

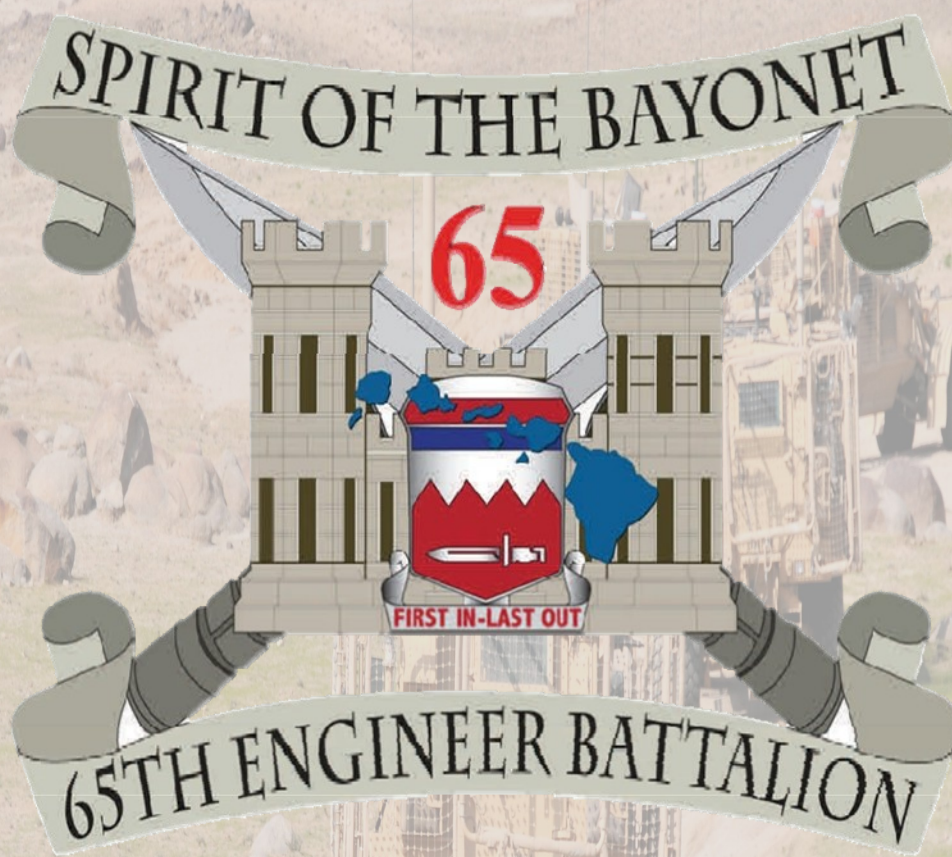
TASK FORCE BAYONET

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BAYONET UPDATE

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Aloha Friends and Family of Task Force Bayonet,

As I reflect back on the last 30 days, I am truly amazed by how much this battalion has accomplished. The Soldiers of Task Force Bayonet go above and beyond day after day. If it sounds like I am bragging, well, I am. I could not be more proud of the men and women in this organization and all they have accomplished. We are the few, the lucky few, who get to wake up every morning and put on the jersey of the most powerful team ever assembled in the history of mankind. It is my distinct privilege to lead some of these heroes every day, and I remain committed to telling their story and honoring their legacy.

Mahalo to all the Families and Friends of Task Force Bayonet for your support. We appreciate everything you do, day in and day out. God bless – First In, Last Out!

LTC David Acker,
BAYONET 6



LTC Acker and CSM McVicker during a Key Leader Engagement with the Commander of the 205th CEK



LTC Acker talking to the Soldiers of Task Force Bayonet after the NCO and Soldier of the Quarter Competition



LTC Acker and CSM McVicker speaking with the junior enlisted Soldiers of Task Force Bayonet

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Headquarters and Headquarters Company

Strike First!

2

Aloha Friends and Family,

While the companies often have some friendly competition to claim we are the best company in the Bayonet Battalion, this month, actions spoke louder than words. On April 24th, SSG Crabtree, SGT Wobby, and PFC Williams competed in the NCO and Soldier of the Quarter Board. They tested their skills at land navigation, first aid, weapons, communications, and writing an OPOD before proceeding to the final event, a grueling test of their physical and mental endurance and strength. For the NCOs, the score was tied going into the final event, but amongst the hot Afghanistan sun and a crowd of supporters, each of our contestants proved that they had the ability to push their limits and fight for the title. In the end, the Tigers reigned as HHC swept the competition, and PFC Williams and SSG Crabtree proudly earned the title of Soldier and NCO of the Quarter, respectively. They will join the previous quarter boarder champions to compete in the Soldier and NCO of the Year competition at the end of May.

On a different note, I want to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to each and every Tiger Family Member, especially the FRG. You have given this team, and me, unwavering support and dedication throughout the last fourteen months, and I truly cannot express my heartfelt gratitude for that. On May 1st, I will relinquish command and hand the HHC Guidon to CPT Christopher Hassell. CPT Hassell, his wife, Jill, and their three children are no strangers to the Tiger Family. Chris has been working relentlessly in the S3 Shop and has come to know and appreciate each of the Soldiers, NCOs, and Officers within the organization. I trust that Chris will lead this company to new heights, and I truly wish him and Jill the best as they take command and continue the legacy of such a remarkable company full of extraordinary Soldiers.

God Speed!

CPT O'Nan, Tiger 6

HHC Soldiers Compete in the Soldier and NCO of the Quarter Competition



PFC Williams assembling weapons



SSG Crabtree at the land navigation station



SGT Wobby at the medical station

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65th Engineer Training Team

Unleash Hell!

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ETT's Reaches End of Mission, Making a Lasting Impact

The end has come for your Hellhounds. The 65th ETT has completed its portion of the mission and is returning to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company. We are proud of all that we have accomplished for the Afghan National Army and the Afghan people. With our support, the Afghan Engineers will endure as a vital asset to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan that will be pivotal in defeating the Taliban in the years to come.

It is a bittersweet departure, we must say good bye to our friends from the 663rd (Alabama) and 284th (Texas) Army Reserve Companies that we have protected and guarded us over the past 7 months. The relationships that we built with them will not soon be forgotten. The direct engineer training that they expertly provided the Afghans was made possible by the stalwart Hellhound warriors that stood as an impervious wall to the unidentified threats that lurked in our training environment. The experience gained in this complex environment will guide us throughout our future careers.

As we return to HHC and support the deconstruction efforts in Kandahar, we count the days until the end of the deployment. Although the Hellhound ETT may fade into the hourglass of history, our accomplishments and our memories of the team will remain. Our sacrifices and time spent away from our Families, although tough to bear, will ensure success for years to come within the 207th Corps Engineer Kandak. Hellhound 6 signing off, but remember to always love your Hellhounds.



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Soldiers of FSC Reflect on Time at FOB Lindsey

“The Personal Security Detachment (PSD), FSC and the 65th Engineer Battalion as a whole, was entrusted with a monumental task, assume command of Forward Operating Base Lindsey and have it completely retrograded within two months time. We handled mostly the security aspects of the FOB, but one of the greatest and strongest aspects of FSC and PSD was our versatility and our ability to adapt to any situation or task at hand. Soldiers in this company hold a variety of MOSs, from 12B (Combat Engineer) to 92G (Food Service Specialist), but we all came together to accomplish the mission at hand. We in PSD did everything from guarding towers and presence patrols, to building an Alaskan tent for our DFAC.



PSD Platoon was appointed as the Primary QRF (Quick Reaction Force) for FOB Lindsey. When we assumed command of QRF, our Platoon Sergeant SSG Garcia's first goal was to cut our reaction time down significantly;

he wanted us to be the quickest and most proficient QRF Team this FOB had ever seen. In order to accomplish this, we trained constantly with numerous drills. The loud speakers would sound at random times to keep us on our toes and to remind us that a threat could happen at a moment's notice. We trained on almost every scenario imaginable from active shooter to VBIEDs with mass casualties.

QRF was not our only duty at FOB Lindsey; PSD Platoon was also tasked with conducting presence patrols in the surrounding local village and bazaar, outside the wire of Lindsey. During our patrols, we established a very strong presence, the local nationals knew we were there for them, so that one day they would take control over their nation and live in a free democracy. Our message was built upon respect, we respected them and they respected us.

As our time at Lindsey came to an end, we began to see all of our hard work come to fruition. The last couple of months have strengthened our bonds and tested our characters; we remain ever versatile and vigilant. All of us look forward to a safe return home to be reunited with our families and love ones.”

- PFC Khan
PSD Platoon, FSC

“We recently finished up our mission at FOB Lindsey and it definitely feels good to be back at Kandahar Airfield. I got to step outside of my primary job and work at an entry control point where I learned a lot and got to experience a different view outside the maintenance control section. It was definitely some long hours, but overall a good bonding experience with the other Soldiers in the company. Now that we are back on Kandahar Airfield I am back in the maintenance control section working as a clerk. We are getting close to the end as we finalize the timeline for when we will turn all of the maintenance equipment in. I continue to stay focused on the mission so that we can finish up strong and head home with our heads held high.

I would like to give my husband Darrell Johnson a shout-out for being a great man and supporting me during this deployment. I would also like to give my grandmother and two older sisters a shout-out for praying for my safety everyday and all the phone calls that kept me excited to wake up and serve my country another day. Lastly, I would like to give a shout out to my two NCOs, SGT Manibusan and SFC Burton, for being amazing leaders and keeping me focused on the mission at hand.”

- PFC Chloe Carroll
Maintenance Platoon, FSC



“On February 26th, the Forward Support Company moved to Forward Operating Base Lindsey where I began working a twelve hour guard shift at Entry Control Points. It was hard adjusting myself to the new duty hours and the ever changing climate during the night, but after only a few short days our team got used to it and was in a rhythm in no time. Pulling guard duty was a good learning experience and a much different mission set than we are used to. We got the chance to put the training from the months leading up to moving to FOB Lindsey into action. Some of the tasks myself and the rest of the Entry Control Point team were responsible for was searching vehicles, maintaining various sectors of fire and working with local nationals that helped protect FOB Lindsey. Every couple days the Sergeant of the Guard rotated me to a separate control point working with the NCOIC SGT Quinones where I was responsible for searching local nationals that would enter FOB Lindsey. I was a little bit nervous when I was told to search these individuals, but as long as I had the support from my battle buddies working with me, there was no reason to be scared or nervous.

After a month on guard duty, I switched over to run the fuel point with SGT Petre. SGT Petre and I filled up multiple generators and light sets each night to provide power and life support to the entire FOB that was continuously running operations, 24 hours a day. I learned a lot from SGT Petre on how to operate the fuel system supply point, which was another good experience that I never had the opportunity to do in garrison at Schofield Barracks.

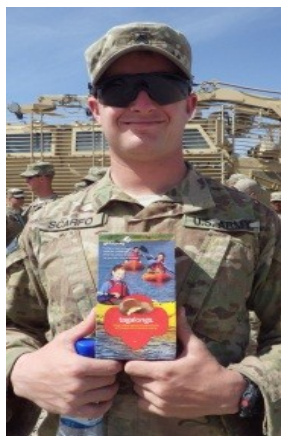
Although the work schedule was long at FOB Lindsey, that didn't stop my leadership from helping me prepare and better myself as a Solider. SGT Petre and my other NCOs in the platoon have helped me prepare for the upcoming promotion board. I am thankful for the experience that I have had so far with FSC and the 65th Engineer Battalion. I look forward to seeing my family soon! RISE UP!”

- SPC Penitusi
Distribution Platoon, FSC



Care Packages from Independence Elementary School Make Huge Impact on 82nd

The best days at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan are mail days. Although Soldiers miss their families, the packages we receive remind us of the amazing support we have back home. It does not matter if you send a package to a family member, friend, or a complete stranger, the act of showing true appreciation for the sacrifices Soldiers are making will not only make their day, but the sender's as well. When put into perspective, it is hard to believe that a simple package can make a Soldier's day but it does. A simple "thank you" goes a long way. It reminds the Soldiers why they serve and demonstrates the true unconditional support from different organizations.



Recently, the 82nd Engineer Company received multiple packages from the second graders at Independence Elementary in Clarkston, Michigan. The school has incorporated the program "Serving Our Community Kids Style" (S.O.C.K.S) into their curriculum. As the packages of Girl Scout cookies, candy, hygiene products, and letters were filled the tent and were opened, smiles and laughter filled the air. These second graders, whom the Soldiers have never met, wrote hundreds of letters thanking our Soldiers for serving their country and the sacrifices they have made.

The Soldiers could not believe the time and effort these children put towards the care packages and were moved that it was all for them. The support the children showed the Soldiers and the level of understanding they have about the military and the war in Afghanistan is inspiring. Upon request from the Soldiers, the leadership reached out to Independence Elementary sending a letter and a photo thanking them for their inspiring gifts, and the response

from the faculty was overwhelming. Linda Zittel, a second grade teacher, printed out multiple copies of the picture and passed them out to her students.

The children were very excited to see their packages arrived and that the Soldiers took the time to send them something in return.



The S.O.C.K.S program not only provides the students and faculty with a sense of gratification, but provides that same feeling to the Soldiers as well. The unsung heroes of Independence Elementary will never fully understand the long lasting impression they left on the Soldiers. This is something that will never be forgotten by the Soldiers of the 82nd Engineer Company. Care packages are more than simple acts of kindness; they provide Soldiers with the drive to always remember they are a part of something greater than themselves and that they are never too far from the hearts and minds of the American people.

First in, Last out. Essayons!

- 1LT Cortney Heaps
First Platoon Leader



A Message from the Commander

Hello Lobos Family!

The 455th Engineer Company has officially passed our downhill slope home as we continue our mission and prepare for our Release From Active Duty, which is quickly approaching. Once again, the company is split between different Areas of Operation as we continue supporting Task Force Bayonet and Task Force Iron Man. We currently support operations north from our headquarters for Task Force Destroyer and continue supporting operations in our current location for Task Force Black Smith.

Morale is up as your Soldiers continue to accomplish missions and look forward to coming home. Thank you for the continued support and patience to all of our Families, friends and the greater community of the Pacific Northwest. Without your support and ability to take care each other, we would not be as efficient and successful as we are. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Our featured Soldier for this month is SGT Nathan Firnstahl, as he was selected from the Soldiers across Task Force Bayonet to meet and greet the Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA) Chandler. He was recognized for his outstanding service and received the SMA coin. Congratulations to SGT Firnstahl for his excellence service as a Noncommissioned Officer and an outstanding Soldier, representing the best of the 455th Engineer Company.

- CPT Mason J. Flemmer, Lobos 6



SGT Firnstahl receiving the Sergeant Major of the Army's coin

The 576th Reflects on Time in Afghanistan

On 24 August 2013, the company left its home at Fort Carson, Colorado to begin a 9 month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. As this deployment comes to an end and the light at the end of the tunnel shines ever brighter, Soldiers and Leaders within the company reflect on where the company has been and all that was accomplished. Each platoon shares their own experiences and remembers the missions accomplished, the partnerships and lasting friendships forged, and the positive impact made during our 9 month journey.

Unique to this deployment from most others that Soldiers within the company have experienced, every aspect of our operations involved multi-national support. Mission



FMT after training the Italian Army on Recovery Operations

command with the Italian military was ever present during day to day operations. Maintenance platoon assisted with improving Italian mechanic's recovery proficiency by conducting training, enabling them to support themselves while conducting operations. 1st Platoon (RCP35) spearheaded the Spanish military's retrograde out of Afghanistan, traversing and clearing the most austere terrain the company encountered. Additionally, RCP35 conducted the only truly multi-national operation, a training event combined with Italian engineers and a Ukrainian EOD team, reinforcing the counter-IED skill set and strengthening bonds between coalition partners.

2nd Platoon (RCP68) during the first portion of the deployment primarily operated to the south of our area of



RCP68 constructing a wire obstacle

operations and was credited with being the combined arms route clearance patrol that cleared the last convoy out of U.S. FOB Farah. Being the only RCP that operated in the Farah area, RCP68 improved the Afghan National Security Forces' ability to maintain open routes by partnering and patrolling with them in this highly contested area. RCP68 was also the only platoon in the company to conduct "other than route clearance" operations, rehearsing and mastering the emplacement of wire obstacles as force protection. Digging into doctrine not trained by the company prior to deploying, the platoon's flexibility and dedication to accomplishing any mission shined through in their success.

Last but definitely not least, 3rd Platoon (RCP57) started the deployment at a sprint when called on to support the U.S. Consulate following a devastating attack. First on the scene, RCP57 secured the area and reinforced vital force protection measures mitigating further risk. RCP57 also traveled to the northern most limit of the company's area of operation. Tasked with supporting units assessing the capabilities of the Afghan Border Police, RCP57 cleared the way to a successful mission, pushing the limits of the unit's capabilities and employing most of the company's enablers.



RCP57 staged prior to a mission

Now our replacements are here and we are pushing forward and training them so they can have a successful deployment. We all look forward to getting home to Fort Carson, where our loved ones are eagerly waiting! *SEARCH-FIGHT-DESTROY!*

- CPT Schmidt, Spartan 6



SSG Cooley conducts radio checks prior to mission



SGT Martinez and SGT VanSlambrouck master the Stalker UAS

849th Mobility Augmentation Company

NITRATE

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Nitrates Move Back to KAF and Are Even Closer to Home

We are nearing the end of our deployment, and all of our blood, sweat, and tears have paid off. The end is in sight, but not quite within grasp. There are still numerous things that have to get done before we step on that plane heading back home. The adrenaline about the deployment has worn off long ago, but now the excitement and anticipation of being back home with our loved ones grows more each day. It is that excitement and anticipation that will motivate us to keep our minds in the game until we step off that bus and into our family's arms.

This month we got to witness some more history take place in Afghanistan as they held their third election. There were lots of rumors leading up to the election, but from our footprint it appeared to go on without a hitch. The voters were out in full force and in greater numbers than the previous elections as they are taking a greater stake in the future of their country. Our company was split between two different locations to provide security and clearance assets if needed. It seems only fitting that the deployment is coming to an end, as half of our company was stationed at the FOB we were originally tasked to conduct operations out of.

This week we will begin training our replacements. The unit replacing us has been in country conducting operations out of Kandahar Airfield. There are a lot of moving pieces at this time, but each Soldier is excited to be training their replacement and are available if any questions should arise throughout this process. The platoons are going through their inventories prior to packing everything up before the transition to Kandahar Airfield. Our second platoon finished their last mission, and upon their return they all felt a great weight lifted off their shoulders as they sat back and enjoyed a cigar together.

We have made a lot of memories while on this deployment, and they will not stop here. There are still numerous tasks that have to be done before we can go home. We have far exceeded timelines in past training events for turn in and finalizing details before being dismissed. And it is no surprise that as the time approaches for our Soldiers to see their loved ones, motivation remains high.

- 1LT Andrew Schiller, Company COIST OIC



HQ Soldier's conducting inventory ensuring accuracy of property book in support of retrograde operations.
(Photo taken by: 1LT Schiller)



Soldiers from 2/849 taking in their first dust storm at FOB Spin Boldak
(Photo taken by: SPC Kirby)

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927th Soldiers Recognized for a Job Well Done

The Soldiers of the 927th received many important visitors in April. The first of our distinguished visitors included: the Honorable Brad R. Carson, the Under Secretary of the Army; General John F. Campbell, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army; and Major General Paul LaCamera, the RC South Commander. Also, LTC Acker and CSM McVicker visited the Sappers and presented them with challenge coins for excelling at their respective positions. Those Soldiers who received coins were SGT Ronald Armstrong, SPC Zachary Pourciau, SPC Nicholas Phillips, SPC Nicholas Oubre, SPC Joshua Cummings, SGT Alexander Ward, SSG Justin Boudin, and SPC John Luginbill. Later in the month, Sergeant Major of the Army Chandler visited Apache and several of our Soldiers had the opportunity to listen to a short speech and to eat lunch with the Sergeant Major and receive one of his challenge coins. Those Soldiers were SGT Kent Hagge, SGT Alexander Ward, SPC Nicholas Oubre, and SFC Cedric Grimes.

Combat engineers are known for their ingenuity in solving complicated problems without resources. This usually applies to missions; however, it is also applicable during down time. Recently, 1st platoon had to stay overnight at a nearby FOB and unfortunately the dining facility was not open that night. So instead of settling for MREs, the Sappers became resourceful. SSG Nathan Lacombe and SSG Justin Boudin procured steaks and snacks from their Romanian hosts and proceeded to BBQ on a homemade grill. True to their southern heritage, the Sappers prepared their food with a spice blend brought all the way from south Louisiana. The Sappers feasted like kings while enjoying a steak (or 2 or 3), smoking cigars, and discussing life. They also shared their feast with their accompanying infantry and EOD brethren.

Hard to believe, but the support staff and LNOs are already preparing for redeployment. They have been busy retrograding broken or unused equipment. The LNOs, SSG Don Ainsworth, SSG Jeffry Sievers, and SPC Joseph Rainbolt, have been working diligently with TF Bayonet personnel to ensure the redeployment process goes smoothly.

The 927th would also like to recognize the promotions of SPC Randall Antill and SPC Clint Duhon.

- LT Cody Lee, Platoon Leader and CoIST



Soldiers receive coins from LTC Acker and CSM McVicker



SPC Nicholas Phillips, PFC Matthew Gottschalk, SGT Calvin Richardson, and SPC Bradley Ard pick out some items from the USO-to-GO kit courtesy of the USO.



SGT Alexander Ward with SMA Chandler



CPT James Hoover and ISG Tod Archo promote SPC Clint Duhon.



SMA Chandler meets Soldiers of 927th



SPC Nicholas Oubre with SMA Chandler

1438th Multi-Role Bridge Company

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RIVER OTTERS

A Message from the Commander

Families and Friends of the 1438th MRBC,

We are pleased to inform you that our RIP/TOA mission with the 814th MRBC is complete and was a success. As we get closer to our departure we are staying focused and remain vigilant in order to return home safely. We have done everything possible to ensure the 814th MRBC is postured for success and we wish them God Speed on their deployment.

As we get closer to our final Demobilization (DEMOB) date, I want to ensure all of our Families and Friends have every bit of information on their Soldier's return home. As we get closer to our departure date, I will ensure that all of the Soldiers in the company have the final flight date and that they pass that information to their families in as much advance notice as possible.

I also want to reiterate the importance of Family Reintegration following this deployment. It is an important step that all of the Soldiers in the company will be given specific classes on. These classes are only a small part of the process of the reintegration process. Please do not hesitate to ask your Soldier what information was provided through DEMOB and help facilitate a smooth Family reintegration. Family first!

- McClellan H. Gaono-Taiese, Company Commander



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Snapshots of Task Force Bayonet

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Re-Enlistments, Promotions and Ceremonies

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TF Bayonet Soldier and NCO of the Quarter



Soldier of the Quarter: PFC Williams, HHC



NCO of the Quarter: SSG Crabtree, HHC

Public Affairs Information

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

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

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