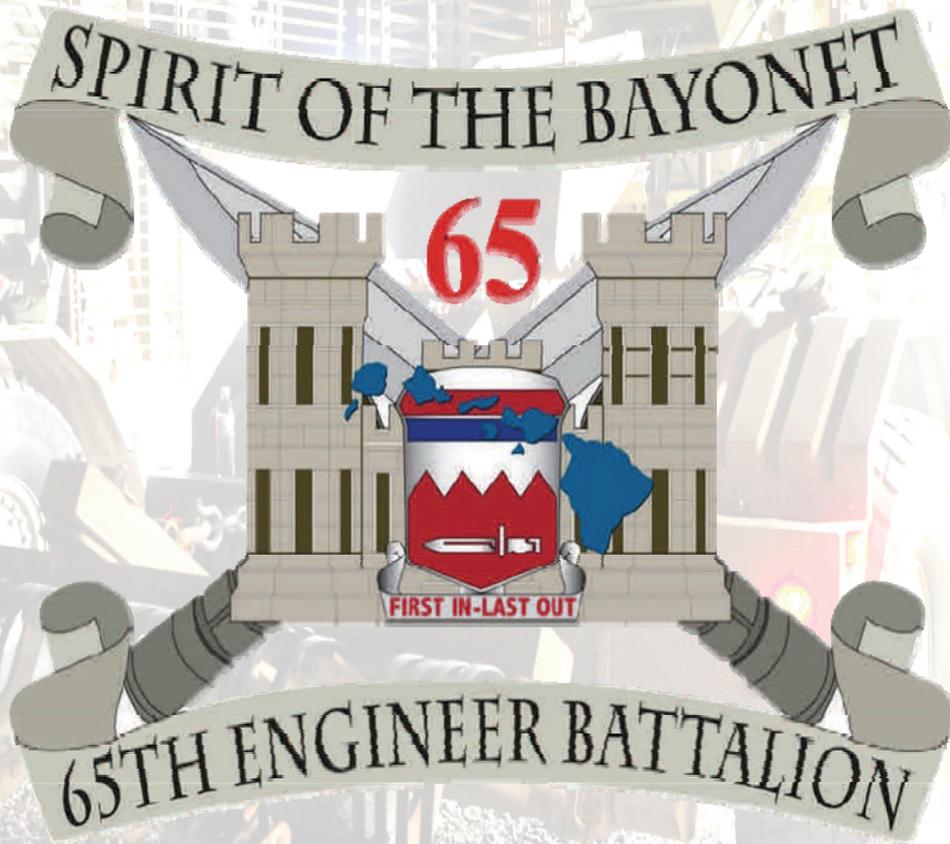


TASK FORCE BAYONET

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BAYONET UPDATE

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Aloha Friends and Family of Task Force Bayonet,

We are now two months into our new task organization under CJTF-4. TF Bayonet has begun retrograde operations in preparation for our return home. As we begin these retrograde operations, CSM McVicker and I have continued to be impressed by how the Soldiers of TF Bayonet remain dedicated to training and increasing their battlefield footprint. Perhaps the biggest source of pride we have been afforded by the Soldiers of TF Bayonet is how they work with their international counterparts, coaching and guiding them to prepare them to take over in a few months when US Forces hand operations over to our Afghan counterparts. Across the board, each company has shown true professionalism by conducting superb training in addition to their every day duties and missions.

As always, our gratitude goes to the Families and Friends of TF Bayonet for your support. We appreciate everything you do!

God bless – First In, Last Out!

LTC David Acker,
BAYONET 6



Aloha from the office of the Task Force Bayonet CSM,

After passing the halfway point in our deployment, TF Bayonet Soldiers continue to embody the standards of discipline and mastery of basic Soldier skills necessary in today's battlefield. This is evidenced by the outstanding Soldiers and NCOs we see in action everyday in the ranks of TF Bayonet.

Again this month Soldiers and NCOs competed in the Soldier and NCO of the Month competition. Congratulations to PFC Edwards from FSC for being selected as TF Bayonet Soldier of the Month and SGT Lopez, also from FSC, for being selected as the TF Bayonet NCO of the Month.

We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter, and we look forward to the day when we be back in Hawaii with our Family and friends.

Mahalo,
CSM Harold McVicker III,
BAYONET 7



LTC Acker issues the Oath of Enlistment to his driver from the Personal Security Detachment.



LTC Acker speaking to key leaders during the recent Counter IED Mobile Training Team class.



CSM McVicker discusses issues with Afghan Border Police after a recent 65th MTT led Counter IED class .

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

Strike First!

Aloha Family and Friends,

HHC continues to stay busy supporting many different areas and operations across Afghanistan. The S6 section, who wrote our article for this month, continues to strive above and beyond. While they continue to provide their expertise and assistance to the battalion and each of its companies, they adopted a few additional tasks. Currently, SSG Davis and SPC Gil are assisting our sister company, FSC, with the communication systems at FOB Lindsey. SPC Stewart, along with a group of 12 other HHC Soldiers, teach classes to incoming units while maintaining the communications at their site. 1LT Kaiser, SSG Buniag, and SPC Elliot continue to do an amazing job maintaining communications for the unit while preparing for our replacements to arrive. We look forward to seeing everyone soon as we are officially over our halfway point and well on our way to redeployment! Aloha!

- CPT O'Nan, Tiger 6

Task Force Bayonet's Nervous System: The S-6 Shop

If Task Force Bayonet were a person, and it's different organizations were it's parts, then the S-6 shop would be its nervous system: it maintains a constant flow of information and orders to all of the disparate parts that make up the body. The S-6 shop is responsible for installing and maintaining any form of communication that the battalion uses. These systems include computers, various types of radios, and Blue



Force Tracker GPS systems... basically anything that has electricity running through it.

As any communications Soldier will tell you, initial set up operations are the busiest and most stressful times during a deployment. Setup for a battalion typically takes about 3-4 weeks and includes the creation of user accounts for all computer systems, accounts for obtaining theater frequencies, and running what seems to be miles of internet cables. During a deployment, something as simple as a malfunctioning e-mail account can become a priority issue. Once those first few weeks are over and all major issues have been solved, the work load decreases significantly as the transition from setup to maintenance begins. With the unique nature of this deployment, and the war in Afghanistan drawing to a close, the overall focus for the 65th EN BN is retrograde. This part of the mission brought its own unique challenges to the S-6 shop.

These challenges, however, were not the only ones it faced. As the battalion was just getting settled in after its first few weeks in Afghanistan, the battalion headquarters was moved from Camp Leatherneck to Kandahar Airfield. All initial set up operations were repeated in the battalion's new location. The S-6 Soldiers were once again up to their eyeballs in work orders, trying to get everyone's systems up and running as soon as possible. Five weeks later, the battalion moved for a second time since arriving in Afghanistan to a new location on Kandahar Airfield. The setup of three different Tactical Operation Centers (TOCs) put the skills and overall sanity of the S-6 Soldiers to the test. They again rose to the challenge and ensured all

communications in the battalion became operational. This small group of 6 individuals pulled together to ensure that the battalion would be successful. Now that the battalion has settled into its permanent home for the remainder of the deployment, the Soldiers of the S-6 are happier than most that the first few months of the deployment are behind them. They look forward to the coming months and the new challenges they will face, as well as their eventual return to the rest of the Task Force Bayonet Family.



65th Engineer Training Team

Unleash Hell!

3

The Snow Doesn't Stop the 65th ETT from Conducting Valuable Training

This month was filled with quite a bit of growth and change for the Hell Hounds and their Afghan counterparts.

First, they survived the Herat "Snow-pocalypse" of 2014. After two weeks of 60+ degree temperatures, Camp Arena was swarmed by four days of relentless snow, with no end in sight. By the time the



storm finally broke they had received over 14 inches of snow. . . quite a bit for their Hawaiian-acclimated blood.

Although the Hell Hounds lost a few days of training, the weather has made a warmer turn and with it; training is back in full swing. The Hell Hound team certified twelve 916 drivers, 15 dump truck drivers, 8 fork lift operators, and 17 medics as Combat Life Saver train the trainers. They also began training over 70 Afghan Soldiers as heavy engineer equipment operators and vertical engineers. The 207 Corps Engineer Kandak will be able to build guard shacks, cinder block buildings with electrical support, and operate heavy machinery like true engineer Soldiers. Already, the Afghan National Army medics that were trained by SPC Martin are providing medical support at the training sites.

Also during this month, the Hell Hounds said good-bye to the 333rd Engineer Company from Pennsylvania and welcomed their replacement, the 663rd EN Company out of Alabama. This new team offers a great amount of experience and a hunger to

work hard. Already, the 663rd EN Company have become members of the Hell Hound family, leaving no doubt it will be an excellent partnership for the rest of the deployment.

Finally, the Hell Hounds also got the opportunity to provide Guardian Angel training for our Slovenian Allies. SGT Yiznitsky, SGT Koeth, and SGT Garcia used their security expertise in an exchange of tactics, techniques, and procedures that enabled both nations to work more closely together.

With February out of the way, the Hell Hounds are another month closer to their return to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. But until that day finally arrives, remember to Unleash Hell and love your Hell Hounds!



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SUSTAIN THE BATTLE!

Aloha! The Forward Support Company stayed extremely busy during the month of February by tackling a wide variety of tasks here on Kandahar Airfield. The team continued to train and prepare for the upcoming mission and is more prepared than ever to place another major accomplishment under our belt. The Phoenix team continued to tackle the retrograde mission head on, but also had some fun while re-enlisting four Phoenix Soldiers on the flight line, watching the Super Bowl from Afghanistan, and taking part in another successful and well-deserved company BBQ. The company also welcomed Mason Milligan, newest son of CPT Milligan, to the Phoenix family this month.



Platoon Updates

PSD Platoon

PSD platoon conducted several missions in Kandahar Province in support of Task Force Bayonet's retrograde operations.

First, there were several Key Leader Engagements for the Battalion Commander and Command Sergeant Major in order to strengthen our ties with Afghan National Army and Afghanistan law enforcement. The platoon also provided security for the battalion's route clearance Mobile Training Team (MTT). The platoon assisted the MTT in training the Afghan Border Patrol in Counter-IED operations at the Joint Regional Afghan National Police Center. Finally, the PSD continued to conduct training for its upcoming mission on a new Forward Operating Base (FOB). The training consisted of mounted and dismounted operations, medevac and casevac operations, personnel and vehicle search, rules of engagement, escalation of force, FOB defense, entry control points, manning guard towers, and Advanced Rifle Marksmanship.

Although vital training and mission support has taken a bulk of the platoon's time, the platoon continued to assist Soldiers in their career progression and career longevity. SPC Ali passed the E-5 promotion board for the month of February and SPC Slate took part in the re-enlistment ceremony at the flight line to continue his service in the Army for 3 more years.

Distribution Platoon

For the Distribution Platoon the past month has been full of many busy, long, and fast-paced days. The majority of the month was spent downsizing and reorganizing the battalion's area of operations to aide in the Task Force Bayonet retrograde mission. Currently, the platoon has successfully turned in over half of their vehicles and other theater-provided equipment, as well as scrap, trash, and over ten 20-foot containers around the motorpool. The Distribution Platoon had the privilege of re-enlisting two of their newest NCOs, SGT Kelley and SGT Besonnett, in front of an Apache Aircraft at the flight line here on Kandahar Airfield.



Company Intelligence Support Team

SGT Lopez and 2LT Goodin continue to head a strong and versatile Company Intelligence Support Team (COIST). This past month they reported and researched a variety of new threats toward KAF, as they tend to increase during the spring time. Each week, the team provides their facts and findings to the company commander and this information is passed on to the higher headquarters. Their briefs include new enemy tactics, techniques, enemy network updates, and situation templates. With the upcoming company relocation to the new FOB, the team diligently continues to collect pertinent threats and intelligence pertaining to future area of operations in the province of Kandahar, Afghanistan. The team looks forward to moving to the new location and gathering intelligence and research, as well as implementing a solid base defense plan.

Maintenance Platoon

The Maintenance Platoon also assisted in the retrograde and reorganization of the battalion motorpool alongside the Distribution Platoon. Within a span of five days, the Soldiers of the platoon renovated and retrograded the motorpool area by tearing down, hauling, and turning in over 78,000 pounds of scrap metal, wood, and other miscellaneous parts. The Soldiers worked from dusk until dawn ensuring that the job was done right. In addition to retrograde, the platoon did some final training in preparation for the company's new mission. They also got a little taste of home when they finalized packing and prepping an early re-deploying container back to Hawaii. Although it was a busy month, the platoon ended February on a high note with SGT Gregory reaching promotable status and a company BBQ with some delicious steak and chicken cooked by our very own SGT Gogue.



The company is looking forward to accomplishing the new mission set ahead of us for the next two months. We continue to thank everyone back home for the unconditional love and support provided to us on a daily basis. We are another month closer to redeployment back to Hawaii and reuniting with families and loved ones.

Until next month, RISE UP!

Back to the Basics: 82nd Soldiers Earn Grenade Qualification Badge

If good Soldiers never stop training, then the Soldiers in the 82nd Engineer Support Company are probably the best. Even in the midst of multiple day missions and change of command inventories, 1st and 2nd Platoons planned, resourced, and executed various ranges to hone Soldiers' combat engineering skills and revisit some basic Soldiering tasks. Although the days are long and busy, opportunities to go to the range provide an excellent conduit for Soldiers to release stress and get away from the motor pool's daily grind.



One of the basic Soldier tasks each platoon mastered this month was throwing the M67 Fragmentation Grenade. Though grenades are not commonly used by route clearance companies on patrols, learning the munitions' components and fuse mechanisms is a combat engineer's function and important for every Soldier to understand. Additionally, throwing grenades provides Soldiers with the confidence to correctly employ it should the situation ever arise. It also builds trust between squad leaders (issuing commands) and Soldiers (throwing the grenade) during the training exercise.

First, Soldiers were briefed four types of grenades and their effects, fuses, and five throwing postures in a class room setting. Upon completion, each Soldier donned their proper protective equipment and practiced throwing inert grenades from the standing and kneeling positions aiming at a window and "troops in the open," targets in the company's motor pool. On the day of the range, each Soldier inspected their grenades, received commands from their squad leaders, and successfully threw their grenades at two targets. The platoons expended at total of 147 M67 Fragmentation Grenades and each Soldier earned their Grenade Qualification Badge. The ranged served as great opportunity for squad leaders to get back to the basics and train each of their Soldiers, and for the Soldiers to unload some change-of-command inventory induced stress by throwing highly explosive objects.

Dig Deep! First in, Last out! Essayons!

- 1LT Annie Nagy, Second Platoon Leader

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A Message from the Commander

Hello Friends and Families of the 455th Engineer Company,

We are all doing great at Kandahar Air Field. Our mission tempo is slow, but our morale is high as we continuously train and rehearse. We know in the near future, our tempo will increase. Right now, we have plenty of time to spend time in the gym and improve our physical fitness. We are very grateful for all the care packages, both individual and group, we have received. The taste from home we have when we open these care packages is beyond compare.

Our Route Clearance Packages are proving effective, as they have cleared over 9,000 kilometers, without a single strike on any Coalition Force. We take great pride in our mission, as we know what we are doing is having a positive effect and is protecting our fellow Soldiers. In the past week, we received our combat patches from the 82nd Sustainment Brigade. LTC Acker and CSM McVicker also honored eight of our Soldiers with the 65th Engineer Battalion challenge coin.

We thank everyone back home for your support and care of the Soldiers in the 455th Engineer Company. We have almost met the half way point of our tour. The Soldiers are excited to return to our loved ones, and wish all of you the best.

- CPT Mason J. Flemmer, Lobos 6



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Spartans Working Behind the Scenes

As the 576th Engineer Company starts to see the light at the end of the tunnel, the “forgotten ones” continue to support the RCPs so that they can continue their mission in RC-W. Amongst these “forgotten ones” are the worker bees in the operations, maintenance, and CoIST sections.



SSG Conley, Battle NCO, tracking a mission.

Each section has a different mission, but each supports the unit as the battle continues.

Days prior to any Route Clearance Patrol (RCP) mission, the Battle NCO prepares the RCP by sending



Can't forget communications! PFC Delgado tightening up the line to the radio antenna.

mission information to higher and coordinating with other units prior to mission day. Some of this coordination includes requesting Army aviation attack weapon teams to fly above the RCP in order to detect enemy activity in the area. Other coordination consists of requesting intelligence so that the unit is fully aware of the operational environment. Along with intelligence from higher, the company is supported by CoIST, the company intelligence sup-

port team. This section consists of three personnel from the unit that focus specifically on processing intelligence so that it can be turned into something the Soldiers can understand.

During CP operations, the Battle NCO, BFT and radio controller, and at least one person from the CoIST section are available to help with any task that may come up. Each person working in the CP is there so that the missions can run as smoothly as possible.

After the mission all Soldiers return to Shindand, and maintenance personnel are ready to inspect each vehicle. If a mechanic can not fix a fault with one of the vehicles, it is sent to the civilian mechanics for maintenance. One of the most crucial parts of a mission is maintenance. Without maintenance personnel to fix broken parts, the patrols would not be possible.

But not everything these sections do to support the mission is business. Soldiers are often given “lickies and chewies” to keep morale high when things become difficult. The supply section orders snacks and drinks to give to each RCP for when they tire of dining facility food.



Maintenance team laying out the tools they use to fix vehicles as they come off of a mission.

As missions continue, every Spartan in the unit continues to work hard. Every person is essential to the unit even if they are not out on the road and “going out of the wire.”

Without the unwavering support of the company's support sections, mission accomplishment is impossible. We rely heavily on the Maintenance, CoIST, Supply, Communications, Operations, and Medical sections to provide unparalleled support—and they have never failed in their tasks. As we come closer to going home, their role in the company will be even more important.

SEARCH - FIGHT - DESTROY!

- Spartan 6



SPC Jones ordering all the “lickies and chewies” for all the Soldiers to enjoy.

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849th Mobility Augmentation Company

NITRATE

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Nitrates Have a Taste From Home As They Experience Record-Breaking Snow

The Nitrates have been conducting operations out of FOB Pasab for nearly two full months. We have experienced the effects of winter weather causing a rollercoaster effect on operations. The lulls in operations may have come as a blessing in disguise, as we have been able to digest and move on following the base attack on January 20, 2014. The most important thing is that our wounded Soldiers are doing well, and two have rejoined our ranks at this time. For a majority of this month the unit has been split, as 2/849 has conducted clearance operations as a part of Operation Chamtoo II in support of Task Force Cougar.

Following the attack there has been more of a presence in the nearby villages. Platoon leadership has taken that tasking and seized an opportunity to implement their internal ISR capability with the PUMA to make their presence patrols more effective. This proved to be particularly beneficial on days when the weather restricted our movement on ground. There were a handful of certified operators that came together and ensured the unit had the capability of employing the PUMA ISR asset at any time. The implementation of the PUMA in the base defense measures became a crucial step in building confidence in our operators. Later, they were tasked to provide their skills during 2/849 clearance operations during Operation Chamtoo II by providing ISR during times of limited to no visibility.



SGT Buchman launching PUMA



There are those in the unit that thought by being here in Afghanistan, we would not have to deal with the cold and snow like we are accustomed to back home in Minnesota. Karma has certainly struck this unit, as we all were laughing at our loved ones back home when they were experiencing temperatures that ranged from 40 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit below zero. Over a span of two days this month, enough snow had accumulated to break a 22-year-old record. We were not the only ones experiencing record-breaking snow, however; Egypt had snowfall for the first time in approximately 120 years. We're all looking forward to the warmer temperatures of the spring, as it will result in an increase in operations too, and we will not have to see any more snow. More importantly, warmer weather will bring us one step closer to coming home.

- 1LT Andrew Schiller, Company COIST OIC

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All Members of the 927th Contribute to Mission Success

February was a busy month for the 927th. The RCP's main mission has been clearing the way to allow freedom of movement to local nationals and other coalition forces. To this day, they have cleared over 3000 kilometers. However, with the United States anticipated withdraw, the 927th's mission is constantly changing. Not only are they continuing in RCP operations, but the sappers have been asked to assist in other FOB operations as well, and have gladly taken up the responsibility.

One of these added responsibilities was increasing FOB security by laying over 1000 meters of concertina wire and providing tactical sweeps to protect the other troops on the FOB. The sappers have also assisted their fellow horizontal engineers with earth moving operations. Next, SFC Cedric Grimes led a team to train the 2-12IN Soldiers in UAV operations. When not on mission, the platoons cross-train on various equipment to increase adaptability and productivity across the company. As is the case with any Soldier, they also enjoy spending time on the small arms range honing their proficiency and accuracy.

The operations team led by SFC Josh Martin and 1LT Roderick McCoy, has been busy working to begin maintaining a smaller footprint on FOB Apache by retrograding unused equipment. Maintenance, led by SFC Nethan Pelican, has worked diligently on keeping all vehicles and equipment on a fully mission capable status. SFC Pelican is known for his ingenuity in solving problems and his willingness to help others. He has proudly received tokens of appreciation from both the Romanian and Slovakian units.



SSG Mark Ward coaches a Slovakian Soldier during a modified reflexive fire drill.



927th Sappers SGT Alexander Ward and SSG Kyle Clark pose with their Slovakian counterparts after a range.

The 927th frequently partners with Romanian and Slovakian Soldiers to complete their mission, either inside or outside the wire. Inside the wire, this partnership has extended to assist our foreign counterparts with training and developing their expertise. SSG Mark Branch and his team of medics frequently assist the Field Surgical Team with any medical emergencies, having received accolades several times for their direct contributions during actual treatments of both American Soldiers and Afghan civilians. The 927th medical section conducts regular Combat Life Saving training within the company. Although the Soldiers hope to never use those skills, they will be prepared to perform them to standard if the situation arises.



SSG Mark Ward gives instructions to the squad as their prepare for a reflexive fire exercise.

Every month the 927th submits a group of Soldiers to the 65th EN BN for Soldier and NCO of the Month. These Soldiers are selected by their leadership as a reflection of their military bearing, physical fitness, and performance in the field. The 927th chose SPC Nicholas Oubre, SPC John Luginbill, SGT Michael Laley, and SSG Justin Boudin as their nominees. These Soldiers compete against the other nominees from the companies of TF Bayonet. The Soldiers are tested on physical fitness and their proficiency at Army Warrior Tasks. If selected, they then move up into the Soldier of the Quarter competition.

The company would like to recognize the promotions of PFC Reshard Dyson, PFC Duhon, and SGT Devin Yelverton. Essayons!

- 2LT Cody Lee, Company COIST OIC



927th Soldier of the Month:
SPC John Luginbill

Hometown: Choudrant, LA
Years of Service: 4
Family: Mom, Dad, Brother, Sister
Biggest Military Accomplishment: Soldier of the Year 527 EN BN in 2010



927th Soldier of the Month:
SPC Nicholas Oubre

Hometown: Norco, LA
Family: Wife and Son
Years in Military: 7
Biggest Military Accomplishment: 3rd deployment to Afghanistan for route clearance operations

Not Pictured:

927th NCO of the Month:
SSG Justin Boudin

Hometown: Baton Rouge, LA
Years in Military: 7 years
Biggest Military Accomplishment: Making E6 in 7 years

927th NCO of the Month:
SGT Michael Laley

Hometown: Baton Rouge, LA
Years in Military: 4 years
Biggest Military Accomplishment: 2nd deployment to Afghanistan for route clearance operations

A Message from the Commander

This month the Multi-Role Bridge Company (MRBC) completed the Highway One bridge maintenance repair. We are winding our bridging operations down and starting the process of retrograding by sending our organic equipment home. This is a good sign for the MRBC because it means we are just that much closer to getting home. We have been leading the way in retrograde and will stay ahead of the drum beat as long as we can keep our appointments with RPAT yard.

This month a lot of our Soldiers have been getting recognitions for their outstanding performance. It is always a good feeling when we get acknowledgement from our higher chain of command because it gives us boost of energy and motivation as we get closer to our end of tour. Congratulations to SPC Soto for winning the “Hero of the Day.” SPC Soto has distinctly earned this accomplishment and represents our company well.

We will close out this month with our monthly Highway One bridge maintenance inspections going east. Since we are getting closer to the end of our tour, we have been contacting the 814th MRBC and doing our best to make sure they have everything they need in order to be successful here in Kandahar. We are doing our best to make sure they do not have to worry about anything other than receiving their initial theater required training prior to our transfer of authority ceremony. I feel the 814th will do a great job bridging when they arrive in country... although they will have some big shoes to fill, I do not think they will have any problems filling them. Until next time, friends and families, we hope you have a blessed day and keep us in your thoughts and prayers until every Soldiers returns. BRIDGE THE GAP!

- CPT Mack Gaono, OTTER 6



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Snapshots of Task Force Bayonet

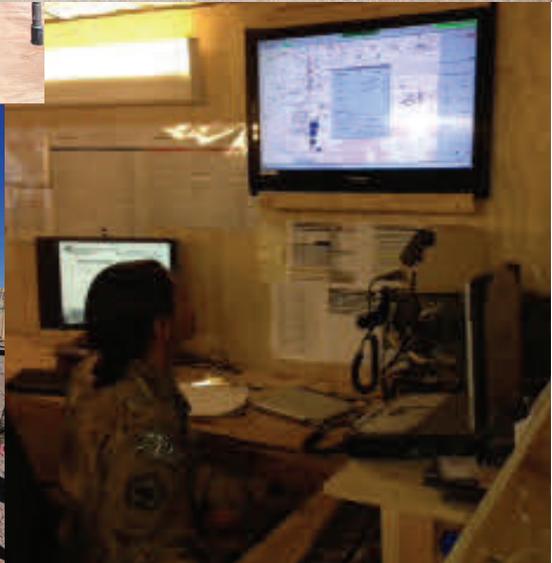
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Re-Enlistments, Promotions and Ceremonies



TF Bayonet Soldier and NCO of the Month



Soldier of the Month: PFC Edwards, FSC



NCO of the Month: SGT Lopez, FSC

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.

Public Affairs Officer: 2LT Brenna Heisterman

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