

# THE ARROWHEAD

## Family Readiness Group Newsletter

Vol. 13

"For the families of those deployed"

30 May, 2004

Dear Arrowhead Families and Friends,

Greetings again from Mosul to all of you. Summer has arrived, it seems, and the temperatures are routinely over 100 degrees during the day. No sandstorms so far, so we are counting our blessings.

The weather is just one of the challenges that soldiers face. Uncertainty is another, and we have had our share. Those of you who watch the news see the reports of fighting in the South, and the security situation in parts of the country is unsettled. Some of the Arrowhead Brigade's troops remain detached from us, serving in a different part of the country, and we have no word on their return.

Leave has also been uncertain, and it is difficult for soldiers to plan. The chain of command works daily to recoup slots, and we have had some success. The tactical situation, however, will continue to strongly influence how many slots are made available to units across the theater. We will publish changes through the rear detachment and FRGs as they are announced.

We have recently said goodbye to some of our comrades-in-arms. SPC Wiesemann of 1-14 CAV and PFC Coleman of HHC are no longer with us, except in spirit. These two young men and their families have our thoughts and prayers.

You are the bedrock for your soldiers. They fight and serve together, and they do it proudly – but they do it secure in the knowledge that back home, their loved ones are taken care of and life goes on. The fact is, you are members of the Arrowhead team as surely as if you were right here. Thanks to you all for helping us focus on the difficult tasks at hand each day.

ARROWHEAD!  
Colonel Mike Rounds

### 1-23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Battalion

Tomahawk Families and Friends,

Greetings from Mosul. A few weeks ago I commented that summer was here; little did we know. Yesterday the temperature topped out at 102 degrees Fahrenheit. It is, however, so dry here that the heat index was still only 97. Nonetheless

### From Front to Rear



Another spectacular view of the Mosul Palace, this time showing the main structure from the rear.

102 is plenty hot, and the Tomahawks are working hard and taking extra precautions to keep ourselves safe and our equipment in working order.

Generally life remains stable and prosperous here in Mosul. Admittedly, we have experienced a slight increase in activity on the part of the criminals and outlaws that would have Iraq slide back into chaos and despair. This activity is self-defeating though, as we are provided increased opportunity to target and eliminate these individuals. Our operations over the last two weeks have been successful and the enemy has suffered many unwanted losses.



Again I find it necessary to call on your patience when waiting for word on future leave slots. We are all waiting in great anticipation to see how the program works out during our remaining months here. I know first hand the strain that last minute changes to leave plans have on everyone in the Tomahawk family. All I can ask is that you trust the concerned members of your

loved one's chain of command as I trust my superiors and have faith in everyone's efforts to ensure leave is granted to all those who are deserving.



As we find ourselves moving into the first weeks of June, we have passed the deployment's midway hump, and are moving swiftly towards the end of our year here. Soon there will be talk of redeployment and countless rumors of everything from early returns to tour extensions. Please do not give credence to rumors. All official news of our return will be passed through the FRG and I will work with the Rear Detachment Commander to ensure you all have as much information as possible as soon as it is available.

As always, you have my deepest thanks for your prayers and continued support. You should all be very proud of your loved ones, and yourselves, for the great sacrifice the Tomahawk family is making as we continue to make a difference in the world we live in.

With great respect,  
MAJ Adam Rocke

## 2-3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Battalion

Dear Family and Friends of the Patriot Battalion,

The month of May has brought a few changes. The first change and the most obvious is the temperature. The mercury has dramatically risen across the country of Iraq and it only promises to increase in the months to come. In other words, it's getting hot around here. Looks like summer starts earlier here than back home. To beat the heat we are placing special emphasis on educating each Soldier on food and water consumption, crew rest, and exposure to sunlight to ensure that our Soldiers take care of themselves while operating in the

extreme heat of the day. Additionally, the air conditioners we had installed in the rooms last month have proven a Godsend. I assure you that each and every one of our leaders is committed to taking every precaution necessary to protect our Soldiers this summer.



Despite the worrisome headlines it will make many of you breathe a little easier to know that we continue to make progress on providing our Soldiers with the best protection possible. Not only are we improving the armor on our non-Stryker vehicles but we have also added protective walls around all of our living, work, and recreation areas and we continue to improve the protection emplaced around the walls of each of our bases and at each entry gate. Protecting the force is a priority and we are all working very hard every day to improve it. I am amazed with the work that has been accomplished by the Soldiers in the Battalion,



they have all done a great job and we are much safer now than when we first arrived in Mosul.

The Battalion was also fortunate to have a number of Soldiers re-enlist during the month of May, extending their commitment to the Battalion and the Army. The following list contains the names of those Soldiers who re-enlisted. From Headquarters and Headquarters Company, SGT Bernard, SPC

Noble and SGT Stine. From Alpha Company, SPC Francis and SPC Guerra. From Bravo Company, SSG Martin, SSG Rampley, SGT Mullins, SPC Adams, SPC Beals and SPC Burbach. From Charlie Company, SSG Lopez, SGT Oullette, SGT Wise, CPL Hill, SPC Joseph and SPC McWhite.

Another change in the month of May was a change to the senior non-commissioned leadership in two of the companies. We are very pleased to have 1SG Van Engen, join Highlander Company (HHC) replacing 1SG Austin as the new Company First Sergeant. Luckily for us, 1SG Austin is staying in the battalion. He moved down the street to Blackhorse Company to replace 1SG Vichot.

You may not know this, but 1SG Vichot has been in the Battalion from day one when the Battalion was stood up as 2-3 IN and designated a part of the Army's first Stryker Brigade Combat Team. He has been with the unit from the ground floor and worked very hard to help make this battalion great. Through all the administrative issues, equipment fielding, and training 1SG Vichot always remained focused on preparing his Soldiers for combat. I will forever be grateful for the hard work and dedication shown by not only 1SG Vichot, but also for the contribution made by his family during these years. The many successes of our Blackhorse Company in the last six months of combat are examples of this Soldier's dedication and leadership. The men of Bravo Company and this Battalion thank 1SG Vichot and his family for their outstanding contribution to our mission and we want to wish them the best as they look forward to his retirement following this deployment.



In closing, the past six months have been busy and filled with some highs and lows. Again, I would really like to thank all of the families for supporting your Soldiers. The thoughts and prayers of the

loved ones back home sustain us every day as we continue this difficult mission. We miss you all and are looking forward to the reunion ahead. God Speed.

LTC Jay G. Flowers  
"PATRIOTS"

## 5-20<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion

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

During the past week, TF Arrow has continued to remain busy conducting operations in central Iraq. We continue to safely transport precious cargo to ensure it reaches its final destinations safely and intact. We have received several PAO opportunities lately so it is very likely that you may see your loved one on TV or see a quote from him in the paper. Since the last TF Arrow newsletter we have been very busy conducting standard of living improvements and are busy with force protection measures required to defend against the many indirect fire attacks the FOB receives.

### **Making a home away from home.**

On any given day at LSA Anaconda one might find TF Arrow soldiers enjoying some the new MWR facilities built specifically for them. The TF S4 and SPO, CPT Hank Barnes and CPT Greg Gibbons along with the Mad Max Platoon have been extremely busy improving the quality of life for the soldiers of TF Arrow. In the last week, construction was completed of the TF Arrow cinemas and a new gym for soldiers to enjoy during their much-earned



breaks in action. Each night, the TF Arrow Chaplain, CPT Kelly O'Leary conducts a movie review of movies that he had donated from AAFES. The soldiers love the new "theatre" and it is a great way to relax. Only one movie shows a day, but

thanks to Chaplain O’Lear, the soldiers can enjoy somewhat new releases on the big screen TV. Additionally, the TF Arrow Powerhouse Gym was recently completed allowing soldiers to remain in top physical fitness. The gym comes complete with many free weights and weight benches acquired from the FOB Regulars TOC gym. The gym is not a total fitness center and has room for improvement, but it is a great way to retain our great figures.

### **TF Arrow soldier awarded Purple Heart**

Yesterday, the first soldier wounded in Task Force Arrow was awarded the Purple Heart for the injuries he received as a result of a vehicle borne IED explosion against his Stryker on 17 May 2004. The Purple Heart is awarded to soldiers wounded in combat action against the enemy. SFC Mark Mejia was wounded in the left arm by fragments of the IED. SFC Mejia, since being wounded, has returned to TF Arrow. He is not yet completely healed, but is taking this time to nurse himself back to a full recovery. During the Purple Heart ceremony, CPT Jeff Bryson pinned the Purple



Heart medal to SFC Mejia’s chest and LTC Reed, CSM Mangosing, and 1SG Austin were there to thank SFC Mejia for his selfless service to his country. SFC Mejia was true to his

quiet and professional nature and had little to say when given the opportunity to speak. At the conclusion of the ceremony, LTC Reed spoke to the soldiers about the importance of limiting your signature while riding in the open hatches on the Stryker. He said, “The driver of the Stryker is alive today and was able to drive away after the attack because he had his hatch closed. A fragment of the explosion landed squarely in the middle of the driver’s vision block.” “The best thing that could have happened during the incident was the driver moving the vehicle out of the kill zone immediately following the attack because it gave the enemy a sure sign that our vehicles are survivable,” concluded LTC Reed. Unfortunately, the second soldier wounded in the attack, SPC Monje, was not in attendance to the event to receive his Purple Heart because he has been evacuated to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany to fully recover from his injuries. The ceremony was a stark reminder of how dangerous things can quickly become in Iraq. Thanks to the armor and protection of the Stryker, a catastrophic event was avoided

once again. Again, the enemy received a stark revelation that the Stryker and our soldiers are formidable weapons and ones the enemy should avoid at all costs.

### **Force Protection**

If you have not seen Task Force Arrow’s home base of operations in a week or so you would think you were lost because of the hard work of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon of the 18<sup>th</sup> Engineers and our Air Force brothers. 3/18 has been extremely busy conducting force protection improvements to Fort Arrow and has made great strides through coordination with other agencies on post. 3/18 turned to our Air Force brethren to haul fill dirt for the Task Force when Army units on the logistics support area were



unable to support our requests. The Air Force came through in a big way and donated two bucket loaders and operators for a week’s worth of work filling force protection barriers and bunkers. The task was a daunting challenge but the spirit of inter service camaraderie and teamwork won the day and now TF Arrow soldiers can rest easily knowing that they are better protected. The TF Arrow tactical operations center and Internet café are now ringed with rows of dirt-filled barriers that provide complete protection from shrapnel and flying debris. Additionally, the line companies chipped in and placed sand bag barriers along their tent areas to protect soldiers as they sleep. The last force protection measures still under way are the Hesco barrier bunkers designed by the TF Arrow Engineer Platoon. Once completed, Fort Arrow will be akin to a fortress providing complete soldier protection.

### **Keeping Close With Kids**

By now, many kids have grown stale to the idea of writing dad. It’s too easy to rely on the phone. Unfortunately, children often forget important events when they get the call. This is why writing is so important. Here is one suggestion to ‘prime’ the kids into writing to “deployed dad.” This works best

when you know your family has about an hour or so of uninterrupted time.

- Look at photo albums with pictures of dad
- Watch home movies showing dad
- Eat dad's favorite snack, dessert, or pizza
- Take time to talk about what the kids remember about dad
- Talk about what you want to do as a family when dad gets home

Then, after all that, set up a picture of dad and have the kids write a letter. Younger kids can simply draw. This stimulates memories as well as draws a connection between the child and parent. It reminds them of what it was like when dad was home and what they have to look forward to when dad returns. Emotionally, they experience their father's presence.

Additionally, the times the phone calls come from Iraq are often unpredictable. This suggestion will help kids incorporate dad into what's going on in school, sports, and home. Keep a small dry-erase board or notebook by the phone. Whenever a significant event happens, record the event to tell dad when he calls. Of course, older kids can do this themselves. When dad calls, use the board to remind the kids to tell dad about the ups and downs that have happened since the last time they spoke. It takes some discipline to establish recording the events but the payoff goes a long ways in keeping a connection between deployed dad and the kids back home.

Genesis 46 tells us the great joy Joseph felt after separation from his father, Jacob. The Scripture says, "A soon as Joseph appeared before him (Jacob), he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time." The connection we maintain between a deployed parent and child will result in tears of joy at our reunion!

As the month of May draws to a close, we get closer and closer to the end of our tour. As always, we remain vigilant to the dangers of operations in Iraq, but our resourcefulness and hard work have made the soldiers of TF Arrow safer. The enemy continues to try to find ways to attack us, but fail at every attempt and in every regard. Their failure is in part due to the outstanding equipment we are provided and partly due to our outstanding training before deployment. The outstanding soldiers of TF Arrow stand ready for any mission and look to the future with determination and steadfast duty to accomplish the task at hand.

LTC Karl D. Reed

## 1-14<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Squadron

Dear families and friends of the Warhorse Squadron,

The summer is here in full force in Iraq, with temperatures daily over 100°. We've passed the midway point of the deployment, and I'm continually impressed by the fantastic job all the soldiers do each day to make Iraq a better place.

We've had a few changes in personnel since our last update. MAJ Gregg Athey has moved to be the Operations Officer for 1-23 Infantry. It has been tough to see him go, but we know that he will continue to do great things for the soldiers in the Tomahawks. We are still awaiting the arrival of MAJ Matt Green from Fort Lewis to take over as the new Squadron S-3. CPT Larry Jordan is now the new commander of Crazyhorse Troop. We wish all the best to Eric McAllister and his family as they prepare for their move. Larry and his wife are a great command team and Crazyhorse continues their tradition of excellence. 1SG Chris Kalili is leaving to attend the Sergeants Major Academy, and 1SG Marlo Montes has moved from the medical platoon to be the new D Troop 1SG. Thanks to 1SG Kalili and his wife for all they have done for D Troop and the Squadron; we wish you Godspeed in your new adventures at Fort Bliss. 1SG Montes is a proven leader in the Squadron and we welcome him and his wife as new members of the D Troop Command team.

There is lots of speculation in the news about what the transition of authority will look like and how it will affect Coalition Forces. In many ways, 30 June will not be that significant – much of the transition has been occurring over the past few months. Iraqi leaders are taking more responsibility each day and the Iraqi Security Forces are also increasingly assuming the role as the primary provider of security.

We have much yet to do, but we are making progress and you have much to be proud of in the heroes in this unit. Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, your e-mails, letters and packages. Please keep them coming! Thoughts of finishing our mission here and returning home to reunite with our loved ones keeps us going.

LTC Buddy Carman

### **Dear Families and Friends of the Horsemen**

We have reached the half way mark in this tour and our soldiers continue to perform their duties without fault. HHT has the best soldiers in the Army and they continually prove it. They conduct themselves as professionals and show on a daily basis their commitment to the task here in Iraq. I am proud of the work and accomplishments of your husbands, wives, sons and daughters. I thank you for your continued strength and support in their efforts.

The Soldiers of Horsemen continue to play a large role in daily operations throughout the squadron. They provide for medical coverage, meals, maintenance, and logistical support to allow the line troops to do their jobs effectively. They are working hard and doing very well. I am very proud of the soldiers and the job they are doing. I am impressed with the positive attitudes and the willingness to get the job done no matter what it takes.

I want to thank all of you for your continued support and sacrifice. Your soldiers could not be here doing what needs to be done without you. The soldiers and families have so much to be proud of and I thank you for your commitment to each other.

CPT Christiansen

### **Greetings from the Men of Apocalypse,**

The men are doing fine under the current circumstances.

Several key leaders from the troop have departed to work in the squadron and brigade: CPT Matt Clark, 1LT Mike Irvine, 1LT Chris Wells and SFC Tomas Aquino. We will truly miss these great warriors from the troop.

Fortunately the troop has not missed a beat with the additions of 1LT Carson Davis Troop XO; 1LT Joe Wolf, 2nd Platoon Leader, 2LT Jason Taylor, 3rd Platoon Leader; and SFC Ronald LeMaster, 3rd Platoon Sergeant. We look forward to their contributions to the troop.

Earlier in the month we had some of our soldiers to re-enlist: SGT Mims (FT. Knox) and SGT Rhoades (FT. Campbell).

In the last month of AO Apocalypse we have opened two clinics, renovated several schools and started water projects for the people of Iraq. We

also have conducted several joint operations with the various city police and the border police in our area.

Families will be glad to know that the quality of life has improved at our FOB. The new twin bunk beds and mattresses and the installation of air conditioners could not have come at a better time. The latest game of choice for the Troop has been horseshoes. The 1SG and I love to give lessons and not are not shy to let everyone know about it.

Finally, continue to send the letters and packages, which are an excellent source of motivation for the troopers.

CPT Luther Johnson

### **Dear Friends and Families of B Troop,**

In this second installment to you since taking over, I would like to tell you some of the great things that your soldiers are doing. We should put some of this work into perspective, because it shows that these soldiers are truly bringing a better life to the people of Iraq. The high intensity period of the war did very little damage to the Rabiah area, destroying only the Iraqi Intelligence Service building. No one has suggested that we rebuild that. All the needs that we identify now for rebuilding are the result of the previous regime's neglect, abuse, or ignorance, or else has been a result in the last year of anti-Coalition activities.

The troop has received some assistance from the engineers, providing us at Outpost Laredo with some much-needed protection and creature comforts. This assistance includes leveling and filling the giant mud hole that made up our parking lot, adding blast barriers around the buildings, adding a new kitchen, mess facility, recreation building, and air conditioning for all of the buildings. We have heartily welcomed the shower and latrine unit as well. Not only are we all much cleaner, but have brought a little of the comforts of home in the form of a western style commode. This is truly living!

On a daily basis 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon and the soldiers of the Fires Platoon keep us secure in Rabiah and keep the border open with Syria. To date, Rabiah has the most traffic, is the most profitable, and most secure border crossing in the country of Iraq. These same soldiers are my key coordinators for numerous well water, power, and school projects. In all, they have so far built or fixed more than 20

wells, brought electrical power to almost 10 villages and are getting almost 20 schools built which were formerly just mud huts. Their efforts also helped open the first emergency room clinic in the area. Previously, the local populace had to go over 20 miles to Mosul for emergency care or for facilities open 24hrs a day. These same soldiers also meet regularly with local civic and tribal leaders to learn what the issues are. These meetings are popularly known as “goat grabs” for the predominance of roasted goat available and the lack of plates, bowls, or even utensils.

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoons continue to work extensively with Iraqi security forces. Because of their hard work, quite a few smugglers and others of their ilk have been stopped while crossing the border. On a daily basis, they conduct patrols and train with the Iraqi Police for basic police work, patrolling, ethics training, etc.



These soldiers have sent more than 100 Iraqi policemen to the Jordan police academy for formal police training.

White and Blue Platoons also train and patrol hard with the IBP and help to make them more self sufficient, despite shortages of training equipment and money, in an environment full of complex cultures, politics, and an international border with Iraq’s “non-hostile” neighbor to the west. Did I mention that there are a few insurgents in Iraq as well? These soldiers have been doing great things for the community as well, making them more secure every day.

There is a lot of great spirit here too. Some of that is surely a result of the support they receive from home. With all the improvements here, there is only one bit of graffiti: “R-E-C-O-N”.

I will try to add more pictures in the near future. Thank you again for all your love and support.

CPT Matthew L. Blome

### **C/5-20 (ROCK) - Halfway There**

We are exactly six months and thirty-six hours past the Middle Eastern sunrise that welcomed Charlie Co to OPERATION IRAQI

FREEDOM. With the new Iraqi Government set to take over in a little over a month, there are still many things that we must accomplish to ensure this new democratic nation is set up for success. At this halfway mark, we have seen a totally different change to The Rock’s mission focus. Currently; The Rock has been tasked to help train Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC). It is the group of local nationals who have been entrusted to help keep this nation safe, so completing this mission is essential as the next step for us to come back home.

With the switch of mission focus geared towards training, there have been quite a few changes. The first change that took place is that the entire company moved from Rock Base, the compound that was right on the eastern edge of the city of Tal Afar, Iraq. Everyone knows how easy it is to grow roots in a place, and every one of your soldiers was sad to leave Rock Base and all the creature comforts it offered. We have been living at the new FOB for a little over a week, and we hit the ground running.

Immediately, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, the Misfits, headed to Mosul for a 6-week training program in which they will whip the ICDC into shape to prepare them for the task of providing security for the new Iraq. Second Platoon, the Reapers, was quick to follow to help stand up more ICDC troops. The Misfits and the Reapers are playing an important role in helping to secure the future of Iraq.

As the rest of the company settles into our new home, everyone is settling into their own battle rhythm. Charlie Co is still a vital component to Task Force Warhorse as we are responsible for securing the main routes of travel as well as help to rebuild and secure Tal Afar, the AO’s largest city, and the many towns surrounding it. There are MWR facilities in place at the FOB, so everyone is well taken care of – telephone access, a nice chow hall serving 3 hot meals a day, and the company is installing its own internet cafe’ that complements with what is already offered here. Thanks to your support, we have continued to remain set on course in giving what we can to help Iraq and its people. Now, with the first 6 months behind us, we are more than ready to tackle the next stepping-stone that will equal mission complete and bring us back home.

### **Delta Troop**

The soldiers of Dragoon Troop continue to do great things for the Squadron in Northern Iraq. Despite the length of time that we have been deployed, the morale of the troops remains high.

Thanks so much for your continued thoughts, prayers, emails, letters, and care packages. The Mid-tour leave program has been immensely popular, and we are very happy that so many have had the opportunity to visit loved ones. The number of seats continues to be fluid, but we are trying our hardest to get as many soldiers home on leave as possible.

Today we reluctantly said goodbye to a fixture of Dragoon Troop. 1SG Chris Kalili was selected to attend the US Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, TX. Quite an honor! He has led the troops as First Sergeant since the beginning of transformation, and I cannot even begin to list the vast contributions that he and his wife have so selflessly made to the troop. We will miss them both, but we know that they will continue to bless battalions and brigades with their commitment to soldiers and their families. Our loss is certainly their gain.

We also welcome 1SG Marlo Montes from the Medic Platoon in HHT. We extend our warmest welcome to the new Army's newest First Sergeant and his wife. 1SG Montes is no stranger to Delta Troop soldiers, and we consider ourselves lucky to have his leadership as we finish up our deployment.

We'd also like to welcome another new addition to the troop, as CPL Harder and his wife had a baby girl on 17 April. He was lucky enough to be able to be on leave for the birth of his first child. We are very happy for the Harders.

In other news, I'm proud to announce several recent promotions. SGT Ian Tate was promoted to Staff Sergeant this month. In addition, SPC Steven Fernandez was promoted to Sergeant, and PFC Tommy Salazar was promoted to Specialist. June 1<sup>st</sup>, we will promote the NBC Recon Platoon Leader, 2LT Lawrence Indyk to First Lieutenant. We will also induct SPC Christopher Waters, SPC Jason West, and SPC Edward Powell into the NCO Corps, as we promote them to Sergeant. All promotions are well deserved, and congratulations to all these fine troopers and their families.

The weather has heated up here in Northern Iraq recently, with temperatures approaching 100 degrees. The guard points, the flight line, and motor pool have been very hot out in sun, but the air conditioning in the work areas and containers, has made it much more bearable.

"Dragoons!"

CPT Thomas Bauchspies

## C/52 Infantry

Greeting Avalanche Family & Friends,

Since my last update we have quite a turn of events in the Company. We moved from Mosul, south to a new location south. 2nd Platoon (1LT Johnson and SFC Roacha) remains in Mosul providing escort security for Brigade.

Originally we were to pick up base security operations and facilitate convoy security missions. About a week ago we received another change of mission to train the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) to help give them the tools to provide for a secure and stable Iraq. Quite a different mission, but once again our fine soldiers love a challenge and have jumped in headfirst. We have had a platoon from C Company, 5-20 IN (Rock) attached to us to train ICDC as well. Due to the large numbers of soldiers we are training, and not having 2nd PLT with us, all of our soldiers are getting involved to include headquarters, and I must say I think they are enjoying it. Imagine a condensed form of basic training. Your soldiers are training Iraqi soldiers how to shoot, move and communicate like the American soldier. Many of the trainees have little to no education, some are illiterate, and some have fought in 3 wars. Many Iraqis are ill equipped, with some wearing loafers and flip-flops instead of boots. To add to the fun, we are totally dependent on Iraqi translators to communicate the instructions! Your soldiers are working very hard and discovering that a whole new type of patience is required to get the message across. The first week of training is almost complete and we have many lessons learned to improve ourselves. Everyone, from the Lieutenants down to the Privates, is doing their part to help their Iraqi peers become better soldiers. Right now we will continue to train through much of July, and then our trainees will be taking over the majority of missions in our new Area of Operations.

I am extremely proud of the flexibility and professionalism displayed by our men. They continue to impress me every day. The importance of our mission is obvious, if we are able to produce competent ICDC soldiers capable of securing Iraq themselves, we will not be required to come back again, and do it for them.

CPT Eric Molfino

## 3-17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Squadron

Dear families,

In this week's update is a reenlistment and a great story about the things our maintainers are doing with Humanitarian Assistance. In addition to the great care-packages for our soldiers, many of you have been sending various supplies to be distributed throughout this surrounding community. Thank you so much, from the Task Force, and from the local communities that thrive on your efforts to support them. Finally, I want to encourage each of our spouses who have not earned the coveted spurs to do so. The "Spouses Spur Ride" will be held in June 04. Please contact the Rear-Detachment Commander for details.

Out Front!!

LTC Reginald P. Mason

### **D TROOP AIDS TASK FORCE 3-17 CAVALRY CIVIL MILITARY OPERATIONS**

The Blue Tigers of Delta Troop, 3-17 Cavalry are not only soldiers and maintainers, but serve as public relations and community outreach specialists these days too. Two to three times a week, the soldiers of D Troop get the unique opportunity to see Iraqi citizens in their own villages and be a part of the Task Force 3-17 Civil Military Operations (CMO) to help improve the quality of life in these villages. On each trip, the Blue Tigers learn more about the Iraqi culture, speak with the local children, and sometimes even share a meal with village leaders. Relatively often, visits revolve around



inspections of community buildings and property such as schools, water delivery systems, and electrical systems to determine improvements which can be made by Army engineers or for which the Army can contract improvements.

Recently, soldiers made a Tuesday morning trip, visiting two local villages and bringing along school supplies, candy, and stuffed animals for the children. Tuesday's special occasion was the completion of the school year for some grammar school students – and delivery of rewards for their hard work. Through the kindness of many people in the states including sponsors from corporations, both from the Fort Drum area and from across the

country, as well as churches and individual volunteers, local students received pens, pencils, crayons, coloring books, notebooks, small toys, and the young girls received hair ribbons and barrettes.



The top five students of the class received a school supply kit for holding all of their supplies and a few extras. After visiting with these young children, the convoy continued to another

school located near the Tigris River, where improvements still needed to be made and CMO officials took time to catalogue the concerns of the head-master and village leaders. While CMO personnel worked with these local leaders, soldiers spent time talking to the school children and handing out more school supplies.

D Troop soldiers enjoy trips like these, as they offer the opportunity to vary their routine, get off post for



a little while, and see more of the country and the people for which we are fighting to bring freedom and security. Through the dedicated CMO team, the soldiers of D Troop, and the kindness of friends, family, and sponsors back home in the States, quality of life in Iraq is changing, one village at a time.

### **STICKING WITH THE TEAM**

Two Lighthouse troopers made a significant step forward in their careers as professional soldiers on Sunday, 23 May. As their fellow soldiers looked on, SSG(P) LeBlanc, of the Task Force Fire Support Element, and SPC Herrera, of 3/5 Platoon, both took the oath of reenlistment administered by Task Force Commander LTC Reginald Mason.

SSG(P) LeBlanc, the Task Force Fire Support NCO, has been working on Civil-Military Operations in addition to his Fire Support duties. This exceptional NCO decided to reenlist for an indefinite period of time, simply stating, "I gave the matter a great deal of thought, and talked to my family about it before deciding to reenlist. I have no doubt that I made the correct decision. I'm staying in until they tell me to leave!"

SPC Herrera, one of Task Force 3-17 Cavalry's Petroleum Distribution Specialists, keeps busy



supplying fuel to the Task Force's fleet of ground vehicles and aircraft. The fast pace of operations in Northern Iraq has kept him and his fellow fuelers on their toes, and their performance has exceeded all expectations.

SPC Herrera has reenlisted for an additional four years,

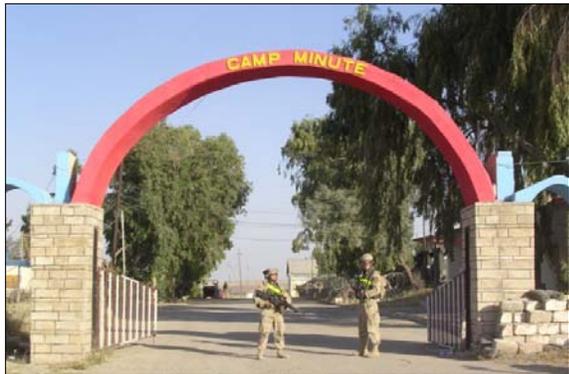
and selected Fort Hood, Texas as his next duty station, a move that will allow him to live closer to home while exposing him to a different professional environment within armored or mechanized units.

Thanks to soldiers such as these, the Army in general, and Task Force Lighthouse in particular, can look to the future with confidence, knowing that it can always rely on its most precious resource—its people. Congratulations to these two outstanding individuals on their commitment to the team!

## 1-37 Field Artillery Battalion

Hello to all our families and friends,

We have completed another two weeks here in the "On the Minute" battalion. Our projects are plowing ahead at full-steam. Spirits are high as we witness the fruits of our labor and we complete more projects in the towns around Mosul. The temperatures are nearing the 100-degree mark, the noonday heat feels as though one is staring into an open oven, and it will only continue to get hotter. While life out on patrol is a hot and sweaty affair, returning to the cool refuge of the FOB is that much



more rewarding.

There have been multiple school openings within our area of operations over the last few days. Our commanders and civil affairs teams has been attending the ribbon cutting ceremonies while representing the battalion during the town council meetings, and playing Santa Claus with all of our donated soccer balls, clothing, books and school supplies. The kids go absolutely nuts trying to get their hands on some of the goodies. They are constantly pleading, "give me pen," "give me book," "give me watch!" CPT Alex Fyfe is our principal benefactor; he gets a real kick out of awarding children with the tools with which to improve their lives.

In order to battle complacency we are constantly challenging ourselves to improve. We have engaged in retesting field artillery specific skills, retraining and retesting to ensure that our primary skills remain sharp and honed in spite of an infantry-centric mission. It is good to be able to work with the aiming circles, howitzers, and fire



direction computers again. The men quickly fall back on their training and achieve success.

Bravo battery has been busy as of late juggling missions and an upcoming Change of Command ceremony. On 30 May, Captain Dale Barnett will be assuming command from Captain Matt Simons. We will celebrate in grand fashion with catered local food and the traditional drill and ceremony. CPT Simons will not be moving too far as he will become part of the battalion staff. Congratulations to CPT Simons for a job well done and we look forward to more phenomenal work from him.

Our recent addition, 2/A/131<sup>st</sup> (TAB) Texas Army National Guard, is quickly assimilating into the battalion. They have been rotating people and equipment finding the most efficient combinations. Concentrating their efforts on force protection and position improvement has kept them very busy. They are a definite force multiplier here with the "On the Minute" battalion. Most of them have joined the

battalion in our concrete living quarters. Soon they will all be in Camp Minute.

The Mid-Tour leave program has been very sluggish here as of late. We have received very few slots as have the rest of the units in theater. We are hoping for a return to the normal flow of leave slots in the near future. The soldiers are anxious to be able to take a well-deserved rest as



we crest the middle of the deployment.

Life here is going well, we have very few wants, there is plentiful food, air-conditioning, safe billeting. We are doing very well with any missions sent our way and continue to see success supporting the local town councils, hospitals and schools. Our thoughts are often with our family and friends, and constantly thank you for all of your support. "On the Minute!"

MAJ Rodney Olson

## 296<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion

### COMMANDER'S NOTE

Greetings to the great group of Frontline Families and all back home! As May comes to a close I am proud to report that our battalion is continuing to provide outstanding support to the Arrowhead Brigade. We continue to support across a huge area everyday and we do it all professionally and with precision. You all have every right to be very proud of your soldier. I am humbled every day with the attitude and manner in which they conduct their daily affairs.

The month of May brought BSMC's change of command between the outgoing company commander, MAJ Steven Matson, and the incoming commander, MAJ Scot Doboszinski. I can't thank Steve enough for his outstanding contribution to the Brigade and the Battalion. All members of the

Battalion wish him the best in his future endeavors and his upcoming marriage in July. MAJ Scot Doboszinski, and his wife are a wonderful addition to the Frontline Family. Scot has already hit the ground running and is doing a fantastic job.

With June right around the corner summer has definitely arrived! Daily temps are already in the mid-nineties and we all know it is only going to get warmer. Our soldiers are well aware of the dangers of the heat and we have taken every measure to prevent any heat injuries. Soldiers are well supplied with sunscreen, we have plenty of cold bottled water and leaders keep constant watch over soldiers while they conduct their mission.

When soldiers are able to take a break from their mission we have provided several options. We are currently finishing up the regular season of the "Mosul Wiffle League" and are set to go into the playoffs. Over 20 teams from the battalion started this league and it has been a blast for those playing and watching. The favorite going into the playoffs is rumored to be the "Rainiers" which consists of MAJ Dalessio, SGT Guerin, PFC Schwartz and myself! Another option for soldiers to unwind is in the FOB basketball league. After a rocky start, we have a team from the Outlaws, the Mad Dawgs, and the Blacksmiths all heading into the playoffs. The Outlaws look like one of the stronger teams with SFC Johnson and SSG Gregory leading the charge for the team. Finally, "Club Felix" has opened up for soldiers to have a place to listen to music, play board games, or watch a feature movie while enjoying a cold drink or ice cream. SPC Felix has done an outstanding job and has truly found his calling as one who works the crowd! SGT Bolden from 334<sup>th</sup> Signal Company also helps SPC Felix out in this endeavor.

It looks as though we will start receiving more leave slots though the number is still to be determined. I'd just ask you to continue to be patient with this program. Obviously mission comes first and we balance that with taking care of the soldiers and doing our best to get them home. More to follow as the situation develops.

Finally, thank you again for your continued support of your loved ones serving in harm's way. Mrs. Margaret has mentioned a Battalion Formal upon our return! We all look forward to that day when we can celebrate the Frontline Family Reunion in style!

God Bless us all!

## HHC OUTLAWS

Happy Memorial Day! We hope that all of you are able to get out and enjoy the holiday. Rumor has it that there has been a lot of rain in the Fort Lewis area. I'm sure this is just a vicious rumor though. Also congratulations on the well-deserved recognition of the FRG. All of you have been doing great and your hard efforts are greatly appreciated by every soldier over here. Thanks!



These last two weeks have been very busy, especially for all of the Field Feeding Teams. 2LT Michael Senft replaced 2LT Joseph (Jody) Fuller as the Field Feeding Platoon Leader. They conducted a 100% inventory of every piece of equipment that the platoon had. The platoon is spread out over 11 different locations so that is a challenging inventory that requires weeks of convoying out to different locations. 2LT Fuller will be moving up to the Company XO position replacing 1LT(P) Gary Ellison. 1LT Ellison will move into the Battalion S-4 shop and work the battalion logistical requirements.

So as a tribute to the departing Field Feeding Platoon Leader, I leave you with this picture of him hard at work and surrounded by hostile enemy forces.

## DC MAD DAWGS

### *Acrimonious Acronyms*

For those of you accustomed to the Army's ways of labeling and naming of objects and places, Mosul, Iraq is the place for you. For the rest of us, even those who've been in the military for a while, all of the acronyms can get just a bit confusing. I say this because every time I call my wife I speak to her in the acronyms that become embedded into the D.C. or should I say Distribution Company spoken language. I tell her about driving my LHS, a HMMWV, a HEMMT, or the FMTV. I tell her that I

had to go to the CP to see my XO or LT, and I don't even mention having to clean my M-16, my M-2 or my MK-19. And whenever she asks me how we can see at night in the dark she's sure to hear about my NVGs or when I'm driving I have to look through my DVE. (that stands for Driver's Vision Enhancer, I just asked my XO). And when she tried to ask me where I was I told her my FOB, not the COB, and tried to explain how I live in my AO. Are you getting a little confused yet, well just hold on cause I haven't even explained what sort of jobs we have here.

On any given day we can do the work of an RTO, an SOG, or an NCOIC and if we're not the driver in the truck, then surely you all must know that we are the TC. Should we ever get sick we don't go to the doctor's we go to the TMC. When not eating an MRE we eat at the DFAC. If we ever need supplies we've got to go to the SSA. We work alongside FMC, BSMC, and HHC. (good to know those guys as they're the cooks). To further our education after AIT we need to go online at our AKO accounts to get into TALDP or the AIPD. When we get dressed in the morning we start out with our PTs for APFT and then switch into our CCUs, DCUs, or ACUs. At least we don't have to match anything or some of us would really be in trouble!

Whew, confused yet? If not, then let me take you outside of the FOB (check back in your notes for that acronym). When leaving the gate we need to make sure that our URO, MTS, and FBCB2 are working. If not, then we need to find our EMS rep with the ANCD to fill our EPLARS. Once we've got all of that up and running and we've PMCS'd our vehicle then we need to link up with our OIC and SP. From there we can finally head out the gate that is guarded by KBR or ICDC and potentially lurking around every corner we are on the constant lookout for NCFs with RPGs, IEDs and SAFs.

With all of these acronym's out there I can assure you that your soldiers are doing an excellent job of getting things done for the Mad Dawg Family. We would like to congratulate our newest NCO, Diedre Holder. And I would like to thank my CO for giving me the chance to write this FRG letter. From sunny Mosul, Iraq we hope that all of you kids enjoy getting out of school for the summer. I would also like to send a personal XO to my wife but she might think that I'm sending along my XO instead of a kiss and a hug. Cheers, SGT. Herriman.

## FMC BLACKSMITHS

Blacksmith soldiers are continuing to make significant contributions to a new and free Iraq. To date SPC Attakai and SSG Collins have up- armored 62 vehicles utilizing the "Mad-Attakai" up- armor design.

Soldiers are continuing to train on the basic war-fighting skills necessary to survive and defend against Non-Compliant Forces (NCF) Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs). During the past month, FMC soldiers trained on Communications and Reporting Procedures, Medical and First Aid Procedures, Guard



Procedures, and Convoy Operations. We also had a unique experience to get FMC soldiers who deployed after November to

get hands on training at the Convoy Live Fire Range, ultimately giving soldiers a better understanding of how to shoot and move while traveling in a convoy. Convoys are the primary mission for the BSB in our support to the Arrowhead Brigade. We are currently planning a MK-19 range to familiarize soldiers with the capabilities of this weapon system.

With the continued use of the soldiers from the 512th Maintenance Company from Mannheim, Germany to service the Brigade's Vehicles, we have completed a total of 105 services across the Brigade.

We continue to revise and upgrade our Force Protection Service and Recovery section has emplaced over 150 concrete barriers around Mission Essential Areas.

The Armament Shop conducted a PMI class for soldiers before going to the M16 / M249 range and they also completed gauging on all of the M16s in the Frontline Battalion.

The Local National Rebuild Program, which we use to rebuild unserviceable engines, transmissions, generators, etc, has completed 15 of the 27 jobs they have in shop. This program saves the Army money every month by rebuilding equipment instead of buying new equipment and it also keeps our combat power above 90%.

The Blacksmiths are doing an outstanding job in supporting the Arrowhead Brigade. Over the past month, we have completed 97% or 211 of the 217 jobs received from the Brigade.

During the past month, three FMC soldiers were selected as the "Blacksmith" Player of the week: SPC Pineda was chosen for his contributions to protecting key personnel on numerous convoys, CW3 Singh was chosen for his service in providing immediate first aid to SGT Rubalcava on the 8th of May 2004 after the Mortar Attack that took her life, and SGT Armstrong was chosen for providing outstanding technical maintenance support and expertise on communications equipment for the EMS shop. SGT Armstrong repaired over 25 radios and was also chosen as the "Frontline" player of the week for his outstanding performance.

## BSMC WITCHDOCTORS

On May 15th the Witchdoctors saluted their company commander MAJ Steven Matson for the last time, and officially welcomed CPT (P) Scot Doboszinski in the BSMC's Change of Command Ceremony. On May 23rd, he was frocked and now is better known around the AO as MAJ D.

MAJ Doboszinski is on deployment number two in Iraq. Prior to being deployed with the Stryker Brigade, he was the G4 Forward for the 30th Medical Brigade out of Heidelberg, Germany and called Baghdad home from January until May of 2003. Before coming to Fort Lewis, he took an opportunity to further his branch skills as a 70K: Medical Logistician, at the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Agency in Fort Detrick, MD. He puts this knowledge to work now at BSMC, 296th BSB in northern Iraq, offering his company's medics and providers the resources, training and leadership necessary to support the soldiers of 3d Brigade with the superior medical coverage they deserve.

MAJ Doboszinski sums up his expectations of BSMC soldiers merely by asking them to **do the right thing**. This means he expects his soldiers to respect and support their chain of command; his NCOs to lead, train, care for and know each of their soldiers; his officers to set, to live and to check the standards.

MAJ Doboszinski emphasizes genuine concern for a soldier's family as one of our most important force multipliers. He realizes that for a soldier to perform his or her duties successfully, they need to have strong and healthy ties to their family's support base. MAJ D has made it his duty to talk with each soldier in the unit, learning family members' names, taking time to look at the pictures they carry with them and listening to each soldier's stories of the challenges and joys their family brings them. MAJ

D hails from Delano, Minnesota and has been married to his wife for nine years.

The BSMC is excited and motivated to serve under MAJ Doboszanski's leadership for the next two years; we respect him professionally for the effort he puts into his work at the company and personally for the emphasis he places on soldiers and their families. Soon 296th will be back stateside and MAJ D looks forward to meeting all of the BSMC family personally, we are sure you will be as satisfied as we are with him!

In addition to hailing their new commander, the Witchdoctors would also like to recognize and congratulate the promotion of PFC Shelton to the rank of Specialist and PV1 Smith to the promotion of PV2.

## 276<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion

*Greetings Families and Friends,*

*Each newsletter the Pioneer Battalion will focus on a particular element within our organization. This week we focus on our Bravo Company of Richlands, Virginia, enjoy.*

### “Bravo Bears”

As Bravo Company's soldiers find themselves many miles from home, working and serving in unknown environments, through mortars, rocket, RPG, and small arms attacks, they are still able to perform their missions and exceed the standard.

Bravo Company has hit the ground running. Over 95 engineer missions have been successfully completed in their areas of operation since arriving in Iraq less than 3 months ago. Their missions have varied from force protection efforts in the FOB, presence patrols in local villages, base utilization and quality of life projects, and even preparation work on Iraqi Civil Defense Corp (ICDC) training facilities.

The platoons are each working with their own assigned task force in a variety of locations in our area of operations in northern Iraq. The jobsites



As Bravo Company's soldiers find themselves many miles from home, working and serving in unknown environments, through mortars, rocket, RPG, and small arms attacks, they are still able to perform their missions and exceed



have varied from construction-like environments to walking the crowded streets of local villages, convoying through traffic worse than that of Washington D.C. and still finding time to smile at the end of the day, especially at mail call.

The morale of the soldiers has been very good despite some injuries to our fellow Bravo company soldiers.

As a company, Bravo finds itself working in many locations spread out over many miles for days and weeks at a time were the only contact with the people are through radio communications.

During our somewhat short time spent in country, Bravo soldiers have found themselves working among people from all walks of life,



including local nationals. Communication is an obstacle at times but with patience and interpreters the goal has been met. It has also been a time to learn about another

culture, religion and lifestyles.

Whether Bravo Company is operating heavy equipment, convoying through crowded streets, emplacing obstacles or on foot patrols, WE WILL PERSEVERE!!!

“DON'T FEED THE BEARS”

CPT Chris Dunn

## 18<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company

Hello again, all Sapper Families and Friends.

I hope this newsletter finds everyone doing well. I can assure you that all of our soldiers and leaders are doing great.

We continue to support operations in two different areas of operation. Third platoon continues to execute operations in the south with the task force down there while the remaining of the company continues to patrol the streets of Mosul. Each day our soldiers are working to make the streets of Mosul safer for the Coalition forces and the Iraqi people. I would also like to congratulate SSG Bunting and his wife as she delivered a beautiful baby girl earlier this month. We have also had the opportunity to promote SFC Ripley and CPT Evans. Thanks to everyone for your continued support. Sappers Forward!

CPT Patrick Dagon

## 293<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Company

The WARRIORS have finally joined the Arrowhead family. We are the latest addition to the Stryker Brigade, completing our link up at the end of March. The Brigade immediately made us feel like one of their own, assisting us in any way they could.

We are stationed out of Fort Stewart, Georgia, normally supporting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division.

The soldiers of the 293<sup>rd</sup> MP Company are breaking new ground for the Military Police Corps here in Iraq. This is the first time that MPs have been direct support to the SBCT. What we are doing here is setting the stage for the role of all military police in future SBCTs. We are proud of what we are doing and proud to be part of history.

The Military Police men and women were very eager to get on the ground and start their mission. This is the company's third deployment since 9/11. The company deployed to the Pentagon immediately after 9/11 for 6 months, followed by a 7-month tour in Afghanistan. We are looking forward to working with the soldiers of Arrowhead. We have a very important job here working directly with the Iraqi Police and have a lot of work ahead of us.

CPT Jason Jajack

## 209<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Company

Hello again everyone!

The soldiers of the 209<sup>th</sup> MICO have been extremely busy recently. Their hard work has helped the Brigade Commander make some very crucial decisions in the last two weeks. Each soldier has had a vital role in gathering the intelligence to help the Infantry Battalions move their forces in the right direction.

In the past few weeks, several soldiers have been promoted. SGT Lambeth was promoted



to SSG and SPC Williams was just promoted to SGT, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. In addition, the MICO held its monthly Soldier and NCO of the

Month Board. This month's winners were SGT Schelble and PV2 Sharma. They were awarded a 4-day pass in Qatar for their efforts.

In addition, SGT Josephson was awarded a 4-day pass for his hard work in the MICO TOC. The soldiers who went to Qatar enjoyed their time off by swimming, laying in the sun and eating out. It was good for them to get away for a few days to relax.

Three new soldiers have joined the MICO in the last couple of weeks. 2LT Hannah and TSgt Healey have replaced their Air Force Weather Squadron counterparts. Also, CW2 Renas has joined the MICO and is already working hard for us.

The MICO is continuing to produce great intelligence for the Brigade. The Stryker Brigade and the 209<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Company should be very proud!

CPT Kevin G. Hosier

## 334<sup>th</sup> Signal Company

Dear Lightning Families,

Greetings. This is possibly my last newsletter as the 334<sup>th</sup> Signal Company Commander. Let me start by saying what an honor it was serving with all your husbands and wives. They are some of the finest people I know and have always made me proud. Their technical expertise and hard work is literally what make this brigade communicate on a daily basis. We are currently inventorying all the equipment as is required for all changes of command. Your spouses have spent some long hot days recently and their hard work has not gone unnoticed.



We have seen some days in the upper 90s recently and being a cold weather fan, to me it feels like a blast furnace. My contractor told us that 20 May was their mark on the wall for summer and had an Iraqi word that meant "the day the women turn brown".

With internet access available at every site, I continue to encourage soldiers to take classes online for college credits. I got some flack about this from soldiers but will repeat it: if your spouse isn't taking courses- get on them; they have the time.

There is a possibility that the leave program will start back up toward the middle of June, but I encourage you not to make plans right now; it is not definite.

As always thanks for supporting your soldiers and the FRG.

CPT Glenn Mellor

### **And finally...**

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.