

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION



1st Combat Engineer Battalion; *"The Super Breed"*

Our mission: provide mobility, counter mobility, survivability, and limited general engineering support to the 1st Marine Division

COMPANY COMMANDER

Family and friends of Echo Company

Our office is constantly filled with care packages, moto mail, and letters from back home. Thank you for that. I guarantee your Marines, Sailors, and Airmen greatly appreciate it. With the summer months quickly approaching, you may want to send things that will make the continuous water they drink a little less boring.

In addition to the route clearance operations Echo conducts, we also partner with an Afghan route clearance tolai (company). Our mission with regards to partnering is to advise and train our Afghan partners so they will be able to conduct route clearance operations independent of Coalition Force assistance. The success of this mission depends just as much on effective working relationships with the Afghan soldiers as it does on ensuring they understand the tactics and techniques we are teaching. To this end, a platoon conducts missions throughout the battle space with our Afghan partners to not only observe, but to build a strong foundation of trust between both militaries. Our partnered platoon has done a tremendous job of building these critical relationships, and has been recognized as one of the more developed partnered Afghan National Army company in the area of operations.

Our two platoons conducting conventional route clearance have learned all the nuances of their particular areas and are executing very well. While the time spent "outside the wire" is taxing and absorbs all their focus, they continue to push hard and work as long as necessary when they're back inside friendly lines. They continue to do great work in the area of operations that would make you proud.

While the platoons are conducting their operations, none of it would be possible without the incredibly long and difficult hours the Headquarters Platoon Marines and Sailors work. They take care of all the "unsexy" work, including vehicle maintenance, facilities management of our compound, and getting the mail. While most Marines always envision themselves climbing large mountains with heavy packs and rifles in their hands, speeding through the water in a zodiac boat under the cover of darkness towards an objective, or slaying dragons like in the commercials, the Headquarters Marines do everything it takes to make the company operate. And I still expect them to be able to jump on a mission with a platoon at a moment's notice. They do all this with exceptional motivation and enthusiasm.

Your Marines, Sailors, and Airmen are truly some of the best citizens America has to offer, and I'm proud to be amongst them.

Respectfully

Major Mike O'Quin

Company Commander:

Major Michael O'Quin

Executive Officer/HQ Plt Commander

Captain Erik Brandriff

Company First Sergeant

1stSgt Deryl Jarnagin

Tank Leader/Ops Chief

MSgt Michael Kadlub

HQ Plt Sgt/Comm Chief:

GySgt Mark Ellison

1st Platoon Plt Commander

1stLt Matthew Overly

1st Platoon Plt Sgt

GySgt Matthew Dordal

2nd Platoon Plt Commander

2ndLt Alexander Wu

2nd Platoon Plt Sgt

GySgt Wilson Hinson

3rd Platoon Plt Commander

1stLt Thomas Hodge

3rd Platoon Plt Sgt

GySgt Shane Marshall

Advisor Team OIC

1stLt William Oliver

Advisor Team SNCOIC

GySgt Aaron McNeal

Maintenance Chief

SSgt Andrew Hedrick

Senior Line Corpsman

HM2 Emmanuel Marquez

EOD Team Leaders

TSgt Adam Putnam

TSgt Damian Taylor

TSgt Mark Walker

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COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

COMPANY FIRST SERGEANT

Family and Friends,

Another month has passed and I am sure it does not seem so to all of you but, the deployment for us is progressing rather quickly. Your Marines, Sailors and Airmen are according themselves superbly in their mission in keeping the routes and thoroughfares free of the improvised explosive device (IED) threat. Their job to neutralize this threat not only keeps all coalition forces safe from this nefarious practice, it also keeps the local Afghan population safe from these devices and the Taliban in general. To that end, their assigned mission is of the utmost importance and in the conduct of these duties, your Marines, Sailors and Airmen are professionals in the truest sense.

The CO and I have been fortunate enough to see them in action. In the below commentary, I would like to describe a little about their area of operations in terms of the people and the land to which they belong.

As you are acutely aware, the area of operations (AO) your Marines, Sailors and Airmen conduct or are focused primarily comprise locales in the lower Helmand province. The areas are further divided into districts. I will focus on the Garm Sir district in this narrative.

Our AO, the Helmand Valley is, geographically, for the most part, a high desert, much like the American Southwest. The Helmand Valley is located in the southwestern portion of Afghanistan and occupies about one-fourth of the total area of the country. Average yearly rainfall in the valley area is about four inches. The valley is in the temperate zone with an elevation varying between 1,500 and 3000 feet (we are at the high end, about 2400 feet). Temperatures range from 18 degrees in the winter to 110 degrees in the summer, Fahrenheit. Humidity is low, and strong dry winds frequently blow in the westerly portion of the valley during July and August. Forty percent of the country's total water resources flows through the valley. The Helmand river is the longest in Afghanistan -- it joins its major tributary, the Arghandab, at Qala Bost, about 350 miles from its source in the Hindu Kush, and continues to the Sistan Basin, another 250 miles.

So, you can understand the importance of this river valley to not only the region and the Garm Sir district but, to Afghanistan itself. Weaving their way off of the Helmand River is a myriad of intricate interconnected canal systems. These canal systems are the lifeblood of the Garm Sir district. They amble through the valley providing this most scarce of resources; water. For obvious reasons, this important but, it is more so to the people who comprise the populous of this district for, by en large, the societal construct of this area is agrarianistic in nature.

There is a stark contrast opposed to the remainder of the area, geographically speaking. The canal zones are lush oases of greenery comprised of farm upon farm for miles on end. It is both simplistically and deceptively beautiful. Beautiful in construct and deceiving in that it can lull you into its beautiful and mask the dangers that exist, both from man and climate.

Let me preface this next portion that the thoughts and descriptors are based purely upon my limited observations so, please place them into the appropriate context. The people who reside in these areas look to be a bit healthier and vigorous than those who reside in the more urbanized areas of our AO. They lead regimented, orderly lives. The call to prayer around 0400 is in effect, their alarm clock. They go about their morning routine and are in the fields tending their crops and/or animals very early. The children, at least the ones of who appear to be of the teenage category, are very involved in this process. It is much the same with any farming culture, and not so atypical of what goes on in American farms, however; the stark difference is the technology to which they conduct their daily routine.

Nearly every facet of their farming practice is still executed by hand; from planting to harvesting. I would suppose this is at least, one reason for the copious number of young children you can find not only working but the younger ones out and about. There a multitudes of young children roaming throughout the area, mostly unsupervised by adults, as they are busy tending to the farming. It is farming in its most base construct. If you were to glimpse back in time, it would be similar to most early American sharecropping practices but, it still exists here. It appears, from an outsiders perspective, that time has stood still and by enlarge, untouched them. Collectively, they seem either unaware, which seems implausible, or indifferent concerning the gravity and situation that currently encompasses the political and societal underpinnings of their country. Perhaps this is rightly so as they seem foremost concerned with taking care of their families and community first.

The same can be stated for their homes and building construction, all of which are made with sod. The homes range from very small buildings to large elaborate compounds with high walls, all made of sod bricks. I would venture to say that minus a few "modern" conveniences, the state that exists today is very similar to conditions experienced by many generations past. Seems a far stretch bridging the two but, looking at the photographs that included in this newsletter, you can see how the correlation can be made.

This is but a simplistic snapshot of the socio-economic construct and honestly, from one persons observations nonetheless, this is one of the districts to which your Marines, Sailors and Airmen are rendering safe and navigable for all. In this charge, as with all others, they are and continue to do a spectacular job. Thank you for your continued support and until next time, take care of each other.

Semper Fidelis,

1stSgt Jarnagin

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

HEADQUARTERS PLATOON

Family and friends of Headquarters Platoon, Echo Company,

I hope everyone is doing well back in the United States. The Marines and Sailor of Headquarters Platoon have settled in well at Camp Dwyer. Overall, the base has everything we need to be comfortable and keep work productive. We have multiple gyms to include a cardio gym, weight gym, and an outdoor basketball court. Many of the Marines in Headquarters Platoon have been incorporating P90X and Insanity into their work out regimens with Captain O'Quin and First Sergeant Jarnagin. Sergeant Singh has also started training Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP) in the early morning in an effort to get Marines like Corporal Prater, Lance Corporal Brown, Lance Corporal Mynes, and Lance Corporal Jackson up to green belt.

Headquarters Platoon's maintenance section, Staff Sergeant Hedrick, Corporal Garcia, Lance Corporal Wilson, Lance Corporal Serra, and Lance Corporal Thurby continue to work long hours ensuring the company's trucks are mechanically ready for patrol. Lucky for Echo Company, these Marines enjoy being covered in dirt, oil, and grease on a daily basis while being mentally consumed by their maintenance projects. The maintenance section has also shown support for our Afghan National Army (ANA) partners by helping them work on their HMMWVs. Our Marines have helped the ANA do preventive maintenance on their trucks as well as fix their HMMWV's air conditioning. With temperatures surpassing 100 degrees, having air conditioning in your vehicle can really raise your spirits and help you stay more focused. We all appreciate all of their hard work dedication to upkeep of the company's vehicles and assets.

Headquarters Platoon wished Master Sergeant Michael Kadlub a happy birthday on May 19th. Master Sergeant is still in shock over how many of the Marines in the company don't know who David Lee Roth is, particularly since most Marines these days were born in the 1990s. Happy birthday wishes go out to Corporal Garcia who turned 23 years young on 26 May (see previous comments).

Congratulations to newly promoted Sergeant Gaurav Singh who has proven to be an immense asset to the company. Aside from ensuring his primary tasks as company administration chief are completed, Sergeant Singh has works in our Company Level Operations Center (CLOC) tracking all platoon movements and situation reports (SitReps). As mentioned, he is a MCMAP instructor and has been seen assisting the maintenance section by learning about what the mechanics do.

The Marines and Sailors showed their support for our Air Force EOD partners by running three miles in honor of all fallen EOD. Thank you for all that you do.

Thank you to everyone who has been support of the Marines, Sailors, and Airman throughout this deployment. Your letters and packages continue to remind everyone of what they have to look forward to coming home to once our mission is complete.

Here is the information on the "Cup of Joe for a Joe" program once again. Camp Dwyer's coffee shop, Green Beans Coffee, has a promotion called "Cup of Joe for a Joe" where friends or family can go online and sign their Marine, Sailor or Airman up for a code worth \$2.00 towards any drink they serve. The email address is www.getcoj.com (see informational flyer on last page).

Thank you,
Captain Erik Brandriff
Company Executive Officer

Family and friends of Headquarters Platoon,

I hope that all of the Moms had a good Mother's day, and were able to take a break for themselves. To all family and friends, thank you for your continued support these past two months. Your Marine definitely looks forward to your correspondence, and appreciates all of the support from the care packages, letters, and e-mails.

This past month headquarters has supported operations for the other platoons with maintenance support, administrative support, and manpower. Some of the Marines who went out on missions this month were: LCpl's Wilson, Thurby, Serra, McGregor, Brown and Jackson. All did well, and help the platoons meet their manpower needs, in edition to keeping up with their regular duties. The Maintenance Marines had made a few changes to their workspace. They needed a place to conduct some of their administrative work, so they constructed themselves an office out of 2x4's and plywood in their maintenance bay. The office was put to good use, ordering parts and keeping track of all the maintenance that has brought almost all of the company's many trucks online. In edition to the company's maintenance the Headquarters Marines have also assisted the Afghan Army with the maintenance on their trucks. When parts were not available the Marines were creative and sourced them through other units.

The Marines of Headquarters platoon continues to work hard everyday to ensure Company "E" will always be able to complete their missions. Enjoy the rest of your spring,

Semper Fi,

Gunnery Sergeant Ellison
Headquarters Platoon Sergeant

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

1ST PLATOON

Greeting Family, Friends, and loved ones once again I write to you from Helmand Province, in southern Afghanistan.

When you are as busy as we have been it is hard to notice that another month of our deployment has come and gone and here again I write another monthly newsletter that only seems like yesterday I was writing. To recap the events since our last newsletter: A few things the Marines in first platoon have been intimately involved with are the maintenance of our vehicles. Every Marine when he returns after this deployment, if he ever is looking for a job in auto mechanics or heavy equipment operation, will never leave the experience paragraph on the resume blank. Since the majority of us come from the Tanker world, maintenance management and dedicating time to having working and mission capable vehicles is a given. The arrival of our dog handlers from Camp Leatherneck has completed our entire first platoon family. The extra man power was sorely missed in regards to daily work and we are glad that their separation from the rest of the team wasn't any longer. Camp Leatherneck is rumored to have many of the comforts of America that can make a man become complacent and forget he is a war zone.

Thanks again family, friends, and loved ones. We enjoy the packages and are always appreciative of the support.

1st Lieutenant Overly, M. D.



Cpl Whyte relaxing on the MRAP with his favorite beverage a "Rip-It"



Marines stage their gear and ready the vehicles prior to a patrol



Sgt Kruspe and HM2 (FMF) Galindo provide security for a dismount patrol



LCpl Fryman readies the Mk19 in the 7-ton before an operation.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

2ND PLATOON

Family and friends,

“Salaam aalaikum.” Peace be with you. This is a phrase your Marines have uttered many times now as their relationship with the Afghan National Army Mobile EOD Tolai (Tolai is Pashto for “Company”) continues to grow.

Over the past month, your Marines and their ANA counterparts have conducted partnered mounted counter-IED patrols, guaranteeing freedom of mobility for friendly forces and local villagers on over 1500 kilometers of road.

Our Afghan soldiers have proven extremely welcoming but it was obvious that, at first, their graciousness was tinged with a bit of doubt and uncertainty: do these new Marines know what they are doing? Do they respect our culture? Do they understand our war? Can we trust them - depend on them as brothers in arms? No doubts were ever explicitly conveyed, but their doubts and ours must have been the same. . .and we certainly had our doubts. Over the past month however, on both sides, these doubts have been largely assuaged.

Our ANA interrogated the IEDs, confirmed that they were in fact IEDs, cordoned and controlled the immediate area surrounding the IED, and cleared all ground around the IED both before and after the controlled detonation used to render the IED safe. During these tense IED-defeat operations, our Marines and Air Force EOD Techs supervise the ANA - ensuring they are employing the proper engineer, infantry, and EOD tactics and procedures

When your Marines haven't been out conducting counter-IED patrols or prepping their vehicles, weapons, and counter-IED equipment for missions, they have been training with the ANA . Falling in on the Advisor Trainer Team's training plans, 2nd Platoon Marines have helped train our partnered ANA soldiers on HMMWV (High Mobility, Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicle, or “Humvee” as it's popularly called) maintenance, a HMMWV driver improvement course, and crew-served weapons (i.e., weapons that require more than one person to operate; usually refers to the M2 .50 Caliber Heavy Machine Gun, the M240 Medium Machine Gun and MK-19 Grenade Launcher) employment and maintenance.

The ANA necessarily push their vehicles hard, and the HMMWVs they have are not designed to carry the weight of the armor they now bear; consequently there is no shortage of work for our mechanics on the ANA side and Lance Corporals Ellis, Despain, and Geis have spent several days at the ANA camp working with the ANA on their HMMWVs. They get their hands dirty when they have to, but for the most part, they are there to supervise and instruct the ANA on how to maintain and repair their vehicles. Lance Corporals Haney, Rojas, Wettstein, and Corporal Bock served as assistant drivers and instructors for the introductory phase of the Advisor Team's ANA HMMWV Driver Improvement Course, and saw a great deal of improvement in their ANA charges in just a few days.

Another critical piece to mounted operations is crew served weapons employment from the vehicles. Lance Corporal Siaens, Corporal Fernandez, and Corporal Bock were the Marines we selected to instruct the ANA on crew-served weapon assembly, disassembly, and maintenance.

On a bittersweet note, 2nd Platoon has had to detach its three dog handlers to serve with the other Echo Company platoons. Lance Corporal Poe, Lance Corporal Perry, and Sergeant Kok have been vital members of our platoon, and will be sorely missed, be we are glad that they will be able to utilize the skills they have honed for months as IDD handlers with the other platoons.

Finally, a resounding congratulation is extended to Staff Sergeant Michael Cheeseman, who was promoted to Staff Sergeant on 1 May 2012. He has immediately stepped up to the increased responsibility that comes with being a Staff Non-Commissioned Officer of Marines, and continues to serve as an excellent example for our junior Marines to look up to.

Respectfully,

2nd Lieutenant Alexander Wu

P.S. - We finally had our first volleyball game against the ANA. We lost... badly. I blame Gunnery Sergeant Hinson.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

3RD PLATOON

3rd Platoon Families and Friends,

I am happy to report your Marines are still doing an outstanding job here in Helmand Province and they have the situation well in hand. Over the past month we have conducted several missions, ensuring the roads are clear for Coalition Forces and local traffic. Along with our clearing efforts, we have been able to show an American presence in our area which has in turn bolstered the confidence of our Afghan counterparts. Along with bolstering their confidence, we have also had the chance to interact with Afghan National Security Forces. On one such occasion our Marines were throwing around a Frisbee after mission. The ANA, who were playing volleyball next to us, left their game to figure out what we were throwing around. They had never seen a Frisbee before, but were eager to learn. A couple of our Marines began showing them the proper Frisbee throwing technique, and before we knew it we were being swarmed by ANA who wanted a chance to throw it.

Lastly, I want to thank everyone back home for your continued prayers and support. Your care packages and letters really mean a lot to the Marines. Nothing will lift a Marine's spirit faster than a simple letter from a loved one. Thank you also for the tremendous sacrifices you all make as parents, wives, and fiancés while we are off fighting, it does not go unnoticed. The Marines of 3rd platoon continue to show the Afghan people that there is no better friend, and to the Taliban, no worse enemy, than the United States Marine.

Semper Fi,
3rd Platoon Staff



3rd Platoon gathers for a prayer prior to going out on a mission



Cpl Morejon and LCpl Evans conversing with a few local Afghan's while on patrol.



One of 3rd Platoons favorite post mission past times, tossing the pigskin or Frisbee around



LCpl Prater with his IED Detection Dog "Docker"

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY ROUTE CLEARANCE ADVISOR TEAM

Family and Friends,

"Chap! Chap! Chap! Raas! Raas!" I watched Sgt Thompson ground guide an ANA soldier through the driver's course he was teaching. He had managed to learn to speak the words "right" and "left" in Dari and was successfully navigating the soldier in reverse through the set of traffic cone obstacles. Sgt Thompson stated: "most of the soldiers have never learned to drive, or had a vehicle to drive in the first place, so we thought we could help them out." The advisor team reinforced with Echo Company Marines assisted in teaching a 3 day Driver Improvement Course at the ANA Camp Garmsir, with the goal being to teach a class that ANA can turn around and teach themselves. I passed by once again on the third day and observed Sgt Thompson had been replaced by an ANA soldier, who was now maneuvering his ANA counterpart through the course. Small victories are the key.

Semper Fidelis,

1stLt Oliver



Sgt Thompson explains to his ANA counterpart that you are supposed to navigate the obstacles rather than move them.



"I meant your other right!" Sgt Thompson exclaims in his best Dari.



Resigned to accept the inherent language barrier(s), Sgt Thompson remains motivated and presses forward in the best mode possible.



GySgt McNeal discusses the upcoming mission with Marines of the ANA partnered Platoon, 2nd Platoon.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

EOD MEMORIAL AND REMEMBRANCE CELEBRATION

Every year EOD has a large celebration the first weekend in May down at Eglin AFB, FL where the joint EOD School is located. This celebration is in remembrance of the all EOD Techs that have given their lives in the past year. There is a memorial service and their names are placed on a wall that has the names of all the EOD Techs that have given their lives in service to our country and her causes. Due to our EOD teams being in Afghanistan, they are unfortunately not be able to attend this event. To honor the Techs that have given their lives this year, the EOD teams have decided to run a mile "in the shoes" of these military members and the remainder of Company E fell in lock step to support them. Unfortunately there are 18 names going on the wall this year, so because Air Force EOD works in three man teams, and there are 3 teams assigned to Company E, each team member is running 6 miles for a total 18 miles per team. The collective Company of Airmen, Marines and Sailors turned out to support this noble and worthwhile endeavor.

The EOD teams are doing this for three reasons; first, to honor those who have given the ultimate sacrifice in our stead in the defense of our great nation. Second to raise awareness for the EOD Memorial and third to raise money for the EOD Memorial Fund; the fund gives college scholarships to the children of fallen EOD Techs, and maintains the EOD Memorial Wall. The web site is www.eodmemorial.org; there is a link on that website to donate to the organization.



TSgt Walker relaying to the Marines and Sailors the significance and purpose of the EOD Memorial remembrance.



The CO and XO prepare to "step-off" and run in a "mile in the shoes of the fallen EOD techs" in support of the memorial remembrance.



Every member of the Company came out to support the memorial remembrance including our IED detection Dog, Docker



A group photo of the participants taken just after the completion of the memorial remembrance run.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

MARINES, SAILORS AND AIRMEN IN ACTION



One of the many, and typical, bazaars found throughout the Helmand Province



The beautiful Helmand River; which is truly the life line for the Afghans



Captain Brandriff and the Headquarters crew strike a pose after completing the EOD memorial remembrance run.



Major O'Quin looks on as Captain Brandriff and MSgt Kadlub get "Shaun T'd" in the Savage Asylum gym.



Captain Brandriff and MSgt Kadlub demonstrating perfect form as they execute "basketball jumps" while getting Shaun T'd during Insanity.



Insanity has broad based appeal as members of 3rd Platoon attempt to regain their breath after getting Shaun T'd.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

MARINES, SAILORS AND AIRMEN IN ACTION



Sgt Brown and Cpl Howell discuss and prepare for an impending mission.



LCpl "motivator" Hite displays his eagerness as he preps for another



Cpl Johnson and Ace preparing to embark upon their next mission.



Team "Top" striking a pose outside their MRAP.



Sgt Oakes instructs LCpl's Haney and Geis in the conduct of MCMAP.



LCpl Wilson working into the late hours with only his care package to keep him company.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

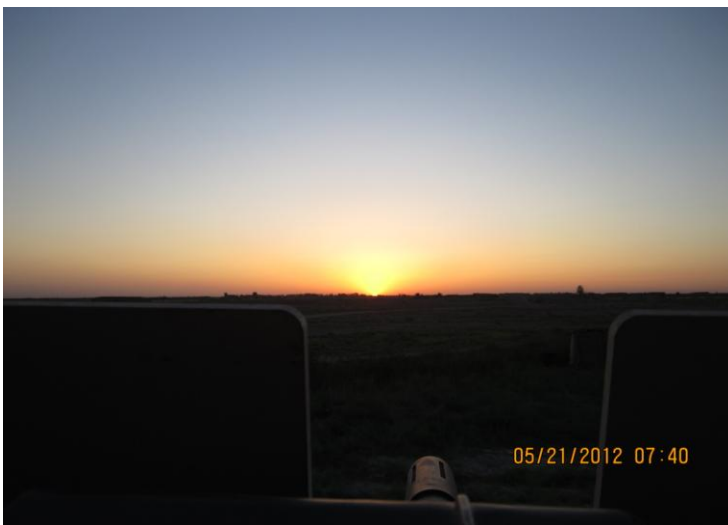
MARINES, SAILORS AND AIRMEN IN ACTION



By the appearance of LCpl Troutman's expression, it is not clear whether LCpl Ellis' period of instruction on how the use the ratchet strap is effective.



Set against the backdrop of the typical "canal zone" landscape, a few Camels lazily grazing and roaming about.



The sun retreats on another long day of patrols in the Garm Sir district.



Sgt Cotton, 1stLt Hodge, SSgt Schickel and LCpl Brown say Hi!



Another view of the typical landscape one would find in canal zone(s) of the lower Helmand province



A picturesque view of the vast fields that encompass the canal zones in the lower Helmand province.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

MARINES, SAILORS AND AIRMEN IN ACTION



Sgt Cotton giving instructions to LCpl Evans at the range



Smiles all around as Cpl Bonnema and LCpl's Brown, Rothwell and Stratton pose with Toby Keith during his visit to Camp Dwyer.



LCpl Stratton interacts with and entertains a few local Afghan children.



After a long day of patrols, there is nothing better than relaxing with your fellow Marines around the "chem-stick" fireside.



Sgt Oakes collects his thoughts as he prepares for another mission.



A typical example of a walled compound found throughout the Helmand.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

MARINES, SAILORS AND AIRMEN IN ACTION



The Marines, Sailors and Airmen of Company E, 1st CEB want to thank Mrs. Donna Wojcik's 6th grade class for their support!! Thank You!!!



HM2 (FMF) Marquez and Cpl Prater showing off their Yoga skills by executing a Warrior One and Two pose outside the Savage Asylum Gym.

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

MESSAGES TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Headquarters Platoon:

MSgt Kadlub:

I would like to wish my wife Andrea (June 6) and daughter Reagan (June 8) Happy Birthday, I promise awesome Birthdays next year across the board. I love you both!!!

Sgt Singh:

Thank you to all the family and friends who send our Marines and Sailors letters and packages. The small things you do help them through the tuff times. Please continue your support and thank you again for everything you do.

Sergeant G. Singh "God, Country, Corps everything else is just extra."

Cpl Prater :

To my wife who moved into our new house this month... Keep the doors locked and enjoy our first home! Don't let Charlie tear up the place. I would like to wish my wife a Happy One Year Anniversary (6/25/2011)! It is crazy a whole year has passed us by since our wedding night. I'm sorry I can't be there to celebrate with you. Just know that I'm there in spirits and am thinking about ya and loving you always! I love you Abbie Gail!

To Mom and the rest of the beach bums, I hope you all didn't have too much fun in Hilton Head. All is well here.

I love you all, Aaron

LCpl Serra:

Hello everyone I just wanted to thank you for everything that you've been sending me, the letters and packages, it is greatly appreciated. Sandra, I hope everything is going well at work and school, good luck on your finals I know you are going to do great, I miss you. I love and miss you all and I will see you all soon.

LCpl McGregor:

Dear Grandparents,
I just want to thank you for the letters and helping with the kids while I am gone. You don't know how much you mean to me, you have been there for all my struggles and you also have encourage me threw it all. I can't wait to get home to see you.

Love you, Kody McGregor

LCpl Brown:

To all of my family and friends, thank you all for the support that you have given me since my time out here. I really appreciate the letters and I will be writing everyone back very soon. They say time fly's when you are having fun, which means time is flying by for you all, but hopefully for me as well. You all will here from me soon.

One love, Jamael Brown

LCpl Mynes:

To all my Family, I love and Miss yall and will see you soon.

Love, Byron Mynes

LCpl Thurby:

Happy Mothers day Mom! Happy Birthday Britt! Thanks for your support, love you and see you on the flipside.

Jeffery

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

MESSAGES TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Headquarters Platoon:

LCpl Jackson:

Heeey !!! Afghanistan is popping out here...sun shining...birds chirping...it's just simply amazing. I appreciate everybody's support while I'm out here on vacation. Eb the care packages have been amazing keep up the amazing work. Friends you all are slacking better send me a package or two Ebony's doing all the work. I love and miss all of you guys really some picture would be nice. Ashley those letters from the kids where LEGIT! I almost cried. I don't know if you all realize were half way done so ill see you soon.

Love, Thomas L. Jackson III

Second Platoon:

SSgt Collins:

Dear Mom,

Happy Belated Mother's Day.

I hope you are feeling better from the surgery.

I miss you. Love, Stephen, Jr.

Dear Dad,

Happy Father's Day.

The supplies you sent to the platoon are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Love,
Stephen, Jr.

Dear Family and Friends,

I'd like to say, "Thank you" to the following persons for the packages sent to 2nd Platoon and Company E:

Mr. Stephen M. Collins, Sr. (USAF, Retired)
Mr. Dennis B. Dyer, *et al* (GE Water & Process Technologies)
Mr. Steve Ibarra (USO of Metropolitan Washington)
Mr. Damon M. Lombard
Ms. Bonnie Mauritz, *et al* (Marine Corps League Auxiliary)
Mr. Randall Ruminiski (3rd Recon, Vietnam Veteran)
Ms. Rosalyn-Sue Smith (Operation Stars and Stripes)

Your gifts, and more importantly, your support are greatly appreciated.

Some of you asked me about the food out here. The food in the Dining Facilities is really good. I eat better here than I do in the U.S. Prime rib and rib-eye steak appear on the menu almost weekly. I've had lobster tail a few times since I've been here. We work closely with the Afghan National Army. They prepared a goat stew and flat bread dish for us a few days ago, which was pretty good.

Although we live in decent accommodations and eat well, I can't emphasize enough how dangerous our mission is. Your support helps me get through tough times and makes good days better.

Take care,

Stephen

COMPANY E, 1ST COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, 1ST MARINE DIVISION

MESSAGES TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Dear United Refining Company,

Please accept my sincere condolences for the sudden loss of Jason. I can only imagine what a shock it must have been to his family and to the refinery. Jason and I conversed on my last day at the refinery prior to my deployment to Afghanistan. He mentioned that he really appreciated that our country has men and women with the courage to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. It was a pleasure working with Jason. He will certainly be missed.

Sincerely, Stephen

Sgt Wilson:

Happy Mother's Day to all of our mothers...especially my own. Let's remember all our fallen comrades who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country this Memorial Day.

Chad

LCpl Troutman:

Sean, Kenny, David, & Jake,

I just wanted to say I miss you all, but I'll see you all soon enough. Things on this side are really nice. I'll probably send one of you all a letter soon.

Grandma & Grandpa,

I love & miss you both. I hope you get better soon.

Love, John

LCpl Rothwell:

To my Family and Friends,

Hope all is well back home! I sure do miss the family, and watching all the little ones grow. I also miss seeing green grass. The place we are in doesn't have a single blade of grass I don't believe. But on a good note, this country is slowly rebuilding itself day by day. It looks as if it's a very slow process, but they are improving. This means we have done something good and are helping a small nation to success.

To my friends, next bar you go too make sure you drink a cold one for me and get a good shot of bourbon as well. Hopefully all of your families are doing well and staying healthy. To the Snyder family, I am very sorry for your loss. It is very unfortunate that happened and I am truly sorry you had to go through that. He was a good young man and he will certainly be looking over you. If it comforts you, I know he will be in good hands.

Please continue to pray for everyone overseas and helping get the missions accomplished. I thank you for everything you have done for us and we will return home to loved ones sooner than you may think.

Sincerely, S.K.Rothwell

Third Platoon:

GySgt Marshall:

Mr. Chason Marshall-

I hope you have a wonderful 9th birthday this month. I know you will have all your friends over and will have a great time. I wish I could be there with you buddy. I love you and miss you. Behave yourself and mind your Mama.

Daddy

MESSAGES TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Sgt Brothers:

Happy Anniversary baby! Sorry, I missed another one. I love you so much. Thanks for being so supportive.

Love Michael

HM2 Chavez:

Devin; Happy 9th birthday. I love and miss you and remember "Be a Chavez"

Sgt Rutledge:

Just wanted to say I love and miss everyone back home. Didn't have time to find out if there were any birthdays this month so happy birthday to whoever! Everything is good here, will see you soon.

Love Matt

Cpl Wagner:

Happy Birthday Dad, I love you and miss you.

Daniel

LCpl Prater:

Happy Birthday Dad!

Matthew

LCpl Vanzomeren:

Happy birthday to LCpl Watson and Sgt Cotton

LCpl Watson:

Happy birthday Sgt Cotton. Happy Birthday Vans. EE Yah Yip

LCpl Brown:

Chicken pot chicken pot chicken pot pie!

LCpl Evans

Happy 17th Birthday Megan

-Craig

LCpl Ravitskiy:

Happy Birthday Mom I love you. Enjoy your day.

-Zar

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