

Lead The Way

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Happy New Year to all of our engineer soldiers and families! As we reflect on the accomplishments and happenings of the past year, let's all stop for a minute to think about the tremendous contributions and sacrifices made by our Active, Guard, and Reserve soldiers and their families during this time of war. Whether it's doing the job overseas, preparing to deploy, training soldiers, designing the Future Force, developing equipment, or ensuring that the home front is being taken care of, sacrifices are being made around the clock. As a result, Iraq today is much better than the Iraq of yesterday; and the principle of freedom is being upheld throughout the world. We're seeing on a daily basis that freedom is definitely not free. So I want to say thank you to those who are fighting for it—our soldiers—and to our families for supporting us.



A great deal has occurred since the last issue of *Engineer*. One of the most significant events was the change of command between General Van Antwerp and General Castro. I'd like to express my appreciation to the Van Antwerps for the positive impact they made on the Engineer Regiment and the Fort Leonard Wood community. It was great to have served with such a fine team, and I know the Regiment and I speak with one voice when I say, "We wish you the very, very best." I speak for the Regiment again when I say, "Welcome home, General and Mrs. Castro! It's great to have you back. We sincerely look forward to serving with you and are blessed to have another extraordinary team in our midst."

Fort Leonard Wood and the Engineer School received a welcome visit from the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Command Sergeant Major Anthony Williams in October 2004. He toured the Noncommissioned Officers Academy (NCOA) and Drill Sergeant School and visited the Sapper Leader Course (SLC), where he gave a briefing on the significance of authorizing the Sapper Tab, TRADOC issues and concerns, and general leadership.

Soldiers from the NCOA, Officer Basic Course, and 1st Engineer Brigade at Fort Leonard Wood also had the opportunity to attend a presentation by the 1st Armored Division Engineer Brigade Command Sergeant Major Ioakimo Falaniko. He shared lessons learned in Iraq and stories of personal courage and leadership on the battlefield. He was also the guest

speaker for the SLC Class 01-05 graduation, and helped pin the first set of Sapper Tabs on the graduates.

During my recent trip to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, I visited the 307th and 20th Engineer Brigades—commanders, command sergeants major, and soldiers at all levels—and pinned Sapper Tabs on eligible soldiers from the 27th Engineer Battalion and 307th Engineer Brigade.

TRADOC Commander General Byrnes has approved the concept to close the gap between explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel and engineers. Part of the concept is a new additional skill identifier (ASI)

for engineers to enable us to identify and destroy (on a limited basis) explosive hazards. This will involve training selected 21Bs as explosive ordnance clearance agents (EOCA). Explosive ordnance clearance is defined as the investigation, detection, location, marking, reporting, and preparation of protective works for unexploded ordnance (UXO). It also includes the disposal in place—when authorized by the EOD staff cell—of UXO identified in draft Technical Manual 093-89D-02, *Explosive Ordnance Clearance Manual*, and theater-specified UXO, after risk analysis and positive identification. There will be 192 seats available per year for the EOCA course, with priority going to deploying units. The pilot course begins on 1 March 2005 at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, with 16 Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATTRS) seats available for reservation starting 1 December 2004. Students must be command-selected based on prerequisite criteria, and their unit must fund the TDY cost. If you would like some of these seats, contact Sergeant Major Benton, USAES Directorate of Training and Leader Development, as soon as possible. We will be conducting a Regiment-wide search to identify E7-level personnel (two each) to serve as instructors at this course, starting summer 2005.

I'd like to remind you that we're nearing our annual ENFORCE Conference, which will be held in late April 2005. Come prepared to share lessons learned and recommend suggestions for the way ahead so our Regiment can continue to progress as it did during 2004.

Finally, continue to focus efforts on the Global War on Terrorism, maintaining high standards and leading the way as engineers do. May God bless the fallen comrades and keep watch over our sons and daughters as we continue to fight the fight. Essayons!