

**OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM 11-12**

# **Task Force Knight**

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



***IT GROWS WITH LABOR*** Vol. 1 Issue 5



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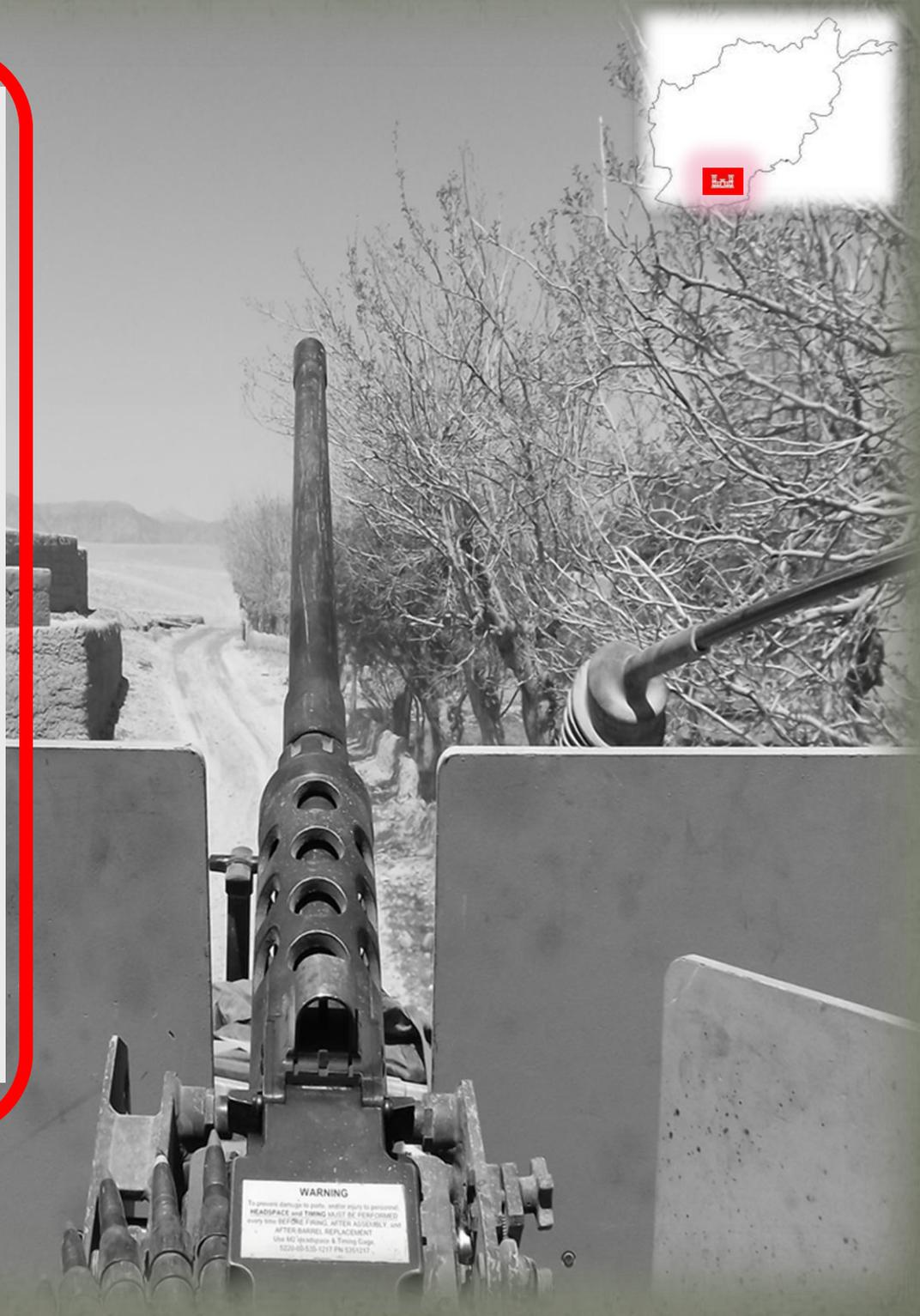
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**WARNING**  
To prevent damage to parts, weather strips to perished,  
HEADSPACE and TIGHT SLUIT BE PERFORMED  
every time BEFORE FILING, AFTER ASSEMBLY and  
AFTER BARREL REPLACEMENT  
Use M2 Inspection & Taming Gauge  
5029-88-535-1217 PN 5292217



**KNIGHT 6-COMMANDERS CORNER**

As May is upon us we observe two significant days that have special meaning; Mother's Day and Memorial Day. The first Mother's Day observance was a church service in 1908 requested by Anna Jarvis, of Philadelphia, to honor her deceased mother. Many other countries observe Mother's Day such as the countries of Australia, Mexico, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Belgium, Russia, China and Thailand. The days may vary, but in special ways they all honor their Mothers. As far as myself, my mom and my wife, well let's just say they are GREAT Mothers or Moms! They both have huge hearts and have raised their children well. It always takes some sacrifice to raise your children, so Mothers or moms, thanks. So to all the moms at home and in Afghanistan, I hope you have a memorable Mother's Day. In regards to Memorial Day, this is an extremely special day. Memorial Day commemorates those who

have paid the ultimate sacrifice. It is a day that we lower our United States flags to half staff for recognition of those who have died protecting our freedom. Many back home will take this weekend to go on a vacation, but I ask that each of you to stop, pause and reflect the freedom you have because others have paid the price.

God Bless, God Speed and Never Forget our Fallen Heroes!

*LTC Michael M. Cleveland*



**KNIGHT 7—CSM THOUGHTS**

Mother's Day is a holiday to celebrate and pay tribute to Mothers. Most will receive phone calls, cards and gifts from their children. Some children are able to spend the day with their mothers. Your mothers appreciate it more than words can say receiving our thanks and appreciation for their love, nurturing, encouragement, and sacrifices they've made for us. However, Military moms whose children are deployed to war zones hope for more than a card, a phone call, or email from their child on this special day. They long for that day when they'll see their child and welcome him or her home. This also applies to another type of Military Mom; the Moms

whose husband are deployed and instantly become a single Mom. They have to take on the role of both mother and father. And they have the same worries, anxieties, and fears coupled with the immense responsibility of parenting children in the absence of their father while staying strong for their kids. So this Mother's Day be sure to thank the Moms in your life for their patience and continued support while we fight.

*CSM Charles Donald*



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

### Soldier overcomes lymphoma; deploys to Afghanistan

Soldiers are expected to overcome the odds and persevere through the tough times in order to serve their country; however, not all battles fought are the result of outside influences or combating mental fatigue – some battles are out of one's control, biological ailments that if left undetected can lead to a fatal outcome. Facing a devastating discovery, U.S. Army Sgt. Tyler Hollows, 22nd Engineer Clearance Company, 223rd Engineer Battalion overcame the odds to serve with his brothers in arms.



Nearly two years ago, Hollows noticed his run time dropping significantly and that it became increasingly harder to breathe. He immediately knew something was wrong but never could have imagined what his doctor would find next – a large apple sized tumor in his chest. Hollows was diagnosed with Lymphoma.

Lymphoma is type of cancer that affects the lymphatic system (lymph nodes).

"If we hadn't caught it when we did, I would have died," said Hollows. "It (tumor) was extremely fast growing. It grew about two inches a week."

Although Hollows fought a continuous uphill battle in order to deploy, he never gave up. With his determination and relentless attitude, the support of his commander and noncommissioned officers, he found a

way he could deploy with his unit.

"I had to fight pretty hard. I had to submit and resubmit waivers and applications," Hollows said. "I was the only one well versed with my conditions to put together my packet. I presented it to whoever I needed to."

"It was an ongoing process. It was maybe a month before we were set to deploy before I was given the okay," Hollows said. "My whole chain of command was behind me. They were in my corner 100% of the way."

Hollows platoon leader, U.S. Army 1st Lt. Uchechukwu Njoku stated, "I commend Sgt. Hollows for his selflessness in his decision to deploy with the unit. He put the needs of the entire unit before his own. His contributions to the unit's overall success have been immense and invaluable."

At a time when many would give up, Hollows was determined to not let his illness keep him from doing what he loved.

"Health was my primary concern. I had to ask myself if my health would be adversely affected (if I were to deploy)" Hollows continued. "I think if you can honestly say, 'No, it would not be any worse from deploying,' then you should definitely fight to deploy."

Upon the many health considerations Hollows had to deal with, he also took into consideration how he would feel about himself if he did not deploy with his unit.

"How are you going to look at yourself 20 years down the line if you were the one who didn't deploy, especially when you had the opportunity to fight for it," said Hollows.

There are many things taken for granted in life, perhaps the most is life itself. Coming face to face with a serious illness caused Hollows to change his perspective about life.

"It was a good lesson on how short life can actually be and how little time

to do everything we want to do and to deploy," said Hollows. "Giving good service to the Army, my friends, my unit the people I train with was extremely important to me – important enough that I did not want to go through life saying I didn't do it ... I didn't step up."



When it seems that life is too tough, remember Soldiers like Hollows: Soldiers who refuse to let their medical conditions define them, Soldiers who embody the Army Values, especially Duty, Selfless Service and Personal Courage, Soldiers who overcome the near impossible for the chance to serve.

"People with this type of medical history shouldn't let it define them. When I was pinned with my E-5 (promoted to sergeant), the big comments were 'Oh he overcame cancer, he's such a great American'," said Hollows, "but I have a bigger skill set than just overcoming a sickness. People are going to see me as a survivor."

*Living the  
Army Values*



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

### 288th Sappers clear the way

By SGT Catherine Threat

Sappers have a long history of “Clearing the Way” on the frontlines of the battlefield. Today, in Afghanistan, the front line is indistinguishable from the rear, and the battlefield is indistinguishable from the home front, but Sappers are still “Clearing the Way.”

The 288th Sapper Company “Hilltoppers”, a National Guard Unit out of Houston, Miss., deployed in November 2011, and is “Clearing the Way” in the Uzugan province of southern Afghanistan. Based at Multinational Base Tarin Kowt, their mission is to provide freedom of movement in and around the Dorifshan, Baluchi, Chorah, Mirabad, Tangi, and Deh Rawood Valleys for the local Afghan people, Afghan Security Forces, government forces of Afghanistan, and coalition forces. This means that instead of trying to avoid IED’s and other battlefield dangers, they search them out and destroy them.

According to 288th Company Commander Capt. Brenton Montgomery, from Memphis, Tenn., “The mission is going great. These guys are awesome; they have been cleaning house around here.”

The unit, to be effective in

Afghanistan, has evolved, creating new ways of approaching the missions. “At times, the route clearance missions call for dismounted patrols, said 2Lt. Alex Armstrong, 288th 1st platoon leader, from Grenada, Miss.

“Route clearance had previously always been mounted and a lot of the guys had the ‘death before dismount’ mentality, but neutralizing the IED threat here in Afghanistan sometimes requires the soldiers to get out and look, to use dog teams if they have them. You have to treat the whole area as a mine field almost, because you never know where it’s going to be.”

Montgomery said there’s been a positive impact. In the winter season everything slowed down, the guys got a chance to walk through some of the villages, actually meet some people, drink some chai with the village elders. The last couple of weeks that’s paid off; they have actually lead us to a couple IED’s “, Montgomery said.

The unit has had several IED finds and detonations since November. “Everyone has walked away from the explosions,” said Armstrong, “It’s amazing, the equipment that the

Army is giving us.

“The hardest thing in Afghanistan is to weed out the false positives - and the poppy fields can be a dangerous place because they are often heavily protected”

Walking in and working around poppy fields and the farmers who tend them has become common place to the soldiers of the 288th, but their mission focuses on securing the roads and surrounding valley, not eradicating crops.

“They are people too, just trying to make a living,” Armstrong said, “They are out there on their hands and knees farming. They are just trying to make it work every day; they live in a war zone. It’s hard for a lot of soldiers to humanize the people of Afghanistan cause we don’t get out and talk to them, but now that we dismount we see more people, we connect with more people, the locals have started coming to us and telling us ‘hey there is a bomb somewhere over here.’ They don’t want it there anymore than we do.”



## The men out front

The first to encounter the threat of potential improvised explosive devices is one of the most dangerous jobs of a route clearance patrol Soldier. Two Soldiers in the 182nd Engineer Company exhibit extreme courage on a daily basis by operating the Husky Mounted Detection System.

U.S. Army Spc. Francis Cremone of Arlington, Mass., and U.S. Army Spc. Joaquin Valera of Boston, are both Husky drivers and Ground Penetrating Radar operators for the 1st Platoon, 182nd Eng. Co., 223rd Engineer Battalion. These driver operators are in front of the RCPs while clearing roads outside of Forward Operating Base Sakari Kharez.



The importance of their job is realized every day as local nationals and coalition forces are able to safely use the roads. While in front, the Husky drivers are the eyes of the platoon—making sure to catch the threat before it catches them.

“Sometimes there is a lot of pressure,” said Valera. “When we get to the route, we look at the surroundings to see what has changed since the last time. If nothing has

changed, it kind of takes the pressure off.”

During their deployment, they have conducted hundreds of missions clearing thousands of kilometers of routes in southern Afghanistan. U.S. Army 1st Lt. Benjamin Salzberg, the platoon leader from New Gloucester, Mass., explains how his platoon’s job is vital to efforts in Afghanistan.

“We clear routes to allow freedom of maneuver for resupply of the COBs (Combat Operating Base) and FOBs (Forward Operation Base) out at the more rural parts, which is very important,” Salzberg said. “And we clear in direct operations so the maneuver elements have freedom to complete their objective.”

Huskies are usually the lead element when clearing routes by playing a critical part in conducting route clearance operations. This especially hazardous position provides the drivers with a sense of pride and accomplishment when they find IEDs before any equipment or personnel becomes damaged or injured.

With the pride and accomplishment also comes the reality that they are all that is between the route clearance package and the enemy.

“We’re looking for indicators; no matter how you slice it, when you’re in the lead. In the Husky your first thing is to look for indicators,” said Cremone.

“I think they do an excellent job. We pick up a lot of hits, being able to distinguish between those and driving the Husky – it takes a lot. They do a great job!” said Salzberg.





## CHAPLAIN'S WORDS

As the weather has warmed up there has been an increased interest in running here at KAF. Each weekend, it seems as though more and more members of the 223<sup>rd</sup> are taking to the streets, running in 5K's in order to enjoy the health benefits of running. The Unit Ministry Team has even partnered with HHC to sponsor a 5K "Cinco de Mayo" race on 5 MAY.

Running was a part of the Roman and Olympic games as far back as the New Testament. There are several places in the Bible where running is used to illustrate a spiritual truth. Hebrews 12:1 admonishes us *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."*

To win a race, you must be focused. You must take off everything that would trip you up or slow you down and you must stay on course and stay strong until the end. The same is true in the "race" of the Christian life. To live a life that is pleasing to God, you must stay focused. Get rid of the things in your life that keep you from serving God, stay on the course that God has laid out for you in His Holy Word, and keep persevering, even in the face of difficulties. If you do these things, the Bible says you will "win the prize" for which Christ Jesus has called us heavenward.



## CPT BLUBAUGH HEALTH TALK

Dehydration occurs when you lose more fluid than you take in, and your body doesn't have enough water and other fluids to carry out its normal functions. You can usually reverse mild to moderate dehydration by drinking more fluids, but severe dehydration needs immediate medical treatment. The safest approach is prevention of dehydration. Monitor your fluid loss during hot weather, illness or exercise, and drink enough liquids to replace what you lose. To prevent dehydration, drink plenty of fluids and eat foods high in water such as fruits and vegetables. Letting thirst be your guide is an adequate daily guideline for most healthy people. But, if you're exercising, don't wait for thirst to keep up with your fluids. In general, it's best to start hydrating the day before strenuous exercise. Before exercising, drink 1 to 3 cups (0.24 to 0.70 liters) of water. During the activity, replenish fluids at regular intervals, and continue drinking water or other fluids after you're finished. Keep in mind that drinking too much water may lead to a potentially fatal condition in which your blood sodium becomes too low, "water intoxication." You need to drink additional water in hot or humid weather to help lower your body temperature and to replace what you lose through sweating. And altitudes greater than 8,200 feet (2,500 meters) also can affect how much water your body needs. If dehydration occurs when you're exercising in hot weather, get into a shady area, recline, and start drinking water or a sports drink. **\*\*Also note that the number one cause of kidney stones is dehydration; therefore, if you do not want to feel what it is like to "give birth," stay hydrated!**

### Mild to moderate dehydration is likely to cause:

- Dry, sticky mouth
- Sleepiness or tiredness
- Thirst
- Decreased urine output
- Dry skin
- Headache
- Constipation
- Dizziness or lightheadedness

### Severe dehydration:

- Extreme thirst
- Very dry mouth, skin and mucous membranes
- Lack of sweating
- Little or no urination
- Sunken eyes
- Shriveled and dry skin that lacks elasticity
- Rapid heartbeat
- Rapid breathing
- delirium or unconsciousness



# 223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



## 223rd Engineers



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



*Excellence*



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



*Army fitness at its finest*

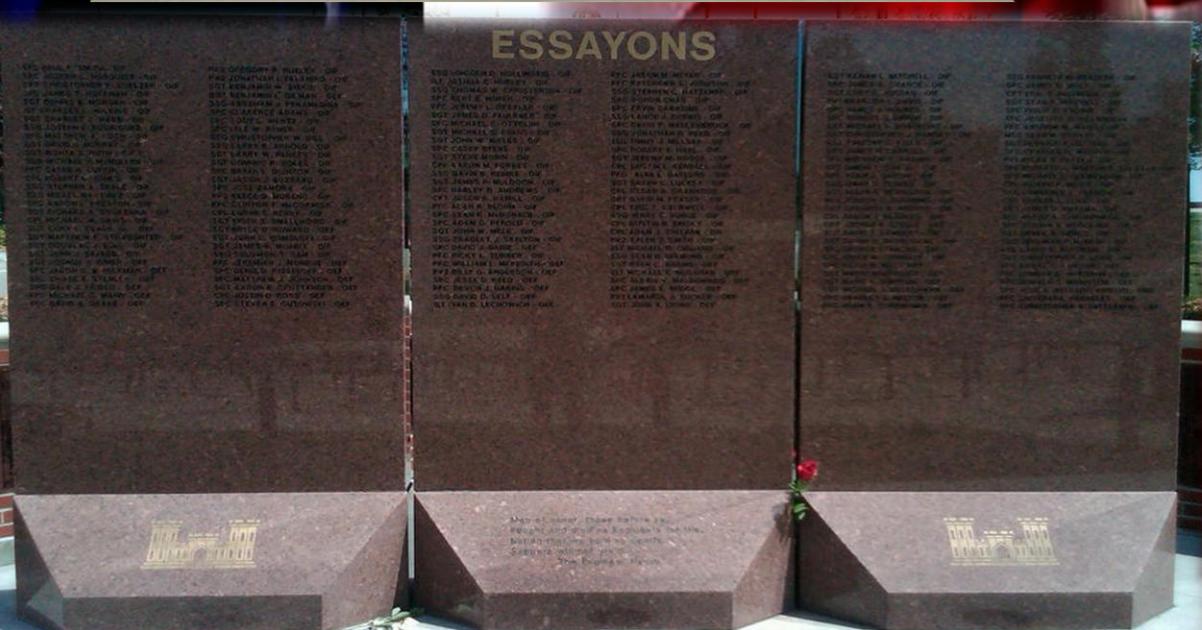


# Memorial Day

**FALLEN NEVER FORGOTTEN**

The bravest are surely those who have the clearest vision of what is before them, glory and danger alike, and yet notwithstanding, go out to meet it.

**-Thucydides**



**GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM**



**SFC Billy Sutton**



**SSG Jonathan Metzger**



**SGT Brian Leonhardt**



**SPC Christopher Patterson**



**SPC Robert Tauteris**

**LOYALTY**

**DUTY**

**RESPECT**

**SELFLESS SERVICE**

**HONOR**

**INTEGRITY**

**PERSONAL COURAGE**



•It is often confused with the Mexican Independence Day, which occurred on September 16, 1810, about 50 years earlier.

•Cinco de Mayo is one of more than 365 festivals celebrated by people of Mexican descent.

•The holiday was popularized in the U.S. in part by Chicano activists in the 1960s and 1970s, who identified with the Mexican Indian and mestizo (people of Mexican Indian and European descent) soldiers' triumph over European conquest attempts.

•Cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and Houston host annual Cinco de Mayo festivities that draw hundreds of thousands of celebrants.

# Happy Birthday

1 Michael Cleveland	11 Kenneth Walls	18 John Ford	24 Frank Payne
2 Thomas Smith	Craig O'Donnell	Lance Hayes	26 Bradley Patterson
Andrew Lasky	13 Kenny Hutchinson	John Johnson	Shakenzie Russell
3 Vincent Devins	Joshua Ulrich	19 James Terry	Tyler Howard
Henry Jones	Zachary Willets	20 Nathaniel Cook	27 Patrick Solomon
Jason Skinner	16 David Davies	Megan Gandy	29 Bradley Farnsley
7 Jason Bennett	17 Romario Johnson	21 Larry Mims	Michael Hodge
Johnathan Long	Mattie White	22 Robert Dannenberg	30 John Sullivan
Jason Smallwood	Christopher Patterson	23 Jessie Sanford	Kenneth Bush
8 Jonathan Jeffery		Brandon Davis	





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**223<sup>rd</sup>  
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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.

Mother's Day is around the corner! Any special plans?

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

# CINCO DE MAYO

G	S	N	P	R	K	W	Q	K	I	E	L	I	D	D
R	I	R	Q	M	N	B	Q	A	E	O	H	D	H	P
E	N	H	S	C	Z	A	M	I	G	O	C	Z	P	N
H	T	C	O	N	Q	U	E	S	T	Z	Q	X	C	H
F	U	X	S	H	Z	I	I	E	X	Q	I	E	F	N
P	S	R	N	F	U	M	I	M	A	R	A	C	A	T
I	A	F	I	E	S	T	A	B	V	B	U	V	R	S
N	L	X	Z	X	S	X	Q	A	W	Z	I	B	P	W
A	S	Y	M	A	R	I	A	C	H	I	J	B	U	E
T	A	W	T	R	B	N	E	K	H	G	F	I	E	B
A	A	A	T	Y	Z	Q	Q	W	H	R	T	G	B	Z
M	U	D	Y	D	F	C	C	O	M	I	D	A	L	A
A	Y	U	C	C	A	S	T	A	N	E	T	S	O	M
Y	Z	M	T	F	S	B	G	T	B	Z	R	A	Q	I
O	X	Y	Z	B	A	T	T	L	E	Q	E	Z	K	I

Amigo	Conquest	Mayo
Battle	Fiesta	Piñata
Castanets	Maraca	Pueblo
Comida	Mariachi	Salsa