



**OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM 11-12**

# **Task Force Knight**

**223<sup>rd</sup> ENGINEER BATTALION**



***IT GROWS WITH LABOR*** Vol. 1 Issue 3



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## KNIGHT 6-COMMANDERS CORNER

Good Day Knight Warriors, Recently I have had several Knight Warriors and family members ask questions related to our mission in Afghanistan. What was our task and purpose? These were great questions especially based on recent events that have occurred in Afghanistan. Task Force Knight has a clear mission that is clearly linked to the overall mission of the International Security Assistance Force. It is detailed below and is located at the following link, <http://www.isaf.nato.int/mission.html>

So what is the mission of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)? The ISAF is in support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, ISAF conducts operations in Afghanistan to reduce the capability and will of the insurgency, support the growth in capacity and capability of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and facilitate improvements in governance and

socio-economic development in order to provide a secure environment for sustainable stability that is observable to the population. So how does the ISAF mission tie into Route Clearance? As engineers, we provide freedom of maneuver. We clear the way in order to support the higher mission. That includes the detection and removal of improvised explosive devices in the area of operations along roads. This is a critical mission. If we don't have safe roads, then it is difficult to maintain the momentum. That's why I can't express enough how proud I am for the sacrifice our uniformed Knight Warriors make on a daily basis.

Task Force Knight Warriors,  
Thanks again for what you do.  
God Bless and God Speed!

*LTC Michael M. Cleveland*



## KNIGHT 7—CSM THOUGHTS

The Soldiers who work most effectively, from my perspective never say "I." And that's not because they are trained not to say "I" or think "I." They think "we" and "team." They understand their job is to make the team function. They accept responsibility and don't sidestep it, it is not the "I" but the "we" that gets the credit. This is what creates trust, what enables you to get the task done.

Easter is around the corner and it is important to remember that Easter is not a time for seeking answers and trying to disprove or even to prove life eternal. It is a day to fan the ashes of dead hope, a day to banish

doubts and seek the slopes where the sun is rising, to revel in the faith. This means during these holiday seasons seek to improve yourself and continue to grow in your faith. We are quickly reaching our six month mark and it is important to keep improving and holding true to those Army Values.

*CSM Charles E. Donald*



# 223<sup>rd</sup> Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward

## 530th Clearance Company Redeploys

The 530th Clearance Company has redeployed back to the States. Before leaving the Relief in Place (RIP) process was under way and successful.

The RIP/TOA is a long standing tradition between units of the United States Armed Forces, who while deployed transfer authority of their line units and area of operation to the newly arrived units in theatre.

The process takes several weeks. This ensures that the change of authority between the

outgoing and incoming unit is done smoothly. CPT Christopher Blackburn, Commander of the 530th worked closely with CPT Joseph Frederick, Commander of 584th and CPT Dustin Centofani, Commander of 569th to ensure that every Soldier completed training for their respective duty assignment.

The successful completion of the RIP allowed the 584th and 569th companies to precisely step into the positive foot prints the 530th left behind.



## Massachusetts's native changes life

Twenty-seven year old U.S. Army Pvt. Carleton Crudup III knew he needed more out of life. Working as a warehouse shipper and receiver, Crudup decided it was time for a change; joining the Army was the perfect way to achieve his dreams.

While some Soldiers in the 182nd Engineer Company, 223rd Engineer Battalion, part of Task Force Knight from West Point, Miss., are seasoned. Other Soldiers like Crudup are fresh out of basic combat training and are already serving on foreign soil for the first time.

“I wanted to better my life, and have the chance to go to college,” said Crudup. “I also just wanted to be a Soldier, ever since I was a little kid.”

After completing advanced individual training as a 91H, track vehicle repairer, Crudup went to the 182nd Eng. Co.

“I was only home for six months before I left to come here [to Afghanistan],” Crudup said.

Crudup helps to maintain the vehicles. He works out of the maintenance bay and has daily responsibilities that include the routine maintenance of trucks and repairing parts that are not functioning properly.

“This is an all day job. Sometimes there are minor things that need to be repaired and sometimes there are major things,” Crudup said. “Helping to keep these vehicles operable is a time consuming task.”

Deployment is very different from what Crudup imagined. His living and working conditions are much better than he thought they would be in somewhere as desolate as Afghanistan.

“I really had no expectations, but I’m surprised things are going as well as they are,” Crudup said. “The surrounding units are very helpful with things I may need, and the teamwork we have here in our maintenance shop is great.”

While the bulk of his work is done under the hood of a vehicle, Crudup knows his job plays a crucial role in the fight. He understands the unit’s vehicles need to be functional to go out and clear routes on a

daily basis.

“Once a vehicle gets damaged, it’s essential to get it repaired in a timely manner to clear those routes, and keep the level of IEDs from building up,” Crudup said.

Vehicle mechanics are often the unsung heroes of the battle. Their tedious job of keeping vehicles operational is often taken for granted. Without the hard work of these Soldiers, the 182nd Eng. Co. and other engineer companies would not be able to conduct route clearance patrols. Creating a safe passage for follow on forces and local nationals is paramount in helping achieve the goals of the unit.

Joining the Army National Guard has had a positive effect on Crudup’s life. He has fulfilled his dream of being a Soldier and is finally able to attend college.



*“I wanted to be a Soldier”*



# 223<sup>rd</sup> Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward

## 883rd and FSC lend ANA a helping hand

Members of the 883rd Sapper Company and 223rd FSC lend a helping hand to 2/205th Afghanistan National Army (ANA) Route Clearance Company (RCC) to correct deficiencies in vehicles, March 13.

logistical support seems to be their biggest hurdle.

Commander of the 883rd, U.S. Army Capt. James McVeigh, knows the ANA needs as much assistance his unit and the battalion can provide.

“Our predecessor, 59th MAC, established a partnering relationship with the 2/205th,” McVeigh said, “When we arrived, I noticed the ANA were struggling at the company level with operations, training, and logistics.”

In order to increase the ANA’s maintenance proficiency, the 883rd

reached out to the battalion’s FSC to help support training in maintenance operations. U.S. Army Capt. Joshua Ulrich, commander of 223rd FSC was on

hand during the site visit.

“Along with the ANA unit XO, we developed and assisted in executing a plan to reorganize the ANA motor pool, placing deadline vehicles together and operational vehicles together to assist the tracking and repair process,” Ulrich said.

According to the visitation roll up, the visit helped to further cultivate the relationship between the ANA and the 883rd. The visit shows the ANA how much the battalion is dedicated to helping them succeed as their own entity.



The members of 2/205th struggle on several levels as they prepare to transition from being integrated into Route Clearance Patrols (RCPs) to taking the lead, however maintenance and



## Spartans clear the way to better partnerships





## 22nd and ANA work “shoulder to shoulder”



Afghanistan National Army (ANA) Soldiers of the 3/205th partner with the 22nd Engineer Clearance Company at Forward Operating Base Pasab in hopes of one day taking the lead on route clearance patrols, March 13.

Working closely together the last seven months, the two companies are ensuring the ANA will gain the knowledge needed to run their own RCP missions.

With Afghanistan beginning independent route clearance operations, it is vital that the ANA’s 3/205th engineers have the capability of leading their missions. It is hoped that with the presence of Afghan forces, the Taliban will be deterred from targeting other Afghans

U.S. Army Capt. Daniel Lao, commander of 22nd ECC has overseen the progress of the ANA since they began the partnership. He firmly believes that the ANA are ready to take the lead.

“They know the culture and the land,” Lao said “We’ve been fighting this way for 10 years, but they’ve lived in this country that has been fighting for hundreds of years. Where they lack in logistics, they make up in creativity.”

ANA Staff Sgt. Abdul Quadm, from Kabul, Afghanistan agrees with Lao’s assessment.

“I think we are ready,” Quadm says “They [22nd ECC] have been very good to us, training us and teaching us.”

Establishing a rigorous training schedule and good leadership was a challenge at first. Having the two groups come together and effectively

train improved over time.

“Getting their leadership to make them show up at first was hard,” U.S. Army Sgt. Douglas Grewell of Newcomerstown, Ohio, Partnership Liaison said, “We had to focus our efforts on the NCOs and make sure they knew how to be a leader.”

The 22nd Commander decided that the training for the ANA would be most beneficial if it were moved from the ANA’s compound to the 22nd’s area.

“When we made the move, they really started showing up more and on time and were more focused on the training, said Grewell, “the biggest improvement I’ve seen is their maintenance capability. It has really blown up.”



“I like working with them [22nd ECC], if we have any problems they help us to fix it,” Qudam said “Things are going good, we work well together, shoulder to shoulder.”

Qudam also thinks the missions are going well with the 22nd. Even though they can only provide a limited number of vehicles in the convoy, they are actively participating and trying to learn to take the lead.

“The idea was to train them and get them integrated in our battle drills, so that we could go from them just following to actually being integrated into what we do,” Lao said “And then from there going from integration to them taking an active role in our mission—that’s kind of where we are right now. It is phase one right now.”

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Tyler DiMona of Johnson City, Tenn., worked hand in

hand with the ANA during his time as a platoon leader with the 22nd.

“I’ve learned these are a good group of guys. If you spend the time with them, you’ll get results,” DiMona said “You have to cultivate relationships with them. You can’t just expect things from them, and get it. You have to bridge those relationships.”

While noticing a change in the ANA’s competency of route clearance, he feels they still have a little ways to go before they are fully capable of following in the U.S.’s footsteps.

“The job we do is technology intensive and resource intensive, that I don’t know if they’ll be able to sustain,” DiMona said, “We are thinking of a more dismounted role for these guys, they find almost all of their IEDs. They find more IEDs dismounted than the coalitions force. They know the land, they know the language. We are going back to the drawing board to better help them succeed.”

While overall the partnerships are progressing and going well, the ANA still need the support of the U.S. Army Engineers to proficiently gain the reins for route clearance. They are making the necessary steps in order to take the lead by the time the U.S. pulls out of Afghanistan, however for now, they will continue to work “shoulder to shoulder.”



## Hooligans partner up



## CHAPLAIN'S WORDS

*"A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver." - Proverbs 25:11*

Most everyone is familiar with old American folk song, "Home on the Range." It describes an idyllic place where "never is heard a discouraging word." That would be wonderful wouldn't it? Can you imagine a place where only encouraging words are spoken? Most of us can't and that is because we have become accustomed to a culture of negativity that likes to complain, criticize and condemn. Think about the conversations you have heard in the past week: would you describe them as positive or negative in tone.

King Solomon reminds us in the proverb printed above that there is value in speaking positive, encouraging words. This seems counter cultural, particularly in the Army where it almost seems expected that we complain about someone or something all the time. But let me issue you a challenge – commit today to speaking encouraging words and not discouraging ones. Look for ways to compliment your co-workers and fellow Soldiers; look for positive things that are happening in your unit and call attention to those things; use your words to build others up and make their day brighter. An amazing thing will happen if you do. Not only will you help brighten the day of those around you, but you will also change your own attitude as well.

So think before you speak. And let's see if the rest of our deployment can be a place where never is heard a discouraging word.



## CPT BLUBAUGH HEALTH TALK

Since you have been deployed many of you may have/had symptoms with or without seeking professional attention for *insomnia*. Insomnia is a disorder that can make it hard to fall asleep, hard to stay asleep, or both. Someone with insomnia will often take 30 minutes or more to fall asleep and may get only six or fewer hours of sleep for three or more nights a week. With insomnia, you usually awaken feeling un-revitalized, which takes a toll on your ability to function during the day. Insomnia can drain not only your energy level and mood but also your health, work performance and quality of life. Most adults need seven to eight hours a night. If insomnia makes it hard for you to function during the day, see your doctor/physician assistant/behavioral health provider to determine what might be the cause of your sleep problem and how it can be treated. Insomnia symptoms may include: Difficulty falling asleep at night, awakening during the night, awakening too early, not feeling well rested after a night's sleep, daytime fatigue or sleepiness, irritability, depression or anxiety, difficulty paying attention or focusing on tasks, increased errors or accidents, tension headaches, gastrointestinal symptoms, and ongoing worries about sleep. Common causes of insomnia include: stress, anxiety, depression, medications, caffeine, nicotine and alcohol, medical conditions, change in your environment or work schedule, poor sleep habits, and eating too much late in the evening.

### ***If you are experiencing Insomnia try these steps***

- ❖ Stick to a sleep schedule
- ❖ Get out of bed when you're not sleeping.
- ❖ Avoid trying to sleep.
- ❖ Use your bed and bedroom only for sleeping.
- ❖ Find ways to relax.
- ❖ Avoid or limit naps.
- ❖ Make your bedroom comfortable for sleep.
- ❖ Exercise and stay active.
- ❖ Avoid or limit caffeine, alcohol and nicotine.
- ❖ Avoid large meals and beverages before bed.
- ❖ Check your medications.
- ❖ Don't put up with pain.
- ❖ Hide the bedroom clocks.

223<sup>rd</sup> Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward

Promotions



**2nd LT Jessica Jackson was promoted to the rank of 1LT**



**2nd LT Matthew Payne was promoted to the rank of 1LT**



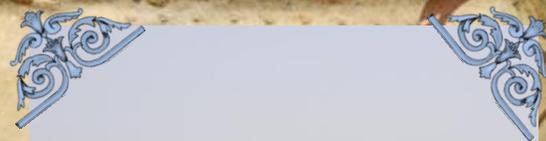
**SFC Scarbrough was promoted to the rank of MSG**



**CONGRATULATIONS!**



*Partnerships*



223<sup>rd</sup> Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



*Encouraging our brothers*



223<sup>rd</sup> Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



*Awarding excellence*





- Shamrocks symbolize the day; St Patrick used them to explain how the father, son and holy spirit were connected. They are also Ireland's national flower.

- Ironically, St Patrick wasn't Irish, but of Scottish descent.

- Since 1962, the Chicago River has been dyed green in honor of the day.

- Boston, USA holds the honor of holding the first St Patrick's Day parade in 1737

- March 17 is the feast day of St Patrick, Ireland's patron saint.

- Green was not the color originally associated with St Patrick; it was blue.

- Shamrocks symbolize the day; St Patrick used them to explain how the father, son and holy spirit were connected. They are also Ireland's national flower.

- Among Americans, more than 9 times Ireland's population say they have Irish ancestry - that's 34.5 million people.

# Happy Birthday

1-Roberto Solis  
3-Shawn Ashford  
Christopher  
J Jeeninga  
4-Dustin Ray  
5-Crystal Lane  
6-Jonathan  
Padgett  
7-Mitchell Logan  
9-David Wilkes  
11-Brenton  
Montgomery  
12-David  
Kuykendall

15-Jared  
McQuary  
Broderick  
Moore  
16-Scotty Floyd  
18-Sean Brafford  
19-Michael  
Schmidt  
Charles Prieto  
Christopher  
Taylor  
20-Jason Bird  
Rickey  
Stokes

21-Kyle James  
Micah Welch  
Stephan  
Otten  
22-Kyle Knight  
23-Kerry  
Holliday  
Bradley  
Hurst  
24-Rodger Steele  
25-Timothy  
O'Donnell  
Cecil  
Pendleton

26-BJ Raines  
29-Robert  
McWhirter  
30-James Smith  
Joshua  
Willette  
Donald Edge  
31-Jody Alford  
Willie cook





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**223<sup>rd</sup>  
Battalion  
Newsletter  
Staff**

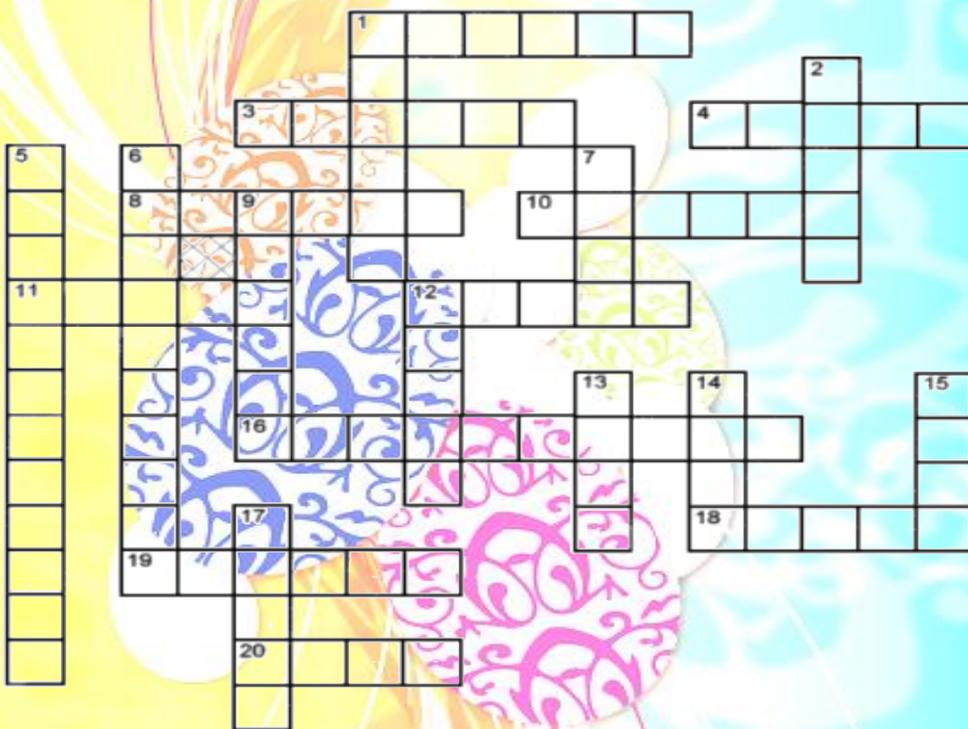
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The 223<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion was mobilized on October 1, 2011 to help the continual efforts of the U.S. Army during Operation Enduring Freedom.

What is your best Easter memory?

Submit your replies to the editor and check back next month for the best, funniest and most common replies.

See you then, stay safe!



**DOWN**

- 1 A hat
- 2 An angel told them "He is ..."
- 5 Nailed to the cross
- 6 Small sugared goodies
- 7 Religious ceremony
- 9 Season in which Easter usually arrives
- 12 Sweets
- 13 Easter flower
- 14 Symbol of innocence
- 15 Blessed
- 17 One was at the tomb

**ACROSS**

- 1 Carry to put things in
- 3 Light one in church
- 4 Peeping baby
- 8 Jesus rose on this day
- 10 March in one
- 11 Use crayons to do this
- 12 Symbol of the Crucifixion
- 16 Day Christ was crucified
- 18 Brings Easter goodies
- 19 Day of week Christ arose
- 20 They get decorated