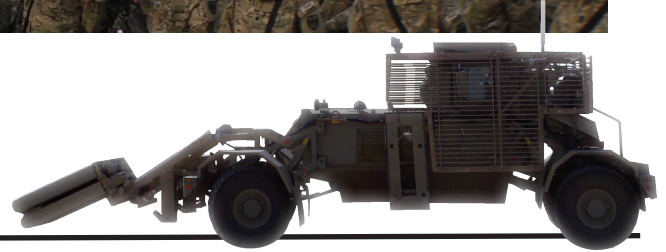
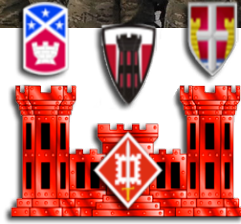


“Clearin’ the way-ROUGHNECK!”

TF ROUGHNECK REVIEW



Issue 4
July 2011
FOB Deh Dadi 2
Afghanistan



Brigade Commander welcomes TF Roughneck

To the Soldiers & Families of the 18th Engineer Brigade,

As Commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade, I am excited to be working with your Soldiers in Afghanistan. Although this headquarters is coming from Germany, I understand the wide variety of units and Soldiers that are in this command from the 1249th Engineer Battalion out of the Oregon National Guard to the 111th Engineer Battalion from the Texas Army National Guard. Our overall goal is to assist the people of Afghanistan in becoming self-reliant. Instead of doing route clearance and constructing buildings for them, we will be partnering with Afghan units to teach them how to do it themselves. As a result, we will give the people a chance to have a better life.



COL. Paul Paolozzi, CDR of 18th EN BDE visited Dehdadi II to personally meet TFR soldiers.

In fulfilling this goal, we are tasked with building, repairing and patrolling bases and routes throughout Afghanistan. A priority of mine is to keep Families informed as much as possible, as quickly as possible, and without exposing ourselves to unnecessary risk by leaking sensitive information in the process. Also, I want to give your beloved Soldier the opportunity to contact you, and your families as much as possible.

I expect us to be very active during this deployment, which will require a great deal of work from the soldiers of the 18th Engineer Brigade; however, in saying that, I need something from you in return. I ask that you stay strong, talk to your loved ones often, and pray for our safe return. Use the FRG as a resource to help and lean on one another for support. Remember that sometimes we, as Soldiers, will be stressed out about seemingly small problems and need someone to talk to about them. I encourage you to talk about it with them and don't dismiss it.



L to R. Task Force CDR Senecaut and CSM Senkirik uncase the Colors (111th EN BN Colors) on FOB DD 2 in July. Uncasing of the Colors is an Army tradition to symbolize the operational control of a unit's new AO (area of operations).

I believe we will be home sooner than you think, and I am hopeful that you will stay strong for your beloved Soldiers and your Family. I can't thank you enough for your prayers, support, and service to our Brigade and Nation.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Paolozzi
COL, EN
Commander

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First mission, outside the wire

Story by SFC Glenn Sierra

FOB Kunduz, Afghanistan-During the first week of July, Alpha Company of the 40th Engineer Battalion handed over their route clearance mission to the 190th Engineer Company of TF Roughneck. This battle hand off included their intel, maps, and equipment. But most important was their experience, knowledge, and techniques used in the area.



1LT Eric Madison

“Our first mission was a RIP (relieve in place) mission. We basically rode along to see all their techniques, tactics, and procedures.” Explained 1LT Eric Madison of the

190th EN CO, 2nd Platoon Leader from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. “I learned a lot of valuable things that I will incorporate into our missions. I feel that this mission set us up for success and is going to make us more effective when we’re on our own a few days from now.”

Since each soldier has a specific job and are in different vehicles in the patrol, each will have a unique perspective. “I was further back in the order of movement, said SGT Frank Turner of 2nd platoon, 190th, 2nd squad leader from Maryville, TN. “I was also in the back of the truck just listening and talking to my counterpart. I was getting a feel for how he runs things and how it goes. Find out, we go through the same headaches. We deal with pretty much the same issues even though they’re active duty and we’re guard. Engineers are engineers. We wouldn’t trade it for anything.”

Aside from the constant threat of the enemy, Northern Afghanistan is unique and unlike any place on earth. From the diverse landscape to the tribal culture, soldiers’ memories will



L to R. Spc. Greenman & SGT Turner

last a lifetime. “I’m actually in front of the convoy in my weird armored tractor called the Husky.” Described Spc. Andrew Greenman of 2nd platoon, 190th, a combat engineer from Talbott, TN.

“We camped out in the desert, in middle of nowhere. Not a sign of life. An hour or two go by. Suddenly a flock of sheep came trotting through our area followed by two crusty old bearded herders, smiling and waving. Just like the Bible times. You just wonder where they popped up from.”

He reflected, chuckled, then continued, “These two little boys between six and eight years old followed us for two dusty miles,

running and waving. We had to stop. We went through our packs to find them snacks and drinks. One package had two cookies and we tried to teach them, ‘you take one and give him the other.’ Nope. They fought it out. The bigger of the two won, put the cookies in his pocket, crossed his arms, and said he wasn’t sharing.”

Incoming and outgoing soldiers alike were serious about their duties and responsibilities. “We took it very serious. This is not something somebody needs to go into with half a heart or mind.” Greenman said, “It takes every bit of who you are to complete these



L to R. 1LT Madison & SGT Turner

missions. You got to throw 100% or more into them.” Before returning to prepare for their next mission, 1LT Madison insisted on making this final comment. “The families of the soldiers are a big part of our ability to conduct our missions. They’re making a huge sacrifice. They are not burdening the soldiers with day to day issues. Churches and other groups have come together and are mailing care packages to us. A soldier’s wife raised several thousand dollars from her church and will purchase items for our platoon and company. You, families, are doing an outstanding job. You give us strength and confidence. Thank you.”



2nd platoon conducts a RON (rest over night)

FSC soldiers' view



Spc. Ward Ellis, Forney, Tx

This was FSC and my first mission in Afghanistan. Our convoy carried supplies and equipment from one firebase to another and back. It took two days. I felt a little bit of excitement. I was a driver and I rotated to gunner during the last part of the mission. You just never know what's out there.

I guess, I kept expecting the unexpected to happen. There were a few mishaps. One of our trucks got a flat tire. Another the brakes got hot and caught on fire. We put it out. An Afghan truck lost control and smashed into one of our transport trucks. We patched our truck up and it ran fine. And, a gun truck hit a donkey. Not sure how the donkey came out, but the truck was fine. Other than that everything went according to plan.



FSC gun truck crew go through pre-mission check list before moving out.



Spc. Edward Cervantez, Venus, TX

I was a gunner on our first mission. I kept myself together and focused on what I was trained to do. I looked for muzzle flash, scanned my sector, look for any threats, and always talking to my TC (truck commander).

It's a third world country out there. I saw a lot of poor people. They live in mud huts. I hope they're not starving. I saw them use primitive tools and modes of transportation, like a donkey pulling a cart.

Their farming reminds me of the 1800's back in U.S. history. I saw them mostly use animals to do all the work. No tractors or machines, like we use. Not sure what resources they use to cook or use for heat. I could see the smoke from their fires. Maybe wood or something else.



FSC combat logistical patrol (CLP) conducts their first mission in Afghanistan. 3



PFC Jasson Reed, Lone Oak, Tx

On our first mission, I did a lot of driving. As a driver, other than the obvious task of driving, you have to stay awake and stay alert. You sit there staring at the road so long and it gets hard. You're eyes start getting really heavy and you go off into your own little world. You get tunnel vision. There are a lot of mountains and curvy roads. The roads are really narrow and the Afghan civilians drive crazy.

Other than that, you really just have to stay on the road and stay in contact with the rest of the convoy.

We were lucky we had SGT Cotton and SGT McDowell as TC's who were very experienced and made us new guys feel at ease and guided us along.

We all feel good about our mission. We got to work with Afghan truck drivers and our leadership talked with the locals. I see progress being made toward handing over responsibility to the Afghans. That's what we're trying to do.



FSC CLPs haul heavy equipment for other units so they can conduct their missions.

New chow pad for FOB Kunduz

Story by SFC Glenn Sierra

FOB Kunduz, Afghanistan-In July, engineers from Task Force Roughneck, Detachment 1, 623rd Engineer Company started the initial construction on a new dining facility to ensure quality of life for soldiers there.

“It’s a pretty cool mission. It affects everybody on the FOB (Forward Operating Base).” Said, Spc. Damen Boyd, a heavy equipment operator for Det. 1 from Macon, GA, “The chow hall we’ve been eating at here is getting overrun. They got new guys coming in all the time, so it gets pack. They run out of food and stuff like that so we need to expand and make things better for everybody here.”

Building them a chow hall is easier said than done. It has to start from the ground up. “I’m in charge of preparing the ground for the chow hall foundation.” Spc. Justin Rewis, a supervisor for Det. 1 also from Macon, GA, said. “I have more experience with the equipment. I’ve got a crew of guys that work under me. I supervise ensuring they’re applying their techniques correctly and I’m watching out for their safety. Like right now, it’s a chow hall so there has to be a smooth surface.”

A young energetic soldier steps up from behind the group. “I’m the dozer operator.” announced Spc. Bradley Page, a heavy equipment operator for Det. 1, from Thomson, GA.



Spc. Damen Boyd



Spc. Justin Rewis



Dozer

“For a pad, you lay some level dirt at one end so that way the water will run off. After that we lay gravel on top of it. I was actually taking some gravel and trying to level it out a little bit so that the grader operator can take it and smooth it out. He can’t get big mounds of gravel out unless I go over it a few times and try to make it easier for him.”



Spc. Bradely Page

Boyd added, “Right now we’re having the Afghans bring in gravel from outside the FOB and pile it up. Page knocks it down on his dozer, I come through and level everything out, and finally Spc. Dupree, out there, packs it down with his roller and gives us a nice even surface.”



Roller

After several hours, Rewis looks out across the project and gives his crew thumbs up. He said the ground was now ready for the vertical engineers to come in and start building forms for the new concrete floor or pad.

“We enjoy what we do as engineers.” Rewis said in concluding. “We make things better. We work with American, German, and Afghan civilians and we all work together to accomplish different tasks working toward a common goal.”



Grader

Boyd, excitedly puts his arms over his buddies shoulders and proudly said. “Being engineers, we get support everywhere we go. Everybody loves us! It’s a great job and we’re happy to be here, we really are!”

4th of July run in the sun

Story by SFC Glenn Sierra

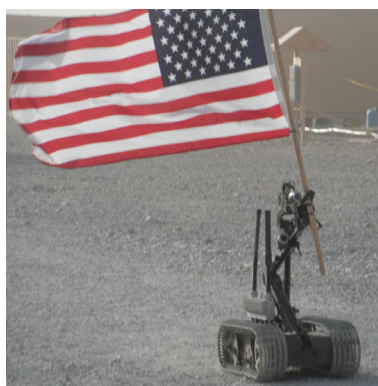
FOB Deh Dadi 2, Afghanistan-July 4, staff members of the S1 (human resource) section of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 111th Engineer Battalion of Task Force Roughneck got into the spirit of the 4th of July by taking a quick pause from helping soldiers to strengthen their bond as a team by participating in a 5K run.

“Since my section is working shifts there’s not a whole lot of time we get to spend together. So, I thought it would be a good opportunity to do some PT (physical training) together.” Said 1st LT John Seargeant with HHC, 111th EN CO, Human Resource Officer from Houston, Texas. “They kind of griped about having to get up early. The morning was cooler. And once they got out there and finished they were glad they did it.”



Soldiers run the final stretch of the 4th of July 5K at DD 2.

The section has been busy since they hit the ground taking care of soldiers needs like pay issues, leave dates, promotions, and most important to their commander, the unit’s overall strength. “We’re trying to give the Battalion Commander a snapshot of the battalion’s overall strength at any given time so that he can make right decisions.” Explained SFC David Harte,



Patriotic Talon Robot

HHC, 111th EN CO, S1 NCOIC from Brownwood, Texas. “We’re limited on computers right now, so our biggest challenge is keeping up with all the different stuff that everybody needs. It was good we had this run today. We needed a break.”



Spc. Echo Holland with HHC, 111th EN BN, a S1 legal specialist from Miles, Texas crosses finish line.

There were challenges for the soldiers during this 4th of July run; rocks, sand, and sun. “It really is different running here; running on rocks and breathing in the dust.” Said SSG Danny Mitchell, HHC, 111th EN BN, section sergeant from Brownwood, Texas. “There were a couple of spots on the road that was just fine powder. You just had to wait when people ran in front of you otherwise you’d get dusted.”

All the participants seemed to enjoy the event, each other, and seemed relieved when it was over. “We had to run two times around the base.” Said Spc. Angelica Trevino, HHC, 111th EN BN, a human resource specialist from Lubbock, Texas. “Two times added up to a 5K run. It was challenging. My feet would just sink into the rocks as I ran. But, I made it.”



L to R: SSG Mitchell, Spc. Trevino, 1st LT Seargeant, SFC Harte, and SPC Holland at the 5K finish line.

As the dust settled and the soldiers started heading off to get cleaned up. SSG Mitchell confessed, “I love my country. This is the 4th of July. And with this run, it turned out pretty motivational. I wouldn’t have done this if it hadn’t been for LT. Seargeant. If I hadn’t done it, today would’ve been just another day. When I get back home I’m gonna get into events like this. I’ll remember this 4th of July, the rest of my life.”

Patience is a virtue

Story by SFC Glenn Sierra

FOB Deh Dadi 2, Afghanistan-July has been a preparation month for the 1014th SAPPER CO. out of Puerto Rico. All the pieces of equipment they need to be 100% combat operational has started to come in. The delay has been frustrating, but the soldiers have taken the opportunity to intensify their training to be ready. They have sharpened their combat lifesaver skills, battle drills, CASEVAC procedures, MRAP (mine resistant ambush protected) vehicle driving, robotics, demolition, and the list goes on and on.



SFC Jorge Santiago

All the transfer paper work, shipment tracking, and training matrixes are closely monitored by the 1014th SAPPER CO. TOC (tactical operations center). “One of my jobs, here in

the TOC, is to track every soldiers’ qualification and status. If he needs this kind of training or that, I’m the one that makes sure it happens.” Explained SFC Jorge Santiago of the 1014th SAPPER CO., Operations NCO from Bayamon, PR.

“There was no equipment waiting for us when we arrived. There was no hand off from an outgoing unit, where we simply took possession of their equipment. All that stuff is coming, so we’re getting ready.”

The Army is a bureaucracy and the paper work ensures responsibility and accountability. Therefore, all Army equipment must be properly signed for. “We received a few vehicles yesterday and we’re now waiting on the paper work to sign for them.” Expressed SSG Angel Santiago with 1014th SAPPER CO., Motor Sergeant from Ciales, PR. “Right now, I’m checking all the systems on this Forward Repair System to see how they’re functioning. I’m with the maintenance section and we’ll be embedded within the platoons on missions. We’ll use this to provide basic maintenance and repairs on our vehicles when we start.”



SSG Angel Santiago

Back in the noisy TOC the soldiers were rushing in and out, checklists were checked off, and instructions were issued. SFC Santiago looked up from his computer and said. “We’re patient, but at the same time, we want in on this fight.”

Some Assembly Required

“A patient man has great understanding . . . “

Proverbs 14:29

Have you ever overlooked the words “some assembly required” while purchasing a desirable item pictured wonderfully on its box? When you get home, open the box and dump out the contents, disappointment mixes with your anticipation because you know your purchase will not be “operational” for a while. Some assembly is required! So many pieces! You have to find the required tools for the assembly. This has to be put together before that. Where in the world is the critical piece pictured in the instructions? Darn! A piece is broken and has to be repaired or replaced. It can try your patience. This, especially if you’re the one trying to put it together and someone else is eagerly watching over your shoulder anticipating your completed assembly.

Well, I can’t share any specific details, but something like that has happened in the mission assigned to the 111th EN BN here in Afghanistan. The Army prefers to hand over a mission that’s pretty much assembled, but it didn’t work out that way. Some assembly has been required. Upon arrival, a bit of disappointment has mixed with our anticipation. Patience has been required.

I’m happy to report though that the professionalism and patience of the soldiers in the 111th EN BN has been great! I think the higher command knew they could hand our Texas, Tennessee, and Puerto Rico citizen-soldiers a mission with “some assembly required.” The soldiers’ great understanding of what has to be done has nurtured great patience. Anticipation for serving through our assigned mission remains strong and I’m confident our operations will be noteworthy.

Thanks for your prayers and support. You can’t imagine how important they are! Your prayers and support are multiplied by God providing for our understanding, patience, strength and comfort. Thank you.



CH Ganther
Battalion Chaplain

July 2011



TF CDR Seneca addresses troops as SPC Jarred Fuller of HHC holds the Colors.



Soldiers of 1st PLT, 190th EN CO make plans for a RC patrol later that night.



1st LT Jason Carter of 190th discuss pre-mission plans with his counterpart.



Afghan boys, like all boys, want to be first to get free goodies from US troops.



L to R. Spc Michael Wilder and Spc Benjamin Carrick of 190th back from patrol.



L to R. 1st mission completed. SGT David Lawhead and SSG Terry Bell of 1st PLT, 190th.



PFC Leslie Goben with HHC provides medic support during FSC logistic patrol.



Soldiers of FSC and HHC listen to the convoy brief before heading out the wire.



L - R. Spc Ward Ellis and SGT Johnny McDowell of FSC are ready to move out on patrol.



Spc Jarred Fuller with HHC provides extra security for FSC combat logistic patrol.



L to R. Spc E. Cervantez, PFC J. Reed, SGT S. Cotton, PFC N. Mauricio all with FSC.



Spc William Trejo with HHC instructs casualty evacuation procedures at DD 2.



Soldiers of 1014th SAPPER CO train on CASEVAC unloading procedures.



Spc Wilfredo Torres with 1014th opens stretcher using his boot to snap it open.



Spc Ildefonso Rivera with 1014th straps and buckles in buddy onto stretcher.



1014th soldiers uplift buddy into designated CASEVAC vehicle during training.



Spc. Damen Boyd with Det. 623rd helps dozer operator position blade to spread



Det. 623rd work with local Afghan dump truck drivers to haul in rocks onto the FOB. 7

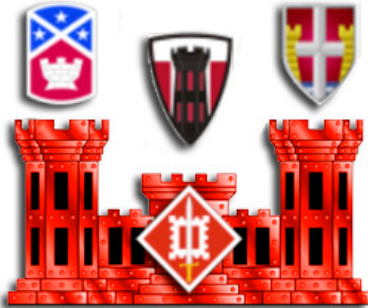


CSM Senkirik talks with BG Lester Simpson about TFR soldiers and mission.



1st LT Jason Brown greets BG Mark Yenter and BG Bryan Watson at TFR TOC.

“Clearin’ the Way-Roughnecks!”



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Roughneck Spotlight:



We can build anything but picnic tables.



We found the problem with our phones.



Sun's gettin' to him!



He left her back in Texas.



I'm not hiding anything I took out of SPC Moy's Care Package Pantry.



The XO is true & straight in many ways... however... his saw cutting...



NCOIC of plans. S (sleepy)-5

