Juggling a career and college may be overwhelming to some people but for Sgt. Tasha Kreger, a native of Pine City, Minn., motor transport operator assigned to the 114th Transportation Company, 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, that is only about half of her work load.

When Kreger isn't wearing a combat uniform in a deployed environment she can be found back home working simultaneously more than 40 hours a week as a corrections officer and continuing her education as a full time student at Concordia University St. Paul.

"She is a very organized person and great at multi-tasking," said Kreger's mother, Lynelle Kreger. "She's been like that ever since she was a little kid."

Kreger enlisted in the Minnesota Army National Guard in 2004 under the Army's Split-Training Option, which allows high school students to go to basic combat training during the summer of their junior year and complete advanced individual training after they graduate high school

"I joined the Minnesota Army National Guard when I was 17 years of age and a junior in high school," said

Kreger.

She went to basic combat training the summer of her junior year. The following summer she completed her advanced individual training to become a human resources specialist.

Kreger deployed to Kuwait in 2007 while assigned to the 347th Personnel Services Detachment.

Once she returned from her deployment, she decided to change her job to become a motor transport operator and was reassigned to the 114th TC.

"I then deployed for my second time in July of 2009 with the 114th TC to southern Afghanistan where I was a gunner during convoys," said Kreger.

She said the deployments to Kuwait and Afghanistan were completely different from each other.

Kreger is currently deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom once again.

After serving as a member of the team, it was time for Kreger to serve as the leader of a team.

"I am now a truck commander for the scout vehicle of our convoy escort teams," said Kreger. "I am the compass of our convoys and the first eyes on potential threats."

She said she knows how important her mission is and takes it to heart.

"I assist in providing security for trucks

transporting goods in Afghanistan,” said Kreger.

“Without that security, it’s incredibly difficult for the safe transport of supplies.”

She said she loves the opportunities and training the Army has provided her.

“I am also a level two combatives instructor and a resiliency training assistant,” said Kreger.

She said she wants to continue her career in the military and has recently re-enlisted for another six years of service.

“She is definitely a positive role model as far as promoting females to stay in the military and move up through the ranks,” said Capt. Ryan Koester, a Hutchinson, Minn. native, company commander of the 114th TC.

Kreger said every year she goes to high schools in the Pine City area to talk about her experiences as a female Soldier in the military.

“I speak on the topics of basic combat training, advanced individual training, Recruit Sustainment Program and all the benefits associated with the Minnesota National Guard,” said Kreger.

She said she also talks about the importance of being a well-rounded Soldier and pursuing further education.

“For the past two and a half years I have been cadre for the Recruit Sustainment Program in Duluth, Minnesota,” said Kreger. “The RSP is a program prepares newly enlisted Soldiers for the realities of basic combat training.”

When Kreger is not deployed and providing security for convoys on the dusty dirt roads of Afghanistan, she is back home working for the Minnesota Department of Corrections as a corrections officer at the men’s state prison in Rush City, Minn.

She has been a corrections officer for the past six years.

Kreger is also a Pressure Points and Control Tactics instructor at the state prison.

“As a corrections officer, I worked in segregation for four and a half years then moved to a utility spot where I had a different post each day,” said Kreger.

She said segregation is where the “trouble makers” get sent.

“If an offender were to get into a fight, refuse directives or anything else of that nature they would be sent to segregation where they would spend 23 hours of their day in a single bunk cell,” said Kreger.

She said her military experience has helped a



Sgt. Tasha Kreger, a native of Pine City, Minn., motor transport operator assigned to the 114th Transportation Company, 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, checks for anything out of place at the rear of the mine resistant ambush protected vehicle. Anything out of place is corrected on the spot to ensure the truck is always mission capable. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvaige 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs NCO)

lot, especially with the leadership aspect and working as a team.

Working at the state prison is merely a portion of Kreger’s busy life back home. She is also a full time student working towards a bachelor’s of science degree in kinesiology, which is exercise science.

She said she likes the mental challenge and decided to pursue higher education.

Kreger decided to go to college in the summer of 2012 and wants to eventually get a doctorate in physical therapy and hopes to one day work with professional athletes.

“While going to school, I became a tour guide on campus, the vice president of the Concordia Sisterhood of Empowerment and a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes,” said Kreger.

The CSE is an organization where women from all social classes come together to network and celebrate being a female. It is meant to promote the strength, health of females as well as create a close-knit group of friends.

“As the vice president of the CSE, it was my

duty to help organize group meetings, events and women's awareness activities," said Kreger.

She said the CSE events help build women's mental and physical strengths. They also help make women more aware of issues that they may be susceptible to such as cancer.

"I have utilized my experience as a leader in the military to take charge of these events and put on self-defense courses for the women of Concordia, as well as numerous health awareness activities throughout each month," said Kreger.

When Kreger is not working at the state prison or going to class she works as a part-time personal trainer.

"My clients range anywhere from friends and family to acquaintances," said Kreger.

She said being a personal trainer consumes approximately 10 hours of her week.

"Being that my field of study at school is kinesiology, personal training doubles as an internship, which is required in order for me to graduate," said Kreger.

Working as a personal trainer is fun for her because she loves to work out anyway she said.

Kreger isn't just about work and no play.

"In the summer I play softball on five different softball leagues and in the fall I only play on three," said Kreger. "It pretty much consumes most of my nights."

She said she has always been into sports and is an all-around player on the field.

When she's not playing softball, she likes to go four-wheeling, fishing, hunting, kayaking, hiking and hangs out with her friends and family.

"Being active keeps me healthy, in shape and out of trouble," said Kreger.

Kreger has applied the skills she has learned from her time in the military to the civilian side of her life.

"I definitely learned my professionalism and work ethic from my time in the military," said Kreger. "Without the military, I would definitely be a different person than who I am now."



Sgt. Tasha Kreger, a native of Pine City, Minn., motor transport operator and Spc. Mat Sherwood, a native of Coon Rapids, Mich., convoy gunner, both assigned to the 114th Transportation Company, 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, ensure all communication cables are secure and connected as a part of their preventive maintenance checks and services. Kreger ensures her team knows their truck through and through by conducting routine PMCS. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs NCO)

Task Force Sword celebrates Women's History Month



From right to left: Capt. Ashleigh T. Davidson, Command Sgt. Maj. Phillip L. Dixon, Lt. Col James L. Turner, Chaplain Suzanne Schäfer-Hagenaars, Command Sgt. Maj. Giacomo Gangi, and Col. Max Droste stand for the playing of the Army Song at the Women's History Month Celebration on Camp Marmal, Afghanistan 30 March. (Courtesy Photo)

Story by 1st Lt. Josephyne Omokeye
548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion
UPAR

CAMP MARMAL, Afghanistan – Throughout the month of March, the 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Task Force Sword, observed and celebrated Women's History Month. Typically, the unit commemorates great women who have contributed to history in the past and recognizes other great women who are currently making history.

The first female world leaders are celebrated because many participated in governments that historically excluded women in the past. High ranking women in the armed forces today are celebrated because it has been approximately 40 years since they were given the right to serve this great nation.

This year, the women of the Sword battalion chose not only to commemorate those who came before them, but to celebrate the women who continue to make history today.

Sgt. Faxiss Ayuso, the 548th

CSSB equal opportunity leader, took it upon herself to engage multiple female leaders and Soldiers here in order to find out what Women's History Month meant to them. Master Sgt. Shaunda Gordon, the battalion Sexual Harassment/ Assault Response and Prevention representative, joined Ayuso in the journey.

Through exchanging stories between the two leaders and other women within the battalion, they learned that there were just as many unique stories as there were women.

"They are all mothers, sisters, daughters, friends, mentors, officers, noncommissioned officers, Soldiers, professionals," said Ayuso. "We are everything that we put our minds and hearts in to."

In one way or another, they are all part of present day history. They play various roles in our hometowns, churches, Families, neighborhoods, schools and other organizations. Many of them have created history within their own Families by being the first female

or even the only member of the Family to serve in the armed forces. Some may be the only females to serve from their hometowns.

Gordon enlisted 22 years ago and is the only female in her Family to have served in the Army. Not only is she a Soldier, but the wife of a Soldier. Together, they juggle children across multiple deployments, permanent changes of station and training exercises.

When asked about her experiences as a mother and an NCO in a dual military Family, Gordon said it has been fabulous at times and a struggle at others.

"As a mother, my children look up to me because they see me going to work every day and putting on the uniform," said Gordon.

She said one of the most difficult obstacles she had to overcome was being away from her children.

Like many other mothers, it was difficult for her. However, Gordon emphasized that being a mother has made her a better NCO

in the process. Gordon's philosophy is that she takes care of her Soldiers as she would take care of her children good or bad.

After countless hours of storytelling, research and bonding, the two women chose to highlight the character, courage and commitment of women of the past, present and future with a ceremony. All were invited to take a moment to recognize women, hear the stories and learn how the women of 548th CSSB are making history.

Dowayne Colquitt, help desk administrator assigned to the 25th Signal Battalion, painted an image, with words, many women of the armed forces know too well; leaving their children and Families behind for deployment tours.

"Make the decision and know that the world's yours, 'cause you're so much more than the world gives you credit for," said Colquitt.

Capt. Ashleigh Davidson, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 548th CSSB, is the highest ranking female in the battalion. She spoke about children taken from their mothers who were slaves and had no rights, about Susan B. Anthony and Sojourner Truth who both fought for the rights of women and African Americans and about Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody who became the first female four-star general of the U.S. Armed Forces and other women who faced challenges and obstacle in their struggles for the equality of women.

She said that what links us women today to those whom have made history in the past is that those women never gave up.

Capt. Suzanne Schaefer-Hagenaars, the only Dutch chaplain

in Afghanistan who is responsible for providing pastoral services for more than 200 Dutch Soldiers, spoke about the importance of personal courage. As a leader from Holland, she noted that the Netherlands is ranked as the number one country in the world

" We are everything that we put our minds and hearts in to. -Ayuso

in terms of gender equality. However, she recognized and commended of all women in the armed forces who have had the courage to make the sacrifices that go hand-in-hand with military service.

"Courage is not the absence of fear," she said. "It is not that you are not frightened or not scared. Courage is being scared, being afraid, feeling alone, sad and hurt, and the ability to continue in spite of that fear. Courage is being a woman, having a heart, leaving

your home, missing your Family, and still standing there, serving your country, and your God. It's crying yourself to sleep at times but waking up in the morning and standing tall and taking on your duties."

Lt. Col. James Turner, the battalion commander of 548th CSSB said that serving in a sustainment formation has allowed him to witness and learn from women of all ranks and at all levels and staff positions throughout his time in the Army.

The ceremony would not have been complete without words of wisdom from inspirational women of the present. A slide show presentation of women from the past, present and future was played along with artist Beyonce's song, "I Was Here." Some women of the 548th CSSB spoke about the importance of Women's History Month and others later recited portions of Maya Angelou's poem, "Still I Rise." Sgt. Ciera Lee, assigned to the 1230th Transportation Company, later gave an a capella performance of Mariah Carey's "Hero."



Capt. Ashleigh T. Davidson addresses attendees of the Women's History Month Celebration on Camp Marmal, Afghanistan 30 March. (Courtesy Photo)

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra
10th Sustainment Brigade PAO

BAGRAM AIR FIELD,
Afghanistan – Sgt. 1st
Class Jefferson Henry, a
Bridgeport, N.Y. native,
10th Sustainment Brigade
equal opportunity advisor,
instructed an Equal
Opportunity Leaders
Course at a Morale,
Welfare and Recreation
center here to leaders
throughout Afghanistan
March 24-29.

The six-day course
focused the students on
equal opportunity and
diversity management in
order to prepare them to
perform the duties of an
equal opportunity leader
at both the battalion and
company level.

Henry
coordinated with Sgt.
1st Class Doris Twitty,
Regional Command-
East EOA, to make the
training available to as
many Soldiers as possible
to increase education and
awareness. The training
is conducted quarterly
to ensure units have a
primary and alternate
equal opportunity leader.

Henry said
the 46 students who
graduated attended with
an understanding of
Army history but few
were familiar with the
history of the different
cultures that contributed
to not only the Army but
America as a whole.

During the course,
Soldiers become familiar
with several cultural



Sgt. 1st Class Jack M. Decker, senior enlisted medic assigned to 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, conducts a presentation on Japanese-American interment during an Equal Opportunity Leaders Course conducted at a Morale, Welfare and Recreation on Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)

observance months that
they can use to increase
awareness throughout
their unit.

Sgt. Crystal
A. New, inside-the-
wire NCO assigned to
Headquarters and
Headquarters Battery,
1st Battalion, 320th Field
Artillery Regiment said
she wished she would
have taken the class
earlier in her career.

New said she
feels she can now
educate her Soldiers
on equal opportunity
topics to ensure the unit
maintains a healthy equal
opportunity climate.

After graduation,
students of the course will
possess the skills required
to advise commanders in
the conduct of informal
equal opportunity
complaints, conduct unit
level equal opportunity
training, assist the
commander in climate
assessment, assist in the
preparation of special
ethnic observances, and

serve as the primary
resource manager of
equal opportunity matters
within the unit.

EOLs are also
trained to handle
informal complaints with
a focus on solving an
issue at the lowest level.
They also assist in routing
formal complaints to the
proper agency.

Although there
are many ways to solve
some issues, the Army
has specific ways to assist
Soldiers with making an
informed decision.

“I know how to
solve problems my way,”
said Sgt. 1st Class Jack M.
Decker, senior enlisted
medic assigned to 1st
Brigade, 82nd Airborne
Division. “I’m always
looking for the Army way
to solve a problem.”

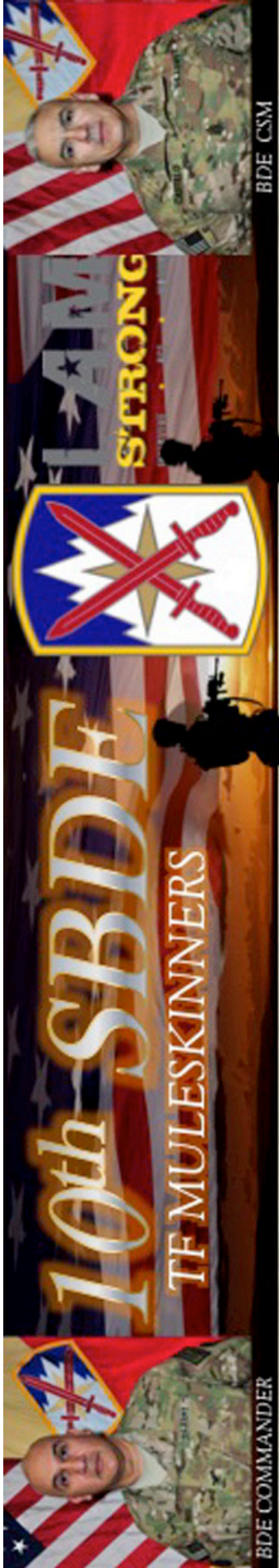
The equal
opportunity program
formulates, directs and
sustains a comprehensive
effort to maximize
potential and ensures fair
treatment for all persons

based solely on merit,
fitness and capability in
support of readiness.

The Army Equal
Opportunity policy
states the U.S. Army will
provide equal opportunity
and fair treatment for
military personnel and
Family members without
regard to race, color,
gender, religion, national
origin and provide an
environment free of
unlawful discrimination
and offensive behavior.

Ultimately,
commanders are
responsible for sustaining
a positive equal
opportunity climate
within their units.

“Communication
at all levels helps
promote the Army equal
opportunity program
by allowing people
to understand and
appreciate each other’s
differences and the special
skill sets they bring to the
fight,” said Henry.



BDE COMMANDER

COL RIOS

BDE CSM

CSM CASTILLO



- Reporting Types: Restricted and Unrestricted
- Have Battle Buddies
- Walk in well lit areas
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Speak Up! Intervene, Act, and Motivate
- Be STRONG!
- 24/7 Support



TF MULESKINNER SHARP

MSG Zielinski

10th Sustainment Brigade

VOIP: 318-431-4012

ROSHAN: 079-304-2825

BLDG# 13982, Bagram Air Field (BAF)

Afghanistan, APO AE 09354

INTERVENE

When I recognize a threat to my fellow Soldiers, I will have the personal courage to **INTERVENE** and prevent Sexual Assault. I will condemn acts of Sexual Harassment. I will not abide obscene gestures, language or behavior. I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I will **INTERVENE**.

ACT

You are my brother, my sister, my fellow Soldier. It is my duty to stand up for you, no matter the time or place. I will take **ACTION**. I will do what's right. I will prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. I will not tolerate sexually offensive behavior. I will **ACT**.

MOTIVATE

We are American Soldiers. **MOTIVATED** to keep our fellow Soldiers safe. It is our mission to prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. We will denounce sexual misconduct. As Soldiers, we are all **MOTIVATED** to take action. We are strongest... together.

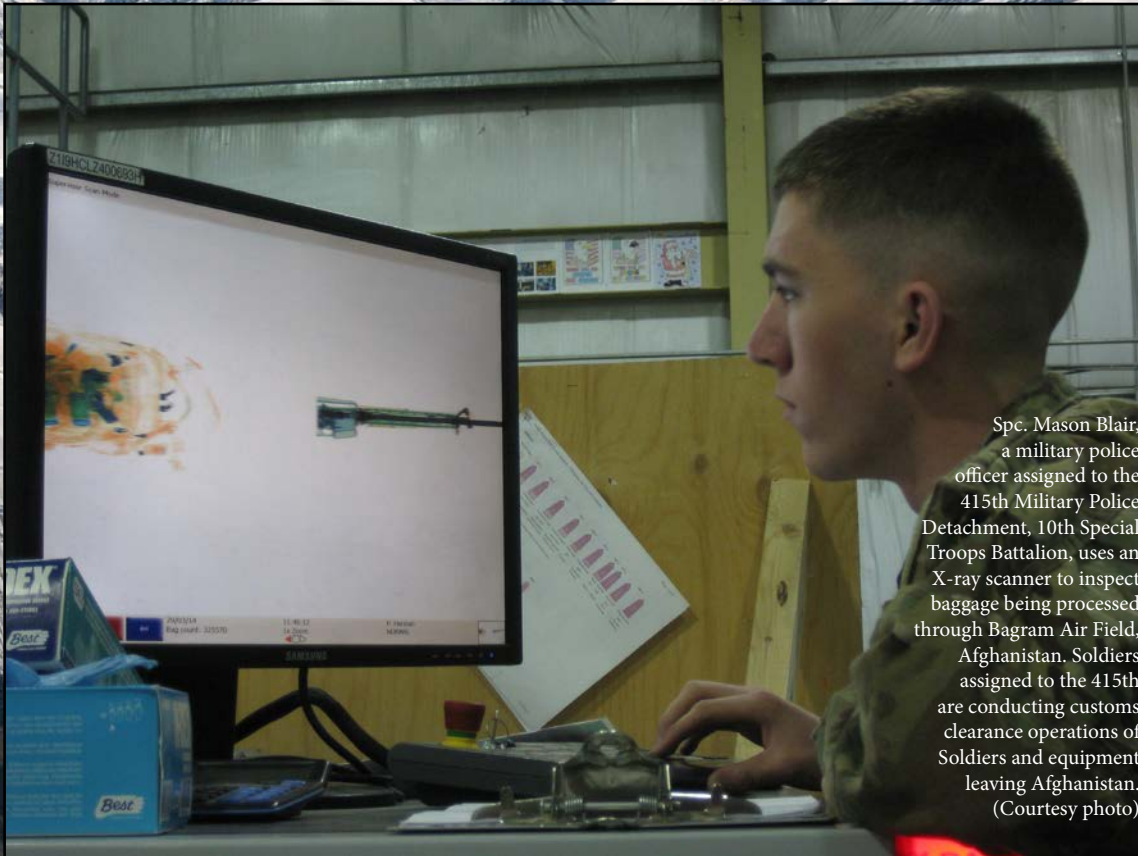
Spc. Tony Stewart, mechanic assigned to the 1460th Transportation Company, a National Guard unit out of Midland, Mich., conducts annual maintenance on Mar. 12 at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan. Mechanics keep the fleet rolling to ensure the mission continues without a hitch, which assist in the support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Courtesy photo)



Command Sgt. Maj. Jose A. Castillo, 10th Sustainment Brigade senior enlisted leader, shakes the hand of Spc. Hollis Shoptaw, motor transport operator assigned to the 1230th Transportation Company, 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, after he was named 10th Sustainment Brigade Soldier of the Quarter. Shoptaw competed against other Soldiers throughout the brigade to earn the title. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)



Command Sgt. Maj. Jose A. Castillo, 10th Sustainment Brigade senior enlisted leader, shakes the hand of Sgt. Teary Ing, team leader assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Special Troops Battalion, after he was named 10th Sustainment Brigade NCO of the Quarter. Ing competed against other NCOs throughout the brigade to earn the title. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)



Spc. Mason Blair, a military police officer assigned to the 415th Military Police Detachment, 10th Special Troops Battalion, uses an X-ray scanner to inspect baggage being processed through Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. Soldiers assigned to the 415th are conducting customs clearance operations of Soldiers and equipment leaving Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)

MULESKINNERS GET'N IT!



MULESKINNERS GET'N IT!



I T H I N K .
I K N O W .
I B E L I E V E .
I . A . M .

As I evolve as both a Soldier and a leader in the U.S. Army, I've come to realize how important it is to rid our community of sexual harassment and sexual assault. By leading by example, I am becoming a better Soldier and changing our culture for good.



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