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Serving Task Force Marne

Sole female team takes on Knighthawk Challenge

SPC. EMILY J. WILSONCROFT
3RD CAB, 3RD INF. DIV.

CAMP STRIKER – Specialists Andrea Hernandez and Kimberly Burton did not set out to win the Knighthawk Challenge – at least, not in any traditional sense.

The two best friends, both from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, said they signed up for the battalion-wide competition, held at 2-3 Avn. Regt.'s headquarters, as a way of testing their own limitations.

"We thought it would be something fun to do," said Hernandez, a native of San Diego, Calif., wiping the sweat from her forehead after completing 54 sit-ups in her first event. "We trained for a month."

As the only all-female team in the competition, Burton and Hernandez knew they wanted to make their mark amid their male counterparts.

"Just because we're smaller, it doesn't mean we can't do the same stuff they can," Hernandez said. "We wanted to show people what we can do."

"I knew we weren't going to win," Burton said, "but once you finish it all, accomplish everything and do your best, you feel good. We wanted to



Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft

Spc. Kimberly Burton, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, assembles an M16A2 rifle as part of the Knighthawk Challenge at Camp Striker.

show everyone that we have strength, we have guts and we can take care of ourselves."

What they could do boiled down to 10 events: push-ups and sit-ups; weapons assembly; communications; preventive maintenance checks and services on a Humvee; dips; bench-

presses; combat life-saving tasks; recitation of the Soldier's Creed and Dog Face Soldier Song; a quiz on their knowledge of their chain of command and NCO support channel; and the most unconventional, a "tire-flip," in

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Task Force Petro delivers food, toys to Gurtan village

STAFF SGT. SEAN RILEY
3RD HBCT, 3RD INF. DIV.

FOB HAMMER – U.S. and Georgian Soldiers helped get food and toys to a small village in need near al Lej, March 18.

Leaders of Task Force Petro, consisting of Soldiers from 13th Geor-

gian Light Infantry Battalion and 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, discovered Gurtan after the completion of Operation Sukihumi, March 7. During the operation, Task Force Petro Soldiers searched and cleared al Wehda, near al Lej. Now, with the area secured, the task force is planning for its revi-

talization.

Soldiers assigned to Civil Affairs Team A, attached to 3rd HBCT, delivered the toys and food to citizens of Gurtan, near al Lej, after assessing the needs of the village.

Company E, 1st Battalion, 15th In-

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TEAM: *team learns new task for challenge*

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which the team had to flip a tire from a Light Medium Tactical Vehicle for a total of 40 yards.

Most of the tasks were not foreign for the two, but still were far from the jobs they do on a regular basis as aviation operations specialists.

This lack of familiarity proved to be an obstacle – especially during the CLS and tire-flip events – although not an insurmountable one.

“Yeah, we flip tires every day for, like, an hour,” Burton joked. Moments before that event, she had good-naturedly lain still as Hernandez worked determinedly to insert and remove an IV from her teammate’s arm under simulated combat conditions.

Burton and Hernandez combined their efforts to succeed not only while maneuvering the larger-than-life tire, but throughout the entire competition.

They even exceeded their own expectations in some events.

“When we first started training, neither of us could do even one dip,” Burton said. Combined, the two had completed five dips in two minutes, each one rooting the other on from the sidelines.

“She (bench-pressed) a ton more weight than she usually does,” Hernandez said of her teammate, who had just finished pressing 125 pounds in the event.

The Soldiers’ platoon sergeant, Staff Sgt. Glen Porter, supervised the competition and said he was pleased with their performance.

“I thought they did an outstanding job,” he said. “They’re great Soldiers, and they showed a lot of lead-



Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft

Specialists Kimberly Burton and Andrea Hernandez, HHC, 2nd Bn., 3rd Avn. Regt., 3rd CAB, 3rd Inf. Div., flip a tire from a Light Medium Tactical Vehicle approximately 40 yards as part of the Knighthawk Challenge.

“We wanted to show everyone that we have strength, we have guts and we can take care of ourselves.”

– Spc. Kimberly Burton
2-3 Avn. Regt.

ership potential by volunteering for this. They’re a good example of what all young aviation specialists should be.”

Although they didn’t win – they

placed 15th out of 20 teams – both Burton and Hernandez said they were glad they’d completed the Challenge and put all they could into it.

The women said they’d be more than willing to participate again in the competition, which was the second of its kind for the battalion during its current deployment.

“We definitely would (compete),” Burton said. “Now that we did it, we can do it again.”

The overall winners of the Knighthawk Challenge were Chief Warrant Officers Robert Rayner and Matthew Groover, Company C, 2-3rd Avn. Regt.

THE Dog Face Daily

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4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division

3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division

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TOYS

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fantry Regiment, and Georgian soldiers from 13th Georgian Light Infantry Battalion provided security.

"Most of the villages in the al Wehda area are in desperate need of medical attention and food, Gurtan was no exception," said Capt. Jimmy Hathaway, the 3rd HBCT liaison officer for Task Force Petro. "With the securing of al Wehda and al Lej, Coalition forces are now able to travel along the routes to assess the infrastructure of the neighboring villages."

Coalition force presence has been nominal in the area since 2006. Hathaway and Task Force Petro hope to turn that around.

"In the past, the village of Gurtan was a mixed society with Shia and Sunni living next to each other," said Hathaway. "Starting around three years ago, the younger adult males were taken from the village by al-Qaeda and other insurgent groups. As a result, the village is composed mostly of women, children and the elderly."

The village sheik's cousin, Rumdan Latef Ali, says the people of his village rest easy at night with the added security Task Force Petro Soldiers are bringing to the village.

"My family is able to sleep peacefully at night now that Coalition forces are running constant patrols in the area," Ali said.

Bronze Star with Valor awarded



Pfc. Amanda McBride

Pvt. Erick Rodriguez, a medic in Company B, 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, attached to 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, receives a Bronze Star with Valor, from Lt. Gen. Lloyd Austin, commander of Multi-National Corps - Iraq March 20 on Forward Operating Base Kalsu, Iraq. Without regard for his own injuries or safety, Rodriguez provided medical care to injured Soldiers after an improvised explosive device hit his vehicle Dec. 12.

Safety Thought of the Day

Antenna and Mast Equipment

General safety:

- Treat all unknown lines, wires, and cables as if they were power lines.
- Always wear eye protection, ACH, and gloves.

Whip/mobile antennas:

- Never touch a whip antenna while the equipment is keyed.
- Tie down the antenna when passing under power lines.
- Never stop your vehicle under power lines.
- Make sure the antenna is not in contact with power lines before dismounting.

- Always use authorized antenna tie down clamps.
- Ensure that an antenna ball is placed on the end of the antenna and secured with tape.

Masts:

- Never deploy a mast near power lines.
- Always ground the mast.
- Do not install guy wires over roads and travel paths and clearly mark them to prevent trips and falls.
- Periodically inspect the mast to ensure it is structurally sound.

Headline Highlights

Pretend veteran; flake nets \$1K; Oreo blamed for bad driving

Man accused of posing as veteran

NEW CASTLE, Colo. (AP) – A Colorado man is accused of stealing an Army veteran's identity and using it for 24 years to get married, obtain free medical treatment and even serve as president of a VFW post.

Mark Mulcahy, 46, faces felony charges of identity theft, forgery and criminal impersonation. He was being held in the Garfield County jail Friday in lieu of \$45,000 bail. It wasn't known whether he had an attorney.

Mulcahy obtained a military retirement document in 1984 in the name of David Keith Anderson of Modesto, Calif., according to an arrest warrant affidavit.

Anderson, also known as David Ronayne, died in a bicycle accident in 2006, the affidavit says.

It wasn't clear if Mulcahy had ever served in the military.

The affidavit says Mulcahy lived under Anderson's name in New Castle, 130 miles west of Denver, and used his identity to have surgery at no charge at the Veterans Affairs hospital in Denver. The upper gastric hernia surgery cost \$6,296.

In 2004, Mulcahy joined a VFW post in nearby Glenwood Springs, saying he had retired after 20 years in the Marine Corps, the affidavit says.

He later became post president but members complained about missed meetings and other problems, and

when state VFW officials tried to contact him, they were told he had moved away, the affidavit says.

Mulcahy married under Anderson's name and hid his true identity from his wife, the document says.

The VA's inspector general began investigating Mulcahy after a phone call from Mulcahy's wife, authorities said, but it wasn't clear how she learned of the alleged deception.

Flakey sale nets Virginia sisters \$1,350

CHICAGO (AP) – Two sisters from Virginia sold their Illinois-shaped corn flake on eBay Friday night for \$1,350.

"We were biting our nails all the way up to the finish, seeing what would happen," said Melissa McIntire, 23. "There's a lot of relief involved."

The winner of the auction, which lasted more than a week, is the owner of a trivia Web site who wants to add the corn flake to a traveling museum.

"We're starting a collection of pop culture and Americana items," said Monty Kerr of Austin, Texas. "We thought this was a fantastic one."

Kerr owns TriviaMania.com and said he will likely send someone to Virginia to pick up the flake by hand, so it won't be damaged. This isn't the first corn flake that Kerr has tried to buy. He said he purchased a flake billed as the world's largest, but that by the time it was delivered it had crumbled into three pieces.

McIntire and her sister Emily, 15, listed the corn flake on eBay last week, but eBay canceled the auction saying it violated the Web site's food policy.

The sisters restarted their Ebay auction, advertising a coupon redeemable for their corn flake, instead of the cereal itself.

The McIntires said they'll likely use the money for a family vacation.

Copycat items have popped up on eBay, including corn flakes shaped like Hawaii and Virginia.

Oreo defense used in Conn. speeding case

SALISBURY, Conn. (AP) – Police say a man's excuse for speeding through a small Connecticut town takes the cake — or, at least, the cookie.

A state trooper who stopped the 1993 BMW last fall says its driver, 28-year-old Justin Vonkummer of Millerton, N.Y., blamed his driving problems on an errant Oreo.

Vonkummer told the trooper that an Oreo had just slipped from his fingers as he dunked it in a cup of milk, and that he was trying to fish it out when he lost control of his car.

Prosecutors learned in court this week that Vonkummer had been charged with speeding and driving under a suspended license — not driving under the influence, as a clerk had mistakenly noted in the court records.

Vonkummer's attorney declined to comment. The case is pending.

Sudoku

8		4		5			2	1
				9	8		3	7
	7					8		
	9	2			3	5		4
			5			1		
	5	7	2	1	9	6	8	
6	3					2		
5	2	1	9			7		8
			1		2		5	

from Sudoku Easy Presented by Will Shortz

Solution to Saturday's puzzle:

6	4	8	7	1	3	9	5	2
1	5	7	9	2	6	4	8	3
3	2	9	8	4	5	7	6	1
5	9	2	1	6	4	8	3	7
8	6	4	5	3	7	2	1	9
7	1	3	2	8	9	5	4	6
4	7	1	3	5	2	6	9	8
9	3	6	4	7	8	1	2	5
2	8	5	6	9	1	3	7	4

ARABIC WORD OF THE DAY

danger

KHah-tar