



# LOGFIRE LEDGER

298th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

## The 104th TC Held Redeployment/Luau Party

The 104th Transportation Company recently held their Redeployment/Luau party on 20 May 2011. The 104th Transportation Company is scheduled to leave Shindand Air Base the first week of June and head back to Fort Benning in order to be welcomed home by their loved ones. The festivities kicked off with a 104th Basketball tournament in which the 3rd Platoon Spartans walked away victorious. Around lunch time a volleyball and horseshoe tournament commenced with 1st Platoon carrying away the winning colors. Around 1700 a spades and dominoes tournament was held under a solar shade to provide a way for Soldiers to cool off before dinner, and if that didn't cool them off enough, the 400 water balloons sure did. At 1800 a wonderful feast of chicken, lobster tail and steak was served by SFC Washington and SSG Gibson from the 183rd (who later received Impact AAMs from the 104th Commander for their support). SPC Kastenbaum and SFC Potter cooked up the well marinated meat and made everyone feel like they were back in the states already. "It was really a wonderful time." "I think everyone enjoyed themselves and really walked away with some great memories of being in Afghanistan." -CPT Donaldson After dinner the 1SG and Commander handed out the Road Dawg Awards for Best Hair, Quietest Soldier, Biggest Gym Rat and so on. Following the awards each platoon was responsible for putting on one skit. "The skits were hilarious, everyone was laughing so hard." -SPC Cooper The end of the festivities was followed up with a Luau dance in the 104th Transportation Company MWR room.



## Lines from “LOGFIRE 06”



### *The little things in life; and a really big deal*

As I considered topics for this month’s column, I pondered various ideas that would be relative to everyone on the “LOGFIRE team”. I arrived on the focal point of “little things in life; and a big deal”. We all have a series of “little things” in life that fall into several categories. Everyone has certain little things that really “bug them”, little things they really “like”, or little things they really “miss”.

I believe that deployments heighten the senses of soldiers, families, and friends to the awareness of the “little things in life”. From the soldier’s perspective, I think we gain a deeper appreciation for the blessings we have as Americans because of all the “little things” in life that we ordinarily would take for granted. Some of the little things we take for granted are sometimes humorous from a soldier’s perspective. I certainly can’t speak for everyone, but below are 21 “little things” from home that I’ve learned to appreciate as compared with life on the FOB:

1. taking a walk on concrete, carpet, tile or anything but “big rocks”
2. taking a shower without having to wear shoes for fear of acquiring some sort

- of fungus
3. eating on real plates
4. eating with less than 500 people at a time
5. using a restroom not made of plastic
6. what clothes should I wear today?
7. performing any activity without the background noise of a power generator, helicopter, forklift, or other heavy machinery
8. flipping on a light switch that’s permanently installed into the wall
9. talking to your spouse when it’s the same time of day
10. walking on anything but “big rocks”
11. taking a shower and shaving without having 3-6 other guys in the same room
12. going outside to a plastic bathroom
13. routine mail delivery taking 2-4 weeks to arrive at its destination
14. green grass and abundant trees
15. taking a drive that doesn’t involve a convoy plan
16. when the noise of helicopter rotors are a rare occasion going to shave and shower without the need of taking a full inventory of supplies; ensuring you have everything you’re going to need
18. having a conversation without having to yell over the sound of wind beating your tent
19. not having to worry about causing a generator to shut down before you plug an appliance in
20. not having to use a flashlight when going to the bathroom in the middle of the night
21. did I mention, walking on anything but “big rocks”?

The list goes on. I suspect that many soldiers can relate with my list, and have a list of their own “little things”. Some of these items are humorous, and quite frankly, silly. However, as I ponder on these things that I ordinarily take for granted, it occurred to me that we should be

thankful for all of the blessings we have. Though many of us who are deployed live at a comfort level inferior to our lifestyle at home, it’s apparent that we live well above the means of the average Afghan citizen. Every time I travel, I see families hard at work in arid fields of rock; yet the efforts to irrigate and nurture the crop allows green to somehow emerge from the rugged terrain. A second glance reveals children, no more than 3-4 years old, also digging, scratching the fields, and gathering crops. This scene sparks a revelation of comparison as I consider my childhood as farming with my grandparents was more of a recreation, and education than an expectation. Secondly, being a “country boy” from Mississippi, I’m accustomed to fertile fields of green; easily irrigated by the flowing waters of the south. The rugged and resilient persona of the Afghan people is an attribute that we can learn from. Likewise, it is a great opportunity for us to gain a realization of our blessing as Americans.

Aside from the amenities that we miss, there are also very sentimental “little things” in life that we deeply miss. I miss the way my house is filled with the fragrant smell of shampoo when my wife dries her beautiful hair each night. I miss the way her “electric smile” lights up any room when she arrives. I miss the sound of my 3 year old daughter’s voice when she shouts “Daddy” in jubilation to show me something new she has learned, or done. I miss a sunset walk around my parent’s lake while my Dad and I “solve the world’s problems”. I miss the sound of a sweeping golf swing on outings with my brother. I miss the crackling sound of a camp fire when “my buddies” and I get away from it all. Though I deeply miss all of these activities, these sentimental events of fondness in my life are sacrificial necessities to secure a better future for upcoming American generations. This is where “little

things” contribute very much and become a really “big deal”.

Every soldier, every loved one, and every friend of a soldier makes daily sacrifices to this cause. We make these daily sacrifices so that our children; and our children’s children, can enjoy a lifestyle of freedom and American amenities that we so richly enjoy. I’ve often been asked if I thought we were “really making a difference in Afghanistan?” It’s clearer to me now than ever before that we are making a very positive difference. We show the Army values personified in the character of the American soldier every day. We set an example of excellence. These values encapsulate a character of humble strength, which is an inspiration to almost any culture. Our values; put into action, bring salvation to the future of our “little things”.

So as I close today, I close in the hopes that family, friends, and soldiers of the “LOGFIRE team” will clearly recognize, and consciously appreciate the “little things” we have as Americans. Other Americans throughout history gave-up “little things” so that our generation could enjoy those freedoms, values and amenities that we have. Let us never forget how truly blessed we are to be Americans. We are the “land of the free and the home of the brave”. Let us continue to value these amenities and blessings we were entrusted to appreciate and pass on. Let us always appreciate the sentimental value of time spent with loved ones. Finally, let us never, ever forget the sacrifices that we make each day that contribute to a really “big deal”. We, as Americans, are the model for the world to follow. Let us always be the best example through our acts of humble strength and our compassionate toughness. May God continue to bless the “LOGFIRE Team”, and may God bless America!

## Words from Command Sergeant Major



Remember, SAFETY  
SAFETY SAFETY !

LEADERS, Make sure you monitor and enforce Hydration standard, warning signs and symptoms of heatstress and illness. Daily fluid should not exceed 12 quarts. CAUTION: Hourly fluid should not exceed 11/2 quarts.

Leaders, check your section for sensitive items. No negligent discharges.

Remember, when in a vehicle each soldier will wear seat belts at all times, and reflective belts, during the hours of darkness, and while wearing the PT uniform.

Check on your battle buddy.

Thank you, LOGFIRE TEAM

LOGFIRE 09



The 298<sup>th</sup> CSSB has a program known as the Humanitarian Assistance (HA). The S-4 section's goal in the HA project is to get representatives from each section involved in the planning and delivery of items to families in need. In this photo, SPC Bender, from the 298<sup>th</sup> supply section delivers a new pair of shoes and toys to the local Afghan boy. The little boy works at the local bread factory located in our area. He is a friendly little gentleman greeting us with a smile. The boy approached SGT Moody one day asking for some new shoes as he pulled up his pants to show his wore out shoes. Well on this day SPC Bender delivered his request and his smile got a little bigger.



SGT UIKASH ANAD  
NCO OF THE MONTH  
104TH TRANS CO

SPC KYLER KLINE  
SOLDIER OF THE MONTH  
183<sup>RD</sup> MAINT CO





**377<sup>th</sup> QM DET/ 298<sup>th</sup> CSSB**  
*377th Quartermaster Detachment*  
*"Movement Brings Victory"*



The 377<sup>th</sup> QM Platoon support customers at Forward Operating Base Shindand in the movement of containers and palletized equipment. SSG Crumity is the NCOIC/Contracting Officer Representative for the centralized receiving and shipping point (CRSP) yard. He supervises all equipment maintenance and RTCH operations, to ensure our customers are provided with the best quality service. SSG Crumity also coordinates material handling equipment (MHE) missions hand and hand with DynaCorp personnel. SSG Crumity has two MHE operators SGT Poindexter and SPC Balingao. The MHE operator's job is to upload, download, stage 20/40 ft containers, and palletized cargo. The MHE operators are a valuable asset to the FOB and are proud to assist and support when needed.



**SSG Crumity guiding SPC Balingao in the alignment of the connex onto the PLS.**



**SPC Balingao moving a connex at the CL 1 yard to be uploaded onto a PLS for a sustainment push.**



**SSG Crumity and SPC Balingao completes a mission at the CL 1 yard. A job well done.**

## Chaplain's Corner

---

### John 15:13 #4 Scripture Verse for Memorial Day - Love

*"Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."*



The verse that immediately came to my mind when thinking about Memorial Day was [John 15:13](#), "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This verse is often quoted on Memorial Day and frequently applied (in most cases, correctly) to the men and women who have died to serve our country. Memorial Day, then, is the day that we remember those who have fallen, whether in battle or in peacetime, who have sacrificed all simply for the sake of their fellow man's freedom. This day, in our culture, comes around once a year and to most, this day signifies the beginning of the summer season and the associated recreational activities.

Think for a moment of the wonderful freedoms we have in the United States. We can hop in a car and drive to a beautiful lake and have a picnic at a public access. We can go to a local university and take whatever classes we want to take to help us enter a particular profession. We choose who we associate with. We choose where we will work. We choose our marital partners. We choose to have children/families. We can peacefully protest by picketing a business, or writing articles in our newspapers. It is just so wonderful to be free. But wonderful freedom we enjoy is not free.

We have one mission: win the minds and hearts of the oppressed so that Afghans can free. In addition, we keep our families and loved ones at home safe and free – safe and free from terrorists, who would like to convert us all to extreme Islamic beliefs, terrorists who would like to dictate how we should live, how we should think, and speak. In 1787, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots & tyrants". Freedom costs us dearly. It requires the shedding of blood. On this Memorial Day weekend we salute the men and women in our armed forces, who have given up their lives to preserve freedom for us.

We also want to salute Jesus, who has set us free spiritually. Consider, "Free At Last!" First of all, we are free from the guilt of sin. Second of all, we are free from death. And finally, we are

free to worship. This memorial day commemorates One who not only gave His life for his friends, but also for His enemies ([Romans 5:7, 8](#)). This memorial day is not only to remember those who have fallen in battle, but One who was triumphant over death ([Colossians 2:15](#)). Let us be mindful that this memorial day doesn't begin a single season of the year, but begins every week of the year. Let us celebrate Memorial Day together, and count our blessings as we name them one by one.

# 183<sup>rd</sup> Maintenance Rodeo

The 183<sup>rd</sup> Maintenance Company held their second annual Maintenance Rodeo on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2011 allowing soldiers to compete against each other for bragging rights of the company. Each team consisted of four soldiers that were all from different sections within the 183<sup>rd</sup>. There were a total of eight events held. Armament Section held two timed events of the head space and timing of a M2 50 cal Machine Gun and disassemble/assembly to operator level of the M16 while blindfolded. Service and Recovery (S&R) held the event of measuring and cutting steal pipe to the proper measurements given while wearing the proper protective equipment.

Communications and Electronics (C&E) had the challenge of loading batteries in a TA-312 and calling another radio while being timed. TMDE had a timed challenge of filling an AN-PRC 148. Inspection Section held a M998 contact truck push with the fastest time as the winners. Engineers Section held the challenge of filling a fire extinguisher while wearing the proper protective equipment while being timed. Maintenance Section's challenge was changing a battery in an LMTV while wearing the proper protective equipment.

The Maintenance Rodeo was a huge success with the first, second, and third place teams awarded with medals prepared by our own S&R Section. The big surprise of the day was when the first place team was also awarded with brand new Sanyo camcorders for each soldier on the winning team that was donated to the 183<sup>rd</sup> by the Sanyo Corporation. The Maintenance Rodeo was closed out with a company BBQ and some much needed down time. On the follow slide you will see some of the pictures taken through out the day during the rodeo.



Starting in the top left corner: SSG Opperman and SPC Emery at the Armament event. SGT Shearer supervising the S&R event with SPC Anderson cutting. The Goon Squad consisting of SPC Stambaugh, PFC Torres, SPC Petrella, and SPC Cisceneros receiving their medals. Team Barbie competing in the contact truck push. PV2 Taylor changing a battery. PFC Torres assembling an M16. SPC Rodarte and SPC Morris grubbing down. SFC Clemens trying to cook on the grill. SPC Ryan, SPC Santiago, and other members of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade PSD team taking time out to eat. PFC Chase holding baby SSG Gordon. SPC Welch and SPC Moore competing in the C&E event. PFC Knight, SPC Palomo and the rest of their team pushing the contract truck. Finally PFC Matter, PFC Ortiz, SPC Wimer, and SPC Anderson receiving their first place prize of Sanyo Camcorders.



# Ribbon Cutting Ceremony For Mandel Middle School

On May 12, 2011 at 1100, LTC Pippen, CSM Ward and CPT Brownlee participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony for Mandel Middle School in Mandel Village, Shindand. Members from the Shindand District Aid Team, Task Force Center, 838 AEAG, and Task Force LogFire joined the Education director and staff for a dedication ceremony and Afghan meal in honor of the work done to remodel the school. Backpacks filled with school supplies and teacher packets were giving out to the students and instructors. The Education Director, Village Elder, and instructors were very pleased with the new school in their area. This will not only have a great economic impact for Mandel Village, but it will provide a quality learning environment for the children.



Old Mandel School



Mandel Children awaiting Backpacks and School Supplies to be handed out

CPT Brownlee hands out school supplies to students

LTC Pippen and CSM Ward discuss Mandel School Ceremony with COL Reyna Shindand District Aid Team Leader.



New Mandel School



CSM Ward and LTC Pippen enjoy a meal after the festivities.



# Afghan Commandos Graduate First Master Drivers Training Class



May is typically the month for graduations. It marks the end of a long journey, and the start of many new beginnings for students who have worked hard and earned their place at commencement. May 19, 2011 in Herat, Afghanistan was no exception. This was the day the 9th Kandak Commandos Special Forces unit of the Afghan National Army (ANA), graduated its first class from the Master Drivers Training Course that was developed by SPC Patrick Morgan. SPC Morgan is a soldier of the 104<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company, which falls under the 298<sup>th</sup> Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

The Master Drivers Training Course came into existence by way of a simple set of principles. A US soldier saw a need to help the Afghan National Army soldiers reduce the number of driving fatalities they were having due to insufficient training. The soldier drafted a POI for a driver's training program and was determined to make the program work. Thus, the Master Driver's Training Course was born.

The course is designed to take approximately 10 Afghan National Army Noncommissioned Officers and train them as Master Driver Trainers, so they can in turn take another group of students, and train them to be drivers. This program is the essence of Counter-Insurgency (COIN) operations as it gives the ANA the opportunity to own this training and be self-sustaining in the effort to train and keep their soldiers safe. It was evident how important this program was when speaking to Captain Safiullah Rahmatullah, the 9<sup>th</sup> Kandak Commandos Training Officer. Captain Rahmatullah stated, "This is not just my Kandak, it is the British Kandak, the Italian Kandak, Slovenian Kandak, the American Kandak...it is everyone's Kandak, because we all work together...shoulder to shoulder, for one common goal, our future."

SPC Morgan's six week course, since its inception in December 2010, has drastically reduced the number of driving fatalities of ANA soldiers by an impressive 70%. This has also been a huge force multiplier by having the number of vehicle damage reduced and more soldiers being mission ready. This program has been financially beneficial through the reduction of repair costs for damaged vehicles and medical expenses for injured soldiers, but most importantly, it has saved lives.

SPC Morgan's 16 years of experience and 2 previous deployments have allowed him to overcome the challenges of language and cultural barriers as well as a 95% illiteracy rate to create the successful Master Driver's Training Course that has become highly sought after by different training platforms around Afghanistan. As SPC Morgan's tour of duty in Afghanistan comes to an end, and he prepares to return home to his loved ones, he will leave behind a legacy of good will that will be remembered for years to come.





# Safety Message

## SAFETY ISSUES

### MAN! It is **HOT** Outside!

Yes, ladies and gentleman, the temperatures are rising here in the Shindand Area. Please remind your soldiers to drink plenty of water, and stay cool when possible. We do not want to lose anyone to a heat casualty.

### DON'T SHOOT!!

There are an increasing number of ND(negligent discharge) occurring in theater. Please soldiers when clearing your weapon, drop the magazine first. Do not pull the charging handle, before dropping the magazine. I say again, do not pull the charging handle, before dropping the magazine. This will help prevent a round being fired, and saving your soldiers from possible UCMJ actions.

### FUN RUN!!

There are many soldiers who enjoy the morning jog before duty and the evening jog after duty. During these times, make sure that you have the proper gear so that an injury will not occur. Chose your jogging path very carefully as the terrain can cause injury. If you are jogging at night be aware of the traffic that is coming and going in the area that you are jogging. Make sure that you are wearing your reflective belt and have some type of flashlight also.

We're on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/298th-CSSB/126140340773566>

These are just a few of the issues that are coming about here in the Shindand area. Please be safe and watch out for the other guy or lady.

“Army Safe is Army Strong”

CW2 James Ballard

## Thought For The Day

Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's the future, but today is a gift. That's why it's called the present.



### Promotions:

- 2LT Sean Maily (298)
- SGT Shaina Wilder (298th)

## On The Funny Side

Two mental patients were having a discussion. One was telling the other that he can climb anything. So the other grabbed a torch light and, shining the beam in the air, told the other, "Ok, climb that", whereupon, the other retorted, "You think I'm foolish, when I get up there, you'll turn off the light and cause me to fall down."