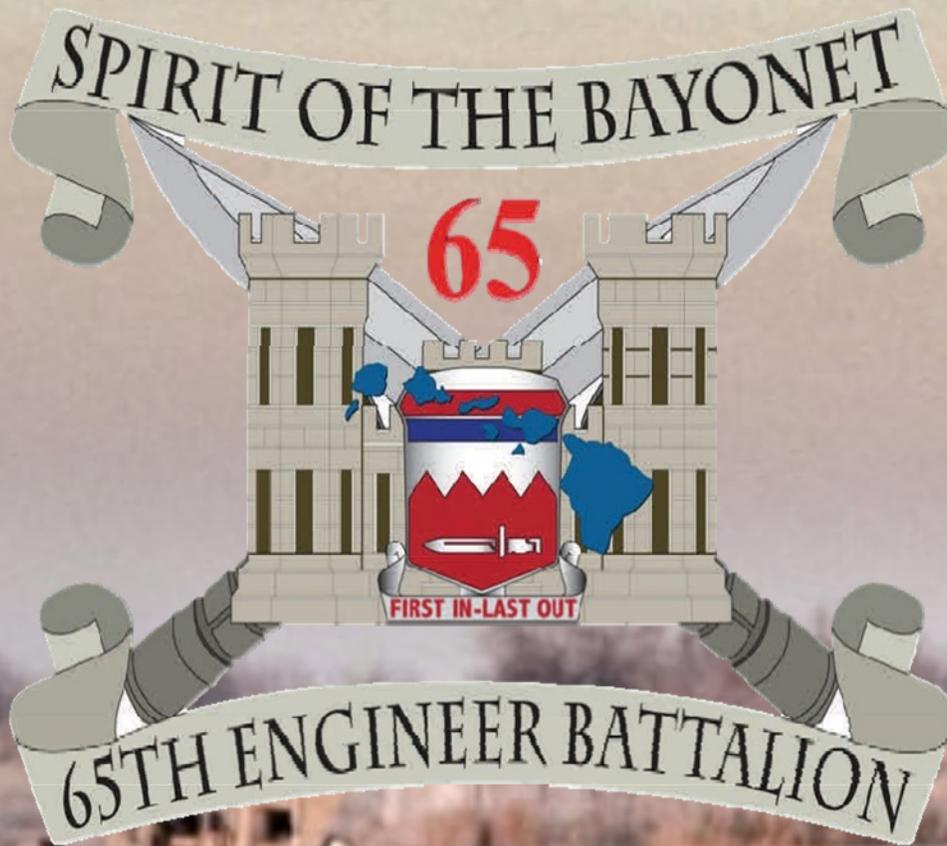


TASK FORCE BAYONET

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Featured In This Issue:

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BAYONET UPDATE

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Aloha Friends and Family of Task Force Bayonet,

We are one month into the New Year and one month into our new task organization under CJTF-4. I am happy to report that the Soldiers of TF Bayonet continue to impress CSM McVicker and me on a daily basis. The dedication and demonstrated competence of the Soldiers of TF Bayonet have earned us a reputation as quiet professionals amongst our new higher headquarters, and we intend to guard this closely through the remaining months of this deployment.

With a new higher headquarters came some interesting and unique opportunities for TF Bayonet to positively contribute to this fight. We are eager to support our new teammates through these new mission sets, and the agility of this team has become the trademark of TF Bayonet. I told this TF prior to the deployment that the true test of their talents, professionalism and leadership would not be their ability to perform the tasks they trained on, but their ability to take on those tasks they are asked to perform for which they did not train. I am proud to say that this TF has risen to every challenge, every mission and every task with genuine commitment and grit, and we continue to look for additional opportunities to make a difference in Regional Command South. As always, we want to thank the Families and Friends of TF Bayonet for the sacrifices you make every day while your Soldiers are deployed. We appreciate everything you do!

We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter, and we look forward to the day when we can be reunited and "talk story." Until then, God bless – First In, Last Out!

LTC David Acker - BAYONET 6



Camp Hero, Afghanistan-LTC Acker and CSM McVicker stand with their Afghan and Bulgarian counterparts after a key leader engagement.

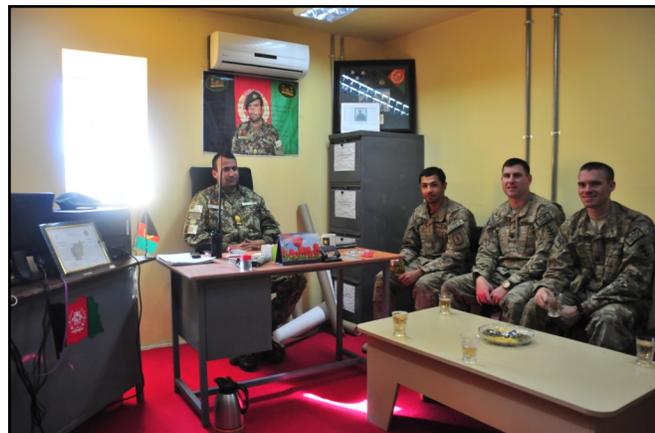
Aloha from the office of the Task Force Bayonet CSM,

As we hit the mid-point of the deployment, the Officers, NCOs and Soldiers continue to demonstrate vigilance and embody the standards of discipline expected of a Bayonet Soldier. Standards of Discipline are the basic characteristics that quickly separate great units from the rest of the pack.

This month Soldiers and NCOs from across the task force came together to represent their respective units as three NCOs and three Soldiers endured the Spirit of the Bayonet Challenge to determine the top Soldier and NCO for 1st Qtr FY14. At the conclusion of the event, the top Non-Commissioned Officer for 1st Qtr FY14 was SGT Laura Rehmert from Headquarters and Headquarters Company and PFC Terry Martin from the 82nd Engineer Support Company.

Congratulations to the participants and I patiently await the upcoming 2nd Qtr competition in March. So in the mean time, hone your basic Soldier knowledge and hit the gym in order to bring your "A" game.

Mahalo,
CSM Harold McVicker III - BAYONET 7



Camp Hero, Afghanistan-LTC Acker and CPT Milligan have tea with Command Sergeant Major Faridullah, 205TH Corps Engineer Kandak Command Sergeant Major.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

Another month has flown by as we continue to stay very busy. From training new units arriving on KAF to teaching the Afghan National Army about Route Clearance, our Tigers continue to represent HHC and the 65th EN BN extremely well. Congratulations to SGT Rehmert for winning the NCO of the quarter! Also, congratulations to CPL Wobby and PFC Williams for winning NCO and Soldiers of the month.

Happy Valentine's Day to all our families and loved ones!

CPT Chelsey O'Nan

TIGER 6



CPT O'Nan (HHC Commander) stands with SSG Gardner and SSG Totten after SSG Totten's promotion ceremony.

HHC Update from the 65th S1 Section!

Between changing mailrooms, reviewing awards, and contributing to retrograde operations, the 65th Engineer Battalion S1 has been busy during the last month. We also had three of our Soldiers earn promotions to the rank of Sergeant; SGT Johnson, SGT Keller, and SGT McDowell!

The Bayonet S1 Soldiers have begun receiving and processing End of Tour awards for three of our companies. SPC Blas, the battalion's primary awards clerk has been hard at work squaring away paperwork, working with company commanders and executive officers, and preparing awards for awards boards. He has been phenomenal at executing his tasks and supporting CPT Johnson, the S1 OIC. While accomplishing these tasks he has also provided world class support in the areas of personnel actions and finance helping to resolve pay issues and helping Soldiers prepare for post deployment assignment options by processing their personnel action requests.



The rest of the S1 has also had their fair share of work. SGT Keller completed two battlefield circulations to units within the Task Force, helping to maintain and update Soldiers permanent records. He successfully updated over 200 records in a two week time frame. SGT Houle and SGT McDowell maintained S1 operations back at Kandahar while we had one of our members, SGT Johnson on emergency leave. They continued to maintain the battalion at operating strength and processed over 30 Combat Action Badges. Bayonet Legal, SPC McNeil has also been busy processing all legal actions for the battalion and company commanders to help maintain good order and discipline.



While the US is preparing to drawdown from Afghanistan, the Bayonet S1 has contributed to this by nominating over 30 pieces of non rolling stock contributing to a reduction of over \$35,000 off the company's property book. No matter the mission, you can rest assured that the Bayonet S1 will continue to provide world class personnel support to the over 1000 Soldiers of Task Force Bayonet.



The Bayonet S1 would like to give a special shout out to their loved ones back home for continually providing support to us while we are here in Afghanistan. It won't be too much longer until we are home!

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Forward Support Company *RISE UP!*

SUSTAIN THE BATTLE!

Aloha from the Forward Support Company to our families and friends back home. Over the past month, the Phoenix team focused mainly on training and sharpening our basic Soldier skills. The team was able to accomplish many different tasks and missions to support the battalion's overall mission success. The Soldiers took some time to enjoy the holidays and welcome in the New Year.

The Personal Security Detachment (PSD) conducted training on dismounted patrolling, medical skills, vehicle search, and personnel search. They also took advantage of the easy access to ranges on Kandahar Airfield by conducting two M4 basic qualification ranges and one M14 long-range marksmanship class. This past month also allowed them to take advantage of the numerous MWR activities that take place on KAF. Some of the Soldiers attended the Kellie Pickler concert and saw the comedian Tommy Davidson live on New Years Eve. In addition to scheduled events, Soldiers continued to hold their own video and card game tournaments after work. Currently, PSD has two Soldiers working hard to become Non-Commissioned Officers. SPC Ali and SPC Murry who will attend the promotion board within the next two months. PFC White looks forward to pinning on Specialist here at KAF in next couple weeks.

Company Intelligence Support Team

Sergeant Carlos Lopez and 2LT Isaac Goodin, have recently joined the FSC as the first COIST in the history of the company. The COIST has enjoyed learning techniques from their comrades in the Battalion S2 shop and learning the expectations from the commander and peers in the company. The battalion S-2 team, Captain Somnuk and 1LT Hanratty, continue to teach the COIST how to improve and strengthen their intelligence products. Due to the new addition of the COIST, the company receives a daily update brief as to what is going on in our Area of Operations. Both, SGT Lopez and 2LT Goodin, have some experience in intelligence; SGT Lopez was part of a Military Intelligence unit while 2LT Goodin took multiple military intelligence classes in college. Recently, the COIST successfully conducted their first commander update brief. Together this team continues to be a valuable and vital asset to the company.



Distribution Platoon

The distribution platoon continues to accomplish a variety of missions and tasks here in Afghanistan. From putting miles on the road, to daily maintenance and services, the platoon continues to complete missions vital to the Battalion's success. The Holiday Season allowed distribution platoon to call back home to family and friends and enjoy the holiday season. The calls home brightened the spirits both here and back home. The platoon enjoyed the activities at the morale center (including watching football and video game tournaments) and got to enjoy a company BBQ hosted by the command team. SPC Shaw recently added a new addition to his family and expresses great joy for his new baby girl, Janiyah. The platoon got to start the year on a good note with the promotion of SGT Bessonett. SPC Penitusi, SPC Shaw, and SPC Swanier continue to study hard for the upcoming promotion boards and the achievement of that next rank.



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Forward Support Company *RISE UP!*

Maintenance Platoon

Maintenance platoon had very a busy month by completing multiple companies' services and preparing roughly 20 pieces of rolling stock for retrograde. The maintenance platoon got to welcome back SSG Christopher Miller back to the team as the new battalion motor sergeant. After some studying and help from his peers, SPC Beal went to the promotion board and earned a promotable status. A major accomplishment to note for the platoon was SGT Gregory and SPC Pahuamba provided their welding skills to assist with the battalion Soldier of the Quarter competition. Their welding shop constructed multiple pieces of equipment for Cross fit-style events to take place: to include a 200lb tire pull and rope climb. These Soldiers devoted over 32 hours to this task with the help of SPC Earvin, SPC Kitchen, and SPC Lewis.

We hope that everyone back home has started off to a great New Year. We look forward to the new and unique challenges ahead for the Phoenix team. The Soldiers of the Forward Support Company thank everyone back home from the bottom of our hearts. Your undying support keeps us going every day and it will continue to keep us motivated in the months to come.

Mahalo!

RISE UP!



SSG Nena prepares to go on mission with the BN CMD Team



CPT Milligan and his wife, Heather welcomes baby Mason James to the Phoenix and Bayonet Family!

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82nd Engineer Support Company

BLADE

Redeployment is one of the best words uttered during a deployment cycle. Although we are not yet able to prepare for that stage of our deployment, the Soldiers of 82nd Engineer Support Company (ESC) have been able to contribute to another very popular effort, retrograde. While retrograde operations are keeping your Soldiers busy here in Afghanistan, they are also supporting the overall homecoming of every U.S. Service Member from theater. The focus of retrograde is to systematically and safely withdraw all of our equipment and property so that we can transition security operations to the people of Afghanistan. The Soldiers of the 82nd ESC have been working diligently to do their part in support of this effort.



In addition to the deconstruction of our own company area, your soldiers have been offering a helping hand to other units. We have transported over 100 parts, containers, and equipment over 600 kilometers from three units within our area of operations. Our Soldiers' efforts to accomplish the mission are reaching well outside our motor pool and their continued motivation is not going unnoticed. New friendships are being forged as we step outside our company aiding those in need and pulling more than our share of weight on and off base. Your soldiers are representing the U.S. Army on a Marine Corps base and creating a lasting impression that we all can be proud of.



Each and every day we arrive at work, our area has a smaller amount of material than it did the day before. Your Soldiers have been able to tear down one building and have prepared five more for deconstruction. Their hard work and dedication enabled them to turn in a significant amount of excess equipment and parts. This allowed six forty foot, four twenty foot, and two additional containers to be emptied out and removed from our company footprint. Working together, your soldiers have also been able to properly dispose of over six tons of scrap wood and metal, an excess trailer, and two shower units. Another impressive push in retrograde that your soldiers have accomplished has been the turn in of twelve surplus vehicles and all of the route clearance enablers, such as robotic arms, that are associated with those vehicles. Because of their hard work the Soldiers of the 82nd ESC now report to a work area that is almost half the size it was when we arrived in October.

- 1LT Cathleen Rush, Field Maintenance Platoon Leader, 82nd ESC



Hello from Kandahar Air Field!

The Soldiers of the 455th Engineer Company are finally all consolidated on to one Forward Operating Base (FOB). The beginning of January, all 3 platoons, Maintenance, and Head Quarters moved to our new home, Kandahar Air Field (KAF), where we now fall under three separate Task Forces (TF). Currently, we are supported or work for TF BAYONET (65 Engineer Battalion), TF IRONMAN (489 Engineer Battalion), and TF MULESKINNER (RSS/2CR). We are still doing our mission, Route Clearance, yet now we belong officially to the CENTCOM Material Recovery Element (CMRE) instead of International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF). What this means, we clear only retrograde routes so that follow on forces may have freedom of movement throughout Afghanistan.

We have also reached our 100 days in theater, and morale is getting stronger as our mission tempo is beginning to pick up. As the war around us begins to wind down, the missions for the 455th are picking up as we clear the way for all ISAF base closures. We take pride in our background, skills, and tradition to keep these main routes open so that others may have safe passage.

We all wish our families, friends and communities back home well. Thank you for all of your support, without you, our task would not be possible. We would also like to thank TF BAYONET, TF IRONMAN and TF MULESKINNER for making our transition to our new area of operations as simple as possible. It is a wonderful gift to learn and work with all three Battalions, making us a stronger and efficient Route Clearance Company.

CPT Mason Flemmer
LOBOS 6



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576th Engineer Company **SPARTANS!**

January marks the halfway point for the 576th Engineer Company's (Clearance) deployment, and as we look back on our time in Regional Command-West (RC-W), we reflect on what the company has accomplished. Not typical to most of our combat veterans' previous deployments, the company's emphasis for support has not only been the operational needs of the American military. Due to the presence of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) nations in the west, the company's operations mainly support the needs of our coalition partners. As combat operations slow and the focus shifts to leaving Afghanistan, the company remains engaged as the spearhead unit for retrograde operations throughout RC-W. Since arriving to Shindand Air Base, the Spartans have contributed to the complete retrograde and turn over to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) of five Forward Operating Bases (FOB), always leading the final movements out of once coalition controlled footprints. Of the five FOBs, only two were previously controlled by American forces, two controlled by Italian forces, and one controlled by Spanish forces. Always leading from the front, each of the company's three platoons has had the opportunity to conduct joint operations with coalition partners, which include Soldiers from Italy, Spain, El Salvador, and Ukraine.



RCP35 traverses mountainous terrain to complete the retrograde of FOB Qal'ah-ye Now

First Platoon (RCP35) skillfully led the final push of Spanish forces from their mountain FOB near Qal'ah-ye Now to complete their retrograde out of Afghanistan. Second Platoon (RCP68) was the only platoon to support the American and Italian closure of FOB Farah with the successful handover to the ANSF. Third Platoon (RCP57) facilitated the timely transition of responsibility of Italian FOB La Marmora in support of the movement of a brigade headquarters. All completed with the utmost confidence and competence by the supported nations, the Soldiers and leaders of the Spartan family continue to meet and exceed expectations. Always leading from the front, each of the company's three platoons has had the opportunity to conduct joint operations with coalition partners, which include Soldiers from Italy, Spain, El Salvador, and Ukraine. First Platoon (RCP35) skillfully led the final push of Spanish forces from their mountain FOB near Qal'ah-ye Now to complete their retrograde out of Afghanistan. Second Platoon (RCP68) was the only platoon to support the American and Italian closure of FOB Farah with the successful handover to the ANSF. Third Platoon (RCP57) facilitated the timely transition of responsibility of Italian FOB La Marmora in support of the movement of a brigade headquarters. All completed with the utmost confidence and competence by the supported nations, the Soldiers and leaders of the Spartan family continue to meet and exceed expectations.



RCP68 blazes a trail for an Italian convoy in support of the FOB Farah closure.

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With retrograde as the focus for the company, the expected end state is the complete handover of security responsibility to the ANSF. In conjunction with our operations comes the support given to the ANSF. On multiple occasions, the company executed operations partnered with and in support of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan Border Police (ABP). RCP57 lead the charge to the northern-most part of the company's boundaries to assist the ABP with assessing their checkpoints along the Afghanistan/Turkmenistan border. Soldiers from RCP57 rendered safe a passage for advisors to complete their assessments free of explosive hazards. RCP35 supported the establishment of an ANA compound in the most contested areas within RC-W, without incident or delay to mission accomplishment. Most notable, RCP68 blazed a trail for ANA and Italian forces during the last push to handover the southern-most FOB in our Area of Responsibility (AO), finding and clearing an IED, mitigating the risk of injury to everyone involved in the operation.



RCP57 travels with and clears for the ABP throughout the northern-most reaches of the company's AO.

The Spartans remain the vanguard to operations within Regional Command-West. As we continue with our vital missions, we meet new challenges, continue building trust, and forge lasting bonds with each other and the countries we support. All of this would be impossible without the support of our families and friends back home. Four more months and we will see you all back at beautiful Fort Carson! SPARTANS!

CPT Donald Schmidt
SPARTAN 6



RCP57 enjoys lunch with the ABP during an operation along the Afghanistan/Turkmenistan border.



CPT Schmidt and RCP68 discuss force protection and security with the ANA at FOB Tobruk

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849th Mobility Augmentation Company

NITRATE

The holiday season has come and gone, and the 849th MAC is fully operational at their new forward operating base. It took longer than expected for the unit to be reunited, but later is better than never. There's always challenges with learning the new area of operations, and working with new entities at a new base. Those challenges are a great tool in keeping the unit working together and striving for more success in the future. A lot of the success of this most recent move is due in large part from the lessons learned with our initial move back in October. This time we were able to forecast certain aspects of the move that were difficult last time, such as automations, and we were able to have an easier transition. Each Soldier has their own thoughts and experiences with relocating to a new forward operating base. SFC Whitcomb said, "these moves even though they're a hassle initially, it's welcomed because it splits the deployment up into smaller chunks while keeping all Soldiers sharp and mentally focused." Those words became evident following the attack on our base this month.



Soldiers of RCP 28 with Chaplain Hodge say a quick prayer before rolling out the first time following the attack.

Training and instincts immediately took over. There was not one Soldier that was scared and didn't know what to do. Soldiers took initiative and knew what to do without being told. That's a result of all the training that we've done as a unit, and the experience of the leadership from their past deployments. The best thing is despite our impressive reaction to that attack, Soldiers at all levels brought up intelligent and applicable suggestions on how we can improve, and be even better next time. We've been extremely fortunate that our unit has been close for a very long time, but the events of this week have brought everyone closer together. It turned a unit with numerous friendships into a unit of brotherhood with increased trust and respect to their battle buddies to their left and right.

-1LT Andrew Schiller
COIST OIC, 849th MAC



Soldiers of RCP 28 are going through mission preparation procedures prior to rolling out

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BREACHER

With over 60 days in country, now is a good time to introduce the 927th EN CO (Sapper). The 927TH Engineer Company (SAPPER) entered service on 1 September 2006. The 927th was established as a new line unit during the 225TH Engineer Brigade reorganization in 2005/2006. The unit hails from Baton Rouge, LA. The majority of the soldiers are from the greater Baton Rouge area, while some are from the most northern and southern outstretches of the state. We even have a few soldiers from Texas and Mississippi. The 927th may be a newer company, but the soldiers are very experienced. The 927th has one previous deployment to Afghanistan in 08-09. Also, in its short but noteworthy history, the 927th has supported several state emergencies including: Hurricane Gustav operations in 2008, the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in 2010, Mississippi River flooding operations in 2011, and Hurricane Isaac recovery operations in 2012. Over half of the company has been deployed to foreign lands. For some, this is their third or more deployment. SGT Henry Shelby holds the record with 6 total deployments.

January was a busy month for the 927. In addition to regular route clearance operations, the unit also devoted time to specialized cold weather training. This was new to many of the soldiers since most are from southern Louisiana and have never experienced significant snow. They also used the time in between mission sets to train up on combat engineering tasks including a range training exercise with MICLICS and APOBS. This training allowed them to hone their demolition skills. Everyone eagerly volunteered to work with the demolitions because nothing pleases a Sapper more than to handle explosives. The Sappers worked on shooting fundamentals at a small arms range. They were able to train with the M240B, M2, M249 and their individual weapons. The range allowed the Sappers to become proficient on crew served weapon fundamentals and of course, improved spirit de corps.

Finally, the 927th would like to congratulate SSG Samuel Green and SPC Benjamin North on their promotions. The promotions were well-deserved and directly relate to their performance on the deployment.

Essayons!



FOB Apache, Afghanistan— Soldiers of the 927th Sapper Company pose for a company photo.

RIVER OTTERS



This month the Multi-Role Bridge Company (MRBC) completed the Tom Bridge removal with Task Force Helmand. This mission was an important mission for us because of a Joint mission planning session that included the ANA as part of the external security for the MRBC. We also have the bridge itself that had a lot of visibility here in Afghanistan due to the location. The removal of this bridge is significant because of the local nationals and contractors as well as the important need to complete the reconstruction of the original bridge going over the Helmand River. This bridge was attacked by insurgents leaving a six foot diameter hole on the far eastern side of the bridge. Since the incident occurred, a 7-bay Mabey Johnson Bridge was emplaced by the 127th MRBC from North Dakota. The 1438th MRBC removed the bridge in 15 hours and 40 minutes. The unit exceeded the 20 hour time frame allotted for removing a 7-bay MJB using previous experience and ingenious pull methods.

We will close out this month with our monthly highway one bridge maintenance inspections going east. Since we pulled the Tom bridge in RC-Southwest we no longer have a need to push westward on highway one as there are no military bridges currently supporting coalition forces. We look forward to conducting the rest of our maintenance missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and the opportunity to train the 814th MRBC who will be replacing us. We like to thank Task Force Helmand for the opportunity to conduct a joint mission and grateful for their support during the Tom Bridge mission. We continue to maintain our standards while serving under Task Force Bayonet as we are also grateful to be serving with such an awesome task force.

“BRIDGE THE GAP”
CPT Mack Gaono
Commander

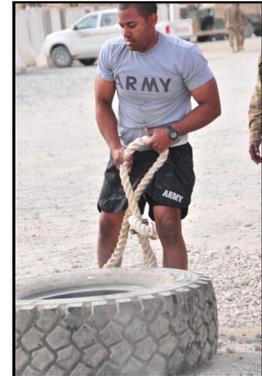


Snapshots of Task Force Bayonet

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Re-Enlistments, Promotions and Ceremonies

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Public Affairs Information

The *Task Force Bayonet Newsletter* is an authorized newsletter for members of the 65th Engineer Battalion. Contents are not necessarily endorsed by the Dept. of the Army, Dept. of Defense, or United States Government. Content is reviewed, edited, and approved by the Battalion Public Affairs Officer.

For questions, comments, or submissions, please contact the Battalion PAO.

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