

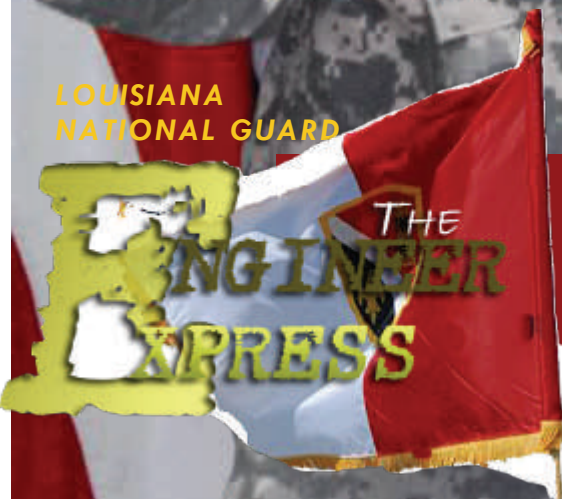
**... an historic day for
Louisiana Army National Guard ...**

"This honor is bigger than me. Many great Soldiers have come before me to allow this event to take place today, and many more will follow."

BG Owen W. Monconduit



LOUISIANA
NATIONAL GUARD



**225TH
ENGINEER BRIGADE**

FEBRUARY 25, 2009

VOLUME 1, ISSUE X

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

BG Owen W. Monconduit

Thanks Engineer Soldiers for the promotion to Brigadier General! Decades of hard work by great Engineer Soldiers performing numerous federal and state missions have led to the increase of this command position from colonel to brigadier general. This promotion is credentialed by the non-commissioned officer corps, and justly so, 2009 is The Year of the Non-Commissioned Officer!!

Engineers, February 2009 has resulted in outstanding full



spectrum engineering operations in Baghdad. Too, we proudly held a combat patch ceremony on 20 Feb. to recognize your military service signi-

fied by displaying the 225th's Shoulder Sleeve Insignia on both the left and now right side. We are only in our first month of operations in Baghdad, so, ready yourselves for a high OPTEMPO and dynamic missions in support of 1st Cavalry Division, FIRST TEAM. Record your daily significant con-

tributions in support of MND-B and compile daily events into weekly measures in meeting your monthly objectives. Too, repeat this process with your personal goals.

Again, the Brigadier General position is really an achievement of the many great men and women who built the 225th Engineer Brigade into the world class, valued based organization it is today! Let's continue to execute our engineering missions in the tradition of outstanding NCO performances and a great safety record, Safe Deployment = Safe Return.

CASTLE 6

MESSAGE FROM CASTLE 7

CSM Joseph Major

Greetings Engineer Soldiers,

Since SAFETY is a major priority for us, I would like to continue with the safety theme from the last newsletter. On the Forward Operations Base (FOB) there are a multitude of safety concerns/issues. Following are just a few I would like to review and offer guidance:

- Make sure you wear a reflective belt while running or moving around at night. We don't need anyone hurt or hospitalized because of an easily avoidable mistake.
- When moving around the FOB either by walking, riding a bicycle, or driving, always observe the

traffic signs, don't speed, don't drive recklessly, and watch out for other people.

- We have a mixture of Soldiers, contractors, and local national citizens working on the FOB, so be extremely cautious.
- Be careful in the office and housing area because there are a lot of rocks and uneven walkways; use a flashlight watching where you step and walk.
- Runners, make sure you run into the traffic flow, not with it.
- Electrical safety: don't overload the circuits in your of-



fice area or Containerized Housing Unit (CHU) with too many appliances or equipment. This could become a fire hazard. Use the proper adapters and extension cords. If you have a question about what adapter or extension cords are correct, please contact the TF Safe in the 225th Engr Bde

Headquarters.

Bottom line... watch out for your fellow Soldiers and Battle Buddy and help keep them safe.

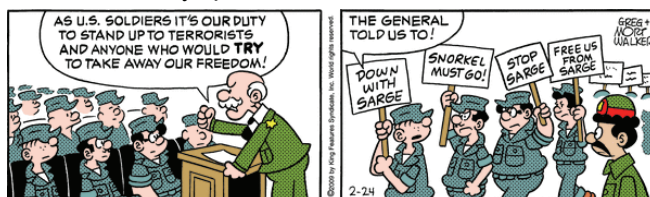
Safe Deployment =

Safe Return

CSM Joe Major



Beetle Bailey By Mort Walker



LOUISIANA
NATIONAL GUARD



The Semi-Monthly Newsletter for the
225th Engineer Brigade

On the Cover:

Newly promoted Brigadier General Owen W. Monconduit displays a coin presented to him by 1st Cavalry Commander, MG Daniel P. Bolger

(Photo courtesy of Julie Dermansky)

How the Air Force Dealt with Military Cutbacks ...

Editor:

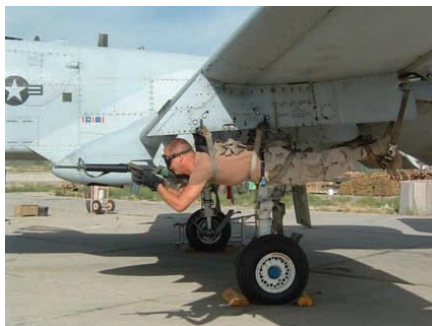
Sgt. Rebekah Malone

Contributing journalists:

Scott Flenner

1st Lt. Janeene Yarber

Sgt. Catherine Graham



Chaplain's Corner

By Chap. (MAJ) Jeff Mitchell

Love and Respect Marriage Series

Our marriage enrichment series will be based on the Love and Respect marriage conference material presented by Emerson and Sarah Eggerich. A great time to learn and reflect on how to be a better spouse is when you are apart. Obviously, those that are married and here together are welcomed. It is based on the verse in Ephesians 5:33 "Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband." This material presented via DVD deals with three areas: the crazy cycle, the energizing cycle, and the reward cycle. The crazy cycle answers "why we



negatively react to we each other?" The energizing cycle answers the question, "how do we motivate a spouse?" The Reward Cycle answers "what can we do when a spouse doesn't respond?"

Please take advantage of this series no matter what your marital status in order to be equipped for the present or the future.

Check out the resources at

<http://www.loveandrespect.com>

The series will be at the Division Chapel on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month starting 26 March at 1800 hours. This is one of the best series I've seen in years.

CH (MAJ) Jeff Mitchell

Vol. I, Iss. X

- 2 Comments from Castle 6
- 2 Message from Castle 7
- 3 Chaplain's Corner
- 4 46th modifies vehicles
- 5 Recovery Class Begins
- 6-7 Soldiers in Focus
- 8-9 Soldiers celebrate Mardi Gras
- 10-11 Newest general in Louisiana National Guard
- 12-13 COL Mustard in the kitchen
- 14-15 Meet the command

MARDI GRAS Quiz

1. What Krewe was the first to introduce animated floats?
 - A) Mid-City
 - B) Proteux
 - C) Rex
 2. Which Krewe is credited for having the first celebrity King?
 - A) Bacchus
 - B) Orpheux
 - C) Endymion
 - D) Zulu
 3. On July 8, 1988, the Louisiana Legislature passed bill #SB188 in response to one Krewe's problem. What is the bill commonly known as?
 - A) The Mardi Gras Bill
 - B) The Carnival Relief Bill
 - C) The Coconut Bill
 - D) The Mardi Gras Relief Bill
- Name two wars that saw a halt of Mardi Gras celebrations in New Orleans while they were in progress?
- A) The Civil War & WWII
 - B) The Korean War & WWII
 - C) Persian Gulf War & Vietnam War
 - D) WWI & WWII

46th modifies vehicles to ease travel through Baghdad streets

By Staff Sgt. Maria Martinez-Glory Direct Support Platoon, Platoon Sergeant

The mine resistant ambush protected vehicle, an armored fighting vehicle designed to survive improvised explosive devices, is the preferred method of movement for many Soldiers conducting convoys in Iraq. However, the large vehicles have been known to get caught in tight spots on some of the narrow streets in Baghdad, and are threatened by low-hanging electrical wires. To help with this issue, maintenance Soldiers of the 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), 225th Engineer Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division - Baghdad, figured out a mechanical solution to divert the wire over the vehicle.

The direct support platoon of the 46th Eng. Bn. developed a solution that would quickly provide a safe and cost efficient solution.

While other units developed their own solutions, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Langston Washington, a native of Houston, Texas, noticed that other wire mitigation devices needed more coverage.

"Instead of starting at the bumper of the vehicle, [wire mitigation devices] started at the top of the cab which offered little protection if it were to come into contact with power lines," said Langston.

His solution was to start at the front bumper of the vehicle to allow the coverage to continue to the back of the vehicle. When the power lines come into contact, they would flow right over the PVC piping. His welding team led by Spcs. Paul Thrailkill a na-

tive of Canoga Park, Calif. and Stephen Green, a native of Citronelle, Ala., provided the ingenuity and skills essential to tackle this dilemma. The Soldiers undertook the project to protect the battalion's vehicles by fabricating the design that became the standard for the 46th Eng. Bn.

Thrailkill, who specializes in welding, produced the template for the metal brackets that hold the mounts in place.

"I understood the magnitude of the mission when I noticed how many brackets I would have to fabricate to complete just one vehicle," said Thrailkill.

Green, who is also a welder, spearheaded a team of volunteers from the battalion to place the kits on all the vehicles.

Green said, "Some of the brackets were too flimsy to withstand pressure from power lines or any other sources."

As a result, he requested stiffer PVC pipe that would hold up during any contact with the hanging power lines. Some vehicles had to come back to the shop for mi-

nor improvements to be made but in the end, the vehicles were successfully completed with the best product from the



Soldiers conduct a test of the wire mitigation system by passing an mine resistant ambush protected under low-hanging wires.

direct support platoon and its welders. Once again, the maintenance team of the 46th Eng.



Spc. Stephen Green, welder from Citronella, Ala., welds a wire mitigation kit on one of the mine resistant ambush protected.

Bn., proved that with creativity and hard work any challenge can be overcome.

Combat mechanic recovery classes opens

Photo and article by Sgt. Catherine Graham

Combat mechanics and support troops from the 890th Engineer Battalion, 225th Engineer Brigade, took the opportunity Feb. 5 to take part in a new vehicle recovery course given at the 890th Eng. Bn. motor pool here.

The course has been designed to improve vehicle recovery operations within the battalion as well as for the unit which will replace the 890th Engineers in the next few weeks.

Throughout the course, Soldiers experienced realistic scenarios created to hone their skills as they drive outside the wire to recover disabled or damaged vehicles.

The mechanics used cranes on 'mock-up' vehicles to represent types of equipment they may encounter during actual recovery operations. They also used the course to test their driving skills.

Three classes were held during the trial phase of the four-day block of instruction, where the Soldiers served as troubleshooters for the course curriculum by completing a questionnaire and offered suggestions to modify the course.

The first two classes were offered to Soldiers experienced in the recovery and maintenance sections.

"The class was a little basic for me because I work in the recovery section, but I am happy to help troubleshoot the class for other Soldiers. My suggestion was to focus less on preventive maintenance checks and services and more on hand signals," said Spc. Scott Monroe, a native of Gulfport, Miss., who attended the first class.

"Improving drivers' training was my suggestion for the course," said Sgt. Timothy Hines, a native of Dublin, Texas, a mechanic with the 836th Sapper Company.

Hines helped critique the second class, which he said included invaluable training for vehicle operators as they recover vehicles.

"I felt that accurate information from the equipment operator is a vital to the success of a recovery mission," Hines added. "Drivers' training will help the Soldier understand the importance of conveying correct information in relation to recovery."

The third class was opened to Soldiers in the distribution platoon who were not experienced in the recovery process.

"I wanted to take the class to get a better understanding of the M916 (tractor trailer) truck. The class taught me how to back up the truck and trailer through a serpentine course and other difficult terrains," said Spc. Montoya Brown, a native of Gulfport, Miss. and a unit supply specialist with the 890th Eng. Bn. Forward Support Company. "The class material was extensive and the hands-on experience was great. Using the battle damaged equipment was difficult but it gave us a worst case scenario experience."

"I learned a whole lot. I could find no fault in the course. I am glad I had the opportunity to attend the class and I think a lot of Soldiers will benefit from the training," added Brown.

The course marked the first time the 890th's troops have trained at the recently constructed recovery operations training area of their motor pool.



Safety

By 1st Lt. Jerry Rodriguez
During the next couple of weeks, the HHC fire wardens and KBR will be inspecting Soldier's containerized housing units (CHUs) for safety purposes. Key things to remember:

- Only CE and UL certified electrical devices will be authorized for use on VBC.
- There should not be an obstruction in front (inside and outside) of your door for at least 36 inches.
- You should contact the 1SG with any deficiencies in your living areas that require a work order for repair.
- Remember that most wall receptacles on VBC are 220 volt. If you need to power 110 volt (U.S.) appliances, ensure that you utilize a power converter (step-down transformer). Otherwise, you may burn up the appliance and possibly start a fire.
- Do not 'daisy chain' power strips together. Power strips and large appliances (refrigerators) should be plugged directly in to the wall receptacles.
- Hanging of ponchos, poncho liners, blankets, etc., for individual privacy inside CHUs is not authorized on VBC. If a fire would start in the living areas, these items obstruct egress from the CHUs.

I would like to thank all 225th Engineer Soldiers for doing a great job in promoting safety. To date in Iraq, HHC, 225 EN BDE has had zero recordable accidents. Let's keep it that way!

PHOTO LEFT:
During the first class in the recovery training area in the 890th Engineer Battalion's motor pool, Spc. Scott Monroe of Gulfport, Miss., uses hand signals to back the wrecker up so that the battle-damaged vehicle

Soldiers in

46th Engineer Battalion

Sgt. Cole Brewer

Somebody call the Discovery Channel. We have the next episode of "Dirty Jobs" with Mike Rowe!

Sgt. Cole Brewer, member of 'Dirty Deuces' platoon, Company A, 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), 225th Engineer Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, heads a plumbing repair task force of six Soldiers. "Everything is new," Brewer said. "Each situation we get called to fix is unique even though they all fall under the category of 'plumbing repair.'"

Committed to improving the quality of life for Soldiers living on remote Joint Security Stations, Brewer's team has completed more than 15 of the most severe plumbing, pipe fitting, and sewerage disasters. Some of these problems were previously thought to be unfixable and required ingenious, non-standard solutions. Brewer's team remains undaunted even in the most challenging conditions that are usually inherent to working with sewage main breaks and dysfunctional plumbing.

Despite all the notoriety, the former firefighter remains modest. He continued, "My team has gained a lot of experience. We just get better and better."

Recently while on leave, Brewer, of Riverside, Calif., married his girlfriend of more than three years, the former Mandy Sulzmann of Grand Terrace, Calif.

890th Engineer Battalion

1st Lt. Richard Warehime

Hours on a route clearance mission can lead to many inside jokes. For members of 2nd Platoon, 688th Engineer Company, 890th Eng. Battalion, 225th Eng. Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, their platoon leader provided the ammunition.

The holder of three types of martial arts black belts, 1st Lt. Richard Warehime of Texarkana, Texas, is fondly referred to as 'happy feet' by his Soldiers. And while the 'Ligar' Soldiers joke, they are quick to explain why their 'LT' is one of the best.

Soldiers explained, "He is very level-headed. He has a cool head and knows his job very well."

Being platoon leader for a route clearance team is no easy task. It takes a leader who possesses incredible attributes and is willing to lead from the front to perform this task

overall success of the mission. The young lieutenant is that type of leader.

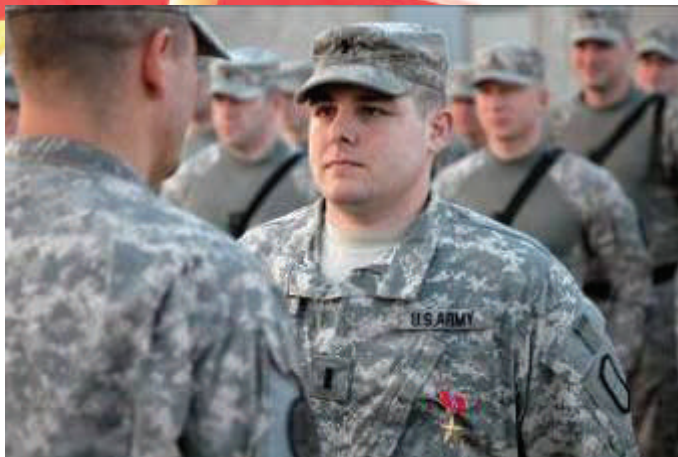
"Every day I wake up and consider myself very fortunate to work with the group of people that I do," said Warehime. "What I enjoy most is the platoon, just being around the guys."

For the past year, Warehime has successfully led his platoon down some of the most dangerous routes in Baghdad clearing them of IEDs that threaten the safety of everyone in Iraq.

Along with his daily platoon leader tasks of mission planning, intelligence gathering and overall command and control of his Soldiers, Warehime, leads his Soldiers from the front by performing every duty, driving every vehicle and completing every task involved in a route clearance mission. "I wanted to learn more about the vehicles and what jobs the other Soldiers do so I started driving and TCing (troop commanding) different vehicles," said Warehime. "[The knowledge] is very beneficial ... I would not ask my Soldiers to do a job that I would not do myself."

"The buffalo is nice because it is a lot more powerful to smash stuff, but I really like the husky," Warehime explained about his favorite piece of equipment. "It is a lot more versatile vehicle, the most surviv-

and ensure the



1st Lt. Richard Warehime receives the bronze star



Sgt. Cole Brewer of 'Dirty Deuces' platoon

Focus

Warehime has gained the respect and confidence of his Soldiers and command over the last year.

"He is an extraordinary, incredible officer, with a ton of talent who brought the best out of his Soldiers," said 688th Eng. Co. Commander Cpt. Marc Anderson, of Mountain Pine, Ark. "I have been impressed with him from the time we started till now. Throughout the deployment, he continually encouraged Soldiers to bring ideas and concepts forward, and that is what makes him a great leader."

HHC, 225th Engineer Brigade

Pfc. Taylor Crooks, a combat engineer, 225th Engineer Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division—Baghdad works in the operations section of his brigade's command center.

A native of Deville, La., Crooks enlisted in the U.S. Army seven months ago and received a promotion to private first class Feb. 16.

Working with the Army's command post of the future, he can track and report, in near real-time, events and units all over the greater Baghdad area. As a CPOP operator in the tactical operations center, Crooks functions as the eyes and ears for the commander during combat operations, route clearance missions and joint MND-B/Iraqi Security Force patrols.

Crooks, who joined the Army " ... to get a

head start on life and deploy," didn't deploy to Iraq all alone. In addition to his "Castle" teammates, there's a man who has been with Crooks since the beginning.

"He knows there will be no special treatment for him while he is deployed with me, but I am very proud of my son," said his father and deputy commanding officer of the 225th Eng. Bde., Lt. Col. Jerry Crooks.

Tough, with no special treatment, is how the young private expects life to be here in Iraq during his first deployment.

"I'm just proud to be a Soldier and follow in my family's footsteps."

890th Engineer Battalion
Sgt. 1st Class Glenn Sierra
Sgt. 1st Class Glenn Sierra, a combat engineer assigned to 836th Sapper Company, 890th Engineer Battalion, 225th Engineer Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division—Baghdad. Sierra, a native of Brownsville, Texas, enlisted in the U.S. Army twenty years ago. This Soldier has seen many combat engagements throughout his career to include his second deployment to Iraq.

Sierra, who has a bachelor's degree in journalism, is a

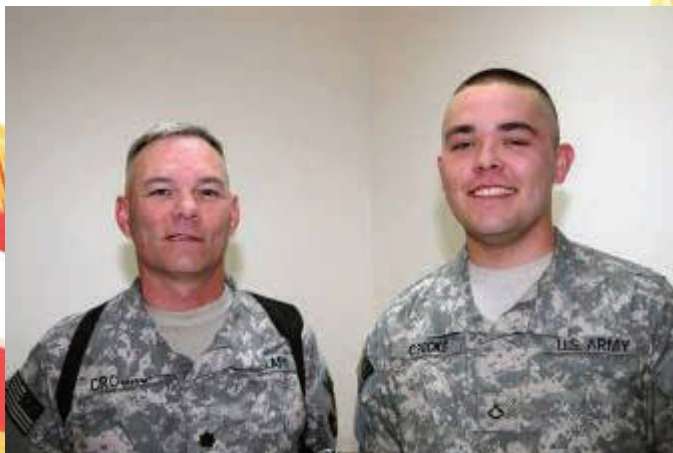
special education kindergarten teacher at Morning Side Elementary in Brownsville, Texas. He serves as the platoon sergeant of the 1st Platoon "Reapers".

"I worked as a civilian journalist for a while, but I became tired of always dealing with tragedy and sadness," said Sierra. "I wanted to do something I felt good about. That's why I became a teacher."

He also has an impressive military resume and experience that he brings to his platoon. His diverse experiences include the following positions: reconnaissance scout, combat camera and psychological operations.

"I enjoy passing my knowledge to my subordinates—it is my Soldier's job to hunt for IEDs so the roads are safe to travel for Coalition forces and the Iraqi people. It's my job to make sure they do their job safely and return home to their families.

Sierra, whose hobby is diving, is a certified scuba diver who once worked as a shark wrangler at an aquarium in Galveston, Texas.



Newly promoted Pfc. Taylor Crooks with his father, Deputy Commander, Lt. Col. Jerry S. Crooks



Sgt. 1st Class Glenn Sierra, once a shark wrangler

Soldier's Angels send Mardi Gras to Baghdad

For deployed Soldiers of the 225th Engineer Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, of Pineville, La., you can take the Soldier out of the state, but you can't take Mardi Gras out of the Soldier.

Thanks to a generous donation of more than 170 care packages from Soldier's Angels, an organization aimed at supporting deployed service members, the engineers were able to celebrate in style.

The boxes, each addressed to an individual Soldier, were filled with decorations, beads, colorful masks, moon pies and of course well wishes.

"You could tell Soldiers were happy to receive boxes full of moon pies, beads and other decorations," Lt. Col. Greg Parker of Gonzalez, La., said. "The Mardi Gras décor and food provided joie-de-vive (joy of life) to experience Mardi Gras in Iraq."

The headquarters building

was decorated for more than a week as Soldiers opened their boxes and added decorations to the displays.

"I got a t-shirt, mask, beads, fleur-de-lis and some candy," Sgt. 1st Class Janis Smith of Winnsboro, La., said. She gave her mask after the celebration to members of a jazz band.

The recipe for the Mardi Gras favorite, king cake, was given to the cooks in the dining facility; and while the interpretation wasn't perfect, it definitely sufficed.

Soldiers dressed in full-garb celebrated as armored vehicle horns honked as they passed by the Soldiers adorned in elaborate masks and costumes; undoubtedly their first experience of Louisi-



Spc. Jasmon Valley of Pineville, La., unloads loads of Operation Overseas Mardi Gras packages.

ana culture in Iraq.

Louisiana Soldiers said sharing Mardi Gras was the chance to share just a little piece of themselves, the state they represent and a culture rich with history and tradition.

"We can learn a lot from the Iraqi Culture, but we can share ours at the same time," Parker said. "Iraqi people love to celebrate just like we do."





From Left to Right: Sgt. 1st Class Joel Hoover, Master Sgt. Lisa Bates and Lt. Col. Greg Parker displays the 'Meet us on Bourbon Street' banner in front of the 225th Engineer Brigade headquarters building. Operation Overseas Deployment provided more than 170 boxes of Mardi Gras spirit for the Soldiers. Sgt. RoKeisha Berymon models her festive Mardi Gras mask. The spirit of Mardi Gras was contagious for Soldiers as they donned their garb to take photos with their friends holding LSU, New Orleans Saints and Mardi Gras banners as well as Louisiana's state flag.

Operation Overseas Mardi Gras



... an historic day, for Louisiana Army National Guard ...

Four weeks to the day of the inauguration of American's first black president, Louisiana National Guard ceremoniously promoted its first African American to general officer.

Owen W. Monconduit of Pineville, La., was promoted to brigadier general Tuesday, Feb. 17, in Baghdad. He is the commander of the 225th Engineer Brigade, and serves as the provincial engineer for the 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

In what has become a year of historical steps forward, Monconduit marveled at the enormity of the honor of being the first Black Louisiana Guardsmen to don the star.

"This honor is bigger than me," Monconduit said. "Many great Soldiers have come before me to allow this event to take place today, and many more will follow."

February is Black History Month, a time to remember the many great

African American's that have paved the way for equal opportunity for all genders, races and creeds.

"I am proud of the National Guard, Louisiana and our country for the progression of equal opportunity for all races and genders," Monconduit said. He went on to explain some of the great steps forward in the last year alone.

"The first bill President Obama

signed was the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act; Louisiana just elected the first Vietnamese U.S. Representative, Anh Cao, and last year the first governor of Indian decent, Gov. Bobby Jindal," Monconduit pointed out. "This is a sign of our times, moving forward on equal ground."

Monconduit graduated from Louisiana State University in

"This honor is bigger than me. Many great Soldiers have come before me to allow this event to take place today."



Col. Ahmed, commander of the 6th IA Engineers, presents newly promoted Brigadier General Owen Monconduit with a gift in commemoration of the historic event.

1984 with a Bachelor of Engineer Technology, a Master of Arts in organizational management from the University of Phoenix in 1998 and from the United States Army War College in 2007 with a master's in strategic studies.

During his 28-year career, Monconduit has served as a pla-

toon leader, company executive officer, company commander, battalion and brigade commander, all with the 225th Eng. Bde. Before accepting command of the engineer brigade in 2007, Monconduit served as the executive officer to the Adjutant General of the Louisiana National Guard, Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau. He became the chief of the environment management section for the Louisiana National Guard in 1991 where he served before becoming the Construction Management and Facilities Officer in 2000.

"The National Guard is a great organization – it's a value based organization and it certainly expresses equality and has many opportunities available for any young person that is interested in the military," Monconduit said. "It's a humbling experience to achieve your dreams, but through perseverance and hard work, it pays off."

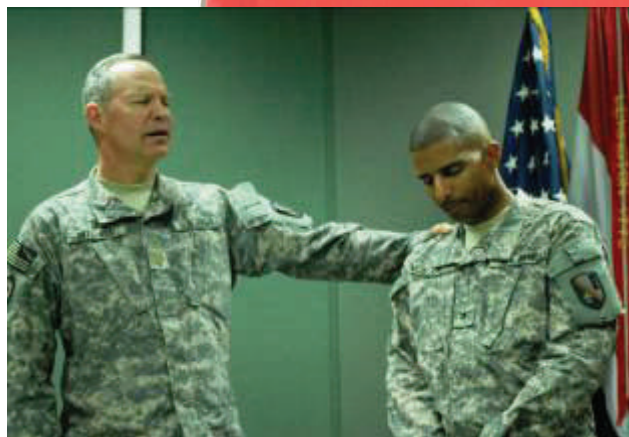
The Operation Enduring Freedom veteran commanded the 528th Engineer Battalion from Monroe, La., through a year-long tour to Afghanistan in 2005 before commanding his battalion for six months on state-active duty for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Landreneau was able to view the promotion with Monconduit's wife, Anges Chenevert, via video teleconferencing to Louisiana from Baghdad. He has known Monconduit his entire career.

"Most importantly, he leads in the direction of taking care of Soldiers;

Owen W. Monconduit is promoted to the rank of,

Brigadier



General



because of that, he has earned the respect of the Soldier and NCO corps he leads,” Landreneau said. “Owen’s a great Soldier, a great patriot, very dedicated to his Soldiers and a great leader.”

Monconduit has received numerous awards during his career, some of which include: the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Superior Unit Award, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal and the Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon.

Opposite page: Newly promoted Brig. Gen. Owen Monconduit is presented with a gift from the 6th Iraqi Army Engineer Commander, Col. Ahmed.

Left to Right: Chaplain Jeff Mitchell prays for Brig. Gen. Owen Monconduit.

Maj. Gen. Daniel Bolger congratulates the newest general in the Army, Brig. Gen. Owen Monconduit.

BG Monconduit thanks all the supporters over the years, in particular, the NCO Corps.

MG Daniel Bolger shows the video teleconference the star he put on BG Monconduit’s chest. The general’s wife was able to view the pinning from Louisiana with the Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Bennett Landreneau.

Colonel Mustard used a candlestick in the kitchen

The guidon is a symbol of heritage and pride. Protecting the units, guidon is a fiduciary responsibility held by every Soldier in the armed forces. It is for this very reason that the 'art' of guidon theft has become somewhat of legend in military circles. Risky by nature, the reward in stealing someone else's guidon is immeasurably greater than the idea of getting caught. Every guidon theft has its story, often embellished. This is the story of how a young guidon from the 225th JAG suffered the unimaginable; It was stolen ...

JAG GUIDON STOLEN!!! **By Castle JAG, Lt. Col. Connell Archey—11 Feb 09**

The JAG guidon has been pilfered. CID has been contacted and initial forensic evidence points to a male LTC whose last name begins with P, known as the "CoS." Expect an arrest warrant to be issued imminently. In the meantime, a BOLO has been issued for a young guidon and the suspect. The guidon is JAG blue in color with a golden JAG crest, and the words 225 and JAG lovingly stitched on its surface. The guidon should be treated delicately due to its tender age. The vile despicable Cos was last seen

wearing digital ACUs with brown boots, dark hair, and a funny smirk on his face. Approach with extreme caution, particularly if the words huddle, cows, or briefing are heard.

More to follow...

A SECOND SUSPECT IS IDENTIFIED—12 Feb 09

Update. Further testing by CID has revealed that a second culprit was involved in the heinous theft of the JAG guidon. In addition to Cos, there was a shorter squattier Major involved, known only as the "2." CID is uncertain how 2 had time to become involved in this conspiracy given the extreme number of meetings that 2 claims to attend. The theory being worked is that the meetings are alibis for criminal activity and that gritsums, exsums, and sigacts are code words for conspirators. This crime may be racketeering or organized in nature. As with CoS, 2 should be viewed as armed and extremely dangerous.

Meanwhile, continue to be on the lookout for the young JAG guidon. CID is

considering an Amber alert. Authorities had made it clear that the full weight of the legal system will come to bear should harm befall the JAG guidon.

A THIRD SUSEPCT IS IMPLICATED-13 Feb 09

The case is moving quickly as the conspirators begin to turn on one another. Under intense interrogation (in compliance with Geneva Conventions and all applicable laws and treaties), 2 has implicated a "third" suspect. 3 who is known to associated himself with CoS is believed to be the planner of racketeering organization. 3 is a ladies man, the tall dark quite type. But do not let 3's charm mislead you, like his conspirators, he must also be approached with extreme caution. Do not attempt to apprehend should you encounter any of the conspirators.

JAG GUIDON RESCUED! **- 21 Feb 09**

Where CID failed, Special Ops succeeded.

While the details of the recovery operation are classified, according to unnamed sources, special forces launched a raid in the early morning hours of 21 February 2009 (Zulu time) in the location of the work area of 3 or the ungovernable, tribal areas of Pakistan. The extraction operation almost failed when a local Adam offered resistance. Special forces nevertheless persevered suffering one injury. In the words of the team leader, "The casualty is unfortunate. But the feeling is exhilarating as this is what we train for."

CID released a statement that the recovery of the guidon should lead to charges shortly against COS, the 2, and 3 and others still to be implicated.

Although the young JAG guidon was shaken from its ordeal, its spirit has not been broken. It bravely flies in the face of hostile action at this very time in the JAG office.

The plight of the JAG guidon continues. Information that cannot be corroborated indicated that 3

has or had possession of the JAG guidon. As more and more time passes, authorities are concerned that harm may have befallen the young JAG guidon. Your help is desperately needed.

RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS by COS, S2, S3—21 Feb 09

Well, the gig is up. I have some evidence to present to the JAG to prove that I was not involved. It is obvious that by the attached photo, there is no way to prove I or any one else in the staff was involved.



Guidon thieves cannot be identified thanks to the ingenious disguises worn by the culprits. Any information that leads to the arrest of criminals will lead to the informant receiving a photo with the popular guidon.

Lt. Col. Greg Parker

COS, 225th Eng. Bde.

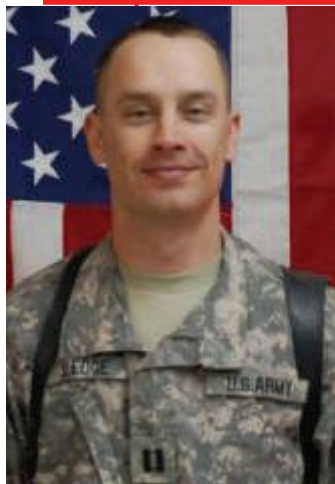
Amen, I feel vindicated. Its about time legal folks get their facts straight before accusing innocent, hard working, self-sacrificing Soldiers of doing such a heinous crime as guidon theft - should not there be enough arsonists out there for the jag to focus his attention on? Cant we all just get along?

Maj. Will Conley
S2, 225th Eng. Bde.

You might think you've scored a victory of some sort, but think of the well-being of your guidon. Instead of working endless hours flying for your sadistic pleasure, it was living a life of pampered luxury while under our "supervision." Stockholm Syndrome? I think not...

Lt. Col. Dave Dancer
S3, 225th Eng. Bde.

Introducing 890th Engineer Battalion Command



CPT Sledge, CDR
836th ENG CO



CPT Sledge
836 ENG CO.1SG



CPT Brown
848th ENG CO.CDR



1SG Young
848 ENG CO 1SG



LTC Joe Hargett
890th ENG BN CDR



CSM Larry Mergenschroer
890th ENG BN SEA

1SG Michael Weaver
HSC, 890th EN BN
Photo unavailable



CPT Bryant, CDR
890th FSC EN BN



1SG Gargus
890th FSC 1SG



CPT Sanchez, CDR
HSC, 890th EN BN

Introducing 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (H) Command



CPT Landreth, CDR
A CO 46th EN BN



ISG Roman
A CO 46th EN BN



CPT Beal, CDR
B CO 46th ECB (H)



ISG Williams
B CO 46th ECB (H)



LTC Matthew Zajac
46th ECB (H) CDR



CSM Francis Thibodeau
46th ECB (H) CSM



CPT Smoot, CDR
B CO 46th ECB (H)



ISG Hall
B CO 46th ECB (H)



CPT Lauver, CDR
955th EN CO 46th ECB (H)



SFC Gibbs, ISG
955th EN CO 46th ECB (H)

Spc. Jeramie Benjamin

January's Soldier of the Month goes to Natchitoches, La., native Spc. Jeramie Benjamin. The command post of the future (CPOF) operator is a member of the 225th Engineer Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division - Baghdad.

21-year-old Benjamin, who holds the 11C MOS, is thrilled with the added responsibility he of working in the tactical operations center. He said, "I have enjoyed learning how to operate all the machines

in the TOC and I am glad I have good people to work with."

The added responsibility and experience that he is gaining on his first deployment will only better help him prepare for his military goals that he has set for himself.

"I want to become an officer and stay in the military over 20 years," said Benjamin.

Currently a sophomore at Northwestern State University, Benjamin is pursuing a degree in criminal justice while enrolled in the reserve officer training course.

"Benjamin has an eagerness to

be a team player and works," Sgt. 1st Class Haden Hobbs of Pineville, La., said. "He jumps in there regardless of rank and roles his sleeves up."

The night TOC NCOIC, Hobbs explained that the transition from infantryman to TOC specialist has been dramatic.

"He didn't know his way around an office, let alone the TOC," Hobbs said with a smile. "Now he's multi-tasking with multiple computer systems. I'm definitely proud of him."

When not at work Benjamin enjoys destroy-

ing villains on his Xbox, playing Gears of War II and working out at the gym.

Benjamin's parents, Griffon and Eva Paige, wait patiently for their son's safe return at home in Natchitoches, La., with his two sisters, Halie and Griffianna Paige, ages 12 and 8.

Sgt. Rebekah Malone

January's NCO of the Month is Sgt.

Rebekah Malone of Pineville, La. A native of Kansas, Malone moved to Louisiana after meeting her husband, Cpt. Rob Malone while deployed in 2004.

She has six years of service in the Reserves and National Guard as a finance specialist and human resources specialist. Currently she works as the public affairs NCO for the 225th Engineer Brigade.

Although she is awesome, Malone is highly upset she has to write about herself; it goes against her values of ethical journalistic reporting.

She is known as 'angry little squirrel', short-shot and little bit. She once threw a certain lieutenant colonel in the snow, just because she is mean.

When Malone heard her subordinate civilian PAO, Scott Flenner was a better photographer, she actually locked the fury-instigating Soldiers in an office until they begged for forgiveness for their transgressions; it is Ash Wednesday after all.



Combat Patch Ceremony, 225th dons right shoulder sleeve insignia

On Feb. 20, the 225th Engineer Brigade held a ceremony to place their combat patch on the right shoulder of their uniform. This patch signifies a combat deployment and is worn as representation of what unit the Soldiers fall under and support during their tour. As a brigade element, the Soldiers of the 225th engineers are authorized to wear their own patch, containing the castle of the engineers and the fleur-de-lis of Louisiana, on their right sleeve, in addition to the one already worn on their left. The ceremony and presentation of the combat patch was overseen by the 225th Engineer Brigade commanding officer, Brigadier General Monconduit, and Command Sergeant Major Major.

Top Photo: Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Major dons the 225th Engineer Brigade patch on the right shoulder of Pvt. Chip Normand of Marksville, La.

