

PROVIDER POINT

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Heart of the Rock!



Another Chapter Comes to a Close

Task Force Provider Commander
 Col. Ron Novack

Task Force Provider Senior Enlisted Advisor
 Command Sgt. Maj. Forbes Daniels

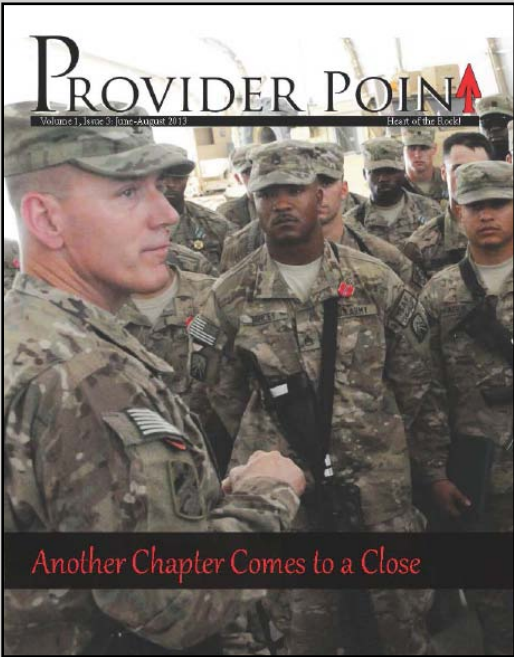
Task Force Provider Public Affairs

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On the cover:
 Col. Ron Novack, 3rd Sustainment Brigade-Task Force Provider commander, speaks with 66th Transportation Company Soldiers, June 13, at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, as they prepare to return home from a nine-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.
 (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)

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Provider 6 Sends:

Task Force Provider Team,

In the winter of 2012, our Nation called on us—the 3rd Sustainment Brigade—to deploy for an unprecedented fifth time. Without hesitation, we answered that call and set forth to support Operation Enduring Freedom 12-13, embracing our new mission and the many challenges that lied ahead. Assuming authority of logistical operations across Regional Command South, Southwest and National Support Element-West meant sustaining the war fighters at multiple, some remote, locations throughout an operational area approximately the size of California. Our task—to provide the war fighters freedom of action unhindered by logistics. True to form, Task Force Provider did not disappoint.


Providers, each of us should be proud of what we have accomplished. It was because of your efforts that the brigade was able to synchronize and provide general supplies, fuel, maintenance, transportation, ammunition, mail, fallen heroes support, and transition support to U.S. and Coalition Forces across RC-S, SW and NSE-W. You couldn't go anywhere throughout the three regions without finding a Provider there, making a difference. It was TF Provider, who thoroughly planned and executed hundreds of convoys and travelled more than one million miles across some of the toughest and most dangerous roads in Afghanistan because we knew, 'Someone was counting on us!'

As another chapter in Provider history comes to a close, we can look back and reflect upon the many accomplishments we've made and the relationships we've formed. The combination of Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, as well as Airmen, Department of the Army Civilians and contractors made up our Task Force, and absolutely everyone was instrumental to our mission success. Each of your individual efforts and contributions had a major impact on the successful outcome of our deployment.

Our nine month deployment would not have been successful without the unwavering support of our families, the Fort Stewart community and all of the Coastal Georgia communities. We thank each of you for the outpouring of support you gave us from Christmas cards to care packages. Knowing we were supported by a grateful Nation inspired each of us to do our best during this deployment.

In closing, I want to personally thank you all for your contributions to our unit, our Army, our Nation and Afghanistan. I am truly humbled and honored to have served among your ranks on this deployment and to help write TF Provider into the history books.

Heart of the Rock!

Sincerely,

Colonel Ron Novack
Commander, 3rd Sustainment Brigade



Provider 7 Sends:

Task Force Provider Team,


The past nine months highlight your unmatched professionalism and dedication to Task Force Provider's mission accomplishment in Afghanistan and to our Nation. Because of the daily contributions, teamwork and mission-focus that all of you have demonstrated during Operation Enduring Freedom 12-13, we can close another successful chapter in Provider history. I am proud of you all for a job well done.

Task Force Provider represents the strength of our Nation. Our brigade's history now consists of five combat tours in the last 10 years. It is because of resilient Soldiers and their Family Members, like you, that we are able to continue to answer our Nation's call, regardless of the mission at hand. Our accomplishments over the past nine months have been astounding. Over 6,000 convoys conducted, 200,000 miles travelled, containers managed, ammunition inventoried, vehicles maintained, supplies delivered, over 5,000 awards processed and many more milestones were only made possible because of our Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard service members who make up our formation. You all can be more than proud of your achievements. Your individual efforts, countless hours spent travelling on some of the most dangerous roads in Regional Command – South, Southwest and National Support-West has demonstrated your unwavering courage and support to the Task Force's success during this combat rotation.

Your hard work '*punching outside of your weight-class*' has paid off. Many of our junior enlisted Soldiers have entered the Noncommissioned Officer Corps during this deployment, and several Provider NCOs have advanced into the senior ranks. We've also recognized a new Soldier and NCO of the Quarter and inducted four NCOs into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club. Many of you will depart this theater of operations wearing new rank, having learned new skills, and perhaps best of all, you've joined the less than one percent of all American citizens who have volunteered to serve in the Armed Forces during a time of war. I am extremely proud and honored to have served with you, and I must recognized the tremendous sacrifice of all the family members who wait patiently for your safe return. The Army is not great because of its weapons, its vehicles or equipment. The Army is great because of the Soldiers and Families that serve it selflessly. Your service makes you citizens of the highest order. All of you can look back with great pride and reflect on what you did for our Nation and for Afghanistan.

As we prepare to return back home to Fort Stewart, Ga., remember to maintain the highest level of standards and discipline, continue to exude a high level of motivation and keep safety in the forefront of all that you do. We look forward to return home to our Family Members who have continuously supported us throughout the duration of our deployment.

Heart of the Rock!

Sincerely,

Command Sergeant Major Forbes Daniels
Senior Enlisted Advisor, 3rd Sustainment Brigade



Combat Dining In upholds tradition

Leaders awarded for excellence

By Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green
3rd Sustainment Brigade

A deployment to Afghanistan has not deterred one U.S. Army battalion from keeping a time-honored military tradition alive. With an emphasis of promoting esprit de corps while taking the opportunity to recognize Soldiers' achievements, the 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, hosted a combat dining in and awards ceremony, May 31, at Camp Leatherneck.

The 87th CSSB-Task Force Pyramid is currently comprised of transportation and quartermaster elements representing all three Army components—Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve. The battalion is responsible for supporting sustainment and transition operations throughout Regional Command Southwest and National Support Element-West. Commissioned and noncommissioned officers of TF Pyramid attended the dining in that fostered togetherness and celebrated Army customs.

Col. Ron Novack, 3rd Sustainment Brigade commander and guest speaker, embraced the liberty to share the importance of living the Army Values with his team.

"During my 31 years in the Army, I've spoken at a number of events, and each time I try to use this opportunity to impart some sort of higher lesson, some thought, that will perhaps stay with you longer than just the length of this speech," Novack said to his Soldiers.

Novack, a Weatherly, Pa., native, discussed the importance of selfless service—service to Sol-

diers, the unit and to the nation.

"These three elements are mutually supporting," he said. "To serve, you must give up yourself, your personal interests and needs for a higher calling without any thought of personal recognition or gain. Selfless service is giving a piece of yourself, time after time, for the betterment of the nation, the Army, your unit, and most importantly, the Soldier next to you."

Novack went on to provide examples of Soldiers who he feels epitomizes selfless service, including Staff Sgt. Carletta Davis, a combat medic with Company C, 10th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, and member of the brigade commander's personal security detachment who was killed in action during her third combat tour to Iraq, Nov. 5, 2007.

"During Staff Sgt. Davis' memorial ceremony on Forward Operating Base Warrior, her battalion commander spoke highly of how she truly lived the Army Values every day of her life and how her selfless service to our nation was a shining example of what selfless service should mean to all of us," said Novack. "Her selfless service will never be forgotten...her battalion commander, (was then) Lt. Col. Ron Novack."

Novack also spoke about the most decorated combat Soldier of World War II, 2nd Lt. Audie Murphy, and Staff Sgt. Clinton Romesha, a section leader assigned to Troop B, 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, who was recently awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions when his combat outpost received enemy fire

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ABOVE: Lt. Col. Lance Curtis, the commander of the 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, presents the Ordnance Order of Samuel Sharpe to Chief Warrant Officer (2) Shabbar Robinson, during a ceremony at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, May 31. The award was presented during the 87th CSSB combat dining in. Robinson is assigned to the 66th Transportation Company.

PAGE 6: Col. Ron Novack, left, the commander of the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, awards Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Simpson, the senior enlisted adviser for the 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, with the Quartermaster Corps Distinguished Order of Saint Martin Silver Medallion, during a ceremony at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, May 31. The award, which is presented to quartermasters for excellence, was presented during the 87th CSSB combat dining in. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)

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from an estimated 400 Taliban fighters.

“Time after time, I watch Soldiers disregard personal interest in lieu of selfless service to fellow Soldiers,” said Novack.

“We must maintain living the Army Values, and when our nation continues to call on each of us repeatedly to deploy, like it has over the past 12 years, it will take leaders and Soldiers with an unequivocal sense of selfless service to win.”

Novack charged the leaders who attended the dining-in to be selfless servants. His remarks were followed by an award presentation to select Soldiers who have embodied the Army Values and excelled in their technical trade.

Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Simpson, 87th CSSB senior enlisted advisor, and Maj. Tony Marante, support operations officer in charge, were presented with The Honorable Order of Saint Martin. The award is presented to quartermasters for excellence.

Additionally, the Ordnance Order of Samuel Sharpe was awarded to Staff Sgt. Jonathan Kennedy, Sgt. 1st Class Frederick Boyles, Chief Warrant Officer (2) Shabbar Robinson, Chief Warrant Officer (2) Nathan Noel, Chief Warrant Officer (2) Romero Smalls, Chief Warrant Officer (3) Michael Warren and Capt. Phillip Dillingham.

Novack said that the combat dining in was a success, and he applauded the 87th CSSB for exercising military tradition.

“Tonight, it is evident that there is emphasis on maintaining customs and traditions in this unit,” said Novack.

“This event is important on many levels, because we as leaders, each and every one of us, need to continue to understand the importance of our Army traditions, which represent who we are and what we stand for as Soldiers.”

Troops take aim at German marksmanship badge

**By Sgt. Tanjie Patterson
3rd Sustainment Brigade**

Fourteen Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade Soldiers earned the German Armed Forces Badge of Marksmanship, also known as the Schützenschnur, July 11, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

The ‘Providers’ received the rare opportunity to fire foreign weapons while strengthening partnerships with their German army counterparts assigned to the 1st NATO Signal Battalion.

“Working with the German army was a great experience, and it was a good opportunity to see how other nations train,” said Staff Sgt. Shane Medders, the force protection noncommissioned officer in charge with HHC, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, and Sylvester, Ga., native. “It was professional, safe and motivating.”

The Schützenschnur is a decoration earned for weapons proficiency and is authorized for enlisted wear on their U.S. Army Service Uniform. To earn the award, the ‘Providers’ had to successfully shoot the Heckler & Koch G36 service rifle as well as the H&K P8 pistol.

Since this was the first time that these American Troops fired German weapons, the Providers first teamed up with the Germans who helped teach weapon familiarization.

“The Germans were subject matter experts on the weapons,” said Capt. Jeffrey Shields, the force protection and antiterror-

ism officer in charge with HHC, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, and native of Fairfax, Va.

“They coached us, made us feel really comfortable with the weapons and were easy to work with.”

After the Soldiers were oriented to the weapons, they then fired into the qualification—taking aim at stationary, silhouette targets from the prone, kneeling and standing positions.

Shields said he appreciates the ‘once-in-a-career-opportunity.’ Although he cannot wear the badge as a commissioned officer, he said the day was time well spent with NATO allies while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



A German army soldier with the 1st NATO Signal Battalion coaches 1st Lt. Matthew Riggs as he fires a Heckler & Koch G36 assault rifle July 11, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Jeffrey Shields)



Safety is priority for ammunition handlers

By Spc. Rochelle Krueger
3rd Sustainment Brigade

U.S. Army ammunition supply specialists are tasked with receiving, storing and issuing all types of munitions and explosives. According to deployed Soldiers with the 63rd Ordnance Company-Task Force Provider, sorting ammunition can be just as dangerous of a mission as those who fire it.

“This job keeps you on your toes; you have to be careful,” says Spc. Jessica Castellese, assigned to the 63rd Ordnance Co. “We are around all kinds of ammunition—even the small arms can be dangerous.”

Castellese and her platoon work at the ammunition supply point on Kandahar Airfield. Amidst scorching temperatures in Southern Afghanistan, these Troops withstand the heat and the dangers associated with sorting through thousands of hot rounds.

“You can never be too careful when handling the ammunition,” said Castellese, a native of Arlington, Texas. “We’ve seen all kinds of things, like taped grenades or blasting caps just thrown into a can. Sometimes you can’t identify (the ammunition) because the label is gone or it’s foreign.”

At the ASP, the 63rd Ordnance Company handles everything from 9-mm rounds to Army Tactical Missile Systems (rockets). The Soldiers assist redeploying units by inventorying and separating the used, unused and damaged munitions.

“(Additionally), my team has to go through all of the ammunition from ranges or discovered on installations to sort out and determine where it needs to go,” said 63rd Detachment Commander, 1st Lt. Becky Deal.

If the ammunition is still serviceable, it is often reissued to units who need it, said Deal,

or transitioned back to the United States. If not, the 63rd Ordnance Company either packages the defected material so it can be demolished or sends the damaged munitions to the incinerator.

“We also have to sort through the brass to make sure there are no live rounds in the turn-in,” explains Deal.

All of the brass, or shells from used ammunition rounds, are also sorted by size.

“This is part of the job that many Soldiers do not see,” said Spc. Kalian Gayadat. “We sort through the brass so it can be destroyed and processed into new rounds for the Soldiers on the front lines.

“Attention to detail is vital in this part of sorting because if a live round gets mixed in with the brass shells while it is being melted, the round could go off and injure someone,” added Gayadat, a native of Boynton Beach, Fla.

Deal said safety is her team’s No. 1 priority.

“My Soldiers understand the depth of the fire power we work with,” she said, comparing the ammunition to an improvised explosive device. “We conduct daily safety briefs. The knowledge of the effects of setting off just one flare helps my Soldiers maintain safety first.”

Helping to ensure safety at the KAF ASP is Donald Turkovich, the quality assurance specialist (ammunition surveillance).

“The most dangerous thing out here is finding unknowns in the cans,” he said.

Turkovich assists the ordnance company by further inspecting rounds and determines if the ammunition is still serviceable.

Continued Next Page

“I have to examine every piece turned in to determine if it is safe and set it aside,” he said. “Sometimes the Soldiers just don’t know what it is.”

Furthermore, the 63rd Ordnance element at Kandahar Airfield is not entirely comprised of “89Bs.” Several Soldiers—like Gayadat, a wheeled-vehicle mechanic—have cross-trained to support the unit’s mission.

“When I first started learning about ammunition here I was skeptical of touching it, (considering) the dangers associated with it,” said Spc. Jeramie Thibodeaux, a petroleum supply specialist who helps sort through ammunition at the ASP. “But now, I handle everything with confidence.”

Spc. Brandy Wilkinson, who has experience with handling ammunition, said the most important part of her job is the knowledge of the munitions’ power.

“You have different classes of munitions,” said Wilkinson, a Santa Barbara, Calif., native with the 63rd. “Every day you really have to have a respect for the munitions and know what it is capable of doing to ensure the safety of everyone.”

First Lt. Rebecca Deal, 63rd Ordnance Company, sifts through 5.56 mm shells at the ammunition supply point, July 5, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rochelle Krueger)

Safety Excellence

Seven units stay accident-free, earn safety streamer



ABOVE: Maj. Tracy Swanson and 1st Sgt. Glenn Myers affix the Army Safety Excellence Streamer onto the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion-Montana National Guard guidon, July 12, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, after going 12 consecutive months without an at-fault accident. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rochelle Krueger)

LEFT: Capt. Nick Linse and 1st Sgt. Ralph Algieri affix the Army Safety Excellence Streamer onto their unit guidon, July 12, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade was one of seven Task Force Provider companies to receive the coveted safety award after going 12 consecutive months without an at-fault accident. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)

By Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green
3rd Sustainment Brigade

Seven unit guidons are now ornamented by streamers that serve as a physical representation of Task Force Provider Soldiers. Inscribed onto the streamers are the words ‘Safety Excellence,’ characterizing the U.S. Army organizations who have exhibited exemplary safety standards for 12 consecutive months. The Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve-component companies are currently deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, and for

one year these Troops went without experiencing an at-fault accident.

Lt. Col. Don Gillespie, battalion commander for the 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, said ensuring zero accidents while preparing for and during a combat tour is a testament to the Soldiers’ adherence to standards and discipline.

“(The Army Safety Excellence Streamer) represents the many hours of ensuring Soldier safety, conducting risk assessments and mitigating risk at every corner, conducting battle drills, pre-combat checks and inspections time and time again,” said Gillespie, during an

awards ceremony held July 12. “This streamer is a representation of hard work and dedication to ensuring the wellbeing and security of each and every Soldier.”

Gillespie and Col. Ron Novack, 3rd Sustainment Brigade-Task Force Provider commander, adorned the Army Safety Excellence Streamer onto the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade; HHC, 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion; 1048th Transportation Company, Connecticut National Guard; 1487th TC, Ohio National Guard; 82nd Financial Management Support Unit; 502nd Human Resources

Company and 63rd Ordnance Company’s unit flags.

The safety streamer may be displayed by each company for one year. Upon expiration, the units may re-qualify and resubmit request to maintain their streamer under the eligibility criteria.

Gillespie said it is rare to see so many companies within one task force earn the coveted safety award.

“Simply put—amazing,” he said about the Soldiers who stood proudly behind their newly embellished guidon. “This is quite an accomplishment.”





Fire Safety training keeps Soldiers prepared

By 1st Lt. Amanda Cookman
87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

Amidst the 120-degree Afghanistan summer, U.S. Soldiers with the 109th Transportation Company, 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, have learned one way to beat the heat and ignited fire safety training with the DynCorp Camp Leatherneck Fire Department, July 28.

As part of the unit's safety stand down day at Camp Leatherneck, the fire department helped raise the temperatures outside with controlled fires and taught the Troops exactly how to extinguish the flames.

The purpose of the training was to share the importance of fire safety in a desert environment. Asheville, N.C., native Tom Parson was the primary instructor for the exercise.

"(Many) people have never experienced a fire (first hand)," said Parson, who has served as a firefighter since 1986 and at Camp Leatherneck

for three years. "This gives the Soldiers a chance to judge what they are up against."

Second Lt. Daniel Stonecypher, the safety officer for 109th TC, organized the training. He said that incorporating subject matter experts contributed immensely to his company's readiness.

"The fire department takes pride in training various units on Camp Leatherneck to ensure Soldiers are prepared in the event of an emergency situation," said Stonecypher.

The Soldiers trained on the Tri-Max Fire Suppression unit, which holds a 30-gallon mixture that produces foam to douse the flames. The fire department presented realistic scenarios that could threaten the unit while deployed and ignited multiple, staged, flammable wood piles for the Troops to tactically extinguish.

Sgt. Joshua Leavitt, 109th Transportation Company's safety non-commissioned officer, said the training was beneficial.

"This training could make a difference one day and save somebody's life out here," he said.

Adnan Hasanaj, DynCorp Camp Leatherneck Fire Department, teaches Chief Warrant Officer (2) Frank Abair, 109th Transportation Company, how to use the Tri-Max Fire Suppression unit as part of fire-safety training, July 28, at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Amanda Cookman)

Montana Governor visits Guardsmen in Afghanistan

By Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green
3rd Sustainment Brigade

The 24th Governor of Montana, Steve Bullock, met with U.S. troops serving in Afghanistan, July 25. His stop at Kandahar Airfield included a visit with the Montana National Guard's 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

Bullock said that his trip to Afghanistan was in part due to his six-year-old son's inquiry about deploying Soldiers.

"He asked me, 'Where are they going,' and 'What do we do for them while they're gone?'" said Bullock, adding that his child was trying to comprehend what it would be like to live without a parent for a significant time period.

"I know that it's been a long haul," the governor told the Montana Guardsmen who sat before him. "It matters; it matters to all of Montana. I fully expect Montana to appreciate and recognize the service that you provide."

The 495th CSSB provides sustainment and transition support throughout Afghanistan's Regional Command-South.

The governor reassured the Soldiers that they will be supported not only throughout the duration of their deployment, but also upon their return to Montana. Bullock said he acknowledges the sacrifices that service members make and the additional skill sets that National Guardsmen possess.

He added that the Adjutant General and current Montana National Guard Commander, Maj. Gen. Matthew Quinn, shares his sentiments about Soldier-support.

"I can't sit here and say 'I know what you've been through,' nor will I even try to pretend that I do," said Bullock, "but, anything we can do as you come home, you just call on us."

The governor then provided the Soldiers with the opportunity to ask questions and voice any concerns.

"It's been an enriching experience for me; thank you for the sacrifices that you make," he said before departing.



TOP: Master Sgt. Ferrin Spivey, assigned to the 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Montana National Guard, meets Gov. Steve Bullock, July 25, during his visit to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

BOTTOM: Lt. Col. Don Gillespie and Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Mooney, the 495th CSSB command team, meet the Governor of Montana, Steve Bullock, July 25, during his visit to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)



(1) Governor Bob McDonnell presents a Virginia flag to Capt. Rodney Rhodes, commander of the 1710th Transportation Company, July 25, during his trip to Afghanistan to meet with Virginia Troops. (2) Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell speaks with 1st Sgt. Frank Mitchell, 1710th Transportation Company, Virginia National Guard, during his visit to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, July 25. (3) Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell poses for a photo, July 25, with 1710th Transportation Company Soldiers at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photos by Spc. Rochelle Krueger)



Virginia Governor visits hometown Soldiers in Kandahar Afghanistan

By Spc. Rochelle Krueger
3rd Sustainment Brigade

Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell met with deployed U.S. service members in Afghanistan, July 25. His stop at Kandahar Airfield included a visit with Virginia National Guard's 1710th Transportation Company.

The 1710th provides sustainment support to the war fighters in Afghanistan's southern region.

McDonnell, a 21-year Army veteran and father of a daughter who deployed to Iraq, said he was proud of the Guardsmen and wanted to personally thank them for the service and sacrifices they make, especially as they traverse throughout the country's dangerous routes.

"You are a terrific unit," said McDonnell, as he addressed the troops who stood before him.

"You're a long way from home; you're doing tough, but very important work, to resupply some of the people on the front lines."

McDonnell added that the Emporia, Va., based transportation company is among the 9,000 Guardsmen who've

served since the September 11, 2001 attacks.

"I can't tell you how proud I am of what you are doing," McDonnell continued. "In most of the previous wars, there was a draft, but this war in Afghanistan (includes) an all volunteer (U.S.) Army. You Soldiers enlisted or reenlisted knowing that you would be put in harms way; you still chose to do this anyway. To me that is the best that America has to offer—an all volunteer service."

As a token of appreciation for the 1710th's efforts in Afghanistan, the governor presented the "Ghost Riders" Company Commander, Capt. Rodney Rhodes, with a flag that was flown over Va. state capital, Richmond.

"Thank you for all that you have done in Afghanistan, and for what's still to come" he said, as he thanked Rhodes and his Soldiers.

"It's a real incredible honor for me as your governor."

McDonnell travelled to Afghanistan with Montana's Governor, Steve Bullock, who also visited with his hometown Troops serving at Kandahar Airfield.





By Sgt. Tanjie Patterson
3rd Sustainment Brigade

Sgt. Alex Myers, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist, was the non-commissioned officer in charge for the funeral honors program in Southeast Montana before he was asked to join the 495th CSSB on their combat tour.

"The unit needed a 74D because the one they had wasn't deploying, so my son Alex not only has that job, but also had the experience from his tour in Iraq that the battalion commander and executive officer were looking for," said Glenn.

Glenn, who was also assigned to a different unit prior to the deployment, was also asked to fill an open first sergeant position with the 495th CSSB. The father and son have been assigned to the same unit since August 2012.

For active duty service members, to have a subordinate fall under a senior that he or she is related to can be considered a conflict of interest, but with the National Guard and Reserve-components, positions are often filled based on availability and experience.

"In some National Guard units you will have family members working together, whether it is brother and sister, husband and wife, or parent and child," explained Glenn. "We Guardsmen are use to that, more so than the active-duty Soldiers."

Glenn said he also had a very

candid discussion with the unit commander about working with his son, and they were able to overcome that obstacle.

"I call him first sergeant," said Alex. "We're here to do a job. It's not about who's your dad or mom or brother or sister. When you come here you have to leave all that stuff behind. When you're in this environment, it has to be a professional setting."

Alex says he doesn't take advantage of the fact that his first sergeant is his dad. He says he uses his chain of command and goes through the proper channels when handling issues.

For the Myers men, maintaining professionalism is not a new concept, either. It began during Alex's childhood when Glenn coached his basketball and boxing team.

"He had to call me coach (not dad)," said Glenn.

Some may think that having your father as your first sergeant would make life easier, but Alex will beg to differ.

"I think that because he's my dad, he knows that I'm a very dependable person, so I get asked to do a lot of things," he said. "I feel that I sometimes have to take on a little bit extra."

First Sgt. Glenn Myers and his son, Sgt. Alex Myers, pose for a photo in 2008. The father and son team are now serving side-by-side during their Afghanistan deployment with the 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. (Courtesy Photo)

Glenn admits that he does lean a little bit harder on Alex but also says that his son volunteers often and 'leads from the front.'

Separating his role as a parent and as a leader may not be a very hard task for Glenn but he still possesses a fatherly concern when his Soldier-son leaves goes 'outside the wire.'

"When he goes on missions, I worry a lot, but I trust in him and his training, as well as in his equipment, that he's going to be ok," said Glenn.

Glenn, who has been in the military for 34 years, and Alex, who has served for almost five years, both joined the Army for some of the same reasons—to serve their country and to be patriots.

"I would tell anyone who is deploying with a Family Member to leave the fact that you are family back home, and keep it professional so that it doesn't hinder the mission in any way," said Alex.

Glenn, who agrees with his son, added, "I would tell them to sit down with their children and tell them that they can't confuse the two. It's important that they remember the Army values, that they're Soldiers first, and the mission is priority."

Side by Side

serving

First Sgt. Glenn Myers and Sgt. Alex Myers, pose for a photo at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, July 11. The father and son team serve side by side with the 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Montana National Guard. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tanjie Patterson)

Father & Son are Brothers in Arms

When it comes to deployments, the hardest part for many Soldiers is saying goodbye to their loved ones, especially to their children. For 1st Sgt. Glenn Myers, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion-Montana National Guard, he did not have to bid farewell to one child, because his son is currently deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan with him.





Deployed fathers say distance not greater than love for their children

By Sgt. Tanjie Patterson
3rd Sustainment Brigade

Although these fathers are thousands of miles away from home supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, the distance, they say, is not greater than the love they have for their biological, step and adopted children.

“Being a military father is hard because I’m not able to be there physically for my daughter all the time,” said Warrant Officer Mergeron Jones, the electronic warfare officer with the 3rd Sustainment Brigade. “Even though I’m gone a lot, I know she’s going to be proud of me when she grows up because she’ll understand that her dad did what he had to, to provide a better life for her.”

Jones is currently deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, and has a 2-year-old daughter. He is serving alongside Sgt. Maj. Gregory Green,

the 3rd Sustainment Brigade operations noncommissioned officer in charge. Like Jones, Green says he strives to make his children proud.

“Growing up my father wasn’t there,” said Green. “He wasn’t around to show me how to be a man. So I knew that once I had my children I would be that role model for them; I’d be that male figure in their life to give them guidance.”

Green is the father of two boys, a biological 23-year-old and a 2-year-old child whom he and his wife adopted as an infant.

“Even though my wife didn’t give birth to our son, we don’t look at him as being adopted,” said Green. “We love him and raise him as if he was our biological child.”

Sgt. Marten Sentence, a training room clerk with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, agrees that he doesn’t have to be the biological father to parent a child. Sentence

and his wife raise three boys. He’s the biological father to a 3- and 4-year-old and the stepfather to a 13-year-old child.

“I have been raising my oldest since he was 1 year old,” said Sentence. “I don’t look at him as my step-child; I look at him as my own flesh and blood. It doesn’t matter if your blood runs through a child or not; when you love and raise a child as your own, that’s all that matters in the end.”

All three Soldiers say that responsible fatherhood is important for the well being of any child.

“To me fatherhood means being there to provide love, care and comfort to your child,” continued Jones. “It means making the necessary sacrifices to ensure that your child doesn’t go without.”

“Not only is it a responsibility to be a good parent, but it’s also an honor to be a good parent,” said Green.

Soldier brings



to workplace

family values

By Sgt. Tanjie Patterson
3rd Sustainment Brigade

Five years ago, 1st Lt. Samuel Oh wouldn’t have expected he’d be in uniform today. As a 23-year-old junior at Auburn University, he thought he was on his way to working in the health care profession in civilian life.

“My parents wanted me to be a pharmacist, and I thought that was what I wanted until I realized during my senior year that I no longer had the passion for it,” Oh said.

Oh, who earned a bachelor’s degree in biomedical science, said he approached his parents shortly after graduation with a proposal to change his career choice.

“They weren’t happy with my decision and told me that if I didn’t figure out what I was going to do, then I had to join the Army,” he said.

“It was at that time when a little ‘light bulb’ went off in my head, and I said to myself that, ‘Yes, the Army isn’t a bad idea.’”

Oh said he went to the recruiting station in Huntsville, Ala., the next day just to get information about the military, but ended up actually joining the Army during his visit.

“My recruiter told me that I should join as an officer, because I already had a degree,” Oh said.

A few months later, Oh left for basic combat training at Fort Benning, Ga., and then moved to Fort Jackson, S.C., for Officer Candidate School.

“Originally, I thought I was going to be an engi-



neer or a field artillery officer, but when it was time for me to pick a branch I asked myself, ‘What is the best branch for me to help out Soldiers?’ So, with that thought in mind, I ended up picking the adjutant general branch,” he said.

Now, as a strength management officer, Oh is responsible for all force structure, manpower, personnel and administration requirements for the 3rd Sustainment Brigade. Oh said he loves his job because it allows him to work closely with Soldiers and form strong bonds and personal relationships, a quality he holds very close to his heart.

“Growing up, my parents taught me that having a good work ethic and great personal relationships is the key to success,” he said.

Oh, who was born in Busan, South Korea, said that his parents always wanted the best for him and his sister. Oh’s family moved to the United States when he was 10 years old.

“My parents worked hard so they could provide us with more than they had, so they moved us to the States so that we would have better opportunities,” he said.

Oh added that he tries to instill into his Soldiers the same values he learned from his parents.

“The main thing I try to do is encourage personal relationships as much as possible, because with our job we have to interact with other Soldiers on a daily basis, and what we do impacts their careers,” he said, adding that he hopes to one day become a battalion S1 officer-in-charge and continue to help Soldiers.





After a nine-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the Kaiserslautern, Germany-based 66th Transportation Company transferred their sustainment operations to the 109th Transportation Company of Fort Richardson, Alaska, during a ceremony held at Camp Leatherneck, June 13. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)



66th TC



541st TC



418th TC

After a nine-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the Fort Campbell, Ky.-based 541st Transportation Company transferred their sustainment operations to the 418th Transportation Company of Fort Hood, Texas, during a ceremony held at Shindand Airbase, Afghanistan, June 26. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)

Transportation Companies Transfer Authority



993rd TC

1710th TC

Capt. Rodney Rhodes, commander of the 1710th Transportation Company, provides remarks during a transfer of authority ceremony June 9, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. The 1710th Transportation Co. assumed operations from the 993rd Transportation Co. who completed a 9-month tour. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tanjia Patterson)

Mission Accomplished

Connecticut Guardsmen transfer sustainment, transition operations to California-based transportation company

**By Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green
3rd Sustainment Brigade**

Over the past nine months the 1048th Transportation Company traversed more than 480,000 miles, supporting the sustainment and transition missions in Afghanistan. Their journeys, however, came to a halt, July 27, as a transfer of authority ceremony signified the completion of the Connecticut Guardsmen's combat tour.

Taking the wheel is the California National Guard's 1113th Transportation Co. The San Jose, Calif.-based unit will now continue their predecessor's operations in Regional Command-South.

Lt. Col. Don Gillespie, 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion commander who presided over the ceremony, said that the Connecticut company exceeded the standards in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"During their time, they raised the bar in all aspects of the deployment, becoming a model company for the other transportation companies to emulate," he said.

The battalion commander added that he expects and anticipates the new team to follow in the 1048th's tracks.

"You have a large footprint to fill, not an easy task for any company," said Gillespie to the 1113th Command Team, Capt. Walter Wade and 1st Sgt. Gerardo Alan.

"However, I am supremely confident that you will fill that footprint and build upon the many benchmarks that the 1048th set."

Wade said that the 1048th Command Team, Capt. Joshua Malaro and 1st Sgt. William Galluci, helped set his team up for success and that he will successfully continue the mission.

"We have travelled different paths to get to this point in time," said Wade, as he also addressed his Soldiers who stood before him. "But, we have arrived; we have arrived here together here as a company, a unit and a family. Our battle starts today, and our victory lies within each of every of you. Victory is defined as our ability to provide support to commanders and their freedom of action unhindered by logistics."

Wade also said that his company's victory will be accomplished through tactical and technical proficiency of combat operations and through unit pride. He bid farewell to the 1048th Transportation Company who returns to Stratford, Conn.

During an awards ceremony the day prior, The Purple Heart was presented to Mansfield, Conn., native, Staff Sgt. Alex Seretny, for wounds received when his unit encountered an improvised explosive device, June 14.

Additionally, 52 Soldiers with the 1048th Transportation Co. were awarded the Combat Action Badge

for their active engagement with the enemy.

Col. Ron Novack, 3rd Sustainment Brigade-Task Force Provider commander, said he was proud of the 1048th's accomplishments and applauded the unit for their successes.

"Remember that you wrote a part of history in our Army," Novack said. "I would fight to serve with this company again."



TOP: Task Force Provider Soldiers bid farewell to Capt. Joshua Malaro, 1st Sgt. William Galluci and the 1048th Transportation Company, during a transfer of authority ceremony held July 27 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

BOTTOM: Capt. Walter Wade and 1st Sgt. Gerardo Alan uncase the 1113th Transportation Company's colors, July 27, during a transfer of authority ceremony held at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)

**Providers farewell 82nd,
welcome 15th FMSU**



TOP: Maj. Paul Sell and 1st Sgt. James Cope prepare to case the 82nd Financial Management Support Unit's colors, July 27, during a transfer of authority ceremony held at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

BOTTOM: Maj. Anthony Weilbacher and 1st Sgt. Michelle Hurt, command team for the 15th FMSU, uncase their unit colors during a transfer of authority ceremony held at Kandahar Airfield, July 27. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)



Providers enter NCO Corps with rite of passage

By Sgt. Tanjie Patterson
3rd Sustainment Brigade

The 3rd Sustainment Brigade partnered with the 311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) to host a noncommissioned officer induction ceremony, July 16, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

An NCO induction ceremony is a way to welcome newly promoted sergeants into the time honored Corps known as the ‘backbone of the Army,’ and it also showcases the pride that NCOs embody.

“The step from Soldier to NCO is a big one,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Ted Cope land, senior enlisted advisor for the 311th ESC. “It is probably the biggest step that any of these NCOs will make. It is important to impart to them the rich traditions and heritage of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps as well as the pride and expectations that come with the promotion; it’s not about the pay but it’s about being a leader now.”

Twenty-four ‘Providers’ were welcomed into the Corps, including NCOs assigned to the Montana National Guard’s 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion; 63rd Ordnance Company; Virginia National Guard’s 1710th Transportation Ceremony; 135th Quartermaster Company and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade.

The ceremony began as Staff Sgt. Jackie Green, HHC, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, narrated Ruth Apperson Rous’ poem, ‘I Am the Flag,’ while the national colors were posted. Third Sustainment Brigade Senior En-

listed Advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. Forbes Daniels said that the patriotic introduction helped make this particular induction ceremony unlike any other.

“We didn’t follow the normal script,” said Daniels. “I wanted to make it interesting and I wanted it to have a credible impact, all while preserving tradition.”

Junior enlisted Soldiers also took part in the ceremony as privates through specialists proclaimed their willingness to learn from and follow their sergeants by reciting ‘A Soldier’s Request.’

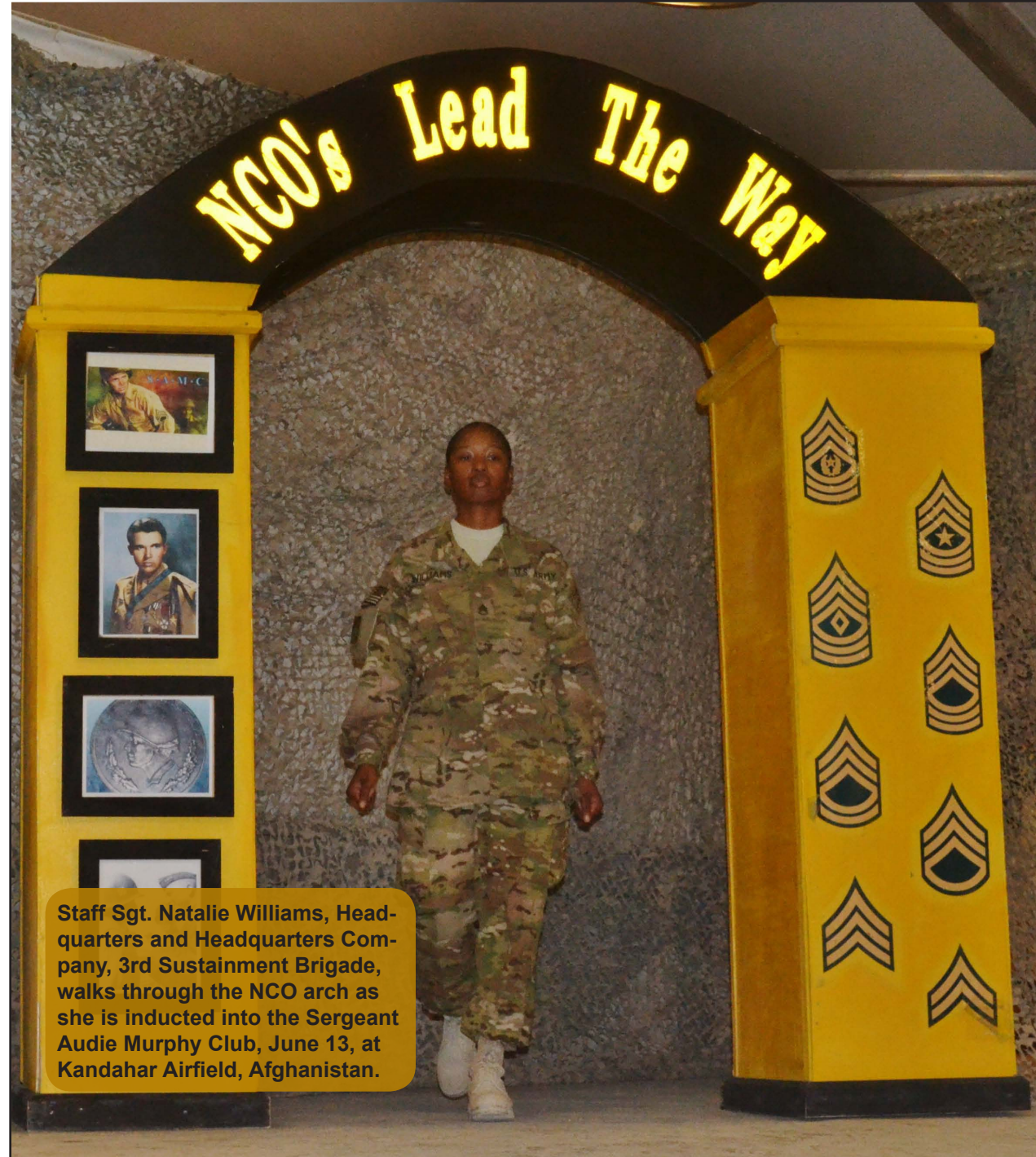
Daniels then led the NCOs through their rites of passage. With their right hands raised and in a resounding voice, the sergeants delivered the ‘Charge of the NCO’ and confirmed their new leadership status.

“I thought the ceremony was awesome,” said newly promoted Sgt. Cody Ramon, an ammunition specialist with HHC, 3rd Sustainment Brigade and Lewisville, Texas, native. “It’s a great opportunity that all NCOs should get to experience. I feel that this ceremony will be one of the highlights in my career as a noncommissioned officer.”

Sgt. Patrick Agwu, transportation management coordinator who also recently earned his stripes, said he appreciated sharing in the experience with his peers.

“I feel like you’re not officially part of the Corps until you have been part of an induction ceremony,” said Agwu, with HHC, 3rd Sustainment Brigade and native of Wichita, Kan., “and, I think that all NCOs should be privileged to have this opportunity.”

Soldiers with the 3rd Sustainment Brigade and 311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) recite the charge of the noncommissioned officer and confirm their new Army leadership status during an NCO induction ceremony, held at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, July 16. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tanjie Patterson)



Staff Sgt. Natalie Williams, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, walks through the NCO arch as she is inducted into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club, June 13, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

S.A.M.C.

Providers enter elite NCO Club

By Spc. Rochelle Krueger
3rd Sustainment Brigade

Two 3rd Sustainment Brigade non-commissioned officers donned the coveted Sergeant Audie Murphy Club member medallion, June 13, as they officially entered into an elite

organization during an induction ceremony held at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

The SAMC, a private U.S. Army organization, recognizes exceptional noncommissioned officers who show exemplary leadership traits.

Newly inducted Sgt. 1st Class Dwayne Taylor, the senior fuel operations sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, said he first learned about the club as a junior Soldier.

"I first heard about it as a (private first class) from my section sergeant who told me about all of the great things that the Audie Murphy Club does for the community and how it supports families," said Taylor, a native of Philadelphia, Penn. "I knew (then) I wanted to become a part of it. Being there for people and the caring aspect has always been embedded in me."

The four-phase selection process for induction into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club began with a nomination by a senior noncommissioned officer and culminated with a final selection board.

"The SAMC is not your average board," said Staff Sgt. Natalie Williams, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the strength management section with HHC, 3rd Sustainment Brigade. "You are not competing against the other candidates. This is a competition with oneself. Becoming a member of this NCO-only, prestigious club was very challenging at times."

Williams explained that joining the club took months of dedicated studying and preparation for a performance test and initial selection board before she attended the final board.

"The hardest part of this whole process was learning about Audie Murphy, attending study halls, the mock boards and the unknown—basically not knowing what to expect," she said.

Taylor agreed.

"You don't know what to expect or study for," he said. "You have to



With the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club medallion around his neck, Sgt. 1st Class Dwayne Taylor, HHC, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, is inducted into the elite club, June 13. (U.S. Army photos by Spc. Rochelle Krueger)

be able to show the board members that you not only know the information, but know how to apply it."

In the end, says Williams, the countless hours spent studying was well worth it.

"This experience was a great accomplishment for me in my career," said Williams, who has 12 years of Army service. "From here, I will share my knowledge and experience with my Soldiers and future SAMC candidates. I will host study halls and just continue to seek out leaders with the same leadership qualities."

According to the Army regulations, SAMC members exemplify leadership characterized by personal concern for the needs, training, development and welfare of Soldiers, and concern for families of Soldiers.

"If we aren't taking care of all Soldiers, then we're irrelevant," said Taylor.

"Now (that we are SAMC members) we have to continue to mold and groom our Soldiers. We must understand and learn the regulations set before us in order to better train Soldiers to prepare them for the next level."

Even though Taylor and Williams have just recently been inducted, they are following in their mentor's footsteps and seeking out new SAMC members. Master Sgt. Sundi Ganaway, the NCOIC of the 3rd Sustainment Brigade personnel section and Williams' mentor, said she is proud to see the fruits of her labor.

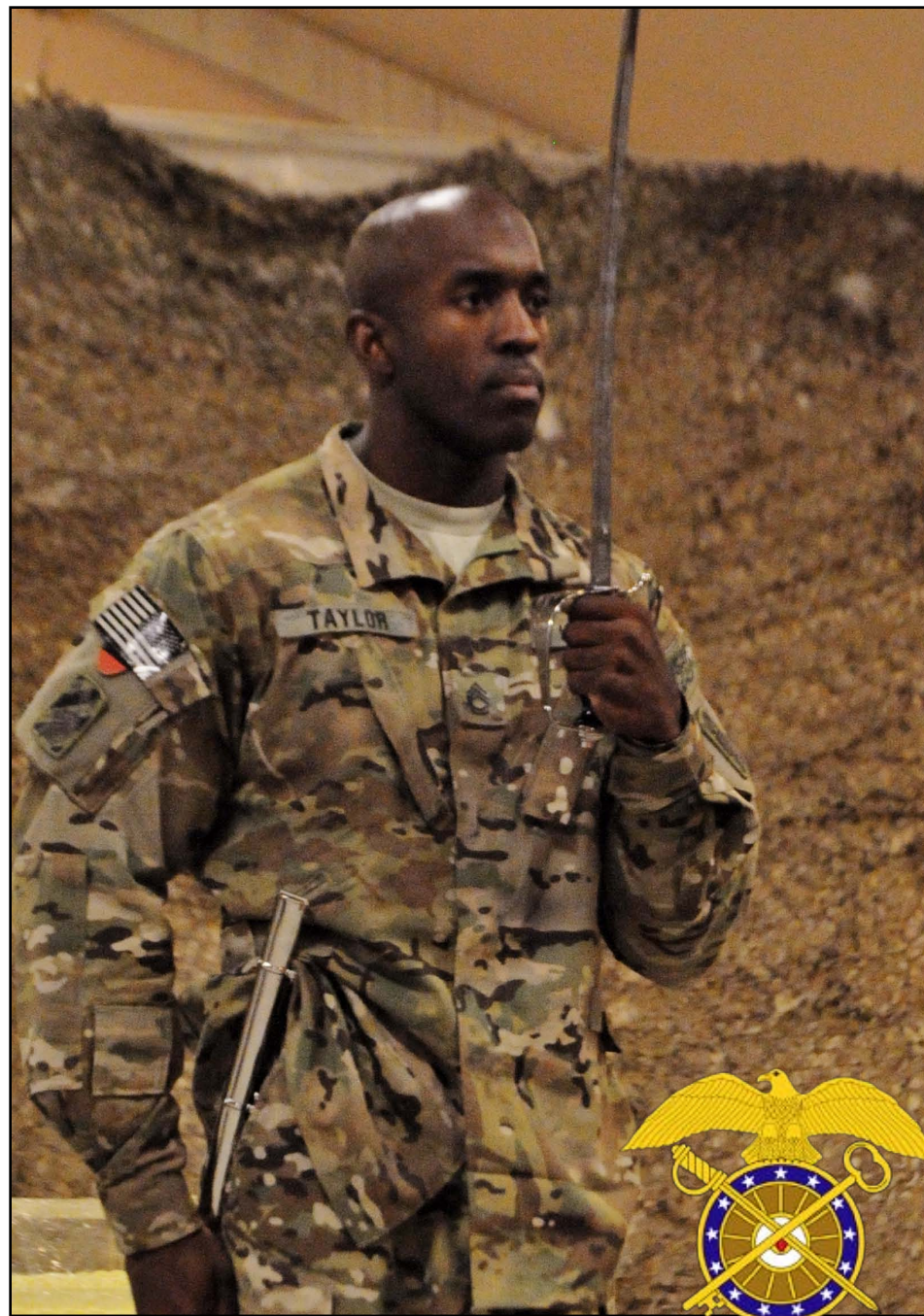
"One of my proudest moments is to see my NCOs get inducted," said Ganaway, a Rockford, Ill., native who has been a SAMC member since 2007. "We are the top two percent of the NCO Corps, and I am proud to say some of my Soldiers are among that."

"I think that is one of the most important things that Sergeant Audie Murphy Club members can do—pay it forward," said Ganaway. "We do that by mentoring NCOs that we see could have a bright future that stands out from the rest."

The SAMC club prides itself on giving back to the community in their area. The Kandahar SAMC was established in May 2010, and although members are serving in a combat zone, they do what they can to give back to their fellow deployed service members.

"We (are hosting) a volleyball tournament in July and another talent show in August," said Ganaway. "We try to at least do one event each month to support the community here in Kandahar."





Sgt. 1st Class Dwayne Taylor, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, recites the Quartermaster Creed while celebrating the Corps' 238th birthday, June 17, at Kandahar Airfield. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rochelle Krueger)

Providers celebrate Army Branch Birthdays

RIGHT: Capt. Roger Hafford narrates an excerpt of the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence branch's history, July 25, while celebrating the MI Corps' 51st birthday. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tanjie Patterson)



Task Force Provider hosts a birthday celebration for the Adjutant General and Finance Corps, June 15, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tanjie Patterson)



ABOVE: Task Force Provider hosts a ceremony at Kandahar Airfield, July 13, to celebrate the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Corps' 95th birthday. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green) LEFT: Sgt. 1st Class Frankie Rodriguez and Sgt. Manuel Torres partake in a birthday celebration of the U.S. Army Chemical Corps, June 25. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tanjie Patterson)

Spc. James Little, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, demonstrates the use of the wig-wag, the oldest flag system associated with the U.S. Army Signal Corps, June 22, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. The demonstration was a part of the Signal Corps' 153rd birthday celebration hosted by the 3rd Sustainment Brigade-Task Force Provider.

RIGHT: Providers celebrate the U.S. Army Medical Department's 238th Regimental Birthday with a ceremony, July 27, at Kandahar Airfield. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Tanjie Patterson)



(1) Task Force Provider Soldiers helped celebrate the Judge Advocate General and Chaplain Corps' 238th birthday, July 30, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tanjie Patterson) (2) The 3rd Sustainment Brigade, with the help of 878th Engineer Battalion, celebrated the Engineer Corps' 238th Birthday, June 19. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tanjie Patterson) (3) Sgt. Desmond Jones, assigned to the Virginia National Guard's 1710th Transportation Company, explains the dynamics of a M915A2 tractor vehicle during the Task Force Provider's birthday celebration for the U.S. Army Transportation Corps, July 31. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rochelle Krueger)



Staff Sgt. Matthew Frazee and Cpl. Nicholas Bess participate in the 400-meter relay event, July 1, during the 3rd Sustainment Brigade's organizational day at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

camaraderie **Organizational Day** esprit de corps

Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, took part in an organizational event that fostered teamwork and esprit de corps, July 1, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. The organizational day included a 4X400 meter relay, humvee push, volleyball, basketball shoot out, tire-flip, tug-of-war and a mystery event.
(U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Green)



Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Winbon and Capt. Paola Davila attempt to flip a tire faster than their opponents, July 1, during the 3rd Sustainment Brigade's organizational day at Kandahar Airfield.
TOP RIGHT: Tug-of-war was one of several events featured during the 3rd Sustainment Brigade's organizational day, July 1.

Soldier-siblings become US citizens in combat zone

By 1st Lt. Amanda Cookman
87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

Spc. Meri Ngiracheluolu-Tarkong, “Lulu,” and Spc. Spal Ebas are both serving with the 63rd Ordnance Company, 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. Not only do the two share a common bond as Soldiers, but they also share a familial bond as siblings.

The two Soldiers were stationed at Fort Lewis, Wash., when Lulu received orders for combat. After Ebas heard the news, he volunteered to deploy with his sister.

“She is my younger sister and I thought it would be better for her if I went on the deployment (too),” said Ebas, a water treatment specialist. “I wanted to show her my support, and I wanted us to come home together.”

Together, the two Soldiers are supporting Operation Enduring Freedom—and together, the two siblings have become U.S. citizens during their combat tour.

Within four months of one another, both Soldiers raised their right hand and took the Oath of Allegiance to the United States. The two vowed to renounce allegiance to any foreign government, to support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and to bear arms on behalf of the country when required by the law.

Lulu received her citizenship during a naturalization ceremony at Kandahar Airfield, March 1. Ebas followed suit and received his U.S. citizenship during an Independence Day Ceremony held at Bagram Air Field, July 4.

“I felt excited and good because this will open up endless job opportunities in the military, and now I can stay in the United States with my children,” said Lulu, an ammunition specialist who is married with four children.

Before their deployment, Lulu and Ebas were citizens of Palau, an island country located in the western Pacific Ocean. Ebas came to the United States in 2002 to pursue an education and opportunities through Job

Corps, a free education and training program designed to help people learn a career and help its members find a successful job.

Lulu joined the U.S. Army from Palau in 2005, for a better life for her family. Six months later, her brother, Ebas, also enlisted.

“With my citizenship, I can now continue to advance in the military, and it opens up the door for jobs, as well as for my family,” said Ebas, who is also married with four children.

First Lt. David Young, Ebas and Lulu’s detachment commander, said he is proud of his Soldiers and understands the importance of becoming a U.S. citizen. He renounced his Panama citizenship in 2006.

“Lulu and Ebas are two of the hardest workers that we have here in Afghanistan,” said Young. “It is obvious their deployment is easier because they share a family bond; they have managed to spread that connection throughout the entire unit.”

Spc. Meri Ngiracheluolu-Tarkong and Spc. Spal Ebas, both serving with the 63rd Ordnance Company, 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, pose for a photo at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, July 9. The siblings, natives of Palau, became U.S. citizens during their combat tour. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Amanda Cookman)



CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

One Last Mission: Reunion

By Chaplain (Maj.) Chris Wallace
3rd Sustainment Brigade

The Chinese word for “crisis” is comprised of two characters: one meaning “danger” and the other “opportunity.” And as we prepare to return home and reunite with loved ones, there is both an opportunity for good and danger in our relationships.

Often there is anxiety and fear as reunions approach, and every Soldier has an opportunity for health and happiness in relationships back home. Some Soldiers return to infants whom they have never met. Some return to young children about four years of age, and the children will have little or no memory of time together. Some return to a spouse and a relationship that was in dire straits prior to deployment, and there is a sense of fear as a reunion approaches. Some return to a teen with concerns about the future.

Whatever your situation, I’ve heard many Soldiers say their biggest concern in life is family. Many Soldiers enter the service to protect and provide for their family’s future. Reunion is a big deal and just as important as anything accomplished during this nine month deployment.

There will be excitement when we enjoy a big embrace with our loved ones. We look forward to the liberty that we’ve missed for months, the comfort of home, free time and hobbies.

Well, **first** exercise moderation. Don’t love it all, drink it all or spend it all during the first 48 hours when we return. Slow down and remain in control of your emotions, spending, drinking, celebrations and every aspect of life. Be smart, exercise some discipline and understand that reuniting takes some time. We’ve been separated for nine months, and it is going to take months for life to return to a new normal, a different normal, and possibly a better normal if you do well.

Second, spend time with your loved ones and ensure they know you love and value them. Listen to their stories from the past nine months. Especially with little children, be excited about their new abilities. Has a child learned to tie their shoe? It’s a small, mundane event, but to them it is an achievement. Share with your family in their new habits. Be excited what they are excited about and jump in with both feet on all the good stuff.

Third, ease back into your family and work into their routines. Maybe your spouse is more lenient with the children than you desire. Maybe the check-book is not kept as accurately as you think it should be kept. Both you and your family may be more independent; so, for the first week, just sit back and observe. There is always time to work on important matters together, but don’t add a hot temper, painful emotions and harsh words to the concerns you do need to address.

Fourth, take care of yourself. After deployment there is often stress, anger, depression and relationships issues. So, expect trying times and work through them. And if you need help, be sure to take care of yourself. A Chaplain is a great place to start, and he can direct you to lots of resources that may be of help.

Fifth, talk and plan with your family about the coming reunion. What expectations are there from each person in your family? Ask your spouse, children and loved ones what one thing they have missed the most. Determine what everyone expects upon reunion. Un-met expectations are painful, and with some communication and planning you can manage expectations.

“Reunion is a big deal and just as important as anything accomplished during this nine-month deployment.”

Before you co-sign a loan

By Capt. Estefania Baird
Legal Assistance Attorney

Many times we are faced with the decision of co-signing a loan for a friend or family member. This situation may arise when your child needs money for college, or when a buddy asks for your help in starting a business. Before making this decision, it is important to understand the legal and financial consequences. As a co-signer, you are basically guaranteeing to the lender that your child or buddy will pay off their debt. If they are unable to do so for whatever reason, you will be obligated to pay the full amount, including late fees and collection costs.

There are several consequences many people are unaware of until it is too late. For example, some states allow the creditor to collect debt from the co-signer before trying to collect from the borrower. The creditor can use the same collection practices available against the borrower, such as going to court and garnishing wages. If the debt goes into default for non-payment, it may become part of your credit report. Also, should you ever need to borrow money for your

own personal reasons, some lenders may consider the co-signed loan one of your own obligations.

The above scenarios should raise a level of concern. As such, there are several steps that you can take before co-signing a loan.

First and foremost, make sure you will be in a position where you can afford to pay the loan. You may ask the lender to provide you with a calculation of the amount of money you could owe. The lender is not required to do so, but it never hurts to ask. You could also request the lender to provide you with written notification should the borrower miss a payment. This will give you time to try and resolve the issue before becoming liable for the full amount. Additionally, you could ask the lender to incorporate a limitation on liability statement, so that you would only be liable for the principal amount, rather than additional costs, fees and charges.

Because the ramifications are quite severe, it is important that you consider all other options prior to co-signing a loan. If you do decide to co-sign, make sure you negotiate the contract to your terms, get copies of all documents and speak to a financial planner.

Prevent injury when mounting, dismounting

By Mark Johansen
3rd Sustainment Brigade Safety Officer

In the Army, there's large equipment that must be mounted and dismounted to accomplish many different tasks. Soldiers must always be aware of fall hazards, especially when climbing onto or off equipment during maintenance or while securing equipment during transport. When dismounting, Soldiers must be careful where they put their hands and feet. In addition to de-gloved or amputated fingers, Soldiers can also suffer twisted or broken ankles, along with injuries to their legs, knees, wrists, arms and upper body.

So what can you — as a leader, battle buddy or Soldier — do to prevent these types of injuries? Here are a few tips:

- Use extreme caution when mounting or dismounting a vehicle.
- Ensure you understand and use the three points of contact method when mounting, dismounting or moving around on the vehicle.
- Break three points of contact only when you reach the ground, cab, turret or a stable platform
- Do not use wheel hubs, machine tracks or door handles for mounting and dismounting
- Ensure the driver or gunner is aware when personnel are mounting or dismounting the vehicle
- Never mount or dismount a moving vehicle. Drivers must bring the vehicle to a complete stop before allowing anyone to mount or dismount
- Never climb in front of a weapon to mount the vehicle
- Wear protective gloves



RETENTION : 35 Providers Stay Army

Sgt. Christopher Rochester	Sgt. Patrick Antus	Staff Sgt. Jennifer Benjamin
Staff Sgt. Michael Rodriguez	Spc. Dalton Carney	Spc. Faamaoni Brown
Spc. Joshua Schmidt	Sgt. Orion Delgado	Staff Sgt. Carol Cartagena
Spc. Cristal Spikes	Spc. Chad Eaddy	Spc. Crystal Eaddy
Sgt. Eric Strassler	Spc. Harley Froland	Spc. Jackson Ferretti
Sgt. Mark Tevis	Spc. Rafael Gonzalez	Sgt. David Geminder
Sgt. Steven Tipton	Spc. Samantha Griffin	Sgt. Chad Graves
Spc. Denver Urbach	Sgt. John Kim	Sgt. Joseph Jefferson
Sgt. Nicholas Vanvalkenburgh	Sgt. Amina Lewis	Spc. Kodjovi Kindedji
Spc. Derin Vrana	Staff Sgt. Michael	Sgt. BJ Lucas
Spc. Myron Wilson	Sgt. Lloyd Bethea	Spc. Jasmine Andrews
Sgt. Cody Ramon	Spc. Constance Alford-Hughes	



**Third Sustainment Brigade-Task Force Provider
Soldiers embark on a mission to support the
war fighter in Southern Afghanistan.
(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rochelle Krueger)**