

Lead The Way

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I would like to begin by saying thanks for the great work by all of the great sappers across the globe. I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to the new leaders within the Engineer School. What a super team we have!

During my travels throughout the previous quarter, I witnessed officers, non-commissioned officers (NCOs), and Soldiers doing an outstanding job supporting our nation and our Army at war. In June, for example, I participated in training with students of the Urban Mobility Breaching Course (UMBC) at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The details of this course are in the Engineer Update on page 38. I am soliciting your help to send as many NCOs as possible to the UMBC.

Another course I ask you to support is the Explosive Ordnance Agent Course (EOAC) at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. In this course, students learn to identify, categorize, and destroy captured enemy ammunition (CEA), improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and unexploded ordnance (UXO). It bridges the gap between explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel and engineers.

Three courses offered here at Fort Leonard Wood are the Sapper Leader Course and the Unit Searcher and Unit Search Advisor Courses. These courses help produce some of our Army's best small-unit leaders and greatly improve their ability to operate in an urban environment.

Just two years ago, the only specialized course offered by the Engineer Regiment was the Sapper Leader Course. Today, we present a myriad of courses. It is imperative that we continue to send Soldiers to these courses. I have talked to many leaders and Soldiers in the field who stated that these courses are making a difference in their confidence and ability to perform their wartime missions.

I also participated in training with our engineer divers in Delta Company, 577th Engineer Battalion, at Panama City, Florida. I was thoroughly impressed by the extensive training students go through to become divers. Soldiers attend Phase I of the training at Fort Leonard Wood and Phase II at the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center at Panama City. This training requires a tremendous amount of mental and physical endurance. It is demanding and challenging and definitely prepares divers to conduct their wartime and peacetime missions. If you have Soldiers interested in



becoming engineer divers, visit the 577th's Web Site at <http://www.wood.army.mil/577th/Diver/index.htm> for information.

During August, I attended the 130th Engineer Brigade off-site in Germany. I visited the 1st Armored Division and 1st Infantry Division engineer units and learned about the challenges they're facing regarding transformation. I'm confident that we have the right command teams, at the right place, at the right time to get the job done. It was great to speak with the leaders and Soldiers, and it felt good to be out doing PT with the outstanding NCOs of the 82d

Engineer Battalion. I am extremely proud of all of you. A special congratulation goes out to Staff Sergeant Randolph Delaprema for being selected as Fort Sill's Drill Sergeant of the Year for 2005.

The good news transformation story is that this quarter we will witness the standing up of two engineer battalions: the 20th Engineer Battalion, consisting of three mobility augmentation companies (MACs), one sapper company, and two firefighting detachments (the 507th and 557th) at Fort Hood; and the 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat Heavy), consisting of two vertical companies, one horizontal company, and a survey and design team at Fort Knox. We'll also see two mine dog detachments, consisting of four mine dog teams, standing up at Fort Leonard Wood.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming Army Engineer Association (AEA) Conference in Orlando, Florida. To register, visit the AEA Web site at <http://www.armyengineer.com>. It will be great to meet with everyone and discuss the many topics that are on the agenda.

In closing, I would like to say that I am extremely proud of our Regiment's Soldiers for their contributions and positive impact over the past year. We owe this generation a great deal of gratitude and respect. I am especially proud of those sappers deployed around the world in harm's way—whether it's in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom or in support of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. These Soldiers and their families make tremendous sacrifices each and every day. To those 146 sappers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the cause of freedom, justice, and the American way of life—neither you nor your families will be forgotten. God Bless America!