

'True Grit' Seabees of NMCB 15
join the team... **PAGE 4**

Medics practice life-saving
leadership... **PAGES 6-7**



TRIPLE NICKEL TRIBUNE

"WILLING AND ABLE!"



JOINT TASK FORCE TRIPLE NICKEL
NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATER ENGINEER BRIGADE IN AFGHANISTAN



Issue 3 — April 2013

Message from the Commander

Colonel Nicholas Katers,
"Able 6"

Triple Nickel Team,

Greetings again from Bagram Airfield! We have finished conducting a large number of Battalion and



Company rotations of units in and out of theater. We are tactically set for the summer to train the Afghan National Army, conduct route

clearance missions, and deconstruct our facilities. I could not be prouder of the units and especially the Brigade HQ staff over the last three months, who have quickly become experts in their field and are now considered the old-hats in theater. They are providing sage advice to our subordinates, Regional Commands, and the ISAF Joint Command; their influence is changing how the theater wins this war.

In every deployment though, I need help from the home front. During the first third of a deployment, soldiers are fired up to arrive in theater, learn, and make a difference. During the last third of a deployment, we are fired up to teach our replacements and come home. The HQ has entered that middle portion where confidence is needed, that they are the experts to make a critical difference. This is the time for all of us to think – "If not me, who?" We are the "old hats" and will continue to create additional positive impacts to this country and the USA.

We are Willing and Able!
- Col. Nick Katers, "Able 6"



Afghan National Army (ANA) engineers construct a road in Panjwa'i district, Kandahar province, March 28. With U.S. support, the ANA are playing a lead role Afghan infrastructure projects. Related story: Page 5
Photo courtesy of Sgt. Kimberly Hackbarth, CTF 4-2 Public Affairs

U.S. to support new Afghan national engineer brigade

By U.S. Army Capt. Spencer Garrison
Joint Task Force Triple Nickel Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — The Afghan Army will soon form its National Engineer Brigade (NEB) to help lead construction and development of its country.

The new organization, backed by U.S. military engineer advisers, will take on civil responsibilities such as developing infrastructure and building up Afghanistan through construction projects, contract management, and related engineer

tasks, according to coalition partners.

In fact, Afghan National Army (ANA) engineers already have begun deploying at the regional level throughout Afghanistan to conduct various construction and combat engineer missions.

The battalion-sized 205th Corps Engineer Kandak (CEK) in southern Afghanistan recently constructed a new road, and many Afghan route clearance companies have taken the lead in patrolling for and removing improvised explosive devices, or IEDs,

(Continued on page 3)

Afghan Army engineers have already begun deploying at the regional level across Afghanistan to conduct various construction and combat engineer missions.

April — Month of the Military Child

JTF Triple Nickel honors all our military Children and Families for their continued sacrifices, strength, love and support. We are 'Willing and Able' to be there for the Nation, because you are always there for us.



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At A Glance...

- ◆ TRIPLE NICKEL SERVING AS THEATER ENGINEER BRIGADE, COMMANDING ABOUT 5,000 ENGINEER TROOPS
- ◆ ENGINEER FORCES SPREAD ACROSS AFGHANISTAN IN VARIOUS ROLES
- ◆ FOURTH LARGEST UNIT UNDER ISAF JOINT COMMAND, BEHIND ONLY EAST, SOUTH, AND SOUTHWEST REGIONAL COMMANDS
- ◆ JOINT TEAM LED BY 555TH ENG. BRIGADE HQS... INCLUDES ARMY, NAVY, AND AIR FORCE, AS WELL AS ACTIVE, RESERVE, AND GUARD
- ◆ TRIPLE NICKEL FOCUSED ON AFGHAN ARMY ENGINEER PARTNERSHIP, ISAF TROOP CONSTRUCTION, AND ROUTE CLEARANCE (KEEPING ROADS SAFE)

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Command Sergeant Major's Corner Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Bryan, "Able 7"

Triple Nickel Family,

I pray all is well back at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, all the home station bases of our various units, and the home-towns of all our Families.

Everything here is going well. We are all working through the rough spots and moving forward with an unwavering commitment to accomplish our missions and help win the war.

Our troops are resilient, even in the midst of the heartache that comes from missing all of you – their dear loved ones and friends. Our Triple Nickel Team, down to the individual Service Member, continues to uphold the highest standards of conduct and professionalism.

The Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen of Joint Task Force Triple Nickel never slow down and never

"The Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen of JTF Triple Nickel never slow down and never stop honing their skills..."

stop honing their skills. They maintain the never-quit spirit that has made our Army and our own engineer brigade truly unmatched.

Our NCOs are being given increasing responsibility and are proving themselves as critical members of the team. Together with our officer counterparts and the outstanding enlisted warriors entrusted to us, we will continue to move forward ensuring the success of the Theater Engineer Brigade.

Continue to keep faith and stay strong for your loved ones.

Willing and Able,
CSM Kevin Bryan



Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jason Jones, TF Dynamite

Soldiers of the 878th Engineer Battalion prepare to arrive in Afghanistan aboard a military aircraft earlier this month.

'Dynamite' touches down, ready to assume route clearance mission

By U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jason Jones
Task Force Dynamite Public Affairs

KANDAHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan — Soldiers of the Augusta-based 878th Engineer Battalion hit ground in southern Afghanistan last week. The unit's main body arrived here March 29 and was greeted by the 120th Engineer Battalion, the Oklahoma-based unit that it will be replacing.

The 878th is in Afghanistan to provide route clearance for coalition forces and local populations and to assist in the development of the Afghan National Army engineer force.

As the U.S. prepares to leave Afghanistan next year, the unit's mission is a reminder that the overall U.S. legacy is an enduring one.

"We want the people of Afghanistan to know that we care," said Lt. Col. Ed Granados, battalion commander. "We want to leave this country better than when we arrived ten years ago."

The 878th has spent months preparing for its mission, and morale is high, now that it can finally implement those skills that have been developed.

"It's good to see so many of our soldiers in high spirits while being away from home," said Sgt. Tyler Morris, the unit chaplain's assistant.

While still trying to find their bearing in their new surroundings, the Soldiers of the 878th Engineer Battalion are adapting quickly.

"We're a family and it's really starting to show," said Morris. "I think most of us have learned that the way we're going to get through this is by leaning on our families back home and our unit family here."

Here, camaraderie is key.

The Triple Nickel Tribune is an authorized newsletter for members of the 555th Engineer Brigade and Joint Task Force Triple Nickel. Contents are not necessarily endorsed by the Dept. of the Army, Dept. of Defense, or United States Government. Content is reviewed, edited, and approved by the Brigade Public Affairs Officer. For questions, comments, or submissions, please contact the Brigade PAO.

Public Affairs Officer: CPT Spencer Garrison
spencer.g.garrison.mil@mail.mil

YOU ARE THE NEWS!

This newsletter belongs to the **WILLING AND ABLE** members of **Joint Task Force Triple Nickel...**

Send us photos, stories, and ideas for future coverage, and see your unit's accomplishments highlighted on our Facebook page and in future editions of the Triple Nickel Tribune!

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Email: spencer.g.garrison.mil@mail.mil



U.S. to support new Afghan national engineer brigade

(Continued from page 1)

along roadways throughout the country.

“Afghan Army engineers are very good at route clearance, building maintenance, and construction and maintenance of roads,” said Afghan Lt. Col. Khair Mohommad, 205th Corps Engineer.

With local and regional engineer units deployed and operating, a national-level military engineer force is considered the next step.

The development of the NEB, expected to be complete this winter, is being supported by coalition advisers, including leaders from the U.S. Theater Engineer Brigade known as Joint Task Force Triple Nickel – a team of about five-thousand American engineer Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen spread across Afghanistan and led by the 555th Engineer Brigade headquarters from Joint Base Lewis-McChord near Tacoma, Wash.

“We are honored to advise and assist in the development of this im-

portant Afghan organization,” said Col. Nicholas Katers, commander of JTF Triple Nickel.

“As the coalition’s theater engineer brigade, we will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Afghan National Engineer Brigade as they deploy nationwide in service to their country,” Katers added.

Current organizational plans call for the NEB to include two engineer kandaks, or battalions. One will be a national construction kandak, similar to the regional CEKs already being fielded across the country. The other will be a specialty engineer kandak with unique capacities such as bridging, steelwork, and well-drilling.

In addition, the Afghan NEB is to have a robust headquarters capable of managing various projects and contracts across the country – including both military and civilian-sourced construction. This can expand the reach of the NEB by bringing in manpower, equipment, and engineer capacity beyond that which is directly provided by their own kandaks and uniformed military engineers. This is similar to how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) owes its extensive national reach partially to its many civilian workers and contracted engineers.

Why is forming the Afghan Engineer Brigade such high priority for the coalition? For what it can offer a self-reliant Afghanistan, advisers say.

Drawing historical parallels, leaders at the 555th Eng. Bde. point to the critical contributions of U.S. military engineers in building up America for more than two hundred years: military fortifications since the American Revolution, civil construction and infrastructure projects throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, and also disaster response, recovery, and mitigation.

Perhaps of greatest benefit, U.S. military advisers say, is the Afghan Army engineers’ increasing ability to help develop Afghanistan’s infrastructure, especially its vital national road network.

A key part of the Afghan and coalition strategy is to better connect the government to its people – providing greater security and governmental presence throughout the country.

How can the government build and strengthen that connection with its people, bring govern-



An Afghan Army engineer operates a grader during a recent project.

ance into previously ungoverned, remote territories, and bring commerce into economically isolated, impoverished areas?

The engineers’ answer: Infrastructure.

The more quickly and smoothly security and commerce can flow into even the most remote parts of the country, the more Afghanistan can become a well governed, economically vibrant nation.

Infrastructure is vital to Afghanistan, advisers note, but even more so when its construction is led by members of the Afghan National Army, the country’s most trusted public institution.

That’s because civil projects by the Afghan National Army offer two unique advantages: putting a uniformed Afghan Army face on publicly visible projects, and offering well-armed, self-defending army construction crews that are less vulnerable to insurgent and terrorist interference.

According to a 2012 survey by the Asia Foundation, the main reasons for Afghan optimism are good security and reconstruction/rebuilding. The same study found that the Afghan National Army is the most highly trusted organization among Afghans, with 93% of Afghan respondents saying they have a fair deal or great deal of confidence in the ANA.

Taken together, these findings may suggest the ANA’s National Engineer Brigade could be uniquely positioned to take the

lead in building and, in turn, helping secure the nation.

One of the key considerations going forward is how the NEB will coordinate its new role with other governmental and non-governmental organizations also involved in infrastructure development and engineering at the local, regional and national levels.

The Afghan government includes a Ministry of Public Works, for example, currently responsible for much of public construction and related projects.

Outside organizations including the UN, USAID, and USACE also play supporting roles at this time, though with Afghans taking the lead and international presence drawing down, the onus will be on Afghan institutions to continue taking the constructive lead.

Planning between Afghan officials, coalition partners, and others will continue over the coming months, as all parties work to shape a corps of engineers that can best support the Afghan government, military, and populace.



Afghan Army engineer shoulder patch worn by ANA soldiers throughout Afghanistan.



Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 15 arrives: Seabees of 'Task Force True Grit' to operate across Afghanistan

By U.S. Navy Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Daniel Garas
NMCB 15 Public Affairs

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 15, headquartered out of Belton, Mo., arrived in Afghanistan earlier this month to support Operation Enduring Freedom.

As the International Security Assistance Force continues to drawdown, NMCB 15, operating under the recently coined name "Task Force True Grit", is spearheading engineering retrograde operations.

"We just won't be in one forward operating base," said Commander Anthony Spinler, NMCB 15's Commanding Officer. "Whether it is a squad of twelve or a large detachment of 100 or more, we tailor ourselves to the

task at hand. That's one of the things that make Seabees unique."

Upon mission tasking, the Operations Department task tailors each project into detachments by supported commander priority, deploying to locations throughout the area of operations to support a variety of engineering operations.

Spinler added that this deployment will be different from a standard one in that the number of tasks is greater and Seabees will be continuously formed into new teams.

"The missions are a lot shorter," said Spinler. "They may only be on a job for two weeks before they return and then reorganize into a new build-team."

"I think this deployment will be exciting," said Construction Mechanic 1st Class Justin Bohaty. "The opportunity to work on many jobs with different people will



Photo by U.S. Navy MC2 Daniel Garas, TF True Grit Public Affairs

Skipper Spinler addresses Convoy Security Element (CSE) before the team steps off to travel halfway across Afghanistan for various engineering missions.

break-up the monotony and avoid complacency."

NMCB 15 will be tasked with completing numerous projects in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, including the drilling of water-wells, camp maintenance and deconstruction projects.

NMCB 15 is deployed as part

of the joint U.S. Theater Engineer Brigade in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and is an expeditionary engineering element of U.S. Naval forces supporting units worldwide through national force readiness, humanitarian assistance, and building and maintaining infrastructure.



JTF Triple Nickel Equal Opportunity: Here to help our service members

JTF TRIPLE NICKEL EOA



SFC BLACKMAN
Triple Nickel EN BDE
"WILLING AND ABLE"

Still have questions?

If so, call the JTF TN EOA Office at DSN:318-481-4976/ Bldg. 23050/ email @ precious.d.blackman@afghan.swa.army.mil

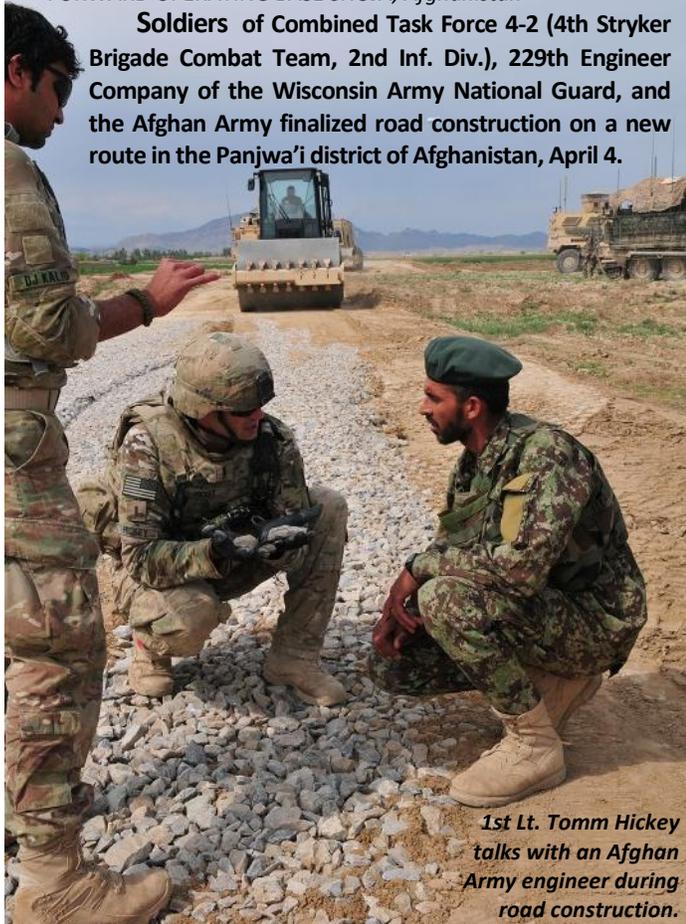
- ✓ **Be sure your complaint is EO related.**
(The five protected area's in EO are: Race or color, religion, gender, national origin,)
- ✓ **Attempt to confront the harasser.**
(The complainant is not required to confront the harasser, however, it is encouraged)
- ✓ **Did you give your chain of command an opportunity to resolve your issues?**
(Soldiers have the right to visit the EO Office to voice their complaints of unlawful discrimination and /or harassment; however, we encourage Soldiers to resolve their issues at the lowest level)
- ✓ **Have you contacted your unit Equal Opportunity Leader (EOL)?**
(If you cannot resolve your conflict with the harasser or chain of command contact your unit EOL)
- ✓ **If assistance is still needed, contact your unit EO Advisor (EOA).**
(Contact SFC Blackman, your perspective unit EO Advisor)
- ✓ **Keep in mind that EO Advisor's advise and make recommendations to commanders and assist you through the complaint process.**
It is the commander's program
- ✓ **Be honest and don't provide misleading information.**
(IAW AR 600-20, AppD-12, " Soldiers who knowingly submit a false complaint may be punished under the UCMJ)
- ✓ **Remember a complaint must be supported with facts**



U.S., Afghan Army engineers build road through Taliban ‘center of mass’

Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Kimberly Hackbarth, CTF 4-2 Public Affairs
FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHOJA, Afghanistan—

Soldiers of Combined Task Force 4-2 (4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Inf. Div.), 229th Engineer Company of the Wisconsin Army National Guard, and the Afghan Army finalized road construction on a new route in the Panjwa’i district of Afghanistan, April 4.



1st Lt. Tomm Hickey talks with an Afghan Army engineer during road construction.

The 229th Eng. Co. worked with CTF 4-2 on a previous road construction project, but this time they also worked with Afghan engineers in a less kinetic area, said 1st Lt. Tomm Hickey, a platoon leader with the 229th.

The physical presence of the enemy wasn’t felt as much as when he and his team built a road with Company B, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, CTF 4-2, he said.

The only people near the construction were local farmers, which provided a different challenge, said Hickey.

“It was something you could-

n’t just brute force your way through and tactically maneuver your way through,” said Hickey. “You had to look at the political and cultural side of it.”

When U.S. and Afghan forces first began scoping out the area, they learned that there were issues between residents of Panjwa’i district and Dand district because the road they planned to build crossed district borders. There were no clear boundaries as to what land belonged to whom, said Hickey.

“At the very start, it was a unique experience for me having to go to numerous shuras with the

district governors and the local maliks,” said Hickey.

Not only did they build a road, but they created v-ditches down the side as away to channel water along the road to prevent flooding and to help direct water back to the fields, said Hickey.

The 3.8-km road connects the village of Haji Baba to a village to the south, Narose.

The road also provides easier transportation to Combat Outpost Khenjakak, which is where Company C, 1st Bn., 38th Inf. Regt. resides.

Capt. Ralph Parlin, the commander of C Company, and his soldiers partnered with the local Afghan National Army to provide security for the engineers.

“The importance of this road from a security perspective is that the town here to the southwest (Narose) is very hard to get to,” Parlin explained. “You can’t get mounted vehicles there, so the (Afghan Local Police), the ANA and (International Security Assistance Forces) have a hard time getting there.”

The absence of security forces near the villages creates the condition for a Taliban safe haven, said Parlin.

“This road

not only helps the citizens of Afghanistan north of here, but by culminating down into the village of Narose, it allows us to project combat power to that area in order to make it less suitable for (Taliban) command and control,” Parlin said.

The new route ties into roads that come off of the villages of Nakhonay, Narose, and Haji Baba

“We want to build a road for Afghanistan (and) for the Afghan people...This is their home that they’re rebuilding.”

-1st Lt. Tomm Hickey

to encourage locals to use it, said Hickey.

Completing the road was a common goal for both the Afghan and American engineers, he said.

“We want to build a road for Afghanistan (and) for the Afghan people,” Hickey explained. “This is their home that they’re rebuilding, so I think we got to see it from the other side.”

The monthlong project was a crawl-walk-run pace for the Afghan engineers, Hickey said.

The project began with the American engineers providing most of the support then turned

into both countries working together, and finished with the Afghans supplying the majority of work on the road construction, he said.

Watching the progress the Afghans made was a good thing, said Hickey.

“As the missions start progressing more and more toward retrograde, it’s really nice to see us actually handing things over and kind of working ourselves out of a job,” said Hickey. “It’s kind of nice to hand over the torch especially knowing that they’re going to keep going through here and standing up their own country.”



1st Lt. Hickey and an Afghan Army engineer direct a dump truck delivering gravel during road construction.



Medics step up during mass casualty exercise, practicing Life-saving Leadership

Story and photos by U.S. Army Capt. Spencer Garrison, JTF Triple Nickel Public Affairs
BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—

Medics rush between patients, evaluating, treating, and preparing them for urgent evacuation.
—“Shrapnel to the lower extremity. Vital signs stable right now. I put on a tourniquet and dressed up the wound,” a medic reports.
—“Is she breathing?” asks another.
—“Rapid breathing, but she was screaming at me in pain.”

For these medics from Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 555th Engineer Brigade, Joint Task Force Triple Nickel, it was an intense, fast-paced, chaotic day in eastern Afghanistan.

But it was also just a training exercise — fake blood, fake wounds, fake screams.

The scenario: a simulated mass casualty incident (MASCAL) just outside the brigade’s headquarters, which is the command element for the U.S. Theater Engineer Brigade.

Medics and other soldiers of HHC, 555th Eng. Bde., from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., conducted the MASCAL exercise here, March 24, to better prepare the

unit in case of a real emergency. Company and brigade leaders observed as the team carried out critical lifesaving procedures in response to an incident involving seven simulated casualties with various levels of injury.

The team carried out critical lifesaving procedures in response to a scenario involving seven simulated casualties.

These first responders had their work cut out for them. With a life-and-death sense of urgency, they had to retrieve and prepare medical equipment, receive and assess the wounded personnel, begin essential life-saving care, categorize and position the patients by order of urgency (immediate, urgent, delayed, and expectant), continually track and report casualty status, then pre-



Spc. Joshua Adams of Louisville, Ky., a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Co. (HHC), Joint Task Force Triple Nickel, rushes for medical supplies during a company mass casualty training exercise.



Pfc. Moody Watson of Zuni, N.M., a medic assigned to JTF Triple Nickel, provides aid to a simulated casualty, Spc. English Mclemore.

pare them for evacuation to higher-level care, starting with the most critical yet treatable wounds.

“It felt overwhelming,” said Spc. Joshua Adams, company medic and triage officer responsible for leading the medical response on the ground. “There’s so much going on at once, you’ve got to slow down and process everything that’s happening,” he added.

That’s no small task in a situation that demands an immediate, decisive, and correct response to various medical emergencies unfolding all at once in real time, especially while enemy threats may still linger close by.

This was the first time Adams, a Louisville, Ky., native, has served as the triage officer, responsible for casualty tracking, overseeing treat-

ment, preparing the patients for evacuation to higher-level care, and maintaining overall command and control of the team of medics and combat lifesavers.

“It was good to work with all the medics and see how they react to the stresses of being in a MASCAL,” Adams noted.

A Soldier with sights set on promotion to Sergeant, Spc. Adams also considered this a valuable opportunity to develop his leadership skills in a challenging yet important way.

For all the soldiers involved, the value and realism of the training were apparent.

Added stresses were mixed into the scenario, pushing the medics and Soldiers beyond their com-

(Continued on next page)



Life-saving leadership

(Continued from previous page) fort zone.

Staying “in character,” Spc. English Mclemore played a delirious and belligerent casualty, lying on the ground with a bloodstained uniform, arms flailing and resisting help as she yelled nonsensical things like “Barbeque DFAC!”

Meanwhile, some of the first-responders became casualties themselves – a deliberate but previously unannounced part of the commander’s training plan – in order to maximize learning and develop an adaptive, resilient mindset within the unit.

“It’s important in this instance that we did it in a way so the soldiers weren’t ready for it,” said Capt. Matthew Pride, HHC commander, from Staten Island, New York, “including having some of the casualties being the combat life savers that we identified to respond to the event. So that was a big surprise and is something that rings true to real life.”

Overseeing the exercise was Maj. Khalid Jaboori of Ft. Wayne, Ind., JTF Triple Nickel’s brigade surgeon. He helped ensure the training was realistic, unpredictable, and all-around effective.

“Obviously there’s that initial shock when you see a patient for the first time,” Jaboori explained. “Once we get settled in and the training kicks in, it goes into automatic mode.”

“There’s that initial shock when you see a patient for the first time...Once we get settled in and the training kicks in, it goes into automatic mode.”

- Maj. Jaboori, Brigade Surgeon



Pfc. Moody Watson and Aaron Dreas, both assigned to HHC, JTF Triple Nickel, rush to the aid of a simulated casualty, Pfc. Morgan Tunell, during the mass casualty training exercise.



Adams directs medical treatment and casualty evacuation as the triage officer during the training exercise. The event helped the unit refine its medical response in case of a MASCAL on base.

For Pvt. 1st Class Alicia Baum, a company medic from Fresno, Calif., this was her first MASCAL training exercise while deployed.

“It was a good chance to see how things were organized and really get a chance to see how it’s going to go down in a real situation,” Baum said.

Leaders were quick to note, however, these exercises will be ongoing, as the company continues to hone its training and readiness for real emergencies.

“It’s important for all our soldiers to rehearse their battle drills and stay proficient in all their tasks,” said Pride. “Because you’re in a combat zone, training doesn’t cease. You always rehearse-rehearse-rehearse...that’s a critical function of being battle ready.”

The medics are already looking at how they can improve and continue to build on the training.

“This gives us a real good standpoint for where we’re at in training ... and what we need to focus on,” said Staff Sgt. Maria Morales of Turlock, Calif., senior

medic and medical section non-commissioned officer-in-charge.

“We always can work on better communication,” said Baum – an assessment shared by Adams.

“The biggest thing that could help is communication,” Adams said. “I could talk more with the medics and have them closer to me, so I can better control how they’re treating patients and keep better accountability of casualties.”

Maj. Jaboori looks forward to applying these lessons learned, continuing the training, and ensuring his team is fully ready whenever called upon.

“I know there’s a lot of things to work on still,” said Jaboori, “but this is why we do training, so we can train, see what our deficiencies are, and correct those, before there’s a real event in which they need to use their skills.”

“Hopefully this is a good learning tool for these medics and the company,” he added, “and eventually we’ll correct these deficiencies so we’ll be 100 percent ready to go if we ever need to.”



Watson (front right) provides aid to a medical training dummy as (clockwise from left) Pfc. Alicia Baum, Maj. Khalid Jaboori, and Staff Sgt. Maria Morales, all assigned to HHC, JTF Triple Nickel, look on. The exercise helped HHC medics and Soldiers practice and refine their medical response in case of a MASCAL on base.

*Editor’s Note: Thank you, Maj. Jaboori, outgoing brigade surgeon, for your great service to the Triple Nickel. Best of luck in your next assignment.



There's help when you need it...

Crisis Intervention Hotline

Warriors: Need someone to talk to, or have a buddy here who needs help?

The Crisis Intervention Hotline is staffed 24/7. If you need to talk to a counselor, you can reach them from any NIPR phone by dialing 1-1-1. You can also reach Crisis Counselors by Afghan Local National Phone by dialing 070-113-2000, (wait for tone) then 1-1-1. Also reach Crisis Counselors by NIPR email at OEFKRISISHOTLINE@afghan.swa.army.mil.

Remember, you aren't alone!

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div. Public Affairs

It's a maze! Help the Triple Nickel engineers get to their base, the red castle!

It's a crossword puzzle! HINT: EACH ANSWER CAN BE FOUND INSIDE THE NEWSLETTER!

JTF Triple Nickel Presents... A Maze 'N' Crossword Challenge!

Maze: Follow the white boxes. Start here →

(Maze: Ages 1-8)
(Crossword: Ages 8 and up)

Finish. You've returned to the base. Great job!

About this Photo: Members of 1st Platoon, 321st Engineer Company, Task Force Comet, patrol through fields in northern Afghanistan during a recent mission. (Photo courtesy of Task Force Comet)

ACROSS

1. Joint brigade staff abbreviation
2. The most common letter
3. Major General in USACE
5. ANA ___ Engineer Brigade
8. Newly arrived Army battalion
9. The letter on Superman's shirt
10. Taking the lead in operations

DOWN

1. Brigade surgeon
2. See SFC Blackman
3. Month of the Military ___
4. HHC held a ___ball tourney
6. Newly arrived NMCB
7. U.S.-Afghan road project in ___
9. Gave a helping hand



Brigade Headquarters & Headquarters Company (HHC)

Greetings from Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Members of the HHC for Joint Task Force Triple Nickel have officially surpassed 90 days in country. The spirits of the Soldiers and leaders in the company remain high and our resolve is strong. Soldiers in the J1 section have processed over 1500 end of tour and impact awards for members of the Brigade, the CUOPS section have supervised the clearance of thousands of miles of roadways, and logisticians in the J4 have processed and turned in over \$2 million dollars of excess government property.

One of the more outstanding services that a leader in our company provided was made by the Brigade surgeon, Major Khalid Jaboori. Through Craig Joint Theater Hospital, Major Jaboori assisted a specialist in humanitarian surgery at the outpatient clinic for local nationals and detainees. In total, Major Jaboori performed five humanitarian surgeries, most memorably an infant cleft

pallet and cleft lip reconstruction. He also performed the same procedure for a preadolescent child, and helped to remove three facial tumors from an Afghan national Army Soldier, a local national, and a detainee from the Bagram detainee facility.

His is only one example of the tremendous work the Soldiers of the triple Nickel Phalanx, and we remained united and strong in our fight.

- Capt. Matthew D. Pride
HHC Cdr., Phalanx 6

Company Bball Tournament: J-4 Team Wins



Job well done to all the contestants in the 3-on-3 basketball tourney, March 31st. Special kudos to the J-4 team, who won the tournament. Here they are scoring a run. Or goal, whatever. That's 1st Lt. Arthur with a swish-in-progress.



Sergeant Major Mitchell says...

'Follow us on Facebook!'

Get up-to-date news, pictures, and info about the great stuff happening in the Engineer Brigade.

[Facebook.com/JointTaskForceTripleNickel](https://www.facebook.com/JointTaskForceTripleNickel)

← Sgt. Maj. James A. Mitchell, former Brigade Ops SGM

The Triple Nickel Facebook belongs to you, our Service Members and Families, so we look forward to connecting with you soon!

**Thanks SGM Mitchell for your service in the 555th. All the best in your next assignment!*

Sales of artwork benefit 555 Able Soldier and Family Fund

The 555 Able Soldier & Family Fund helps support our Triple Nickel Soldiers and their Families during their times of greatest need, assisting those deployed and Families of our Fallen troops.

The Able Fund recently commissioned world-renowned combat artist Patrick Haskett to create a print titled **"Clear-Hold-Build."** This print, shown above, depicts the 864th Engineer Battalion constructing a combat outpost in Afghanistan.

This print is being offered at \$80, with proceeds going directly to the Able Fund.

Visit 555soldierfund.com for info and to order.



CLEAR - HOLD - BUILD

ARMY ENGINEERS CONSTRUCT A COMBAT OUTPOST IN AFGHANISTAN IN SUPPORT OF COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

FROM THE PAINTING BY PATRICK J. HASKETT

UNITED STATES ARMY  ENGINEER REGIMENT



April — Sexual Harassment and Assault Awareness Month Vow to do your part in preventing these crimes!



Sexual Assault is a horror so chilling that our first impulse is to turn our heads, hoping that if we ignore the reality, it will go away. But this is a child's game! Only concerned, dedicated Soldiers can address this growing problem. And when we do, we find that we are far from powerless to prevent sexual assault in all its masquerades.

Sexual Assault can stop and Soldiers should be without fear. All we need do is to make a commitment to our beliefs.

A pledge which declares, that from this day forward,
"Sexual Assault stops with ME."

If you are one of us, with the strong will and intention to stand up to the menace of Sexual Assault, take the pledge to stop it.

I _____ pledge that "Sexual Assault Stops With Me."
Rank, Last Name, First Name

Signature and Date

INTERVENE

When I recognize a threat to my fellow Soldiers, I will have the personal courage to **INTERVENE** and prevent Sexual Assault. I will condemn acts of Sexual Harassment. I will not abide obscene gestures, language or behavior. I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I will **INTERVENE**.

ACT

You are my brother, my sister, my fellow Soldier. It is my duty to stand up for you, no matter the time or place. I will take **ACTION**. I will do what's right. I will prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. I will not tolerate sexually offensive behavior. I will **ACT**.

MOTIVATE

We are American Soldiers, **MOTIVATED** to keep our fellow Soldiers safe. It is our mission to prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. We will denounce sexual misconduct. As Soldiers, we are all **MOTIVATED** to take action. We are strongest...together.

JTF Triple Nickel Brigade SHARP Representative: SFC Sharon L. Cook
sharon.l.cook@afghan.swa.army.mil
DSN:(318)-481-4714 | Hotline: 070-620-0906



FAMILY SHOUT-OUTS

I would like to say 'Hi' to all our service members over there. You are doing a great job, but remember to be safe. Also a big hug to my son Sergeant 1st Class Stephen Steiner. HOORA.
— John Steiner

To Matt Geraldo: Hey babe, miss you so much. Only a hundred-something days to go, can't wait to see you soon! Don't forget some Chipotle when you pick me up!
Love, Berenis
— From Pfc. Berenis Castruita, HHC, 555th Eng. Bde.

To Pfc. Alex Avila, BDE HHC, I'm so proud of you baby! We love and miss you like crazy, and we're patiently waiting for you to come home.
— Amanda and Baby Sophia
**Editor's Note: Thanks for sending the family photo! (Bottom-right)*

I'd like to give a shout-out to my wife Rachel in Knoxville, TN. Rachel, I love you, and even though I just got here, I can't wait to see you. I am very thankful for the frequent conversations that we get to have, it definitely makes the time here a lot better. See you soon!
— From 1st Lt. Gabe Snell, 848th Eng. Co., 878th Eng. Bn.

Shout out to PFC Robert Finnerty, 617th. I'm so proud of you for all of your accomplishments! Miss you and love you! Mom

A shout out to Capt. Spencer Garrison- You are missed SO much and we are so very proud of you and all of Triple Nickell! As a wise person once said...“doin' great”! Love, M.D.
**Editor's Note: Thanks Mom, love you too!*

Shout out to PFC Matthew Lewis:
Keep your ears tucked little brother!!!
Love, Jake & Laura

Shout out for PFC Matthew Lewis:
WE LOVE AND MISS YOU!!! Thinking and praying for you everyday. Love, Mom and Austin

Shout out to PFC Terry, I just wanna say I love and MISS you so much. Thinking of YOU always, Stay SAFE & Take Care! Just a matter of time till were reunited again. Patiently waiting for that day!
Your wife,
Your Mrs. TERRY!

APRIL—MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

*To all our Military Children and Families,
Thank You from the Triple Nickel*



Eli Smith, 5, smiles as he proudly holds a sign welcoming his father Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Smith, and the 573rd Clearance Co., back to White Sands Missile Range after a nine-month deployment in Afghanistan. (Shari V. Hill/Sun-News)



Pfc. Alex Avila (right) with his wife Amanda and baby Sophia, shortly before departing Joint Base Lewis-McChord in January to begin his deployment with the brigade. Thank you, Amanda and Sophia, and all military Families, for all you do!



Photo courtesy of Task Force Comet

Northern Afghanistan – A Soldier with 321st Eng. Co. hands candy to Afghan children near an Afghan security compound as fellow Soldier provide security.



Around the Triple Nickel over the past month



Photo by Capt. Spencer Garrison

Bagram Airfield — Maj. Gen. Cox, U.S. Corps of Engineers deputy commander, pins the Bronze Star to Sgt. Thomas, 624th Eng. Co., Task Force Prowler, during an end-of-tour award ceremony.



Photo courtesy of Task Force Lumberjack

Kandahar Airfield – Soldiers with Forward Support Company, TF Lumberjack, clear debris from an outflow grate as part of their flood response mission on base.



Photo by Capt. Spencer Garrison

Bagram Airfield — A soldier and canine team from the 49th Mine Dog Detachment train on explosives detection. These teams train to best protect themselves and others from explosive threats.



Photo from AKO

Ghazni Province – Sgt. 1st Class Ronald DeLurme, 59th Mobility Augmentation Company, Task Force Prowler (now moved under TF Diehard) patrols to clear small villages of IEDs.



Photos by U.S. Army Pfc. Troy Blanton, Task Force SAW

Sapper platoon lends a helping hand

Soldiers from Route Clearance Patrol 69, 595th Sapper Company, Task Force S.A.W., helps recover an overturned Afghan semi-trailer truck March 31, 2013. The platoon was conducting a mounted patrol when they came across the civilian 18-wheeler along the roadside and offered their assistance. 595th Sapper Company conducts route clearance, safeguarding roadways from improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Chaplain's Closing, Maj. Dawud Agbere Saluting our Triple Nickel Children

During a recent visit to a FOB in RC-South, I ran into a young Soldier watching his wife via Skype bringing their very first child into the world. The experience was so overwhelming that the Soldier was literally shaking in his chair. One could only imagine the psychological pain he was going through not being physically present by the side of his wife to provide emotional support and share with her the joy of a momentous event in their life. Missing important family events is the one thing Soldiers complain most about during deployments.

But while the new born may not immediately notice nor understand the pain of a parent's absence that probably will change soon as she begins to understand the meaning of birthdays, sports events, and graduations. If missing family events are tough on military parents, it is even tougher on children who,

depending on their age, may not appreciate why sometimes the military parent is gone so long.

Today as we celebrate the month of the military child, many children of deployed Triple Nickel parents are experiencing the painful absence of their military parents as they celebrate one important life event after another without them. But that is only the tip of the iceberg considering the many challenges military life, by extension, demand of military kids. Yet our kids have remained resilient adapting to new environments and conquering one challenge after another. Still, it's critical we remain close to our children while paying attention to their emotional and social development., so we can identify any looming problem before it gets out of hand. To our Triple Nickel children we SALUTE you and hope to bring your deployed parents home soon.

Remembering our Fallen

2013

JTF Triple Nickel, Afghanistan

Sgt. Tristan Wade



Joint Task Force Triple Nickel - the Theater Engineer Brigade in Afghanistan

Our Mission: Deploy in support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and, at the invitation of the Government of Afghanistan, provide theater engineer support to include development of the Afghan National Army engineer force, ISAF troop construction, and route clearance, in order to help build a pathway to stability, peace, and prosperity for the people of Afghanistan.

For questions or comments, contact:
Capt. Spencer Garrison, Public Affairs Officer
Email: spencer.g.garrison.mil@mail.mil



[Facebook.com/JointTaskForceTripleNickel](https://www.facebook.com/JointTaskForceTripleNickel)

We are the Triple Nickel...

The 555th Engineer Brigade, currently serving as the Theater Engineer Brigade in Afghanistan, with about 5,000 Engineer Service Members operating across the country. Our pride is each unit comprising our Joint Task Force—each with their own storied histories, some dating to the Civil War. This team of teams serves as a diverse, capable force that always lives out our motto, "Willing and Able!"

555



Joint Task Force Triple Nickel
Willing and Able

