



OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM 11-12

Task Force Knight

223rd ENGINEER BATTALION





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IN MEMORY OF THOSE
WHO GAVE ALL
2011 - 2012

SFC TAUTERIS, R
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SFC SUTTON, B
SGT M. CLAIN, K



KNIGHT 6-COMMANDERS CORNER

Good Day Knight Warriors,

The journey for Task Force Knight is coming to an end in Afghanistan, however the “Leaning Forward” momentum will continue after we depart. The Outlaws out of Oklahoma will soon take the sword. They have trained with us from the beginning, to include Camp Shelby, Fort Bliss and Afghanistan (pre-deployment site survey (PDSS). The Outlaws are built on the motto of “Hell Yeah” and their regimental crest “Never Idle” stands the test of time. The Outlaws have built their team focusing on Combat Effects and are eager to take the fight to the enemy. They are passionate about getting it done. They are trained and they are equipped. Hell Yea!

For those who took the fight to the cowards emplacing the devices, thanks again for your laser focus. You are fulfilling the mission and you need to stand tall. You have saved countless lives. Thanks to the Battalion Staff, HHC and FSC for keeping your eyes on the customer. You have operated at an incredible pace this past year and your

efforts have not gone unnoticed by the 82d Airborne and the 411th (Task Force Empire). MG Huggins (Regional South Commanding General (82d Airborne) personally thanked Task Force Knight for a job well done. He also wanted to send a message to the mighty Engineers on the ground, to continue to stay focused. Task Force Knight, I know it is getting closer to the transfer of authority, but we can't afford to be careless. Leaders need to continue to evaluate and calculate the risks for each operational activity. It's the fourth quarter. Let's finish the game in a forward leaning posture. This is what is expected of a professional Knight Warrior.

God Bless and God Speed
Knight 6

LTC Michael M. Cleveland



KNIGHT 7—CSM THOUGHTS

As time is winding down and it is getting closer for the 223rd EN BN to redeploy back home, we welcome the 120th EN BN. Mississippi is known for great “Southern Hospitality”, so we will like to extend our warmest welcome as Relief in Place training is already underway. To the 223rd as well as the 120th EN BN, remember to never become complacent. Remember your military bearing and to stay alert. It brings me great honor in saying that around this time next month, we will all be home with our loved ones. It has been a long and at times difficult year for us all. It is never easy to leave your loved ones no matter what the circumstances. 223rd you came you conquered, and

completed the mission like true Knight Warriors. You all have fought a good fight, but the battle is not over yet until we make it home safely.

To our units remaining in theater, I ask that you show the same due diligence to Task Force Outlaw, as you have to us. We appreciate your hard work and dedication to the mission. Continue to let the Knight Warrior spirit live on!

Thanks

CSM Charles Donald



223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward

883rd Spartans Heading Home



The 883rd Route Clearance Company has redeployed back to the States. Before leaving the company successfully completed the Relief in Place (RIP) process.

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 James McVeigh, Commander of the 883rd worked closely with the 151st Commander, CPT Thomas Grabos and the 870th Commander, CPT Joel Ellis to ensure that every Soldier completed training for their respective duty assignment.

The successful completion of the RIP/TOA allowed the 151st and the 870th to precisely step into the positive foot prints the 883rd left behind.



**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR SERVICE AND
DEDICATION**

LOYALTY

DUTY

RESPECT

**PERSONAL
COURAGE**

**SELFLESS
SERVICE**

HONOR

INTEGRITY

HHC Change of Command

Incoming Leadership

U.S. Army Capt. Antwann Evans, Starkville, Miss. native, took command of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 223rd Engineer Battalion, Mississippi National Guard, during a change of command ceremony at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan, August 13.

“I have waited my whole career for this opportunity,” exclaimed Evans. “I am very honored and plan to make the best of this. I plan to lead this company to best of my ability.”

The change of command ceremony is a formal event officially transferring responsibility and authority from the outgoing to the incoming commander. The outgoing commander addresses his company or unit for the last time, and the incoming commander can officially speak to his company for the first time.

Evans assumed command from U.S. Army Maj. Gary Tolbert who spent the last 18 months commanding the company and leading them during Operation Enduring Freedom.

“It’s been a real privilege to command such a professional group. I can remember the day we had to leave our friends and family, back at

West Point, MS. The courage on each of the Soldier’s faces was inspiring. It made me proud to be associated with such a group.”

Receiving his commission in the Corps of Engineers from Mississippi State University, Evans also holds a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology. His previous assignments include assistant intelligence officer with the 223rd En. Bn., platoon leader at the 858th Horizontal Co. in Calhoun City, Miss., and most recently the engineer plans officer for the 223rd En. Bn. As a civilian, Evans specialized in cardiovascular and pulmonary rehabilitation at the Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis, Tenn.

“Being in the National Guard, it’s uncommon for leaders to receive this type of interaction with his/her Soldiers,” said Evans. “So it’s imperative that I take advantage of everyday with my Soldiers before we return to regular drill status.”

The 223rd En. Bn. is set to redeploy next month, concluding their 12 month deployment. While eager to work with his new company, Evans understands the difficulty of receiving a company during this process.

“This will surely be a challenge, but a welcomed one; one that I intend to take head-on, stated Evans. “I know I have a good foundation to start with and strong NCOs, this combination ensures we’ll be successful in getting our job done and getting our Soldiers home safely.”

Before relinquishing his command, Tolbert offered a word of advice to the incoming commander.

“It’s bitter sweet having to relinquish command and I’ll miss the challenge,” stated Tolbert. “However, I’d advise Capt. Evans to embrace the challenge. Take time and enjoy as much as he can because like all good things it comes to an end.”

Eager to take command, Evans concluded, “I know the standards have been heavily enforced throughout HHC, but I plan to push those standards to new levels. My Command will be based on three principles; pride, training and team building. I hope to make this unit stronger by reinforcing the bond that holds us together so that we will work as one.”



223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward

1433rd Remembers SGT Kyle McClain



Kind of friend everyone needed."

Regarded as a great Soldier, his charisma did not go unnoticed by his command.

"He was a great Soldier and natural leader. He set the example for others in his platoon to follow," said U.S. Army Capt. Todd Falor, commander of the 1433rd En. Co. "When I watched 2nd Platoon training, nobody trained harder than Sgt. McClain. When 2nd Plt. was not working or training, Sgt. McClain was always there in the middle of whatever was going on and he would be the one with the biggest smile of anybody there."

In Falor's remarks to those attending the ceremony, he passed along advice given by McClain's wife, urging members of the 1433rd to cherish the time they have and to treat it as their last.

"I was amazed by how strong she was," Falor said. "We talked about Sgt. McClain and his commitment and love for the Army. She was extremely proud of her husband and his service."

Located in one of the most active areas in southern Afghanistan, the loss of McClain came as an unwelcomed yet familiar circumstance for Lt. Col. Michael Cleveland, 223rd En. Battalion commander, which the 1433rd works for during this deployment.

"We told you what to expect and that the mission you would embark contains significant risks. You have experienced the brutality of war. You have tasted it and you have lived it," remarked Cleveland. "Sgt. McClain was a brave warrior who led the way. He knew the risks and he gave his best, ultimately giving his life."

Members of the 1433rd will continue to carry the memory of McClain with them, throughout this deployment and beyond. The impacts he made both professionally and personally will never be forgotten by his brothers in arms.

"The last time I had seen McClain he had looked at me and smiled," said Lafernier. "I didn't understand it at the time but, I understand it now, he loved his job. He loved us, and we loved him."

McClain is survived by his wife and parents. He will be missed and never forgotten by his brothers in arms of the 1433rd Engineer Company, and the men and women of the 223rd Engineer Battalion and the 411th Engineer Brigade.



Within weeks of arriving in Afghanistan, the 1433rd Engineer Company lost its first Soldier. While conducting a route clearance mission, U.S. Army Sgt. Kyle McClain suffered fatal wounds from an explosion Aug. 1.

A memorial ceremony was held in honor of McClain on Forward Operating Base Pasab Aug. 6. Members of his unit gathered to pay their respects to their fallen comrade and reflect on the life of a man they not only respected as a Soldier, but considered a dear brother.

"Over these past few years I have had the honor of getting to know Sgt. McClain," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Melvin Lafernier, a fellow platoon member. "As soon as I met McClain it seemed as if he had an aura about him. He had the ability to make people laugh, even in the worst of conditions. He was the

Fallen, Never Forgotten



223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



CHAPLAIN'S WORDS

THE END IS NEAR! The end of our deployment, that is. There is a certain giddiness in the air among the members of the 223rd about the prospect of finally, at long last, going home. Yet, for many, there is also some uncertainty as well. Everyone longs to go home, but many are not sure what awaits them when they get home. Some will be searching for a job. Others will be deciding if they want to stay in the military or not. Some are debating another deployment in the near future. Some will go home to an impending divorce or other marital conflict. Some are trying to decide if they will go to college and, if so, what they should major in. So many events in life create uncertainty and uncertainty usually creates worry.

The antidote for worry is trust. But there must be an object of trust which is reliable. The Bible admonishes us in Proverbs 3:5-6 – *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight.”* This verse is an invitation to trust God with our future. If we do, he will “make our paths straight” or, show us what direction we should take.

Whatever decisions are looming on the horizon for you at the end of this deployment, I urge you to entrust them to God. Take the time to pray and meditate on His Word and ask for His guidance. It will take away your anxiety and make things far better for you in the long run.



DOCTOR'S ORDERS

The end of the deployment is finally here! I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to everyone in the 223rd EN BN for all of their hard work and service to our country during this deployment. You have made me proud to be a part of the 223rd EN BN. All of you have made this a very enjoyable and memorable deployment that I will never forget. I want to wish everyone the best of luck in all of your future endeavors upon arrival back in the United States. Please be safe and take care of yourselves. I wish you all a happy reunion with your families. I would also like to give a special thank you to the medics of the 223rd Battalion Aid Station for all of their hard work and dedication. The success of the Aid Station rests entirely with you. I couldn't have had such a smooth transition into my position as Battalion Surgeon or accomplish my tasks and goals without all of your unwavering help, support, and knowledge. I am very proud of each and every one of you and I can only hope to work with you again. Thank you for everything. May God continue to bless the soldiers of the 223rd Engineer Battalion.



Re-Enlistment, Investing in the future



I wanted more of an opportunity to serve my country

I want to advance my military career

I'm looking to increase my retirement opportunity

These HHC Soldiers have taken the oath to serve in the Army. On, August 17 each devoted six more years to the MS National Guard. Congratulations, Knight Warriors!!

223rd Runners



223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



223rd Enjoying a cookout



223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



Early morning patrols



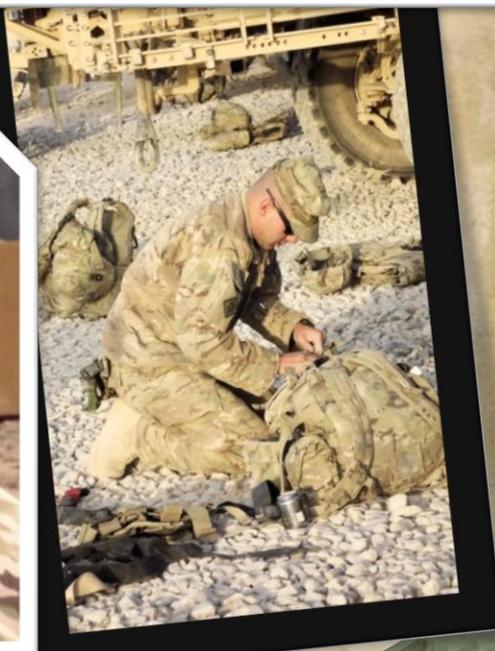
223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



223rd Task Force Knight – Leaning Forward



Task Force Knight



COMING home

TASK FORCE KNIGHT ON THE ROAD HOME



“I’ve seen your face a thousand times, every day we’ve been apart. Mama I’m coming home.”



Welcome Home Troops!



Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country.



HAPPY
LABOR
DAY

Happy Birthday

**SMITH, JIMMY
ALSTON, ANTHONY
ARMSTRONG, ALEXANDER
BAILEY, BLAKE
BRASSFIELD, JASON
BROWN, DWAYNE
BUMPHIS, TERENCE
CAMPBELL, JOHNATHAN
CAYSON, DENNIS
CHARLES, MATTHEW
CLINTON, STEVIE
DUPELLE, NICKOLAS
EZELL, CHICO
FONDREN, CHRISTOPHER
FORBES, JEREMIAH
GARNER, JESSE**

**HARDIN, ROBERT
HENLEY, JOHN
JACKSON, CHRISTOPHER
LATHAM, ROY
LEONARD, ANDREW
LEVINER, JAMES
MCALISTER, VINCENT
PARKS, GLENN
PAYNE, JOHNATHAN
PENNELL, CORY
SCARBOROUGH, ZEBULON
SHULTZ, ANTHONY
SLATER, MARK
STRIBLING, NEKEITH
TERRY, JOSEPH
TOLER, EDWARD**

**TRAIL, IAN
TROTTER, JAMES
VAUGHN, ERIC
WATTS, TIMOTHY
WILLIAMS, JAMES
WILLIAMS, RALPH
WINGO, LINDSAY
WITHROW, CRAIG
WRIGHT, JACOB
ZIKE, JASON**



AMERICAN HEROES

FALLEN NEVER FORGOTTEN

A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.

-Joseph Campbell



Sergeant Kyle McClain was born on the 2nd of December 1986 in South Korea. SGT McClain became a United States Citizen on 11 August 1989 when he was adopted by his parents, Michael and Geraldine McClain. He graduated from Rochester High School in 2005 where he was part of the Falcon Drum line in Rochester High School's Marching Band. After graduating high school he attended Ferris State University for two years, majoring in Engineering. On 10 October 2010 SGT McClain married his wife Lisa whom he met while attending Rochester High School. SGT McClain began his military career in 2007, enlisting in the United States Army as a Combat Engineer. SGT McClain left the active Army and enlisted in the Michigan Army National Guard where he joined the 1433rd Engineer Company. He deployed to Afghanistan July 2012. Outside of the Army he liked to hunt and fish with his father Michael. He also liked to hang out with friends and spend time and money working on his truck. He enjoyed working on guns and anything that had a motor.



**223rd
Battalion
Newsletter
Staff**

1LT J. JACKSON — PAO
SPC J. POSEY — PHOTOGRAPHER

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

How do you like to spend your Labor Day?

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

See you then, stay safe!

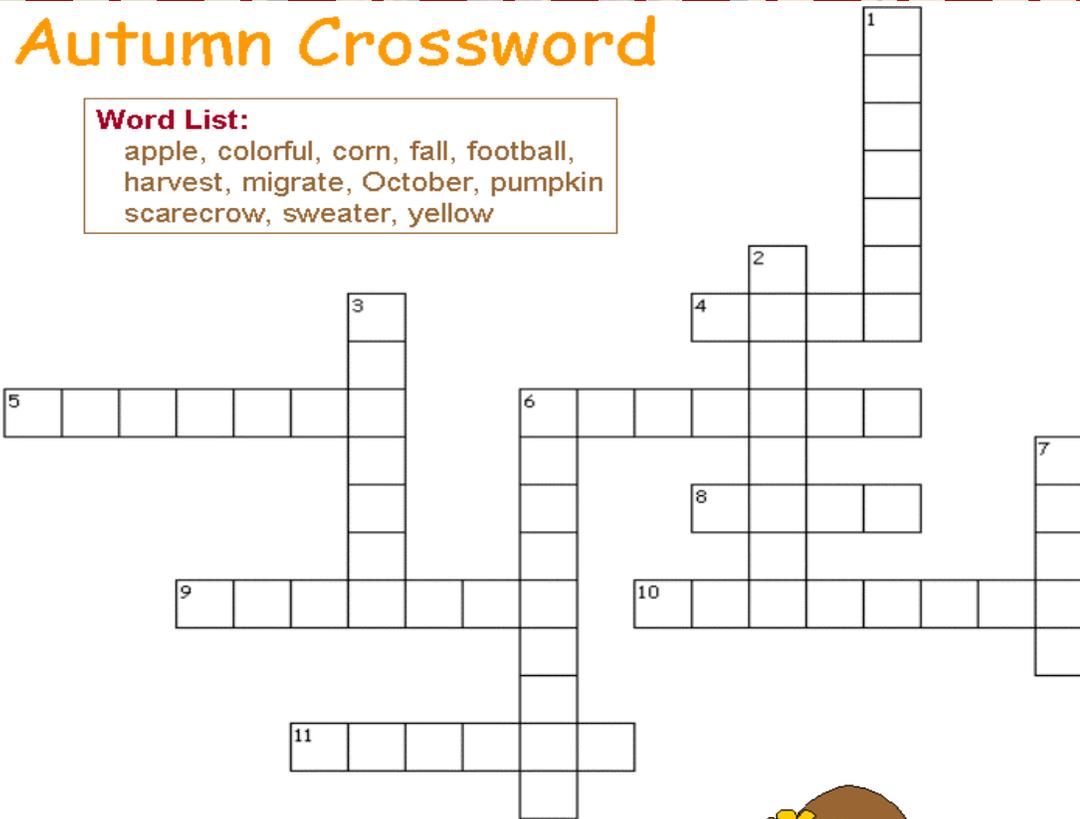


Essayons

Autumn Crossword

Word List:

apple, colorful, corn, fall, football, harvest, migrate, October, pumpkin scarecrow, sweater, yellow



Across

- 4. A tasty yellow vegetable with kernels.
- 5. Another word for gathering crops before winter.
- 6. Something people wear during autumn.
- 8. Another word for autumn.
- 9. Many animals do this in the autumn.
- 10. The way trees look during autumn.
- 11. One of the colors leaves turn in autumn.

Down

- 1. A large orange squash that people carve faces into.
- 2. A sport that starts in autumn.
- 3. The middle month of autumn.
- 6. Used to scare birds away from the corn.
- 7. A crisp, red fruit.

