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**225TH
ENGINEER BRIGADE**

JULY 15, 2009

VOLUME II, ISSUE X

**COVER STORY:
IT'S OFFICIAL! SPC. BROWN
BECOMES AMERICAN CITIZEN 4**



COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

BG Owen W. Monconduit

Fellow Engineers, we are in the midst of history for the Country of Iraq and American Soldiers. As history unfolds here in Iraq, military engineers are continuing to make outstanding contributions to Soldiers in the vantage of quality of life and to the Iraqi Engineers through partnership, training and assistance.

July 2009 is historic to the Country of Iraq and American Soldiers in three areas. First, the Iraqi Security Forces are in the lead for protecting the people of Baghdad as signified in the National Sovereignty Day celebration on June 30, 2009. Second, military engineering work is becoming dominate in the Qadas as opposed to the Amanant. Third, Iraqi Army Engineer Regiments



are beginning to receive military equipment through unit set fielding. All three events are historic and contribute to realizing sustainable security.

July is also significant to the 46th Engineer Battalion as the unit nears redeployment.

To all "Steel Spike" Soldiers, Maintain Military Stan-

dards (MMS) everyday to achieve optimum performance. Focus on your daily tasks to avoid anxiety during the remaining weeks here in Baghdad. Redeployment will occur soon enough so be patient. Stay confident in your skills and abilities as outside temperatures continue to rise above 110 degrees during the day. Drink plenty of water, get a good nights rest, and yes, check on your battle buddy and have your buddy check on you. Remember we are one team, "FIRST TEAM", and do your part to remain capable of performing your mission outstandingly.

SAFE DEPLOYMENT ≈ SAFE RETURN!

Castle 6

MESSAGE FROM CASTLE 7

CSM Joseph Major

Greetings Engineer Soldiers,

What does it truly mean to be a battle buddy? For me, a battle buddy is my best friend in combat. We work and train together each and every day. That person knows what is going on in my life, knows about my family, my likes and dislikes, and knows when I am happy or sad.

A battle buddy is a true friend. They are there when you just need to talk. They advise you when you have questions and support you when you have a difficult day. They are there for the good and bad times. They have your back when on missions. You can count on each other when things turn ugly.

They are your friend



through thick and thin. Sometimes they know more about you than your spouse, because they are with you in combat. They check your equipment before and after missions. They make sure you rest, eat and hydrate properly.

American author Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "The

only way to have a friend is to be one."

Your battle buddy will be your friend for life. So, make sure you live up to your role as a **TRUE** battle buddy.

Remember this deployment is a great adventure and a true test of what you are made of. So keep pushing forward and Maintain Military Standards (MMS) through the process. Keep your families abreast of what you are experiencing here and have fun.

Safe Deployment equals Safe Return

CSM Joe Major

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On the Cover:

Iraqi born Spc. "Brown" becomes an American citizen on Independence Day. Read the story of how he is achieving the American dream after returning back home to Baghdad.

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*Joke (s) of the Week*

Thanks to SSQ Richard Hebert and ghost writer

TEACHER: Glenn, how do you spell 'c r o c c o d i l e ?'
GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'
TEACHER: No, that's wrong
GLENN: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.

Daddy is Going to War - True Story

During the Persian Gulf War, I was assigned to go to Saudi Arabia. As I was saying good-bye to my family, my three-year-old son, Christopher, was holding on to my leg and pleading with me not to leave. "No, Daddy, please don't go!" he kept repeating.

We were beginning to make a scene when my wife, desperate to calm him, said, "Let Daddy go and I'll take you to get a pizza."

Immediately, Christopher loosened his death grip, stepped back and in a calm voice said, "Bye, Daddy."

A man walking down the street noticed a small boy trying to reach the doorbell of a house. Even when he jumped up, he couldn't quite reach it. The man decided to help the boy, walked up on to the porch and pushed the doorbell. He looked down at the boy, smiled and asked, "What now?" The boy answered, "Now we run like crazy!"

Do you know why electricians are some of the smartest people?

They always keep up with current events.

Chaplain's Corner

Living in Victory

Living in victory frees us to live passionately. How you approach victory as well as your reference point to victory is crucial. Notice these Scriptures on victory and ask yourself as you read them, "has the victory been completed, how complete is it, and what is the source of victory?"

"Thanks be to God who always leads us in His triumph in Christ and manifest through us the sweet fragrance of the knowledge of Him in every place."

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." 2 Corinthians 2:14; I Corinthians 15:57; Romans 8:37 Victory is not something that is ahead of us, but has already been accomplished by Jesus' completed victory on the cross to conquer the penalty and power over sin and He rose victoriously over the grave to conquer death.



Victory is something we enter into and begin to live in and walk out of it by faith. Will you lose some battles and have moments where you fail to walk in this victory?—absolutely!!! But when you experience defeat, it just shows you that

you need to quickly get your branch re-connected to the Vine, who is the Victorious Life of Christ in you. John 15 I love the wise words of the Texas coach, Augie Garrido, when asked, "what will your players take from this loss to the Tigers in CWS?" In essence, he said, "the

pain of coming in second will be locked into their memory bank, and in life they will never want to come in second again." You are Champions "in Christ Jesus", so go and live out of it. We live from victory, His victory, so enter in and enjoy the benefits of it.

CH (MAJ) Jeff Mitchell

A new American in our ranks! Cover Story

Photos and story by Lt. Col. Pat Simon

We all know the colors associated with American independence: good old red, white and blue. But this year, we can add another color: brown, as in Spc. "Brown," an interpreter with the 225th Engineer Brigade, currently serving in Iraq.

Brown joined 236 other Service members this July 4 at Al Faw palace here, who raised their right hand and recited the oath of citizenship as new Americans.

Vice President Joe Biden and Multi-National Force-Iraq Commander Gen. Raymond Odierno were also in attendance at the ceremony. Biden commended the newly sworn-in citizens for their service and their decision to become Americans.

"You represent what America always stood for:



strength, freedom, and resolve ... also remarkable diversity," said Biden.

"It is an amazing feeling," said Brown, soon after shaking the hands of both the vice

president and Gen. Odierno. "I was shaking, nervous," he said.

The name "Brown" is not really his birth name but a nickname given to him by an Army officer. He kept the name to protect the lives of his family members who are living in Baghdad. Brown recalled growing up and living under the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein.

"As a student, I remembered that we had to stay behind the wall to stay safe from the former Baath Party," said Brown. "You could not

talk about politics. Those that did disappeared."

Brown received his education in civil engineering and got a job in Baghdad as a supervisor for the U.S. Corps of Engineers. He would find out quickly that his daily commute to Tikrit to check on water, sewer and electrical projects would become a frightening trek.

"The security was very bad. There were many sectarian problems over here. It was not easy moving from area to area," said Brown. "It was very dangerous."

If that was not enough, he became emotionally scarred by the way fellow citizens treated him at the time because of his tenure with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"Many of them thought I was a traitor," Brown said. "They called us very bad names. They did not realize that when we did our jobs, we did them for the Iraqi people."

Brown felt there was no longer a future for him in his war-torn country. He had to leave his father, brother, and two sisters behind and set a new course for freedom and opportunity—

America.

Brown applied for and was granted a special immigrant visa. His first stop was Denver, Colo. to live with his uncle. Brown tried to find a job in engineering, but he found nothing.

He remembered a friend that was a former associate of his in Iraq. He called her and within a few days, Brown and his wife were in St. Louis, Mo. staying with this friend. She then suggested that he apply for a program that would change his life, and unbeknownst to him at the time, it would put him right back on the soil of his homeland.

Within weeks, Brown was not only at U.S. Army Basic Training as a new recruit, he was a qualified interpreter who was on the fast pace to

deployment to Iraq. The program also expedited his ability to receive his U.S. citizenship.

"It's truly amazing to have this new opportunity," said Brown.

Just four months ago, Brown was attached to the 225th Eng. Bde. He found himself right in the middle of history engaging in conversations between military leaders from both countries.

As a military engineer interpreter, Brown has literally bridged the gap between two worlds, and he has finally come to grips with his own world: his past and future.



"It's a big responsibility," said Brown. "I know I am making a difference. This is important for me."

By the end of the year, Brown, a new American citizen, will once again have to leave behind his beloved birthplace, but the circumstances are different this time.

"My old life is over for me here, but I would like to return and visit one day as an American citizen," he said.

Engineers provide additional security in “the belts”

By 1st Lt. Stuart Redus 46th ECB (H), 225th Eng. Bde.



(Photo below)

TARMIYAH, Iraq - Sgt. James Bartholomae, heavy equipment operator, 277th Engineer Company, a native of San Antonio, operates a 10k forklift while Sgt. Marcos Delgado, also from San Antonio, and Spc. John Crawson, a native of Grand Prairie, TX, who are nicknamed the “Wall Walkers,” hang the sniper screen at Joint

(Photo above)

TARMIYAH, Iraq – Grand Prairie, TX native Spc. John Crawson, team leader, heavy equipment operator, 277th Engineer Company, 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), 225th Engineer Brigade, installs brackets on top of a barrier wall June 27 at Joint Security Station Tarmiyah. The brackets being installed will support a fence and sniper screen, providing added security for personnel living at the base. (Photo by Staff Sgt. James Lister, 277 Eng. Co., 46th ECB (H), 225th Eng. Bde.)

Security Station Tarmiyah

June 27.

(U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. James Lister, 277 Eng. Co., 46th ECB (H), 225th Eng. Bde.)



MEDICAL MOMENT

by Capt. Ryan Armentor



We have obviously been blessed with very hot weather. Heat injuries can be very dangerous. I encourage leaders to be vigilant in performing Composite Risk Management along with your PCC's and PCI's during mission planning. Please take this message as the first step of the Risk Management process. The Hazard has been identified.

Specific Heat Injury Hazards are:

Two consecutive days of severe heat.

Increased exertion levels.

Lack of individual acclimatization.

Loss of sleep.

Wet Bulb Globe Temperature excess.

Overweight or over > age 40.

Equipment load.

Minor illness or taking medications.

Sickle Cell Trait (40 x higher Risk).

Inappropriate hydration prior to and during mission.

Leaders implement controls by keeping soldiers hydrated, have work/rest cycles, use field showers or other expedient cooling methods, shade soldiers whenever possible, and acclimate soldiers. Remember, when in doubt, transport patient to MTF.

Stay cool, stay safe, stay smart, stay alive.

277th Engineers improve Liberty access road

By 1st Lt. Michael Bauman 46th ECB (H), 225 Eng. Bde.

BAGHDAD – The “Dirt Devils” of the 277th Engineer Company, an Army Reserve unit based in San Antonio, have just wrapped up resurfacing and upgrades to the roadways north of Western Bypass Road connecting Camp Liberty and Camp Victory. The Soldiers conducted roadwork to keep the road serviceable so it can continue to relieve congestion from smaller roads traveling through Strawberry Hill Road.



Soldiers of the 277th realize their work will assist with transporting various assets and resources.

“Local civilians and local Soldiers are stopping and thanking us for the road construction. In our eyes this feels as a success with hearing the gratitude from fellow soldiers,” said non-commissioned officer-in-

charge, San Antonio native Staff Sgt. George Velez, an Army Reserve Soldier assigned to the 277th Eng. Co., attached to the 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), 225th Engineer Brigade.

Engineers have been smoothing out the road section by section over the last three weeks. The project was completed on 6 July.

One of the challenges for the unit is completing the project without disrupting the regular flow of traffic.

“We received a large amount of traffic flowing through and have a lot of people thanking us for our support in this effort,” stated Sgt. Augustine Deluna, heavy equipment operator, also from San Antonio.

On the busy road, fuel trucks, water trucks, supply trucks, military security vehicles and standard sport utility vehicles keep Soldiers aware of the urgency and productivity the project offers and work on

the road is fast-paced, but conducted safely. Soldiers must communicate with each other during the day to understand their roles and responsibilities in the project.

Throughout the day, Staff Sgt. Velez and Sgt. Deluna give



instructions and expectations to their 277th heavy equipment operators because the project requires constant evaluation.

“We have a plan worked out for each day to complete the amount of productivity on this project,” Staff Sgt. Velez.

“Soldiers switch out from one heavy equipment vehicle to another to loosen the ground, then compact it with foundation made up of limestone and river rock,” said Sgt. 1st Class Bifredo Barros, a Platoon Sergeant, 277th Eng. Co.

After adding the foundation, the “Dirt Devils” smoothed out the road with the heavy equipment by making adjustments to flatten the earth, taking out high spots and filling in low spots.

Soldiers of the 277th know a good foundation is the basis of a solid road and they are working to make sure the road most traveled stays in good condition. They continue to lay the groundwork of success for the present and the future of Victory Base Complex.





Sgt. Heith Kafer, project NCOIC at JSS Tarmiyah, showed a meticulous eye for safety. While providing Quality Assurance and Quality Control for 56th SBCT Soldiers building B-huts, he noticed a work crew improperly utilizing a pneumatic nail gun. The

workers didn't have proper personal protective equipment and were nailing in such a way could have injured a Soldier working on the project.

Kafer called an immediate "cease work" on the project and instructed the work crew on the safe and proper use of the pneumatic nail gun and the importance of protective equipment while working with power

tools. The 10 minute safety stand down allowed the crew to refocus on the project with safety in mind.

Kafer's quick thinking, safety consciousness, and leadership ability to address Soldier safety is the reason that A Company chose Kafer for the Soldier Safety Award.

Safety Spotlight



FIRE



POLICE



EMS

EMERGENCY CALL

485-4070

(VOIP OR DSN)

IRAQNA 0790-194-2960
SVOIP - 243-4407



NON EMERGENCY 485-2758
FM 902 - GATEKEEPER

225 EN BDE TOC: 242-4407 / 847-2613
HHC, 225 EN (GOAT HOUSE): 242-4150 / 847-2382

Funnies from the Front

Submitted by: Sgt. Janis

Soldier's Coffee

This little grandmother was surprised by her 7 year old grandson one morning. He had made her coffee. She drank what was the worst cup of coffee in her life. When she got to the bottom, there were three of those little green army men, and she asked him why they were there. Her grandson replied, "On television, they say, 'The best part of waking up is soldiers in your cup!'"

That's Not It

A general noticed one of his soldiers behaving oddly. The soldier would pick up any piece of paper he found, frown and say, "That's not it" and put it down again. This went on for some time, until the general arranged to have the soldier psychologically tested. The psychologist concluded that the soldier was deranged, and wrote out his discharge from the army. The soldier picked it up, smiled and said, "That's it."

Point to ponder ...

When you can do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world.

George Washington Carver

Eds. Note: **Don't get any ideas Engineers! Haha**

Fraternity gives to Soldiers and Iraqi children

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Pat Simon

"From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life."

That quote from former tennis great Arthur Ashe is not just a famous saying, it's a way of life for a unique group of Soldiers deployed here in Baghdad. They are members of the college fraternity Kappa Alpha Psi who meet every week at the Pegasus dining facility on Camp Liberty, Iraq. They are fraternity "brothers in arms" and part of a time honored tradition of service on the battlefield.

"It's been up and running here in Iraq since the beginning of the war in 2003," said Maj. Reginald Satterwhite, a division automations officer for 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, who hails from Columbia, S.C. "Meetings like this took place during Vietnam and even World War II."

At the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, the first list of Kappa Alpha Psi Soldiers was made and it was passed along through the years for new members to join during their deployments. Now, some 115 lists later, the spirit of the group lives on – through service.

"Whenever we can, we like to give back," said Greenwood, S.C. native, Lt. Col. Joe Berry, who works with Multi-National Corps-Iraq as a corps signal officer who assists the Iraqi Security Forces and is the elder member of the group.

"We view it as a lifelong commitment," said Maj. Willus Hall of Lafayette, La. who serves as the officer-in-charge of Iraqi Army partnership with the 225th Engineer Brigade. "We are taught from the onset (during college) that this is a lifelong process, a journey for achievement."

"Achievement is the premise of everything we do," echoed Pensacola, Fla. native, Maj. Kent Broussard, environmental science officer for the 1st Cav. Div., MND-B.

What they achieve is not mandated by an Army operations plan for partnership with the Iraqis, but their accomplishments do meet the same desired goal.

Every other week, Berry, Hall, Broussard and other mem-



bers of the fraternity reach out to the local community of Baghdad and spend quality time with Iraqi Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Last week they taught the children first aid. In the past, they have hosted soccer and basketball games. They have even taken the children on field trips to fire stations and gave them a chance to try on fire-fighter's gear.

"It is very rewarding to give back to the community and mentor when there is an opportunity to make a difference by educating and empowering our youth," said Broussard.

Their fraternity mission of making a difference does not stop there. They also go the extra mile helping fellow Soldiers. The group sponsors poetry readings to give Soldiers a chance to express themselves and jazz socials where Soldiers can kick back and enjoy soothing music. It's a chance for everyone

to escape from the stress of combat life.

"When they are reading poetry for example, they can forget for a moment what's really going on around them," said Berry. "If you take their mind off of it for a while, it eases stress."

"Wherever you can break the routine of 12 to 18 hour shifts, that makes their situation a whole lot better," said Satterwhite. "It's really nice to provide an outlet and downtime for Soldiers."

As for their own inner circle, these fraternity brothers also have their own support system to help each other make it through the deployment. Just sitting with them for a few minutes makes you feel like you will never be alone with these guys.

"We're extremely close knit," said Hall. "We've enjoyed some of the most hearty laughs and light moments, memories that will last forever."

Those memories of partnership and giving something back would have made fellow Kappa Alpha Psi member Arthur Ashe very proud.



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“Steel Spike” engineers turn an old hangar into ...

By Lt. Col. Pat Simon



(Top left) Cpl. Nathan Hoover, Carpenter, 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), sets up a partition wall while helping to build housing units for Soldiers moving to Forward Operating Base Shield.

(Lower left) Spc. Andrew Seymour, a carpenter, 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), makes sure everything lines up just right as fellow carpenters help build new housing at Forward Operating Base Shield.

(Below) Command Sgt. Major Joe Major, 225 Eng. Bde. hands out commend team coins for excellence to Soldiers in recognition for a job well done.



**News
digest
for
soldiers**

Incentive program gives Louisiana MPs more security power

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Pat Simon

As a linebacker for Cotton Valley High School in Louisiana, Brent McCarty looked up to his coach Christopher Pace for guidance and direction. That was at least five years ago and now Spc. McCarty plays on a different team here in Iraq, and it's thanks to his old coach and an incentive program called the Army National Guard Recruiting Assistant Program (G-RAP).

Coach Pace just so happens to be an officer in the Louisiana National Guard, serving in the rear detachment of the 39th MP Company, who signed up McCarty under the G-RAP. As a Guard Recruiting Assistant, Pace earned \$1,000 for signing McCarty and an additional \$1,000 when McCarty completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training.

McCarty had dropped out

of college and was working at what he considers a dead end job with not future. Then he met Pace at the mud races and he is back on track.

"College was the selling point," said McCarty, Native of Cotton Valley, La., who plans to return to finish up his college degree when he returns home under Louisiana National Guard's state tuition exemption program.

For now, McCarty's team is the 39th Military Police Company where he is a driver and gunner for his company's Command Security Team. His job is to work with Iraqi forces to help protect the nearby community of Rusafa; a job that carries a high degree risk especially for Iraqis who are now in control of the major cities.

"I respect them for what they are doing now. It is dangerous, but they are doing it for their country," said McCarty, who also gave praise to his team members.

"I feel we're doing a great job helping a country get back on its feet."

That's much like what McCarty's coach did for him, and it's something McCarty plans to carry forward as a psychologist one day.

"It would be a great way to help people," he said.



Spc. Brent McCarty, Cotton Valley, La., 39th Military Police Company, is greeted by Brig. Gen. Owen Monconduit on a recent visit to Forward Operating Base Shield.

Special thanks from the 225th Engineer Brigade!

So long Doc!



225th Eng. Bde. Surgeon Maj. Frederick Hall received the Army Commendation Medal from Gen. Monconduit and Command Sgt. Major Major for his service from 11 Apr. to 15 Jul 09 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Maj. Hall, we wish you all the best in your future endeavors. It was great working with you. Hooah!

THANKS BLUE STAR MOMS ...



... FOR THE CARE PACKAGES!



Rawskills Inc.

The Soldiers of the 225th Engineer Brigade would like to thank Eddie Davis III, owner of Rawskills Inc. is a strong supporter of the 225th and the Louisiana National Guard. Davis is pictured sporting his 225 Eng Bde Rawskills t-shirt. Davis just so happens to be the brother in law of Maj. Jarvis Jones, 225 CHOPS extraordinaire. Rawskills Inc. provides a unique opportunity for amateur athletes,



coaches and colleges to show their skills online. The company's database allows searches by a number of variables, including performance statistics and academic records.



"I am a weapon of mass destruction" is printed on the back of the 225 Eng Bde Rawskills t-shirt modeled by Karen Davis-Jones.



Rawskills Inc. Employees:
Front Row Left To Right:
Margie Brown, Shawndra Davis,
Karen Davis-Jones (Maj. Jones' wife)
Rear Row Left To Right: Eddie Anthony Davis III (Owner Rawskills) Melvin Labat, Duane Stelley



225 Engineers



Freedom...





MWR!



Above: 225 tournament champs!
Poker, Foosball, Pool, Table Tennis



2009: Year of the NCO

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Want to be a ghost writer for the Express? Can you draw, do you have an amazing photo you want to share? Please share your ideas, talents and thoughts with us. The Engineer Express is about you! Get published today!

-PAO Team

"Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets."

- Napoleon Bonaparte

United States Army Non-Commissioned Officer Creed

No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of Soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army". I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watchword. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind -- accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers. I will strive to remain tactically and technically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my Soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my Soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my Soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!



(Left)

Sgt. Rokeisha Berymon processes a Soldier's Common Access Card (CAC) at 225 Eng. Bde. HQ at Camp Liberty.



Know a high-speed Soldier that should be featured in the Express? Recommend them today!

