



"SAPPERS IN!"



JOINT TASK FORCE SAPPER

NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATER ENGINEER BRIGADE IN AFGHANISTAN



Issue 6 — March 2014

Message from the Commander

Greetings (again) from Bagram! We are currently in the process of re-locating from NKC to our old facilities at Bagram Airfield where we will again take lead in a high-priority, high-visibility mission: planning the future lay-out of this enormous base.

Meanwhile, our training mission with Afghan engineers continues. The Seabees have overcome enormous challenges while mentoring the Afghan National Engineer Brigade and their efforts are now paying off. The third, and final, unit recently graduated from their initial training.

We also had the opportunity to visit our teams that train with the engineer battalions of the Afghan 201st and 203rd Corps in Regional Command-East. These are two more examples of the great partnership of Soldiers from the 365th En Bn, 284th En Co, and 663rd En Co who work together to ensure the viability of an Afghan engineer force.

Finally, we welcomed our newest unit to JTF Sapper – the 242nd Construction Management Team, Connecticut National Guard. It is great to have them here!

In closing, I'm proud to report that, despite the challenges, our team continues to be positive, professional and ready to embrace any mission, anywhere, no matter how difficult. Again, thanks to our families and friends who remain so supportive!

SAPPERS IN!!

— COL Diana Holland



TEB Continues to Show Resiliency and Flexibility

By 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe
JTF Sapper Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan—The Theater Engineer Brigade, Joint Task Force Sapper, has once again been called on to tackle new problem sets. April will prove by a dynamic and progressive month for brigade operations.

JTF Sapper, under the 130th Engineer Brigade command, is once again relocating its headquarters element, and this time, it is to a familiar footprint. The headquarters is moving back to Bagram, where the TEB was operating out of until their move to

Kabul in December to align with the de-scoping and train, advise and assist mission.

With this move, the brigade's main responsibilities will remain largely the same, with the addition of providing subject matter experts to help identify the means of "right sizing" the Bagram footprint.

The new mission is important because Bagram is one of the largest bases in theater and must be able to support the transition of most units in and out of theater.

The brigade will continue to synchronize all deconstruction

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*The brigade's continuously
changing mission set is
indicative of the hard work and
determination of its Soldiers*



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At A Glance...

- ◆ JTF SAPPER SERVING AS THEATER ENGINEER BRIGADE, THE ENGINEER HQ AND EXPERTISE IN AFGHANISTAN
- ◆ ENGINEER FORCES SPREAD ACROSS AFGHANISTAN IN SUPPORT OF NATO-LED INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE (ISAF)
- ◆ JOINT TEAM LED BY 130TH ENG. BRIGADE HQS FROM SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, HAWAII... INCLUDES ACTIVE, RESERVE, AND GUARD UNITS FROM ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE

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Command Sergeant Major's Corner Command Sgt. Maj. John Etter, "Sapper 7"

*Aloha to our Ohana from
Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan!*

Sitting down to write this means another month has flown past us and we are that much closer to returning home.

I hope that the beautiful island weather is helping the time go by just as fast for you as we enter into our last 60 days in Afghanistan.

Our brigade headquarters is once again relocating to better facilitate the mission we have been given and I am once again impressed with the resiliency of the Soldiers, NCOs, Officers and Families of our unit.

Your Soldiers have embraced this change and set the example for others to follow as everyone here is reducing in personnel and space preparing for the reduction of forces in Afghanistan by the end of this year.

I want to take this opportunity to remind everyone to continue to uphold and set the standard in everything you do.

As most are aware, the new Army Regulation 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms, is now in effect.

There are some significant changes in there, and I encourage everyone to quickly learn what the new right looks like. It is what the Army has now published as the standard, so regardless of your personal opinion on a matter, by volunteering to serve, we also have a commitment to uphold the standards that are associated with that.

I encourage all Soldiers within our formation and their Families to continue to stay focused on the task at hand. We are entering into a very uncertain time for Afghanistan's future as we the elections are this month and the 2014 fighting season is soon upon us. Stay vigilant and watch each other's back. Ensure you are taking care of every Soldier, both physically and mentally so we can all return home soon.

Thank you for supporting your Soldier and Mahalo! ("Thank you!")

*Sappers In,
CSM John Etter*



Photo by Cpl. Clay Beyersdorfer, RC-S Public Affairs

Soldiers from Forward Support Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, go through a post-patrol brief at FOB Lindsey, March 24

"Rise Up": Exemplifying Soldier-First Concept

**By U.S. Army Cpl. Clay Beyersdorfer
RC-South Public Affairs Office**

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — As an engineer in the Army, it is a fair assumption that most of your days could consist of building, tearing down, and moving structures around base.

Don't tell that to the Sol-

diers of Forward Support Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, who are currently deployed to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

While they are an engineer battalion by name, FSC Soldiers, with a variety of military occupational specialties between them, have been asked to complete many different tasks outside of their normal job duties during their current assignment at Forward Operating Base Lindsey, where they were sent more than

a month ago to help transition it eventually

[They] have been asked to complete many different tasks outside their normal job duties

to the Afghan National Army.

Take for example Sgt. William Gogue, who is actually a mechanic by job title, but currently works as the dining facility noncommissioned officer in charge at FOB Lindsey.

He is in charge of five privates first class that along with Gogue serve food to more than 300 people.

"I love cooking, so when I

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The *Sapper Sentinel* is an authorized newsletter for members of the 130th Engineer Brigade and Joint Task Force Sapper. 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 Brigade Public Affairs Officer. For questions, comments, or submissions, please contact the Brigade PAO.

Public Affairs Officer: 1LT Laura Beth Beebe



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Send us photos, stories, and ideas for future coverage, and see your unit's accomplishments highlighted on our Facebook page and in future editions of the Sapper Sentinel!



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“Empowering Leadership”

207th ANA Engineers Excel with Construction Projects

By U.S. Army 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe
Joint Task Force Sapper Public Affairs

HERAT, Afghanistan – Soldiers with the 65th Engineer Battalion, 130th Eng. Brigade’s Embedded Training Team (ETT) have been working with the Afghan National Army’s 207th Corps Engineer Kandak (CEK) since they graduated from the Combined Fielding Center in December 2013.

The CEK has exceeded projections both from the 207th Corps leadership and their coalition partners as one of the last ANA units to be fielded.

“They have learned well, you can really tell,” said Sgt. 1st Class Michael McDowell, ETT First Sergeant, as he inspected the work being done by the horizontal company just outside the gates.

The project was the one identified by the 207th Corps to increase their force protection outside their walls. It was the

first project received by the 207th CEK outside of their nine week training program they are still undergoing.

“This is really going to set the stage for them to move forward,” McDowell said after discussing the progress with the 207th Corps Engineer Planner at the site.

After going over the plan for drainage and some of the logistics issues they may face with bringing different types of equipment to the site and weighing the cost versus benefit, McDowell and the others spoke about

some possible future projects the Corps is expecting to have soon.

Col. Khairizada Zainuddin, the 207th Corps Engineer Planner, said, “I am very happy with the work being done. We would have to spend a lot of money to pay contractors to do the same thing these engineers are able to do. Having this asset internally increases our Corps’ capability

“This [project] is really going to set the stage for them to move forward.”



Photo by 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe, JTF Sapper

ANA Staff Sgt. Dean Mohammad (left), a vertical construction engineer, assists other soldiers working on a masonry project in Camp Zafar in Western Afghanistan, Mar. 4. The CEK has picked up many skills quickly and begun to teach from within their own ranks.



Photo by 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe, JTF Sapper

ANA leaders with the 207th CEK discuss with the 207th Corps Planner, ANA Col. Khairizada Zainuddin (center), the progress of a project they are currently completing to increase Camp Zafar’s force protection measures while a bulldozer operates in the background.

drastically.”

ANA 1st Sgt. Mohammad, the horizontal company first sergeant, who was also on site, explained that the entire project was being run by soldiers within the same company, “from the security guards to the equipment operators, to the supervisors, they all come from inside my company.”

The members of the 65th Eng. Bn. ETT said the force protec-

tion project has been planned and executed by the ANA engineers independent of much help by their coalition partners.

McDowell explained how they check on the project every few days to ensure they are on the right track, but do not impose beyond that, allowing them to learn through their own leaders, similar to how the U.S. Army

completes tasks by teaching Soldiers through their NCO’s experience.

“We are trying to emphasize the importance of using their NCOS, which in turn allows them the ability to teach themselves much easier,” said Capt. Jason

Oliver, ETT officer in charge. Oliver was confident in the CEK’s ability to continue their training to complete independence with the method his team was using to teach

the ANA engineers. The nine week training plan includes everything from drivers training to medical training, skills training and assessment to a “train the trainer” portion.

The skills training and assessment requires the ANA engineers to build useable projects, and work on common methods they

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“Having this asset internally increases our Corps’ capability drastically.”

***- ANA Col Zainuddin
207th Corps Eng. Planner***



Corpsmen Share Knowledge with ANA Medics



Photo by Construction mechanic 2nd Class John Zaragoza

Hospital corpsman 1st Class Carolina Bornstein teaches a class of ANA medics on digital blocks. This procedure is performed when the finger needs to be completely numb for an operation.

By Chief Petty Officer Barry Wood
NMCB 28, EBAAT Operations Chief

KABUL, Afghanistan — U.S. Navy Corpsman with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Two-Eight (NMCB 28) from Barksdale Air Force Base, La. assigned to Joint Task Force Sapper's Engineering Brigade Advise and Assist Team (EBAAT) began training medics from the Afghan National Army's (ANA) National Engineering Brigade (NEB) in Jan. 2014.

While many of the ANA medics had been through some classroom training before, the Navy corpsman brought real hands-on training, application, and exercises in an expeditionary environment. The results over the next eight weeks were outstanding.

The training curriculum included a Combat Life Saver course, as well as familiarizing them with every day "sick call" medicine. The skills they learned are critical during this time when the ANA is now in the lead over the security of their country.

"We began by teaching life-saving techniques such as tourniquets, battle dressings and advanced to casualty care and airway adjuncts," described Hospital corpsman 1st Class Carolina Bornstein, an Independent Duty Corpsman (IDC) and lead instructor, on the first few weeks of training.

"The eagerness of the medics to volunteer for procedures was one of the highlights as we performed nasopharyngeal airway

operations," said Bornstein. "I looked forward to going out to the training site because I knew we had a group of motivated medics that wanted to learn."

Hospital corpsman 2nd Class Isa Lee was also impressed, and explained the ANA's dedication, "to be able to teach those less fortunate than us, with poor living conditions, and for them to be so eager to participate was a great experience."

Capitalizing on the enthusiasm, the ANA medics began learning how to perform minor

medical procedures to include intravenous access with administration of fluids, intramuscular and subcutaneous injections, suturing, incision and drainage with packing, and splinting or immobilizing a joint to provide stability.

The EBAAT corpsmen finished the training by teaching the ANA the fundamentals of sick call, an incredibly important task in a region where access to medical care is remote at best.

Hospital corpsman 1st Class Corey Broussard observed, "When we asked for volunteers for anything, hands shot up, always eager to learn."

Broussard continued in his distinctive Cajun accent, "They had never had any hands-on experience and I'm a hands-on guy. They had heard about this stuff in a classroom but never put it into practice, and that's what we do."

The feedback received from

the students was always positive and the effect of this training has the potential to be felt well beyond the battlefield.

Chief hospital corpsman Justin Davies, NMCB 28's Medical OIC, said, "One student told us after working with our instructors that he realized the importance of an education and was sending his teenage son to back to school, who had recently quit to take a job. The students are clearly not the only ones who have benefited from the training."

Bornstein summed up the feelings of all the instructors, "As the trainers we have had the honor and pleasure to be able to pass on knowledge to this group of motivated Medics that can someday save a life."

The training of the National Engineering Brigade will continue this summer as NMCB 28 is replaced by NMCB 25 and the Seabees continue to prepare the ANA to rapidly deploy.

"The eagerness of the medics to volunteer for procedures was one of the highlights"

"We have had the honor and pleasure to be able to pass on knowledge to this group of motivated [ANA] medics that can someday save a life."



Photo by Hospital corpsman 1st Class Carolina Bornstein

ANA medics with the National Engineer Brigade learn the art of sutures from U.S. Navy hospital corpsman 2nd Class Kenneth Williams.



Support Company performs outside their MOS

(Continued from page 2)

was asked to do this job, I couldn't have been happier," Gogue, who had to complete a week long course prior to learn the process of ordering supplies and cooking for a large group, said.

Gogue said that he had to "audition" for the job, after barbequing for the entire battalion.

"I guess they liked it," he said with a laugh.

His command group christened his new position with a sign right outside the DFAC tent with the words "Gogue's Grill" spread across it.

Although he is not performing his duties as a mechanic, Gogue still has found a passion for his work overseas.

"Feeding everybody and seeing the smile on their faces is totally worth it," he said. "Making people happy is what keeps me going on the long days out here."

Another Soldier performing outside his job is Sgt. Derrick Earvin, a wheeled-vehicle mechanic.

Since his time at FOB Lindsey, Earvin has been tasked with providing security at the checkpoints around the base, as well as conducting presence patrols in the local area.

A task usually assigned to infantrymen, Earvin has embraced his new role.

"We have a great team out here, and everyone really has risen up to the occasion and has done a great job."

"It is a good experience, to be able to get to do a new job, it's nice," he said.

He talked about being overseas, and the ability to perform as a Soldier outside of garrison.

"Being deployed, it lets you do your job," Earvin said. "You train and go through all the drills, so being able to put those into practice in a deployed setting is great."

Overseeing all of the change and transition is 1st Lt. Alex Lostetter, the executive



Photo by Cpl. Clay Beyersdorfer, RC-S Public Affairs

Soldiers from Forward Support Company, 65th Eng. Battalion, conduct a presence patrol in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan.

officer for FSC.

As the XO, Lostetter is responsible for coordinating all of the logistics for FSC, making sure

everyone on the same page.

She talked about the versatility of FSC Soldiers, and how it motivates her to do her own job.

"We have a bunch of people working outside their MOS, and it's a little crazy at times," she said. "But we embrace it, and it's cool to see the positive attitude everyone has doing things they weren't trained before to do. It definitely boosts my morale"

Lostetter credits the leadership within the company "for being able to motivate and get the most out of their Soldiers."

With all the changes and transition, it's just another day for a company whose motto is "Rise Up."

"We have a great team out here, and everyone really has risen up to the occasion and has done a great job," Lostetter said. "Until you step back and look at it, we all just see it as work, and being a Soldier and doing what you are asked to do."



Photo by Cpl. Clay Beyersdorfer, RC-S Public Affairs

A Soldier from Forward Support Company, 65th Eng. Battalion, walks amongst Afghan children during a presence patrol in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, March 24.



Engineers Continue Downsizing Efforts



Golden, Colo., native, Spc. Kyle Taaffe, a heavy equipment operator, attached to the 489th Engineer Battalion, uses his hydraulic excavator to demolish a structure at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jon Cupp, 82nd SB CMRE Public Affairs

By U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jon Cupp
82nd Sustainment Brigade

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — In line with the old adage that busy hands are happy hands, Soldiers often say if their time isn't filled with work during a deployment that slow work days in a combat theater can lead to tedium.

Fortunately for troops deployed with the Little Rock, Ark.-based 489th Engineer Battalion of the U.S. Army Reserves, boredom hasn't been an issue, according to Kingsport, Tenn., native Command Sgt. Maj. David G. Douthat, senior enlisted adviser for the 489th, whose troops have been spending full days deconstructing and downsizing bases.

"When we came in we were extremely lucky as we got here at the right time and we have plenty of work to keep us busy with all the units working very hard to accomplish the mission," said Douthat. "Our Soldiers came in with a 'want to' and 'can do' attitude. The mis-

sion is going well and we came into theater with the challenge of how best to [down-size bases] and leave our work sites better than when we arrived here."

"But our guys took the mission and ran with it and they're always finding ways to do things better and to get things done faster. We're finding that we're getting things done almost at twice the rate of regular units," added Douthat.

Troops for the 489th Engineer Battalion can often be found working to pull out interior electrical wiring, insulation, plumbing, wood and other interior fixtures from structures prior to bringing in heavy equipment such as a hydraulic excavator to deconstruct the buildings.

Once all reusable items have been removed and a building has been demolished, the engineers clear off and clean the site using a loader or excavator to load refuse into a dump truck and dispose of it. Prior to completion, engineers also use heavy machinery to improve the

appearance of the site.

The engineers take useable recovered items from the site to the retrosort yard where the items will be sorted and made available for use in theater, shipped where needed elsewhere in the military system or given to Afghans.

"It's great to see that we recycle the items as I'd hate to see it disposed of," said Waldron, Ark., native Staff Sgt. Guillermo Ozuna, a heavy equipment operator for the Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.-based 955th Engineer Company, U.S. Army Reserves. "We all know how the economy can be back home so it's good to know that we're saving money by giving it to people who need it. That's always a plus."

The 489th Engineer Battalion, which is attached to the active duty Army's, Fort Bragg, N.C.-based, 82nd Sustainment Brigade-U.S. Central Command Materiel Recovery Element, is comprised of various attached companies from both the Army National Guard and Reserves.

"I feel honored to be work-

ing at a battalion level with good, solid troops who have a high level of motivation and it's a unique mission as we have troops from about 25 different states working together, ranging from California to New York and all over," said Douthat.

As Afghan National Security Forces have successfully transitioned to taking over security for their country, it has made the 489th's mission possible, said Douthat, while also reflecting on the significance of the battalion's efforts.

"The importance of what we're doing is that we're setting up the Afghans to be successful, helping them by ensuring deconstructed sites, which will eventually be handed over to them, are cleaned up and in pristine condition," added Douthat.

With projects throughout Regional Command South and Southwest, the battalion's mission hasn't been without its challenges including weather and continual maintenance on machinery.

"Although our operations have gone smoothly, weather has

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"We're setting up the Afghans to be successful, helping them by ensuring deconstructed sites...are cleaned up and in pristine condition."

"Our Soldiers came with a 'want to' and 'can do' attitude."



JTF Sapper prepares for another new chapter in TEB history



Photo by 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe, JTF Sapper

Soldiers with HHC, 130th Eng. Bde., work to unpack a container full of equipment and supplies in Kabul during their transition in December. The company is currently packing up for their transition to BAF.

(Continued from page 1)

efforts across the country of Afghanistan.

To better facilitate the brigade's responsibilities in helping to "right size" Bagram, the unit will maintain the deconstruction and Train, Advise, and Assist missions in Northern Kabul, but most of the unit will transition to Bagram in Regional Command-East, where Bagram Airfield is located.

will remain the TEB's main priority.

Capabilities retained by the brigade will be a horizontal and vertical construction company, the theater bridging company, and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Two Eight (NMCB 28).

The brigade's continuously changing mission set is indicative of the hard work and determination of its Soldiers to provide

The new mission is important because Bagram is one of the largest bases in theater and must be able to support the transition of most units

quality products, subject matter expertise, and a desire to make their families proud.

Ensuring the successful establishment and training of the National Engineer Brigade (NEB)

849th Eng. Bn. Works Deconstruction

(Continued from page 6)

sometimes been an issue but we haven't used it as an excuse to slow us down," said Douthat. "On a couple of bases where we worked, our engineers were sometimes the only people working [in inclement weather] so we haven't let it hamper our production."

"As for maintenance, we're using equipment harder than it's ever been used before, putting a lot of hours on it, and when you do this it's bound to sometimes fail," added Douthat. "But we have great mechanics, who remain very busy, keeping our equipment running and ensuring the mission continues."

As with any unit that works with heavy equipment or works

Douthat. "We've looked at what those safety issues are, dug into accident data, worked ways to mitigate those risks and pushed them down to the troops."

"We have great leadership and safety officers who do safety stand downs and have greatly reduced our accident rate," added Douthat.

Troops who work for the 489th Engineer Battalion said they're proud of what they're doing and that the importance of the CMRE mission is not lost on them.

"It's been a real learning experience and it definitely matures you," said St. Louis, Mo., native Sgt. Michael Axelson, a wheeled vehicle mechanic for the Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.-

based 955th Engineer Company, U.S. Army Reserves. "When I first found out I was going to be part of the CMRE mission, I

was really excited. It gives us a sense of pride to do these

[deconstruction efforts] and to see how far along the Afghans have come toward becoming self-sufficient. It really makes you feel that your sacrifices are worth it."

"I've really enjoyed it and it's amazing to see how many pieces go into what we're doing," said Ozuna. "When you see the amount of work

that's been done, you know we've really accomplished something great."

When their mission is done in a few months, Douthat has a single wish for his troops.

"My hope is that they take away that they were the ones who shaped our deconstruction efforts here, and with all the hard work they've done, they will go home with their heads held high," Douthat said.

"It's amazing to see how many pieces go into what we're doing."

As ANSF have successfully transitioned to taking over security for their country, it has made the 489th's mission possible

"When you're tearing things down, there are differ-

ent safety issues than when you're doing construction," said



Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jon Cupp, 82nd SB-CMRE

A heavy equipment operator uses a hydraulic excavator to load debris from a deconstruction site onto a dump truck at Kandahar Airfield



Helping to Deter IED Placement

By U.S. Army Sgt. Jessica Ostroska
RC-Southwest Public Affairs Office

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan — United States Army soldiers with the 82nd Engineer Support Company (ESC), 65th Eng. Battalion led an operation to install culvert denial systems along Highway 1 in Helmand province, Afghanistan, March 24.

The mission was to install 20 culvert denial systems at five different locations within Regional Command (Southwest)'s area of operation.

The systems are designed to prevent the emplacement of improvised explosive devices in small tunnels along the main highway in Helmand and ensure the safety of the Afghan people traveling along the road.

The system is comprised of two metal-bar grates that are placed at either ends of the culvert and held together by tension force cables, with an anti-tampering device secured to the grates. The device can detect any type of disturbance from vibra-

tions to heat and will initiate a camera to record any tampering with the system.

While the Army took the lead with installing culvert denial systems, soldiers with the Georgian Army and a U.S. Marine Georgian Liaison Team provided security and vehicle stopping points as force protection. The Afghan National Army was responsible for manning and running the vehicle stopping points and engaging Afghan travelers to inform them of the operation.

"This really shows the support we have for the Afghans and how much we want to help them provide safety for not only Highway 1, but Afghanistan," said U.S. Army 1st Lt. Cortney Heaps, platoon leader and patrol commander, 82nd ESC and native of Litchfield Park, Ariz. "Incorporating the Georgians, Marines and the Army, shows the Afghans we can all work together and that they can work with us. We can support one another to get the mission accomplished."

As U.S. Forces continue to

transfer full security to the Afghans in securing their country, they are also providing them with necessary tools and equipment to keep their country and people safe.

"It's a great opportunity to give something to the Afghans that would enhance their force protection," said U.S. Army 1st Lt. Anne Nagy, platoon leader, 82nd ESC, and native of McKinney,

also to protect them along Highway 1."

According to Heaps, the ANSF are supportive of programs that keep Afghanistan safe. The culvert denial systems are easy for the Afghans to build, install and maintain, and are a step in the right direction for the country.

"It was a good mission over-

"It's a great opportunity to give something to the Afghans that would enhance their force protection."



Sgt. Nathan Brown, combat engineer with 82nd Eng. Co., secures the tension force cables for the culvert denial systems the 65th Eng. Battalion is installing along Highway 1 in Helmand province Mar. 24.

Texas. "It is not the end-all, be-all to culvert IEDs, but it is an extra layer of protection that could help save one or many lives. With the anti-tampering device, if something does show that there is some sort of interest or abnormality, it lets us know something is happening and to cue into that.

"Everything we can do with the ANSF goes a long way to help them and will have a long lasting effect on Afghanistan."

It's an added benefit to International Security Assistance Force for a little bit more situational awareness and Afghan National Security Forces and local nation-

all," said Heaps. "It was interesting working with different countries, but once we got into the rhythm of things we worked really well together. Having the ANA out with us shows the Afghan locals they can have faith in their security force, and they are taking the lead in protecting and defending their country. Everything we can do for the ANSF goes a long way to help them and will have a long lasting effect on Afghanistan."



Soldiers with the 82nd Eng. Co. install a culvert denial system along Hwy 1, designed to prevent the emplacement of IEDs in small tunnels along the highway and ensure the safety of the travelers on the road.



Learning to teach themselves

(Continued from page 3)

will use on many future projects.

One example of a method the engineers are learning from their U.S. counterparts is the use of masonry in addition to the commonly used carpentry construction. This is important because, in this part of the country, many of the buildings are a combination of masonry and wood construction due to the materials available in Western Afghanistan.

The vertical company commander, ANA Capt. Ali Akbar, expressed his approval on how well his soldiers were performing and continuing to learn.

"The training is going very well. We just need to keep doing, as much as possible until we are on our own, and then continue to keep doing," Akbar said.

When asked how confident he was with his soldier's ability to perform independently on their own, he said, "We still need

some more experience to be completely proficient, but that comes along with working on more projects."

"Once my soldiers have the chance to do something hands-on, I am certain that my soldiers can do it again," continued Akbar.

"We are trying to emphasize the importance of using their NCOs, which in turn allows them the ability to teach themselves much easier."

Sgt. Patrick Henry, one of the horizontal equipment trainers from the 663rd Eng. Company, Ala. National Guard said, "They are getting the idea of the concepts and understanding what it should look like."

"The rest of what they need to know is just stick time on the equipment and learning how it feels when they do it," continued Huntsville, Ala. native, Henry. "At this point, all I do is give suggestions to their plans."

In regards to the "train the trainer" portion of the training plan, McDowell said, "Once they complete that portion of the phase three training, they will be self-sustaining and able to com-



U.S. Army Spc. Steven Adams, a vertical engineer with the 284th Eng. Company, explains to some Afghan National Army soldiers with the 207th CEK how to construct trusses for a roof they were assembling for a guard shack at Camp Zafar, Western Afghanistan.



Photo by 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe, JTF Sapper

An ANA Engineer operates a scrapper as part of a training mission the 207th CEK is currently completing at Camp Zafar in Western Afghanistan. The project requires the use of synchronizing horizontal engineer assets to build a combat outpost with dirt walls, a serpentine entrance and an anti-vehicle ditch surrounding the outpost.

plete any project or mission they have."

"That training will ensure the soldiers are trained on not only how to train on the engineering portions, but also on how to fix the equipment and the logistics behind everything," he continued. "It

knowns in front of the International Security Assistance Forces, the CEK continues to perform above expectations.

In [the Western] part of the country, many of the buildings are a combination of masonry and wood construction due to the materials available.

"Our soldiers are doing their best to learn all the equipment and methods so that we will be ready to do any project our army may need us to do in the

will allow them to maintain their equipment and materials."

Especially during this critical time period, with so many un-

near future and beyond," said senior horizontal platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Mohammad Sadaq.



Brigade Headquarters & Headquarters Company (HHC)

Hello Sapper Family and Friends,

I am happy to be writing to you again- it represents another month that has passed and it is another month closer to getting back home.

As many of you know, we received a new mission to move back to Bagram from NKC. The move will make for a nice transition and will keep us on our toes as a company.

By the time we are settled in our new footprint, we will be well on our way to receiving 2nd Engineer Brigade to transition our responsibilities. We are still looking at a wrapping up our duties here towards the end of May.

There are several more of your Soldiers heading back home in the month of April. The Soldiers departing early have been identified so there should be no surprise. I will continually work with my wife and FRG Leader, Michelle, to make sure we properly receive

you on the island.

Over the last month, we have had some significant events. SGT Roppelt and SPC Krebs were promoted. Both were battlefield promotions which require stellar performance. SGT Roppelt was serving in a higher rank capacity and earned her right to join the Non-Commissioned Officer Corps. SPC Krebs was promoted for outstanding work with the J7 team!

The move will make for a nice transition and will keep us on our toes as a company.

Once we arrive back at the island, we will go into an immediate long weekend to give everyone a well-deserved break. 72-96 hours later, we will come back into work to complete our reverse SRP which will get each Soldier administratively taken care of (medical, finance, legal, etc.) Reverse SRP will last for about 9 days and then we will head off for block leave! Right now we are

looking for about a two week period for block leave. Our timeline is not set in stone regarding the redeployment events but we will continue to keep you updated.

Thanks again to the FRG, HHC Rear-Detachment and the 130th Provisional Battalion for you continued support! **Combat Ready!**

**-Capt. Matt Jordan
Commander
HHC, 130th Eng. Bde.**



Senior Leaders within the company enjoy lunch together at the Kabul Downtown Restaurant.

There's help when you need it...

Crisis Intervention Hotline

Warriors: Need someone to talk to, or have a buddy here who needs help?

The Crisis Intervention Hotline is staffed 24/7. If you need to talk to a counselor, you can reach them from any NIPR phone by dialing 1-1-1. You can also reach Crisis Counselors by Afghan Local National Phone by dialing 070-113-2000, (wait for tone) then 1-1-1.

Also reach Crisis Counselors by NIPR email at OEFCRISISHOTLINE@afghan.swa.army.mil.

Remember, you aren't alone!

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT., 2nd Inf. Div. Public Affairs



Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe
Western Afghanistan – Sgt. 1st Class Michael McDowell (right), 207th CEK ETT First Sergeant, talks with the 207th Corps Planners on future ANA construction projects

Around the Sapper AO This past month



Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe
Kabul, Afghanistan – Soldiers with HHC, 130th Eng. Bde. gather for dinner Mar. 9 in the dining facility to farewell some leaders within the brigade headquarters.



Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe
Southwestern Afghanistan— Soldiers with the 82nd Eng. Support Co. stand in formation at Camp Leatherneck during a change of command ceremony Mar. 1.

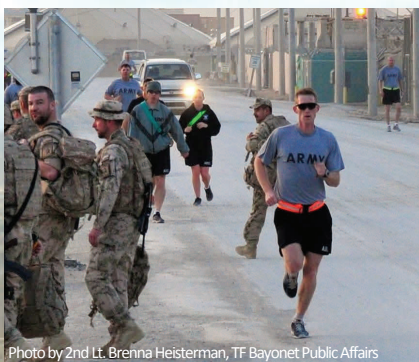


Photo by 2nd Lt. Brenna Heisterman, TF Bayonet Public Affairs
Southern Afghanistan—1st Lt. John Spies, 65th Eng. Bn. battle captain, participates in the TF Bayonet Fallen Engineer 5k run at Kandahar Airfield Mar. 21.



Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe
Eastern Afghanistan – Chief Steelworker Barry Wood hands a certificate to an ANA soldier from the CnEK during a graduation ceremony March 18.

ACROSS

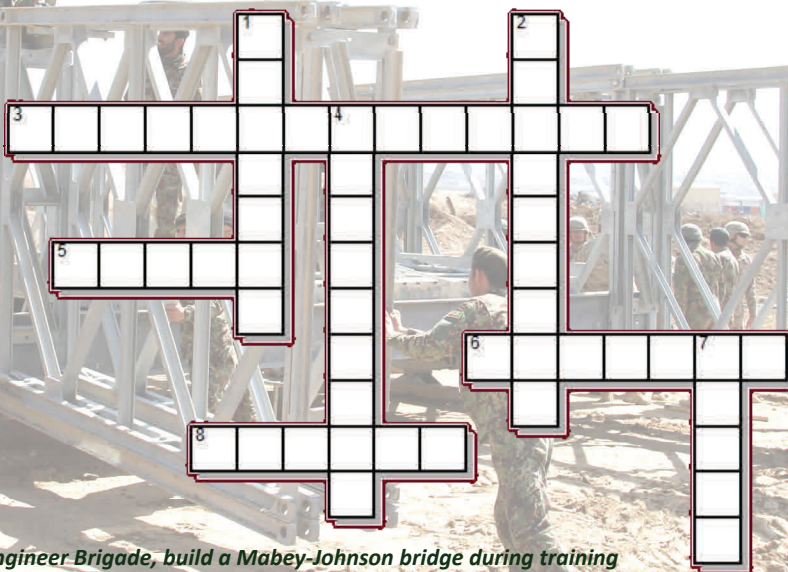
3. Mission 849th Engineer completing
5. 207th CEK Vertical Company Commander
6. FOB FSC, 65th Eng. Bn. currently operating out of
8. Former & Future base for Theater Eng. Brigade

JTF Sapper Crossword Challenge!

DOWN

1. Unique construction skill 207th CEK learning
2. 207th Corps Engineer Planner
4. Yard where useable recovered items are sorted
7. Number of weeks for NEB medic training

HINT: EACH ANSWER CAN BE FOUND INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER



About this Photo:

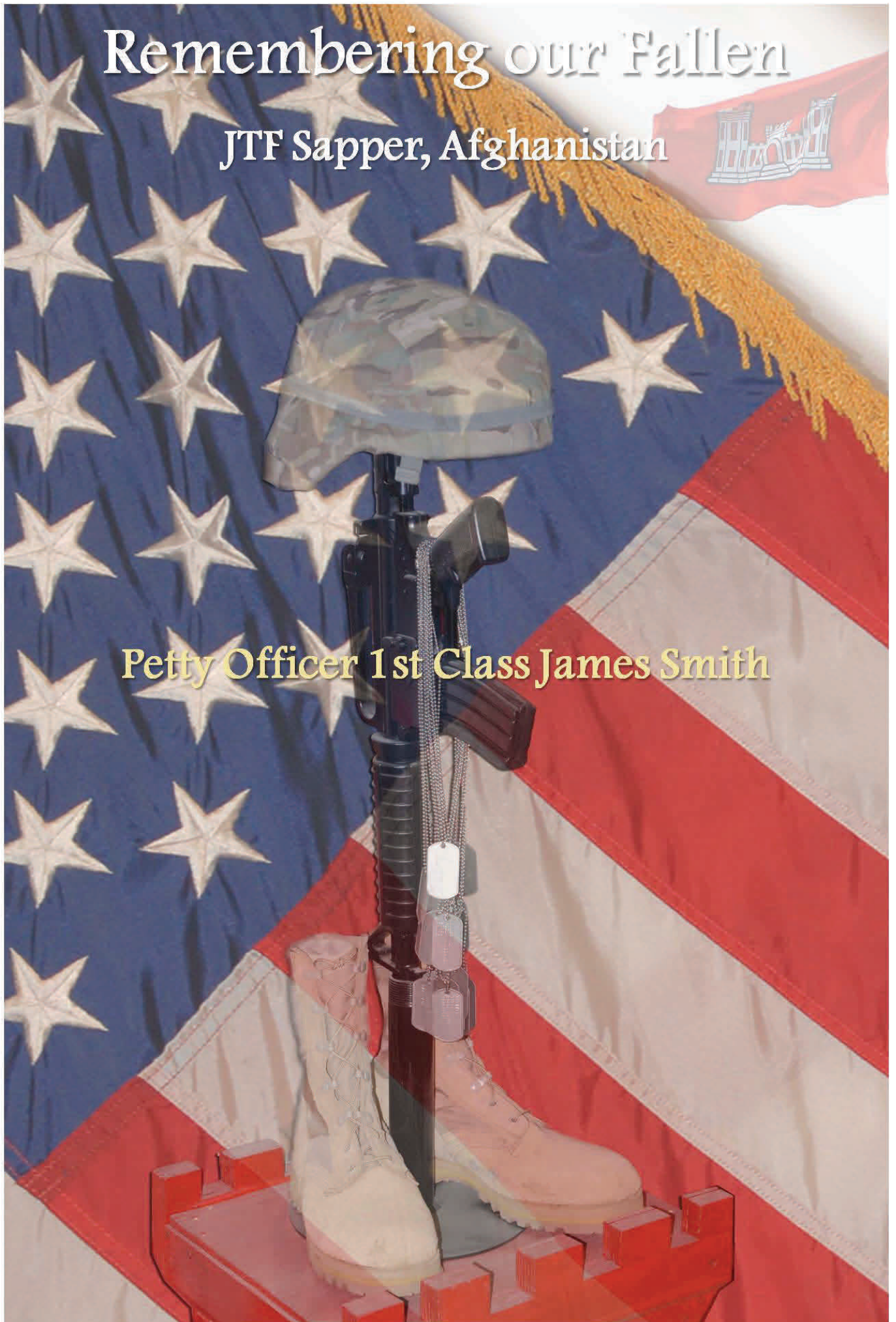
ANA soldiers with the SEK, National Engineer Brigade, build a Mabey-Johnson bridge during training March 18 in Kabul, Afghanistan. (Photo by 1st Lt. Laura Beth Beebe, JTF Sapper Public Affairs).

Remembering our Fallen

JTF Sapper, Afghanistan



Petty Officer 1st Class James Smith



JOINT TASK FORCE SAPPER 'SAPPERS IN'

Our Mission: Deploy in support of the International Security Assistance Force and, at the invitation of the Government of Afghanistan, provide theater engineer support to include development of the Afghan National Army engineer force, ISAF troop construction, and route clearance, to help build a pathway to peace and prosperity for the people of Afghanistan.



U.S. THEATER ENGINEER BRIGADE
AFGHANISTAN 2013-14



Questions or comments? Email
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