

THE ARROWHEAD

Family Readiness Group Newsletter

Vol. 14

"For the families of those deployed"

13 June, 2004

Dear Arrowhead Families and Friends,

Summertime in Mosul – and while the livin's not easy, we are still in our familiar surroundings here. Our mission is evolving as a result of our changing political circumstances, and we are preparing for the transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government. Our focus is shifted ever more sharply to helping the Iraqi Security Forces provide for their own security, with Coalition Forces taking a supporting role. Your soldiers have done a magnificent job in establishing our area of operations as the leader in the country, and I expect that we will experience tremendous success in this critical effort in the weeks ahead.

The situation with regard to R&R leave has improved of late. We still do not have perfect predictability, and there will be some hiccups, but many of your soldiers will be making their way home in the months ahead. Your FRGs and the rear detachment will have the relevant facts as they become available.

The ebb and flow of military life goes on – promotions, reenlistments, births, and graduations; we are all familiar with the things a soldier goes through, and the things a soldier misses with deployments, schools, and PCSs. For the Arrowhead Brigade, there will be a change in the lifecycle of the unit as we redeploy. The Army has decided that we will participate in the unit manning lifecycle initiative. This means your soldiers have the opportunity to reenlist to be stabilized with the Brigade through March 2008, regardless of where they are in their reenlistment window. I urge you all to consider whether this kind of predictability is what you want. The rear detachment can provide further details on this initiative.

Thanks again for all you do for your soldiers and for the Brigade. I wish you all a happy Army's Birthday on 14 June, and a happy Father's Day on the 20th. Don't stop with words of encouragement – your soldiers need them more than ever now.

ARROWHEAD!
Colonel Mike Rounds

1-23rd Infantry Battalion

Tomahawk Families and Friends,

Greetings, yet again from Mosul. Two weeks ago the daily high temperature of 102 degrees

Schoolhouse Blues



A view of the Hassan Jallad school before Coalition funded renovations; one of the "mud hut" schools common to Iraq.

impressed us. This week 102 is the norm. The stresses on the Tomahawks conducting operations in Mosul are severe. Thanks to our superb training and preparation we remain focused and vigilant.

With the official transfer of sovereignty just two weeks away, the Tomahawks' focus remains the transfer of authority to the Iraqi Security Forces. This week we began a series of joint patrols



throughout Mosul with the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) soldiers that recently finished our rigorous four-week training course. These

patrols will eventually lead to our handover of responsibility for our current area of operations to the ICDC. We also began the training of the next company of ICDC who will attend our training program, and then join us in the streets of Mosul in a few weeks.



Finally I can report good news to you about our leave program. Tomahawk soldiers have begun rotating onto leave again, and with luck

many more soldiers will be given the opportunity to visit their loved ones during our remaining months here. Though I offer this as good news, I caution you all not to take for granted that current leave dates would go unchanged. Our experience should teach us that last minute changes can happen, but I promise you that we are determined to get as many soldiers home on leave as is possible.

I will take this opportunity to extend a special thanks to the many Tomahawks, and especially their dedicated families, who have taken advantage of the many benefits the Army offers and have elected to reenlist here in Iraq. The Tomahawks have had significant success towards our reenlistment goals, and I am especially proud of all the soldiers and their families who continue to volunteer in the service of our great country, particularly during these strenuous times. Your fine example is something for all Americans to hold in high regard.



As always, you have my deepest thanks for your prayers and continued support. Your soldiers' hard work continues to improve the

conditions here in Mosul for a safe and secure environment. You can be proud of your loved ones and the sacrifices we are all making.

With great respect,
MAJ Adam Rocke

2-3rd Infantry Battalion

Dear Family, Friends, and fellow Patriots,

Although it has always been one of my top priorities, I am continually impressed with how well the leaders in the Battalion have executed my guidance. The care that we have for our soldiers is seen in every thing that we do to make life a little more comfortable, a little safer, or a little more

enjoyable, and we have done a lot. If you could walk through the grounds of our FOBs and could compare them to when we first arrived, you would immediately notice measures we have taken to improve our camps.

The list of items we have improved on camp is impressive. New guard towers, reinforced walls around the gates, new gates to replace ones that were literally falling apart, a change in the traffic pattern outside the camp and an actual moat have all made this one of the safest camps in the area. We constructed a maintenance facility from the ground up and recently added a wash rack to better



maintain our Strykers. Recreational improvements include adding the MWR computer suite, improving the mess hall, restaurant, and

gym. We have also worked hard to keep the camp beautiful as I believe that it should offer the soldiers a place where they can take a break from the stress of combat, and the beautiful landscaping here certainly helps take one's mind off of the troubles outside the gate, even if only for a few minutes.

Most notable on camp is the new maintenance facility that is nearing completion. The new facility offers three large work bays in which the crews and mechanics will conduct maintenance on our tactical vehicles, four separate offices for records keeping and administrative processes, overhead cover to shelter them from the intense Iraqi sun while they do their work, and most importantly, it provides the mechanics with cement block wall protection against possible enemy mortar attacks.

The date in which Coalition Forces are set to transfer governing power over the country of Iraq and give sovereignty to the Iraqi people is June 30th. With less than 20 days to go, we are working



hard to ensure the success of that transfer of power. One of the critical components to the transition is the proper training, equipping, and empowering the Iraqi Civil Defense Force (ICDF) and the Iraqi Police (IP) into

formidable and self-reliant forces.

Back in April of this year, the men of 2-3 Infantry were tasked with conducting facility improvements



and providing training and equipment to new Iraqi recruits of the ICDC at a former Iraqi Army camp. The recently renovated complex offers new recruits living quarters, personal hygiene facilities, well balanced meals from a mess facility, office space for administrative processes, and diverse training areas and facilities. The team tasked with conducting the training of these new recruits is comprised of senior NCOs from 2-3 Infantry, a platoon from C Company, 5-20 Infantry, and various other elements from Coalition Forces. I can honestly say that the men tasked with this critical mission have done an outstanding job of rapidly transforming the complex into a top notch facility and providing the new Iraqi recruits with unparalleled combat training. With each passing day, the Iraqi recruits grow in their tactical decision-making and ability to defend the people of their city.

Over the past several months, IPs have cooperated with Coalition Forces by providing the critical manpower necessary to conduct checkpoints and run independent patrols throughout the city. Then last month, we began to incorporate newly trained units of the ICDC into joint patrols and raids throughout our Area of Operations. These efforts are all part of the plan to transition power to the Iraqi people and establish sovereignty for the country of Iraq. The men of 2-3 Infantry are proud to play such a vital role in this historical mission.

Jay G. Flowers
"PATRIOTS"

5-20th Infantry Battalion

Dear wives and family members of the Sykes' Regulars and Task Force Arrow,

The soldiers of TF Arrow and TF Sykes' continue to perform brilliantly and make history through their efforts. The Battalion again has marching orders

and will execute some changes over the coming weeks. The mission will again bring the majority of the Sykes' Regulars back together again. The area promises to be challenging, but will be one suited for the battle hardened Regulars.

The Medical Platoon.

The summer sun beats down on Task Force Arrow troops with a vengeance, however the spirits of the troops remain high. The days are long and full as many miles are being traveled while the mission rolls on. Each day in Iraq is a challenge met by the Medics with a steadfast determination to treat everyone with equal care and compassion while conserving the fighting strength in support of each and every Task Force mission. The past months have provided the troops an up-close and personal firsthand tour of the sights and sounds of this country we strive to help stabilize. It is no doubt an intimidating task at times, however dedication and



the determination to provide first rate medical care to coalition troops are the driving force that will inevitably lead to a successful end-state to our portion of OIF.

Each Soldier in the medical platoon is doing an exceptional job despite the hardships that we all share. MAJ Cumings reports, "It's getting hot and it's been a long deployment, but morale is high and I am proud to serve with such a highly trained unit". Despite the heat, the training continues. SFC Tienda, the Medical Platoon Sergeant states, "We are conducting training at every available opportunity, focusing primarily on trauma. This



allows us to accomplish our main mission of conserving the fighting strength". PFC Evans states that he for one is proud to be a part of the developing Stryker history, "This is awesome". The TF Troops begin to

dig in at the FOB, doing the tasks needed to improve the quality of life. The living tents receive air conditioning which makes the hot days much more tolerable. Sandbags pile up around them to fortify and ensure each soldier's safety. The MWR tents provide internet access and a TV for movie viewing while the newly developed gym tent also

provides escape and a great opportunity to maintain physical readiness throughout the deployment. Additionally around the LSA, there is a full working movie-theater, a full-sized gym and an Olympic size pool for soldiers to relax and recreate in during their valued time off. Each improvement is one small step in making life more enjoyable at the new TF home. The Stryker continues to prove its mettle and might while facing the elements and adverse conditions of central Iraq in early summer. The unwavering support and resolute devotion that you all provide from the home front allows us to drive on each day knowing that regardless of what obstacle we may encounter along the way, nothing is unconquerable. As we settle into our new home, we look to the future with anticipation and a growing satisfaction that the incomparable selfless service and commitment to duty provided by the soldiers of TF Arrow is making a tangible difference that will endure long after we rotate back home.

Attack Company

The soldiers of Attack Company continue to operate in northern Iraq. The area they are charged with securing is very active and soldier morale is high in Attack because of the target rich environment. The hard site they call home has recently undergone many living improvements that enhance both survivability and comfort. The Brigade spent a



large amount of money to improve the Attack Company living and work environment and the soldiers of Attack Company took it a step further and made

some excellent quality of life improvements with money issued by Brigade. During the cooler parts of the day one might find the soldiers of Attack Company playing indoor hockey on their indoor field hockey court. A few weeks from now, one might find Attack's soldiers playing a basketball game on their new "under construction" basketball court. If soldiers are not playing actual sports, one might find them playing video games in their new air-conditioned living quarters. Regardless of the activity, the Attack soldiers do it in the comfort and security of their much-improved base of operations. However, the soldiers of Attack are not all play. Attack can be counted on to constantly take the fight to the enemy through raids, searches, and pressure. As a matter of fact, there is dust on most MWR games and Playstations because the soldiers

remain so busy hunting down enemy and criminal elements in the area.

The culmination of Task Force Arrow

TF Arrow recently received a change of mission. Soon our environment, as we know it, will be drastically changing. TF Arrow is feverishly working to constantly improve our living conditions before the planned transfer of authority date so that the new unit will be set up for success. Additionally, the staff is working hard to ensure a seamless transition and to ensure the new unit does not learn lessons the hard way as TF Arrow did. One thing will be for sure at mission's end - our living area will be a vast improvement over the conditions they began with and although not quite completely comfortable, we will feel good knowing that we made a little spot of Iraq a better place through our efforts.

As the month of June rolls on, we prepare for future offensive operations. As always, we remain adaptable to change as we prepare for the future. The enemy continues to try to spoil coalition efforts to stabilize Iraq, but recent events in the Iraqi political arena make it more difficult for the enemies of peace and prosperity to operate with impunity. The new Iraqi governing council recently offered the many militias in the country an opportunity to rebuild Iraq's armed forces through their service, a move that will undoubtedly bring greater stability to the country. Regardless of the political outcomes, the soldiers of TF Arrow and TF Sykes' remain vigilant against the enemy threats and efforts to erode the peace and stability of Iraq. As the seventh month of our tour ends, we reinvigorate ourselves and prepare for the future with hopeful but watchful and vigilant eyes.

LTC Karl D. Reed

1-14th Cavalry Squadron

Greetings from the WARHORSE Squadron.

I'm SFC Kettler, I run the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) for the Squadron. Our small crew of stalwarts coordinates and controls everything that goes on here in Northwestern Iraq. We have the Operations and Intelligence Cells as well as the Command Group in our building, a parade of visitors usually passing through each day. We're on continuous operations here, always something going on or being planned for the future. Our operating area is vast.

Much of our success is due to the outstanding efforts of our Commo Shop. They keep us in contact with our Brigade Headquarters and our outlying bases. We're at the tail end of a long supply line; planning, coordination, and execution are very important. Our Logistics and Maintenance Teams are doing sterling work keeping us supplied and the vehicles rolling. Our Administrative Section is busy coordinating and executing leave runs, finance, awards, promotions, and a multitude of other actions. Though the TOC is stationary, we have elements on the road nearly every day keeping the WARHORSE Squadron running.

We're well into our sixth month here in Northern Iraq. Temperatures have averaged 105 degrees this week, only 25 degrees to go! We're really looking forward to peak temperatures later this summer. Evening temperatures average about 80 degrees, many take advantage to come out and run just as the sun sets. If not then, the rest are up and running before temperatures rise sharply at 8 AM. Several groups have hosted evening BBQs. Living conditions continue to improve through the efforts of the Mayor's Cell. We've opened a new sports complex with another basketball court, a softball field (no grass), and a sharp workout room. The Mayor's Cell has their hands full keeping the FOB's assets working. Especially important is the power generation to keep the air conditioners running. The Mayor's Cell also controls local labor hires and vendors for our "Mall." Our small PX continues to improve much to the delight of all. We have some Engineers here improving roads and doing some other projects. KBR provides us with good food and facilities services. Spirits are high, we're staying busy, and we're all marking off each passing day until we return home.

SFC George Kettler

HHT

With over 200 Military Occupational Skills (MOS), soldiers often argue which job is the best in the Army. Most soldiers, of course, brag on their own MOS-hands down. Being deployed to Iraq has educated me and shed some light on this. What is the bottom line? Its simple- all MOS's are of equal importance, we can't function alone without every soldier's special skill. All soldiers in the squadron are doing incredible things on a daily basis. There is not one MOS that's more important than the other. Taking a Cook, Administrative Specialist, Infantryman, Mechanic, Cavalry Scout or a Medic to

name a few out of the combat zone would be a great loss to our force.

As a newly assigned Medical Platoon Sergeant of the 1-14 Cavalry Regiment with just one short month of deployment under my belt I would be off the mark if I didn't include some great things the Warhorse medics have done. In most of the operations here, the medic is the only medical asset on the ground within countless miles of a Physician or Physician's Assistant. These medics have been performing all areas of their job superbly, from minor sick call illnesses to some of the most advanced trauma situations. I can only speculate on how many lives have been saved by our Warhorse medics. I am very proud of our Medics' accomplishments and you should be too. As the Army transforms into a new generation, so does the Army Medical Department (AMEDD). About 18 months ago, the AMEDD revamped the Combat Medic by adding six additional weeks of training and making the passing of the National Registry EMT exam a mandatory graduation requirement. What does this mean? The present Medic, now known as a 91W Healthcare Specialist, is far more advanced than ever before. The GT and ST score requirements are higher and the medics coming in now are much more educated than before. They're smarter, better trained and expected to achieve a higher standard. The medic has been set up for success by being part of the first Stryker Brigade Combat Team in the Army. The primary ground evacuation asset, which also serves as a treatment platform, is the Stryker Medical Evacuation Vehicle (MEV). It's an awesome vehicle and has proven to be an important piece of "conserving the fighting strength" in the rigors of combat. Finally, one of the many strengths that makes our Army the greatest in the world is our diversity. With this, we have many beliefs and values. One thing is for certain, common to all soldiers, is the love for their family. In a time where family separation is reality due to worldwide combat missions, the relationship with our family is much more important today than it probably ever was. Taking care of soldiers and their families is an important leader's responsibility. As leaders and soldiers we could probably never thank our family members enough. The reality being that family has been with us many years before the Army, during our career and will be there when our Army time is complete. Ask any soldier today his or her most precious asset- family will be top of the list for sure. Family will always be there from start to end. Thanks to all of the family members of our awesome soldiers. When we know you all are safe, sound and supportive it makes us

feel that much more motivated and focused to get the job done.

SFC Shawn E. Romero
Medical Platoon Sergeant

Apocalypse

Dear Family and Friends;

Hello from the blistering deserts of Iraq. The temperature is steadily climbing, but has not stopped us from continuing our mission. Here at our FOB, we just had our air conditioners installed. This has been a great boost for morale. Nothing beats walking into an air-conditioned room after many hours of patrolling in 100-degree weather. Along with our new air conditioners, we now have a new basketball court. We are still wondering if the Officers can put together a team that can defeat the NCOs.

We continue our hectic pace of insuring that Iraq is ready for the transfer of power to the new Iraqi Government. This is just another step that needs to be taken before we can all head for home. So we continue with the patrols, traffic control points, meeting with government officials and the all too familiar "goat grab". These are all critical steps toward securing a successful transition allowing us to return home.

From all of the troopers of Apocalypse Troop, we want to express our gratitude for the continued support we receive from our family and friends each day. We look forward to hearing from all of you back home each and every day, whether it's by mail, the Internet, or the telephone. So keep the mail coming!

SFC Cannon

Bronco

Greetings, family and friends, from Iraq! Things are going pretty much the same here, but with a big change coming. We'll get to that in a moment.

Rest assured that we are all still safe and into a groove. 2nd and 3rd platoons go out to the border just about every night, and most nights we catch donkeys carrying empty barrels that used to contain benzene (it's like gas) and sometimes we get lucky and catch sheep. Sheep are easier to catch than donkeys-those darned donkeys can find their own way home! Sometimes these platoons will work hand-in-hand with the border patrol, when the forts have stuff like trucks and functioning communications. But even if the men at the fort

can't help out with the missions, we know there will always be plenty of that delicious chai, a local tea blend with lots of sugar.

While those platoons are keeping the border secure, 1st platoon and the mortar/fire support section are keeping the streets safe with daily night patrols. Sometimes they even get the local police to go out and do their jobs as well. But for the most part, the city can sleep well only due to the hard work of these two platoons.

Of course, between rotations into town we can count on a trip back to the FOB. No rest for the weary here. If you all could be here to see this place, you'd say it's pretty amazing. Chow is served four times a day, there's free internet and pay phones, a new gym and softball field. You won't catch many Broncos on the softball field, though; we stay plenty busy with guard shifts of four hours on, four hours off, guarding the front gate and lots of Quick Reaction Force duty and guarding detainees. Any Bronco will tell you that sports is for sissies like D Troop and HHT.

However, as much as we have come to enjoy our missions, things must change. With the June 30 deadline approaching, it's time to let these hardworking and self-sufficient Iraqis take over and go to their own ministries for help with stuff like getting someone to pick up their garbage of the streets and to get their relatives jobs. So until next time, keep us in your thoughts and prayers, and you'll know we'll be doing the same. Broncos Buckin' Hard.

Crazyhorse

Hello family members of Crazyhorse and the Thunder Platoon. Let me start by saying that everyone in the Fire Support Platoon is doing well and morale is high. We are keeping busy and thoughts are turning toward redeployment. We are still keeping busy, however, on the mission and always staying safe

The weather here has changed from cool and muddy to hot and dusty! Good news is that it will only get even hotter and dustier. Of course we are all eagerly awaiting that. FOB life is good. The air conditioners are worth 10 times whatever the government paid for them. They provide a good deal of relief.

Congratulations are in order for newly promoted SPCs Barrett, Baker, Dukes and Francisco, as well as Compton to PFC. Take care and keep us in your thoughts and prayers as you are always in ours.

SFC Decker

**C/5-20 IN – Rock
Remembering What We are Fighting For**

As the Fourth of July approaches, the soldiers of Charlie Company 5-20 remember what they continue to fight for in Iraq. The hope of peace and democracy that our nation enjoys is the end state of our mission. The soldiers of Charlie Company continue their hard work knowing that they will bring the qualities of our nation to the people of Iraq.

The summer months are upon us and the soldiers continue to drink water by the gallon. The temperature tops out at around 100 degrees, but the strong northern wind helps to cool the soldiers during their missions. The dining facility continues to offer American delicacies including our favorite fast food items. The digestion of a quarter pound hamburger after patrols, sets well in the stomach. In addition, the wide selection of ice cream cools the palate as we enjoy a baseball game on the big screen. 1-14th Cavalry Regiment built a new MWR center on the FOB. The center includes a softball field, basketball court, two sand volleyball courts, and a brand new air-conditioned exercise facility. The new center has brought fierce athletic competition in which Charlie Company will participate and win. As the deployment drives on, the morale of the soldiers continues to soar. The recent upgrades to the MWR are just icing on the cake.

We would like to give special attention to SSG Allen in HQ Platoon, as well as PFC Renner from the MGS platoon. These two Rock soldiers elected to re-enlist while here in Iraq. PFC Renner received a tax-free bonus for his re-enlistment under the Army's new Unit Lifecycle Program, allowing him to become stabilized in 5-20 Infantry until 2008. It says a lot about these two individuals that chose to extend their obligations to the Army and their country, while serving in such tense and adverse conditions. These are just a couple who have decided to remain on the team.

The company continues to accomplish its missions throughout northern Iraq. First and second platoon continue to train the Iraqi Civil Defense. First platoon remains a two section fighting force, operating in two locations. They continue to train ICDC to facilitate the hand over of security responsibilities to the newly formed democratic Iraqi government. As well, second platoon continues to train ICDC in the south at Q-West. The vigorous work of these two platoons will result in a highly trained Iraqi Civil Defense that will

carry on the high standards set by Charlie Company.

The rest of the company conducts its mission from our FOB. The company continues to ensure the safety of the people of Tall Afar and the surrounding villages. The soldiers have settled into their new home and have realized the benefits of being located on a forward operating base. The amenities offered on the FOB allow us to thank our friends and family for their support on a daily basis. With the support of our families and friends, we will complete our mission and establish a free and democratic Iraq.

Warm Regards,

SSG(P) Gaines

Dragoons

Well, hello again from the mighty DRAGOONS! It may seem we just sent out a FRG newsletter but we wanted to get a jump-start on the month of June. Even though it has only been a couple weeks since the last letter, plenty of interesting things and happenings are going on with the Troop.

We begin with myself. My wife and I (SFC Kormos) are the proud parents of a new baby girl (8 lbs and 21.5 inches). We also had a few promotions that took place. In UAV platoon Allen Jackson was promoted to Private First Class; Lawrence Indyke from the NBC Platoon made the transition from 2LT to 1LT and our XO, Thomas Casey pinned on Captain Bars. Congratulations to all the newly promoted in D Troop. We also said a big hello to 2LT Jonathon Quike the new platoon leader for UAV platoon. The outgoing platoon leader 1LT John Koubaroulis will now work at Brigade. Good Luck, John!

All the platoons within the Troop are busier than ever. The UAV platoon works around the clock. These great aviators on the ground work hard to ensure that UAV is supporting our fighting forces here in Iraq day and night. The NBC platoon continues to provide steady convoy escort protection. Without them our Troop would not be able to provide the support to other members of the Troop not located here at FOB Fulda. Multi Sensor Platoon and the HQ section are the watchdogs of the FOB. They keep us safe. Finally but not the least, our Prophet guys are providing the necessary work to capture the bad guys.

When we are not working there is plenty to do at the FOB. The new Sporting Complex is finished and I must say very nice. The gym is equipped with all kinds of weight machines and

even has an aerobic exercise room. There are even TVs so you can watch and work out at the same time. Outside there is a basketball court, softball field, volleyball court and a horseshoe pit to entertain the troops. In a week we will be having the first FOB CUP sporting tournament. Everyone seems to be enjoying the new sports complex, even with the heat. Which brings me to my next topic. It's HOT!!!!!!!

Temps are soaring, but with the AC in the containers and work areas everyone in the Troop is surviving the summer.

Finally, on the behalf of the soldiers in the Troop I would like to thank you for sending all the care packages. We appreciate your support. We're about 5 months away from finishing up our task at hand. We all like to wish you a safe and happy summer!

3-17th Cavalry Squadron

ALL GOOD THINGS MUST COME TO AN END

The fearsome "Rough Riders," undefeated in five previous appearances in the Qayyarah Intramural Basketball League under Coach CPT Wilson, finally met their match today, falling 35-31 to the "Cougars" in a hotly contested battle that was characterized by ferocious defense on both sides.

After a slow start that saw turnover after turnover, as both teams broke their teeth on their opponents' defense for nearly five minutes before scoring the first basket, the score slowly grew, with multiple



lead changes until the half, when a thunderous breakaway dunk by PFC Martinez enabled the Rough Riders to pull within one point at 13-12.

In the end, the Rough Riders' lack of reserves—several key players were unavailable due to mission requirements—enabled the Cougars to pull ahead after the Rough Riders' top scorer in the game, SPC Bennett, fouled out with almost eight minutes left. Still, the Rough Riders deserve the utmost respect for their skill, sportsmanship and tenacity.

COMMO SWEEPS QUARTERLY BOARDS

The Task Force Communications section concluded a very successful month of training and mission support by winning both the Soldier and NCO of the Quarter awards on Sunday, 6 June. After SPC Rivas-Gamero's impeccable appearance before the Board earned her top honors as the Task Force's best soldier for the Second Quarter, SGT McElravy made it a clean sweep by claiming the distinction of being the best Non-Commissioned Officer in the Task Force.

These two exceptional soldiers are no strangers to recognition and awards. During the Task Force Organizational Day competitions, SGT McElravy smoked the competition by winning the 2-mile run in a scorching time of 11 minutes and 20 seconds, while SPC Rivas-Gamero earned no fewer than five trophies in such diverse events as the 2-mile run, 40-yard dash, bench-press, sledgehammer throw and three-point shootout.

Our sincere congratulations go out to these proud representatives of the Signal Community—we can't talk without them, and now we can't even talk bad about them!

FULFILLING A PROMISE

As Coalition Forces strive to restore a safe and secure environment in the war-torn country of Iraq in order to allow the Iraqi population to rebuild their economic infrastructure and develop a new form of democratic government, the most fundamental problem they face is how to develop trust between themselves and the Iraqi people. Without it, it is impossible to make any lasting progress, since the Iraqis are bound to reject any reforms they feel are not in their best interest. As a result, it is critical for any representative of the Coalition to clearly establish his or her integrity and trustworthiness.

The members of Task Force Lighthouse have worked diligently to establish a positive working relationship with the villagers in their area of operations, and recently made a big step forward towards gaining the unconditional trust of the local population. A few weeks ago, during a visit to the neighboring village of Kareez, Task Force 3-17 Cavalry's commander, LTC Mason, asked the Sheik for a list of the public works projects he felt were most important to his village. After considering the list and determining the financial resources available, LTC Mason decided to give the villagers the necessary funds to build a security wall around the local school.

The contract was quickly awarded, and within two weeks, the wall was erected, outfitted with a metal gate and painted. The Task Force Civil-Military Affairs Team monitored the construction throughout the duration of the project, and finally reported that it was complete.

On Saturday, 5 June, LTC Mason returned to Kareez to inspect the wall and honor an invitation from the Sheik and the villagers of Kareez, who wanted to thank the Lighthorse troopers for keeping their promise. After the formal inspection of the completed works, the troopers treated the children of Kareez to candy, toys and athletic equipment donated by private citizens in the United States. After the last teddy bear, beanie baby and Whiffle



Ball had been handed out, the soldiers joined the villagers in a beautifully prepared Iraqi meal, then participated in an

impromptu celebration, complete with singing and dancing.

Events such as this are the cornerstone of a harmonious working relationship between the Task Force and the Iraqi civilians it has been called upon to protect. Thanks to its commitment to assessing the needs of the local population and meeting them through carefully planned and executed Civil-Military Operations, Task Force 3-17 Cavalry can look forward to a relatively quiet and uneventful time during the rest of its mission in northern Iraq.

1-37 Field Artillery Battalion

Greetings families and friends.

As we have sped past the mid-point of the deployment, the "On the Minute" battalion has kept its soldiers on their toes by revisiting basic missions, and preparing for and conducting changes of command. Our units have been undergoing extensive training of field artillery specific tasks to make sure those skills remain sharp. Bravo Battery recently conducted a change of command, and Alpha is preparing for theirs. The temperatures continue to rise and the soldier's performance is rising to meet these new conditions.

The Change of Command for the "Thunder" Battery went very well. Captain Matthew Simons

relinquished command to Captain Dale Barnett. The ceremony was very professionally carried out,



the soldiers and non-commissioned officers looked great. After the formalities Captain Barnett had a generous layout of local cuisine for the guests. Captain Matt Simons did a great job while in command, and the battalion wants to extend its gratitude. Good luck to Captain Barnett in following his lead, we have the utmost confidence that he will excel. CPT Simons will continue to serve the battalion as the Assistant S3. "Thunder" probably has also been engrossed with establishing firing capability here on the Forward Operating Base. They made a visit to a local impact area in order to conduct a live fire exercise. They fired over 60 rounds, performing admirably; they haven't lost a single step in their ability to provide accurate and timely fires.

Headquarters and Service Battery has been required to perform some of the same tasks as the line batteries, using its strength in numbers to take some of the pressure off of the other units. They have been active in manning the quick reaction force, gate guard, civil-military operations, and command and control. They do a great job managing many varied and unique missions.

PFC Matthew Davidson and PFC Jason Moore of HSB were both promoted to Specialist, congratulations to them and their families! SPC Richard Clark performed well on the Promotion Board for the Battalion, congratulations to him as well, quite an accomplishment for his career path.



The unit basketball team advanced to the playoffs in the Forward Operating Base League by winning their game over 296th Brigade Support Battalion 46 to 32. SPC Chwast is

getting the chance to test his culinary skills by

providing food for the Retrans site our unit is protecting. As you can see, we are being pulled in many different directions, but doing great!

The "Steel" Battery has also been busy trying to balance change of command responsibilities with a busy operational tempo. Captain Matt Lillibridge has arrived from his previous job as 5-20 Infantry's Fire Support Officer in order to conduct change of command inventories and to familiarize himself with the battery's mission. The battery has been busily engaged in conducting howitzer and Fire Direction Center crew drill training and certification on top of their usual missions. Of note, they opened a school in a small village, which before our arrival was only a mud hut. They also opened a Traffic Control Point that they were responsible for constructing. SPC Davis and SPC Libby both passed the promotion board with flying colors; we are looking forward to promoting them!

Charlie Battery continues with its mission of protecting its base. They have been doing an excellent job as always. SFC Calip is the acting First Sergeant there, he hasn't missed a beat in taking over for 1SG Clark. "Rock" is in good hands.

A/2-131 TAB continues to be a great addition to the battalion. They are a huge multiplier to force protection, but have also been a boon in helping out with taskings and manning. They recently fielded a high-speed new radar, which is working wonders at tracking any indirect fires within the local area. CW2 Aaron Bien, who was recently lightly injured during a mortar attack was awarded a Battalion Coin for his actions. He was attending to a local citizen who was also injured when someone noticed that his calf was bleeding. He has also been nominated for a Purple Heart for his injuries. We appreciate all the work the TAB is doing for us, and expect them to continue as a force multiplier for the Brigade.



The last two weeks have gone by very fast. The leave slots have been increasing in numbers, which is a real morale booster along with our access to reliable air conditioning. We wish you all the best, and can't wait to be back there in sunny (or rainy) Washington.

MAJ Rodney Olson

296th Brigade Support Battalion

We are closing in on 8 months in Iraq and the BSB continues to provide outstanding support to the Brigade. Soldiers in the BSB have not missed a beat in providing food, supplies, maintenance, and medical services to over 5,000 soldiers within the Brigade. Morale is extremely high and soldiers are conducting their missions with the utmost professionalism.

Great news! Within the last week we received leave slots for the month of June and we will see slots for the upcoming Summer months shortly. Many soldiers in the battalion will get the opportunity to go home and visit their loved ones for 15 days of mid-tour leave. Like everything else in the Army, we must all be flexible because the leave program could change at any time but the future months of leave slots look optimistic.

Within the last two weeks we had well-deserved promotions in the BSB. 2LT Lopez was promoted to 1LT on 4 June, CW2 Green was promoted to CW3 on 1 June, and SSG Richardson was promoted to SFC on 1 June. These 3 promotions could not have happened to more deserving individuals with such promising potential.

The BSB just finished their Wiffle Ball tournament. The "Rainiers" whose team consists of



LTC Thompson, MAJ Dalessio, SGT "the arm" Guerin, and PFC Schwartz soundly defeated the FMC "Dust Devils" who team consisted of SSG Linton, SGT "the mouth" Collier, SGT Daprix, and SGT Scroggins. They were two well played games but ultimately no one could hit SGT Guerin's fantastic pitching.

Also, in a MWR sponsored Basketball Tournament three teams from the Battalion made it to the tournament. HHC's team lost in the first round with a crushing defeat by 1/37 Field Artillery Battalion. FMC and DC will resume playoff games

on 14 June 2004 and will give their opponents challenging competition.

Finally, we can't thank the rear-detachment, Family Readiness Group, friends, and family enough. Your support throughout this deployment has been outstanding. Please continue to send letters and care packages. Frontline Support!!

LTC Dennis Thompson

276th Engineer Battalion

The date of June 8, 2004 will be recording in the history books of the 276th Engineer Battalion. On this date, our Battalion was presented with the honor of wearing the 2nd Infantry Division patch as a combat patch. The combat patch, presented by COL Rounds, is a huge morale booster for our soldiers who have been here supporting the Arrowhead Brigade for over 90 days.

We will wear the 2ID patch with great pride as we continue our tour here in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The words of guidance from both COL Rounds and LTC Morgan concentrated on staying focused on the mission in front of us, while still taking time to reflect on our accomplishments and the support of our families and friends that we hope to return to soon.



So far since being in Theatre, we have pinned on nine Purple Hearts, which is nine more than we had hoped for. However, our soldiers understand the risks that they wake up to everyday and try to

sleep through every night. They do not hesitate in their mission and understand the huge responsibility that our great country has shouldered here in Iraq. They also see the progress that we are making in preserving freedom for the Iraqi people.

Bravo Company – BRAVO BEARS

Soldiers all over the world can relate to the obligations and responsibilities of gate guard. The soldiers of Bravo Company have taken this responsibility to the next level. Under the direction of 2LT Compher and SSG Beavers, the men of 1st

Platoon, along with members of the equipment section have taken on the mission of force protection. 1st platoon has been diligently working on two gate modification projects as well as several other force protection efforts. The force protection missions have been an on going project since arriving in Mosul.

The Gate 3 project was the first gate mission that 1st Platoon took on. Working along side over 40 local nationals, we have constructed the guard shacks and rolling gate for the project. There has also been electrical and commo work completed at gate 3 and tower 8, which included over 1000 feet of electrical wiring and spotlights were installed.



The work at gate 2 is still under construction. Local nationals have poured a concrete slab for the rolling gate and a prefabricated drop gate has been

installed. There have been several dump truck loads of debris and concrete removed from this work site as well.

Bravo Company is also working hard to enjoy the little downtime they have. One of the highlights of the week is watching the Bravo Company basketball in action at the gym.

18th Engineer Company

Hello to all the Sapper Families and Friends. It has been another busy month for the 18th Engineer Company here in Mosul. The weather has definitely been getting hotter. We have finally broken 100 Degrees. The good news is that it remains cool in the morning so the 1SG has every reason to require people to do some PT. At the beginning of this month, the new commander, CPT Mitchell began his inventories of the company. He has one platoon left to inventory and our change of command will be on 26 June 04. Naturally, this is a sad time for me, as I will have to leave the company after spending eighteen outstanding months with you. CPT Mitchell and I have known each other for a long time and he is going to do an outstanding job. I wish CPT Mitchell and the company the best of luck in the future. My thoughts and prayers will be with everyone throughout the remainder of the

deployment and in the future wherever the Arrowhead Sappers are. Thank you for everyone's support. It has truly been my honor to lead such a fine group of Americans. Sappers Forward!!!

CPT Patrick Dagon

293rd Military Police Company

The soldiers of the 293d Military Police Company continue to push hard on a day to day basis, while keeping the morale high in the unit. We have officially passed the 3 month mark of our deployment and have begun to settle in. We continue to make life here at the LSA better, constantly improving our living conditions, work areas, and our recreational facilities. The company has started a sports program, pitting squads within the company against each other for bragging rights. The first of many events was kicked off last week with a volleyball tournament. It is proving to be a great stress reliever and a team builder for everybody involved.

The 293d Military Police Company continues to press forward on their missions with the Iraqi Police. During the past two weeks, the Military Police have shared their knowledge and experience by conducting several classes for the Iraqi Police and Arrowhead soldiers. The 293d conducted classes on the proper use of less than lethal ammunition, checkpoint operations, and vehicle/person searches.

Your support back home has been tremendous. I thank you for everything you do to keep up the morale of these men and women. We do what we do because of you and couldn't do it without your support. **Warriors!**

CPT Jason Jajack

209th Military Intelligence Company

Hello again everyone! Summer is upon us over here and the heat is starting to hit full stride. Temperatures are now in the 100-degree mark and moving higher it seems every day. So far 107 degrees has been the highest mark, but I'm sure that mark will be broken shortly. Because of the high temperatures, we are encouraging soldiers to drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. Please consider kool-aid type or other drink mix beverages in your care packages to loved ones to help us fight dehydration.

In the past few weeks, the following soldiers were promoted. SPC Griffie made the jump to SGT and SGT Holt was promoted to SSG. In addition, the MICO held its monthly Soldier of the



Month Board. This month's winner was PFC Ramsey. He will be rewarded with a Brigade Certificate of Achievement for his efforts. We are

continually trying to do the little things like soldier of the month boards, rifle ranges, APFT training to help soldiers develop and gain those crucial points needed to get promoted. Please encourage your soldiers to pursue correspondence courses and on-line schooling in their off-time to not only help professionally develop themselves but also help them obtain promotion points.

This month, SGT Athey was awarded a 4-Day pass in Qatar for his hard work in the MICO TOC. The company was able to get two seats for mid-tour leave recently. SPC Mihai and SSG Robbins were given the opportunity and in the middle of their mid-tour leave back in the States. It will be good for all of these soldiers to get away and relax. In reference to Mid-tour leave, the brigade will be once again sending soldiers home beginning 15 June. Expect company soldiers to begin arriving back in the states shortly for their 15-day leave. The company will do its best to make-up the leave slots for those soldiers who had their leaves recently cancelled. Please be patient, and do not make reservations that cannot be reimbursed in the event we endure another freeze in airline flights from Iraq.

In other news, 1LT Schwaiger has transferred to 296 BSB to become the Battalion S2. This is a very important and good career progression move for him and his family. Replacing 1LT Schwaiger is 1LT Koubaroulis coming from D Troop 1-14 CAV.

In closing, I would like to thank all the family and friends of the soldiers and let them know that their support is greatly appreciated. Although it is difficult to be away from loved ones for such a long period, your support has given the soldiers the strength to carry out this important mission for our country. Thanks and we'll be back in touch in two weeks.

CPT Kevin G. Hosier

334th Signal Company

In honor of my first issue of the *Arrowhead Brigade (FRG) News Letter*, I would like to take the opportunity to introduce you to my family. My wife and I moved here back in 2002, and we were with the 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) until last April. We have one daughter. I am very proud to have been given the honor of commanding the absolute "BEST" signal company in the Army.

The first order of business after I hit the ground was the change of command inventory. It



provided chance to meet each member of the company by visiting every remote site. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all

the military spouses for their efforts to lay out assigned equipment in the midst of sizzling hot desert heat. I personally thank SGT Brown (supply sergeant) and LT Tucker for their effort to make the transition as seamless as possible. I also thank 1SG Haun for demonstrating his loyalty and professionalism preparing for the Change of Command ceremony. Outstanding job, 334th!

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to address the families of the 334th Signal Company soldiers in this bi-weekly edition of the *Brigade News*. The next three months will be very critical



for all of us and unpredictable, but the 334th Signal Company soldiers will continue to excel in each endeavor they undertake. I am tremendously proud of this

company and grateful to have the opportunity to serve its soldiers and families.

CPT Dave Kim

And finally...



The brand-new Hassan Jallad school (seen on front page) after Coalition-funded work replaced the mud hut school.

Thanks to everyone once again for your continued care and support. Knowing we have the support of the folks back home makes our job that much easier. In the coming months we will face many challenges – both in Iraq and at home. Please keep us in your thoughts. You are always in ours.

- Arrowhead

* You will notice a conspicuous non-use of spouse names in the newsletter. This is purposefully done to protect families.