

THE PACEMAKER PRESS

Following the 864th Engineer Battalion During Its Time In Afghanistan



Feeding for the Masses

864th Engineer Battalion Cooks Feed
Hundreds with Only a Few

Page 3

Construction, Construction, and more Construction!!

The latest and greatest pictures of our Pacemakers doing
what they do best out on the project sites. Pages 16

THE PACEMAKER PRESS:

the official newsletter of the 864th Engineer Battalion while deployed on Operation Enduring Freedom, 2013.

The *Pacemaker Press* is an authorized newsletter for members of the 864th Engineer Battalion "Task Force Pacemaker." Contents are not necessarily endorsed by the Dept. of the Army, Dept. of Defense, or the U.S. Government. Content is reviewed, edited, and approved by the Battalion Public Affairs Officer (PAO). For questions, comments, or concerns, please contact the Battalion Public Affairs Officer.

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Feeding for the Masses

864th Engineer Battalion Cooks Feed Hundreds with Only a Few

Field feeding is a term that often triggers visualizations reminiscent of Charles Dickens's soup kitchen with a large, sweaty man serving miniscule amounts of soup while laughing when asked to serve more. For others, memories surface of the old lunch lady barely acknowledging your thank-you while she slops on what appears to be mashed potatoes beside your unknown source of meat. For the 864th Engineer Battalion, stationed out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, small portions and grumpy servers are nowhere to be found during their field feeding operations on Forward Operating Base (FOB) Sharana, Regional Command East Afghanistan.

As the 864th Engineer Battalion continues deconstruction operations on FOB Sharana and reduces the footprint in preparation for transferring the FOB to the Afghan government and military, multiple civilian contracts that once provided basic needs, including food services for the Soldiers and civilians, have ended. As a result, the 864th Engineer Battalion has taken on an additional mission: field feeding half of the population of FOB Sharana.

"At my location alone," states Sergeant First Class Eldridge Gilbert, platoon sergeant for the 864th Engineer Battalion field feeding team, "my team of nine food service specialists and one motor transport operator, who is assisting me with personnel management, feeds, on average, roughly 760 personnel per meal."

The 864th Engineer Battalion falls under CENTCOM Materiel Recovery Element (CMRE) while deployed to Afghanistan. Most of the units stationed on FOB Sharana are part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). By feeding more than just its organic units, the 864th Engineer Battalion is extending a hand of good will and support towards its sister units falling under ISAF command. More-

over, it's a demonstration that the Army is retrograding out of Afghanistan in an Expeditionary Model.

"This is a natural step in our retrograde progress as we transfer and close our bases," explained Lt. Col. Henderson, commander of the 864th Engineer Battalion. "At some point before the materiel can be moved, before the infrastructure can be dismantled, and before the security forces can stand down, we have to close the dining facilities, chapels, MWRs, gyms, PXs, and a myriad of other contract services that are essential to the suc-

"The person serving is a reflection of the total operation. It is imperative that he or she loves what they are doing and believes in the mission. Morale is greatly affected by the feed fielding team..."

-Sergeant First Class Gilbert

cess of our Army to include critical field support representatives for our advanced equipment, sanitation, power production, operations, maintenance, laundry and so on. This provides a great opportunity for our Soldiers serve in these specialty areas to perform their craft in an expeditionary combat environment which is something that we have not done consistently over the past 12 years of war."

For a field feeding team, duties are split amongst seven positions: administration, rations, floor supervisor, shift leader, first cook, cook, and sanitation noncommissioned officer in charge. Due to the minimal number of personnel and the large amount of people being served, the team oftentimes finds itself understaffed. However,

according to Sergeant First Class Gilbert, being understaffed is a situation full of opportunities.

"When understaffed," said Sergeant First Class Gilbert, "the Soldiers are forced to learn a lot more, including time management and how to prioritize tasks in order to accomplish their mission in a shortened period of time."

"It's a learning experience," stated Specialist Destiny Dawson, a member of the field feeding team responsible for the administration management, "and I'm enjoying every part of it. There are personnel that are grateful for the things we are doing, and it makes me feel good knowing that I can put a smile on someone's face."

Specialist Dawson's duties include keeping an accurate headcount, menu planning, filing all reports, managing the distribution of memorandums, and making sure all requests are reviewed and properly handled.

However, for every yin, there is always a yang.

"Being understaffed," said Sergeant First Class Gilbert, "means working longer hours with one shift rather than splitting the team into two shifts."

With limited number of personnel to serve a large number of hungry Soldiers and civilians, Sergeant First Class Gilbert has employed certain techniques and procedures for a more productive and efficient team.

"You are only as good as your last meal, so every day we strive to make the next meal better than the last," stated Sergeant First Class Gilbert. "They work as a team and each one utilizes their strengths to compensate for another's weakness. In garrison or with a larger staff, everyone will, at some point, serve on the line. (cont'd on page 15)

Commander's Corner

A Letter From LTC Henderson, Commander, Task Force Pacemaker



"Character is the total of thousands of small daily strivings to live up to the best that is in us. Character is the final decision to reject whatever is demeaning to oneself or to others and with confidence and honesty to choose the right" -- General Arthur G. Trudeau

Greetings to all from Bagram Airfield. This will be our last newsletter sent from Afghanistan prior to redeploying... we are certainly all looking forward to getting back to home station and being reunited with our Families. We recognize the fact that it has been a long, hard year for the Pacemakers starting last September when we deployed to Idaho to prepare for this deployment. Many of our Soldiers have been away from home for most of the last year. I could not be more proud of our Soldiers and our Families for the character, perseverance, integrity, and respect for our team that you have all shown while selflessly serving our Nation at war. Your Soldiers' performance in combat while operating in some of the most dangerous areas in eastern Afghanistan has been simply superb. The way that our Families have pulled together at JBLM to support one another and support our Soldiers is unparalleled. In every way that you can measure the success of a unit, the Pacemaker Family has "risen to the challenge" and consistently exceeded expectations.

We are not at the finish line yet though. In fact, the most difficult time to stay focused, stay safe, and preserve our character is now... right at the end of the race. Winning football teams do not let up in the last few minutes in the 4th quarter; this is a recipe for failure. Olympic competitors don't become champions by losing focus at the end of the competition. So now, more than at any other time, we all need to focus on safely accomplishing our mission. We need to invest extra energy to finish strong, run through the tape, and keep our Soldiers and Families resilient and safe. To do this, we all need to reach inside, find the will to persevere, and surge at the end of the race. That's what winners do... and that is the character of our Pacemaker Soldiers and Families. As we all have reached the end of our rope, I also ask that we all exercise a little patience and tolerance with each other, in our formations and in our Family Readiness Groups. This is how great teams do take care of each other; remember that we are "our brothers' keeper."

I know that this all sounds good in a newsletter, but me writing about it isn't going make it so. We all need to have the intestinal fortitude and the integrity every day to make the very personal individual choice to display the character of a winner, to make our team of teams better, and to do everything in our power to bring all of our Soldiers home safe after having accomplished so much over the past year. This next 6 weeks will be a true test of our collective character... the "thousands of small daily strivings to live up to the best that is in us." We look forward to seeing you all next month as we surge at the end of the race, run though the tape, and finish this deployment strong. SET THE PACE!

LTC John W. Henderson, Pacemaker 6

Command Sergeant Major's Foxhole:

A Letter From Command Sergeant Major Christopher D. Tipton

Greetings, to all Pacemakers, Pacemaker alums, families, and friends of the Pacemaker Family.

This last month was very daunting. Our Pacemakers were challenged as we picked up and officially moved the Task Force Pacemaker Headquarters at FOB Sharana and stood up our new expeditious Task Force Pacemaker Headquarters at Bagram Airfield. Many of our companies are still spread over all parts of Regional Command-East, Afghanistan working hard to complete their individual missions. Their proficiency and efficiency have them way ahead of schedule in completing their missions. Deconstruction operations continue to be our highest priority mission for retrograding operations. As stated in previous letters, another step in completing our mission here in Afghanistan and another step closer to being with loved ones.

As many of you back home begin school registrations for your children, know that your Pacemaker wishes they could be there for the first day of school because, for many of the young children, this day is so special. Our children bring joy to our hearts as they grow and change so much while we are away on deployments. As the weather changes from summer sunshine to cloudy fall in the Pacific Northwest, Pacemakers plan to bring home much joy, love, and sunshine as we reunite with you all.

I want to personally give kudos to the Pacemaker FRG and families for all the effort and support put into the Pacemaker Pregnancy Support Program, the Walk to Afghanistan, and the upcoming Welcome Home Celebration. The level of situational awareness provided to our families from the FRG has been outstanding. Our Pacemakers' morale is very high due to your efforts and we look forward to getting the job done over here.

Thank you again for your prayers and blessings as they continue to safeguard us from harm's way. Thank you for what you do and continue to do for our great Pacemaker Family and our nation!

Expect Anything (Aliquid Expectavit), Pacemakers!

CSM Christopher D. Tipton, Pacemaker 7



Headquarters and Headquarters Company Regulators!

Greetings from Bagram. This month our Soldiers have established our new home. Our Soldiers have been working tirelessly to build our new work area from the ground up. The battalion staff has made a seamless transition, maintaining their tracking systems and coordinating the battalion's deconstruction efforts. The CST has remained busy supporting the move of the battalion headquarters, and ensuring the safe movement of personnel and equipment to various operating areas for our sister companies. Congratulations to SGT Knight, SPC Abramyan, PFC Farias, and PFC Reifsteck on being awarded the Combat Action Badge. Another big congratulations goes out to 1LT(P) Benfield, 1LT(P) Bruner, 1LT(P) Caasi, 1LT(P) Davis, 1LT(P) Finley, and 1LT(P) McKenna on



SGT Knight, SPC Abramyan, PFC Farias, and PFC Reifsteck stand ready to be presented their Combat Action Badge.



PFC Reynolds has been a big part of the construction effort to make the BN TOC livable. Here, he is displaying the only tools he used throughout the construction effort. He's also wearing his protective PT belt to be safe...of course.

making this year's Captains list. Our time here is getting short, and everyone is looking forward to their reunions. Thank you to all the Regulator friends and Families for your continued love and support. Regulators!



CSM presents SPC Brock with a Battalion Coin of Excellence for winning the Hero of the Battle.

Forward Support Company Providers!!!

Greeting from Afghanistan!

Last month PROVIDERS began preparations to relocate to a new location and reestablish operations. This new location, the PROVIDERS' home away from home for last 60+ days in Afghanistan, is an improvement as we now have dining facilities (serving four meals a day), PXs, MWRs, an Education Center, USOs, gyms, finance offices, legal offices, chapels, and many more services that make life over here a little easier.

Across eastern Afghanistan, the PROVIDER family will surge our efforts to complete our assigned missions and prepare for redeployment back to Joint Base Lewis McChord. The Distro Platoon is busy hauling the engineer's equipment from various locations in order to consolidate all the material in preparation of the follow on unit taking charge of their missions. Field feeding is still feeding the hungry masses at FOB Sharana as well as ensuring our Soldiers on convoys are well taken care of with drinks and snacks. Maintenance is supporting the convoys in addition to taking a raw piece of land and turning it into the new motor pool. Ops continues to stay busy as they are building walls, desks, and assembling communication equipment for the new company office. The PROVIDERS family can be very proud of the distinguished support rendered during this notable tour in Afghanistan.

Over the next two months, the PROVIDERS workload will increase, life will continue to become more challenging for your Soldier, and communications will experience disruptions as most of the Soldiers will be out on missions and not in a permanent location.

As the Commander, I am starting to see the excitement in our Soldiers' eyes as the vision of successfully completing a very difficult mission draws nearer and nearer, as the anticipation of being reunited with their Families gets closer, and how the sense of accomplishment that can only come from rising to the challenge of serving your country with honor during a time of war becomes more and more real as the mission draws down.

Please except my sincere gratitude to all of our Families and the Family Readiness Group for all your support that has provided us the power to continue the mission through many long days. We would not be able to perform our mission without you all.



2LT Weizorcek explains why his Soldiers have earned the Battalion Coin



2LT Rainey explains why her Soldiers have earned the Battalion Coin

I ask for everyone's patience and continued support to our families and Soldiers as we prepare to go through a transition here in country in order to finish this deployment strong and transfer our mission on to our replacement unit. We look forward to seeing you all safe and sound... and soon.

CPT Islam, Provider 6
PROVIDERS!

557th Engineer Company Animals!!

It's hard to believe how fast August has flown by. Before we know it, we'll return to JBLM. But first—there is still work to be done, and your Animals have, as always, been getting after the tasks at hand with a relentless spirit.

Headquarters section has newly occupied the company command post that they built from the ground up. We're back to full operating capacity, thanks to their tireless efforts.

1st Platoon recently completed the earthwork for the new battalion command post at Bagram Airfield, and began work on the attached motorpool, which will support our replacing unit. Simultaneously, they built a test area and laydown yard for TF Paladin, the lead counter-IED agency in theater. As an indicator of the successful training that 1st Platoon has been squeezing in around



Keeping things clean around the jobsite

multiple projects, SGT Paiz was selected as the Battalion NCO of the Quarter. In recognition of this fine accomplishment, the Battalion Commander presented SGT Paiz with an Army Achievement Medal.

2nd Platoon is also doing construction to support the retrograde effort. They

remain hard at work on the Bagram retrograde sort yard expansion. Of late, they've been working with other units to get buildings and tents set up for the sorting process that is so critical to a successful retrograde.



You've got mail! 557th Soldiers support the installation of communication lines for rapid email access to keep the battalion running smoothly

undaunted in the face of the ever more-rugged living conditions, which is a reflection of the outstanding leadership and motivation that 3rd Platoon has become well-known for on their project sites.

Hearty congratulations are due to SGT Valderrama and his sponsor, SGT Weaver, both of 3rd Platoon. The pair recently returned from representing the Animals at the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) Soldier of the Year competition in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. SGT Valderrama won and will next compete for the U.S. Army Soldier of the Year, a truly impressive honor. We wish SGT Valderrama the best of luck at his next and final competition.

The maintenance section continues to work

efficiently, both at Bagram and at Warrior, to keep the line platoons' equipment fully operational. They've recently increased the rate at which they complete periodic services while also teaching the operators more about their equipment. Also this month we congratulate Staff Sergeant Sanchez on his promotion; well deserved!

At this point in the deployment, we've hit our stride and are beginning to look forward to going home. The biggest remaining challenge for most of the company is the tendency towards complacency. So, while your Animals surely can't wait to rejoin you at JBLM, we're working hard to stay disciplined



Command maintenance is a team effort

thoughts over these few remaining months.

Animals lead the way!

CPT Richard A. Mahn, P.E., PMP
Commander, 557th Engineer Company



3rd Platoon

585th Engineer Company Roughnecks!!

Hello Roughneck Family and Friends,

It is crunch time. We have just two short months left of the deployment and only a month left of deconstruction. The Roughnecks are closing in on their last projects and time is speeding up as FOB Sharana is in the final stages for closure as the first major Forward Operating Base in Afghanistan to be deconstructed. To note, the Roughnecks have moved into a "lifeboat" here on FOB Sharana in order to facilitate the closure.

The 1st Platoon Nomads have been working hard this past month on both FOB Sharana and Bagram Airfield. Their main focus has been on Bagram Airfield where they constructed a footprint to prepare for the relocation of not only our own company but also the Battalion Staff, HHC, Forward Support Company, 557th Engineer Company, and 617th Engineer Company from all the surrounding FOBs and COPs. Additionally, they have constructed multiple Large Area Maintenance Shelters (LAMS) to create a retrosort yard on Bagram Airfield to handle all the materiel from the closure of FOBs and COPs across Afghanistan. On FOB Sharana, the Nomads have been diligently working to deconstruct clamshells and descope multiple wooden structures.

Over the past month, 2nd Platoon Hell Hounds have also been working on several FOBs. Their main focus has been on FOB Sharana, where they have been deconstructing clamshells and descope buildings for the 1220th Engineer Company to demolish. The Hell Hounds also have a team of Soldiers assisting 617th Engineer Company to deconstruct tents and descope wooden structures at another FOB in Regional Command North. And lastly, the Hell Hounds sent a dynamic duo to an outreaching FOB to provide electrical support for 557th Engineer Company and to increase the quality of life for the Soldiers on that FOB.



CSM Tipton talks to some of the Hell Hounds at their project site.

Keeping with the trend, the 3rd Platoon Titans have been conducting deconstruction missions on two separate locations this past month. They have continued, in their own flavorful Titan way, to work hard and maintain a constant stream of jokes and pranks. They have deconstructed several giant canvas and aluminum tents, even more wooden structures, and all of our old living tents which were smaller canvas and aluminum tents. Along with the rest of the company, the Titans executed a mass move and now are living two Soldiers to a room. As a result the number of pranks has inevitably increased as well as the level of creativity. SGT Green and SPC Klesick mastered convoying on their homemade stick horse "Silver". Silver was lovingly created out of cardboard, duck tape, a broken broom handle and aluminum custom seals. Throughout the physically demanding work, ridiculous antics and latrines backing up, the Titans have maintained their impressive level of moral and camaraderie, while focusing on the mission.

The Maintenance Platoon Reapers have been exceptionally busy this past month. After moving and reestablishing an entire motorpool, the platoon has continued to excel in maintaining the Roughneck vehicle fleet. In addition, the Reapers have assisted with the deconstruction of several sites on FOB Sharana to include the old living area and the old motor pool.

The month of August has been a busy one for the Headquarters Platoon. In this past month they "jumped" the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) from the Battalion area to the life boat area, not an easy feat. They also worked to send back organizational equipment to cut back on the amount of equipment the company has in theater in order to "get small" and prepare for the re-deployment. The upcoming months will continue to be hectic during the company's relocation to BAF.

On the home front, we would like to welcome three newborns into the Roughneck family: Madison Galton, Carter Lewis, and Aiden Jemelle January. Congratulations!

Overall, the pace of the deployment has picked up in preparing for the last push to arrive safely back at JBLM. Despite the endless set of projects, motivation continues to remain high as everyone can see the light at the end of the tunnel. We all are excited for that last flight home and to be reunited with everyone back home.

Sincerely,

1LT John S. Jacobs, Roughneck 5



SPC Rahm works on building a stair case for one of the new tents.



All together! Nomads prepare to move one of the arches on a LAMS-A tent.

617TH ENGINEER COMPANY TRAILBLAZERS!!

Another month past in the deployment and it has been a busy one. We have been working deconstruction operations throughout RC-East and RC-North. 1st Platoon continues to work deconstruction operations and have been responsible for the deconstruction of

several large wood buildings, installing culverts, and improving drainage. 2nd Platoon has been supporting the Company in an upcoming move to another base. They are also assigned an interesting and chal-

lenging mission of repairing a large section of washed out road in Afghanistan. 3rd Platoon continues to work on deconstruction operations in Northern Afghanistan. They have had the unique challenge of working with contracted equipment from local Afghan contractors. Maintenance Platoon continues to support all three line platoons. Headquarters Platoon is focusing on the massive flow of administrative actions to include processing end of tour awards, leave forms, and acting as the spear head for the Company's move.

Great performance this month by PFC Prisyazhnyuk who won both the Battalion and the Brigade Soldier of the Quarter Board. Several Soldiers in the Company received Impact Army Achievement Medals due to their hard work and success on repairing the base perimeter and providing medical aid.

The Soldiers that received AAMs were SSG Hoke, SGT Ballard, SGT Steen, SPC Bevell, SPC Linn, SPC Morvant, SPC Vavra, PFC Gaud, PFC Miller, PFC Salwasser, PFC Tatum, and SPC Chopper. We had several Soldiers promoted this month. Soldiers that were promoted to Specialist this month were SPC Adams, SPC Agresta, SPC Bernosky, SPC Chopper, SPC Clavette, SPC

Collazo, SPC Denyer, SPC Duncan, SPC Nelson, SPC Randolph, SPC Smith, SPC Huber, and SPC Long.

As a reminder, after September 15th you should no longer send mail to your Soldier. There is a chance he/she will not receive it in time if you send it after that date. The FRG Leader or your POC can provide information on the mailing address if you have any questions. Thank you for your continued support from the States.

Your support and effort to your Soldiers and the Company during the deployment have been outstanding and critical to our success. As always, never hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

CPT Karoline Hood
Trailblazer 6, "Clear the Way"

This has been a great month for the gladiators of 1st Platoon. As the company has begun to transition, 1st Platoon has become the main effort for deconstruction operations. We've have been working very hard to complete this mission with the degree of excellence the Gladiators are known for. This month's work has been highlighted by several specialty jobs including culvert installation, the emplacement of an interior cordon to the FOB, and the construction of a counter I.E.D. training lane.

2nd Platoon Gravediggers have had a busy month conducting a variety of operations. The platoon completed our deconstruction missions by demolishing buildings. As soon as deconstruction concluded, 2nd Platoon began training and preparing their equipment for their upcoming mission. The platoon did an excellent job through-

out the training ensuring that everyone was prepared.

3PLT has spent the last month deconstructing in the northern provinces of Afghanistan. After two weeks and numerous hours of waiting in flight terminals, the entire platoon finally made it. During the past month, the platoon has done extensive deconstruction. The biggest struggle for the platoon has been learning to use and fix local engineer equipment. The maintenance team has worked tirelessly with one tool box and no ability to order parts to keep the platoon powering forward to complete the mission. As the end of the deployment draws near, the platoon is ready to finish this last mission and come home. This will be the most challenging mission for the platoon.

During the past month, the maintenance platoon has continued to maintain the fleet which has allowed for mission accomplishment. We have had to coordinate with various assets across Afghanistan in order to ensure that we get parts to where we need them in the fastest time possible. In addition to supporting our Company, we have also been supporting the 101st Airborne with maintenance as they need to it.

This past month, Headquarters Platoon has continued to help make the company function. HQ has been busy preparing the company for redeployment by planning and conducting inventories. PFC Hancock continues to administer vaccinations for the soldier's in the company. This month has been particularly exciting as SPC Burgerhoff was laterally promoted to the rank of Corporal. We'd like to thank all the families in supporting our morale by sending care-packages.



Working hard at the construction site



Maintenance, it never stops.



PFC Hancock is excited to administer a shot to 1LT Sullivan.

84th Survey and Design Detachment Trojans!!

Trojan Families and Friends,

This month, the Trojan's primary mission focus was helping the battalion get established in its new home on Bagram Airfield. The Soldiers of 84th EN DET have built floors for the tents, assembled tents, built walls and doors, hooked up A/C units, dug trenches, wired up generators and much more. The days were long and hot, but the Trojans worked diligently and accomplished a lot.

While the primary focus was on setting up Battalion, there was still survey work to be done. SGT Sanchez and PFC Rivera are working on the TF Paladin project making sure that the final drainage and elevations are meeting the original designs. SGT Mangiapane, SPC Babb, and PFC Francis continue to work on the BAF Retro-Sort Yard. The project has spanned over 5 months, but they are only a few weeks away from completion. SGT Kearney and PFC Lao are currently creating "AS-BUILT" drawings for the battalion area of operations. SPC Myrum and PFC Lao designed and provided survey support for the 864th Motorpool construction. SPC Lampman and PFC Burnside have been the building workhorses for the Detachment this month with hammers, nails, saws, and other implements of construction. One of their carpentry projects was to construct the deck outside of the Survey Team Room with a camouflage net for cover. SPC Boling is working with the BAF Land Management team collecting information on unit locations and building maps for future planning. As always, SFC Villa, SSG Ingoglia, and SSG Swanson have been behind the scenes making sure the work is getting done to standard, mentoring the junior leaders, and ensuring mission success.

We are in the home stretch for the deployment now and with a little over a month of hard work, our ADVON Trojans will be getting ready to make their flight back home. However, we can't and won't lose our focus this close to the end.

Best regards,
Trojan 6



In a rare, serious moments, the Trojans get together for a detachment picture.



PFC Lao and SPC Myrum digging a trench outside the new battalion area.

1220th Engineer Company Muskogeese!!

The month of July is finally in our rear view mirror and we are pushing forward into August, with an increase in momentum. There have been a lot of operations ongoing, for the 1220th, since the last newsletter was published.

That being said, the Soldiers of the 1220th continue to accept and overcome all challenges presented to them. These Soldiers have continued to amaze everyone; they have worked with or for, with their ingenuity and outstanding work ethic. Their efforts have greatly impacted the retrograde operations in RC East and have built quite the reputation for those who wear the Thunderbird patch in this area.



With this reputation comes expectations that if we are given a task it will get done in excellent fashion. These outstanding Soldiers are certainly representing themselves with pride and representing the State of Oklahoma with dignity and honor. Their individual and team effort are major a factor in the success of the CMRE mission.

"Clear The Way!"

CPT Josh D. Lawson
1220th Eng Co

I would like to start this newsletter by congratulating our FRG Coordinator, Mrs. Amanda Howe, the wife of SFC David Howe. She was recognized for her outstanding contributions to the unit by recently being selected as the state of Oklahoma's Outstanding FRG Leader of the Year. Amanda has worked tirelessly for our FRG and is more than deserving of this accolade!

Since our last newsletter, we have been able to get the entire company consolidated into one area again. The living conditions are cramped, but still fairly comfortable. It's also a lot more convenient to get to the equipment since the motor pool is located in the same general area.

The company has been extremely busy working to prepare the post for handover. The post is looking more and more like a ghost town. The work that is being done by these soldiers is impressive to say the least. They are always thinking outside the box. They have developed a new procedure in destroying buildings called B-Huts. Rather than tearing down the entire structure and hauling it off in dump trucks, they have developed a procedure to lift the wooden structure and load it on a flat bed trailer in order to move



the entire structure to the dump site. I'm sure many of you have seen the videos posted on facebook.

The maintenance section has also been surpassing

all expectations. Working on equipment that has been in theater for several years. They seem to get everything back in operating condition to allow the construction platoons the ability to take care of their missions in a timely manner. They also repair generators around our area. These generators power our living quarters and better our quality of life.

I guess it comes back to a good solid work ethic. The soldiers of this company have a tremendous work ethic that is seen throughout the base. I've been told that when the Thunderbird patch is seen they know the job will get done! To hear these compliments gives me a tremendous sense of pride. These guys work their tails off every day; not because someone is cracking a whip to make them work, but because these soldiers take pride in what they do!

As always, I am going to continue to ask for assistance from the families for information on any issues that they might recognize as detrimental to the mental health of their Soldier. Due to the time change, email is still the best option to contact me.

Thanks for all you do!

"Clear The Way!"

1SG David B. Curtis
1220th Eng Co



Tips for Spouses and Families coping while a Soldier is De- ployed:

- Include breaks in daily routines
- The parent at home needs to have a regular "Mommy's/Daddy's day out"
- Encourage all Family members to share feelings, re-assure your partner of your love and commitment, and try to see the deployment as a challenging opportunity for growth.
- Communication is important between the Soldier and Family member. It is important to keep in touch; however, try to end phone conversations and letters on a positive note.
- Give children a method of measuring the passage of time.
- Make sure your spouse's parents are kept informed. The Soldier's parents share your concerns about the health and welfare of their deployed son or daughter.
- Keep children involved with outside activities and maintain constant communication with schools.

For more information access:

<https://www.militaryonesource.com>

Have a Question Regarding Your Soldier's Company's FRG?

Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA)

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New and Expecting Mothers!

The Pacemaker family wishes to offer support through the Pacemaker Pregnancy Support Group!

Check it out on
Facebook!

Search

Pacemaker Pregnancy Support Group.

864th Engineer Battalion Welcome Home Celebration



November 14th, 2013

Emerald Queen Casino

For Service Members And Their Guests (18+)

25\$ E4 and Below, 30\$ E5-E6, 35\$ E7 and Above-Cash or Check

Please Contact 1LT Tom Kutnink at

thomas.d.kutnink.mil@mail.mil M-F 9AM-5PM

Tickets will be sold until 7 NOV 2013

(cont'd Field Feeding) But with our limited personnel, we must put the most consistent customer-service oriented person behind the food line. The person serving is a reflection of the total operation. It is imperative that he or she loves what they are doing and believes in the mission. Morale is greatly affected by the field feeding team and if one member is having an 'off' day, I cannot have them serving the customers, and this can be a challenging rotation at times."

The field feeding team has not been operating alone. Civilians working for AMC have helped out by providing mechanics, construction crews, and transportation. In the words of Sergeant First Class Gilbert, their help "increased" the manageability of the mission. Overall, the Soldiers of the field feeding team are managing this difficult task with professionalism, self discipline, and hard work.

How can Sergeant First Class Gilbert tell?

"At the end of the night," he says, "I can see the exhaustion in their eyes. However, the staff is well trained and many on their third or fourth deployment, so they make it look easy. We may be small in numbers, but I am proud to work with this group of Soldiers because they are huge in heart. There is a lot that goes into preparing meals for large amounts of people, and truth be told, we can never please every customer. I just love the fact that these Soldiers still try!"

"I always look at things or life as 'you get out of it what you put into it'," stated Specialist Dawson. "If you put your all into it, then you can expect to succeed."



In order to help out the battalion, many Soldiers have gone outside the duty description of their MOS to conduct construction operations to ensure the battalion is established. Here, PFC Reynolds, a 12B, constructs a doorway to an office.

Pacemaker Baby News!



Congratulations to SGT Gable, 617, and his wife on the birth of their daughter Delilah Gable!

Pacemaker Volunteers of the Month

The Pacemakers would like to recognize Mr. Herb Schmeling and Mr. Andrew Oczkewicz, workers at the USO, for their outstanding work helping the Pacemakers this month.

They have been kind enough to organize and distribute food for the Pacemaker Soldiers prior to them getting on the plane to leave for Afghanistan.

Moreover, these two have arranged so that the Pacemaker Soldiers are never short on Girl Scout Cookies or toiletries.

These two gentlemen have also arranged so that every Soldier that is part of the Single Soldier Project is not without toiletries when they re-deploy.

And finally, on the Walk to Afghanistan's first event, they arranged for the USO to provide food and water for the participants.

Thank you Mr. Schmeling and Mr. Oczkewicz for your tireless work and helping hands to aid our Pacemaker Soldiers and family during the deployment! It is much appreciated!!



1220th Engineer Company Soldiers discovered a faster way to deconstruct small structures: move it as a whole instead of taking it apart piece by piece.



Because the battalion moved to a new location, new TOC areas had to be constructed out of Alaskan tents. Here, 585th puts together the interior of a tent.



In addition to deconstruction, the battalion has also been constructed multiple projects. In order to help the retrograding process, 585th built two LAMS-A tents that will later be used as storage and holding areas for CMRE sorting



With a new battalion area comes a new place to park all of our vehicles. Here, 557th Soldiers are moving earth as they work on the new battalion motorpool



Communication is very important for all the companies. Here, 84th Soldiers are digging a small trench for commo lines to be laid.



Another view of the new battalion motorpool.