



# THE LUMBERJACK LEDGER

Volume 1, Issue 5, July 2007

## LUMBERJACK 6

Greetings to all families and friends of the 20th Engineer Battalion! We have been here in Iraq for almost 9 months (and the 642nd almost 11 months)! The weather is very hot and we just hosted three members of the incoming unit on a pre-deployment visit. The 20th Engineer BRIGADE has also recently arrived and is preparing to assume the corps engineer brigade mission, so there will be two 20th Engineers in town! The unit remains very busy, building coalition outposts and joint security stations all over the Baghdad area, as well as building some new medical facilities right here on Camp Liberty. Many Soldiers have reenlisted here in theater, coupling their desire to continue service with some very generous bonuses being offered. All of this points to two things: success for the operation in Iraq and success for the Soldiers in the 20th Engineer Battalion. With each passing day, Iraqis are taking more small steps to move forward with the future of their country. With the second meeting of the US and Iranian ambassadors recently, it appears that an important time is at hand in the struggle to create a safe and prosperous Iraq that respects the rights of all its citizens. People are doing a lot of talking in Washington; Soldiers are doing a lot of DOING here in Iraq. Every day, in the one-hundred plus degree weather, Lumberjack Soldiers are getting down to business placing concrete barriers and HESCO bastions; erecting guard towers, latrines, and showers; installing electricity and air conditioning; clearing debris off of roads; filling craters from explosions with concrete; and building large obstacles to block insurgent movement around Baghdad. They are doing important work that is vital to Multi-National Division – Baghdad and to the American people. The average Iraqi on the street and in the countryside, Sunni, Shiite, and Kurd, is also depending on the United States to stand by him in this hour of trial, even as the various groups attempt to reconcile among themselves and move towards a better future as one united people. Just as the old adage says, "If not us, who? And if not now, when?" Please continue to support and pray for your Soldiers as they continue with this mission. Please continue to pray for our Soldiers who have fallen in this conflict and their families, as well as for those Soldiers who have been wounded and their families. May God bless each of you and keep you safe in your lives back in the United States.

## LUMBERJACK 9

As our time here winds down it is so good to see just how much our Soldiers have learned. The Lumberjack Soldiers spread their wings daily and show just how dedicated they are to accomplishing their missions here. I am proud of each and every Soldier in the command. The efforts made in building infrastructure around the camp and working throughout the Baghdad community has been outstanding. The Lumberjack Soldiers show their courage and dedication to their jobs that is unsurpassed by any unit I have served with. Their unique abilities and adaptability to all situations has made the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion's mission a success.

# HHC "Diablos"



SSG Ortelgel and SPC Mendoza working on the Lumberjack Shack



1SG Lingenfelter's B-day surprise.

The month of June saw a great many changes occur in HHC. We have said goodbye to a number of outstanding Soldiers who have moved to the 510<sup>th</sup> Sapper Company in order to be given the opportunity to do work in their MOS. We know these individuals will continue to do great work! So we say goodbye and good luck to SPC Forester, SPC Presley, PFC Proctor, PFC Ramirez, SPC Escalante and SPC Antoff. Though we are saying goodbye to these Soldiers, we welcome, in their place, the following individuals from the 510<sup>th</sup> Sapper Company; PFC Johnson, PFC Golden, PFC Thalerwellman, PFC Metcalf, 1LT Boucher and SFC Shatto. We look forward to the hard work, experience, and dedication we know these individuals bring to HHC. We also welcome SSG Ortelgel from FSC who comes to us with a wealth of knowledge and a gung-ho attitude and say farewell to SFC Guillencepeda who goes to FSC. His dedication to HHC operations helped shape HHC as we stood up and brought us to where we are today. Many thanks to him and his family and we wish him good luck on this new assignment. Not only have we seen movement in and out of the company but we have been privileged to promote and number of Soldiers. The following individuals were advanced in rank in the month of June: SSG Masters, SGT Miller, CPL Kelly, SPC Trevino, SPC Sather, SPC Tackett, CPT Steele, CPT Petrie and 1LT Boucher. Congratulations to all our newly promoted Soldiers!

HHC continues to conduct training, daily company operations and mission taskings with a limited number of personnel. This month HHC ran a qualification range and we were able to qualify 90% of the company. Great job by 1SG Lingenfelter and his range detail in running that range! They were able to qualify 4 of our medics on their 9mm pistols which will give them greater flexibility in egression from a vehicle to treat a wounded Soldier should the need arise. We have continued to see the daily temperatures rise to 115 degrees F and higher. Despite these temperatures we remain high in spirits as we continue to look forward to coming home and completing our mission here. The S3-C shop and numerous Soldiers from all sections have continued their work on the Lumberjack Shack and it is looking fantastic! We anticipate being able to utilize this building soon as the new battalion classroom and gathering place. Our very own S6 Soldiers have also put forth an extra effort this last month in conducting a VTC with the FRG. Despite the initial hiccups they did a great job of getting it up and running so all Soldiers who signed up were able to see and talk to their loved ones back home. Thank you all for your continued support- we eagerly await the day when we set foot down on FT Hood



PFC Perkins listens to SSG Woods give him instruction.

The Lumberjack Shack – almost completed!



-CPT Wayment





# WORKHORSE

Hello Friends and Families,

I hope this finds all of you doing well. I know it has been a while since our last newsletter, but we have been busy supporting the battalion. All of you would be very proud of the hard work your loved ones have accomplished. We know you are all pulling for us and your thoughts are a tremendous motivator.

We have had eight promotions since our last newsletter. Andrew Cancienne, Johnathan Workman, Kerrie Augustyn, Jean Cuevas, and Lena Brown were all promoted to specialist, while Alicia Bozeman advanced to private first class. In addition, Neal Haufe earned his sergeant stripes and Jim Wilson's bar changed from yellow to black as he is now a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant.

This newsletter will be very short on verbiage because I have decided to pack it with more pictures than normal. These pictures are from the whole deployment, not just the last two months. Enjoy!







# 510th Sapper Company

July 2007

ISSUE 5

## Commander's Comments - CPT Kenneth Rockwell & 1SG John Etter

Hello to all the Family and Friends back in the states! I truly hope you are enjoying your summer months. With the end of July comes the end of our 9th month here in Baghdad. I am pleased to report to you that your Soldier has performed admirably, is in great spirits, and greatly looks forward to his return to Fort Hood.

The largest change over the past two months has been the structural change of the 510th Sapper Company. As our missions change, so too has our needs for four platoon. As a result, and to return to the in-

tended structure of the 510th, we have removed fourth platoon, transferring the Soldiers to the other three platoons within the 510th. During the shuffle, we were saddened to lose the newly promoted 1LT Boucher and SFC Shatto, both of who moved over the HHC to assist the battalion staff.

Since the last newsletter, the pace of operations here in Baghdad has slowed. As the President's troop surge plan for Baghdad nears a conclusion, we find ourselves with less missions. From the onset of our time here in Iraq, our focus has

been establishing neighborhood security stations, putting the 510th Sapper Company on the tip of the spear for the U.S. strategy. Having completed over 50 neighborhood security stations, and helping Iraq meet one of its 18 benchmarks for success, your Soldier has truly done his part to help Iraq become a more stable country. I am profoundly proud of the work done by your loved one and the 510th Sapper Company.

## 1st Platoon - 1LT Thomas Wynn & SFC Alfredo Ledezma

Hello friends and family, greetings from the Arabian Desert. Unlike back home, the weather here has been consistent and predictable, 110 to 120 degrees everyday. We have been quite busy throughout the past couple of months. First Platoon has certainly been the "go-to" platoon, participating in just about every type of construction mission to include crater and road repair, obstacle emplacement, electrical work, and an abundance of carpentry. The Soldiers are consistently commended for their efforts on every mission from company, battalion, and brigade commanders.

Throughout June and July, First Platoon has been all over Baghdad, enhancing force protection measures and upgrading the living conditions at Coalition Out-

posts, Joint Security Stations, and Patrol Bases. On May 5, 2007, at a COP in Northeastern Baghdad, the platoon received mortar fire while finishing a project. Although five of us were wounded, SGT Hernandez received the brunt of the blast and was sent home to recover from his injuries. We're all pleased to hear that he has recovered, and are hoping to see him soon. PFC McFadden received a Purple Heart for his injuries, and three of us received Combat Action Badges.

The platoon has seen a lot of changes in the past couple of weeks. We'd like to congratulate CPL Savage, SPC Valdez, SPC Glass, SPC Reynolds, SPC McFadden, SPC Wilds and 1LT Wynn on their recent promotions. We'd also like to welcome SSG Battle, SGT

Reeff, SGT Mack, SPC Antoff, PFC Hughes, PFC Warfield, PFC Huver, PFC Ramirez, and PFC Proctor to the platoon, and congratulate SSG Smith for finding his way back to First. We would also like to send our farewell to SSG Shepp, moving to 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, PFC Northcut, moving to S2, and PFC Thallerwellman, who moved to HHC Operations. And finally, we'd like to thank CPL Savage for his commitment to the Army, and congratulate him on his recent reenlistment.

From every member of First Platoon, we want to thank everyone back home for your prayers, support, and of course their care packages. We're more than half-way home, and although these last months are sure to creep by, we'll be home in no time.



## 2nd Platoon - 2LT Daniel Robledo & SFC Nathan Young

Hello to all. First off, allow me to introduce myself. I am the new Second Platoon Leader, Lieutenant Daniel Robledo. Along with myself, there have been many recent additions to our family. The majority of our new members have joined us from fourth platoon with the transition of the 510<sup>th</sup> Sapper Company to a three platoon concept. We are excited about this reconfiguration which has given us fresh leadership with a new first squad leader, SSG Archer, and further combat power with the addition of PFC Santiago and PFC Koch. This reconfiguration has also strengthened our electrical capabilities with three very talented electricians, SGT Hollman, SGT McDonald, and SPC Morris. Our carpentry ability has also increased with the

prior construction experience of PFC Franciosa and PV2 Jenson. We also welcome PFC Moring, PFC Pressley, and PFC Reid who joined us from battalion headquarters to receive some much anticipated line experience. However, with the influx of personnel comes the loss of old members. We are sad to see SSG Aalsburg leave second platoon. His presence will be missed but we wish him the best of luck with HQ. SPC Buchanan and PFC Golden have been requested by battalion staff members to serve at their level and have eagerly accepted. We wish them the best of luck as well. The most anticipated arrival would be the Mages family's newest member who is expected sometime this week. Congratulations to both of you.

Missions have kept the platoon busy in the month of May and June. We have fortified defenses and installed electricity for numerous coalition outposts and joint security stations. The finished product of the Soldiers' work illustrates how their skills improve with every mission. However, all missions come with risk. The Purple Heart was awarded to PFC Martin and SGT McDonald for wounds received. PFC Martin will remain in San Antonio to recover from his injuries. We wish PFC Martin and his family the best and our thoughts are with them. Nevertheless, our moral is high as we plan to finish our tour to the best of our ability and rejoin our families proud of our accomplishments. Thank you for your continued support.

## 3rd Platoon - 1LT Daniel Lao and SFC Sidney Karneke

The recent weeks have been filled with productive work and significant change. 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon has continued to work to better the living conditions and operations of units throughout the Baghdad area.

Workload has included constructing over 6,000-square feet of living space and installing much appreciated air conditioning systems. Most recently, the focus was on a medical storage

facility which was completed on 12 July. In coming weeks, the platoon will begin work on constructing a new medical aid station for the battalion.

In the midst of continued opera-

tions, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon has undergone a shift in personnel. SFC Shatto has moved up to a new position where he is now working as day-

moved over to assume responsibilities as platoon sergeant and has already made his contributions felt. PFC Johnson, who has

turned heads because of his hard work and motivation, was hand-picked by CSM Murphy to be his driver. Soldiers joining the platoon are SSG Shepp, SPC Allen, SPC Escalante, SPC Forrester, SPC Gadberry, SPC Gosset, SPC Sisson, and PFC McFaul. Promotions have included PFCs



Riva Ridge Medical Warehouse built by 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Platoons

shift NCOIC for the S3 shop. His countless efforts of hard work have been invaluable to the platoon's success and he will be greatly missed. SFC Karneke, formerly of 4<sup>th</sup> Platoon, has

Sisson and Stern to SPC. Continuing one a day at a time, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon remains healthy and productive. Thank you for all your support and love.



IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT 10 MONTHS HAVE COME AND GONE FOR THE SOLDIERS, NCOs AND OFFICERS OF THE DEUCE. THE UNIT IS STILL WAITING TO HEAR THE OFFICIAL DECISION ON WHAT HAS COME TO BE REFERRED TO AS, "THE E WORD." REGARDLESS OF WHAT HAPPENS, THE SOLDIERS OF THE 642<sup>ND</sup> ESC HAVE SHOWN TREMENDOUS FORTITUDE AND DISCIPLINE THROUGH IT ALL, DESPITE THE SITUATIONS IN WHICH IT HAS INVARIABLY LEFT THEIR FAMILIES, FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES BACK HOME. IT IS THE SUPPORT OF THESE CLOSE FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS TO WHOM WE OWE OUR SANITY, STRENGTH AND COURAGE — THANK YOU!

DESPITE THE WHISPERS OF EXTENSION, WE CONTINUE ON IN OUR MISSION; ALWAYS FOCUSED. THE SOLDIERS OF THE DEUCE ALWAYS AMAZE ME WITH THEIR DISCIPLINE, WORK ETHIC AND UNYIELDING MOTIVATION. THE COMPANY'S NAME IS WELL-REGARDED BECAUSE OF THEIR EFFORTS ON AND OFF THE FOB, AND WHY SUPPORTING UNITS NOW ASK FOR THE DEUCE BY NAME. WHETHER IT'S THE LINE PLATOONS WORKING EXTENDED OFF-THE-FOB MISSIONS — ENHANCING THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF COALITION FORCES AND THE LOCAL POPULACE THROUGH THE CREATION OF COALITION OUTPOSTS, JOINT SECURITY STATIONS, PATROL BASES AND CHECKPOINTS THROUGHOUT LOCAL MUHALLAS - OR THE HEADQUARTERS AND MAINTENANCE PLATOONS ENSURING THE PLATOONS ARE PROPERLY SUPPLIED, RESOURCED AND FITTED WITH THE PROPER EQUIPMENT TO EXECUTE AND ACCOMPLISH THEIR MISSION; THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORT OF THE SOLDIERS IN THE DEUCE AND THE CAMARADERIE WE SHARE, MAKES THE UNIT A TRUE EXTENDED FAMILY.

IN JUNE AND JULY WE SAW MANY INDIVIDUALS RECOGNIZED FOR EXEMPLARY ACHIEVEMENT ON MISSIONS, AS WELL AS NUMEROUS SOLDIERS AWARDED COMBAT ACTION BADGES, AND OUR FIRST COMBAT MEDIC BADGE. WE HOPE THAT BY THE END OF THE TOUR WE WILL HAVE EACH DESERVING SOLDIER IN THE DEUCE RECOGNIZED IN SOME WAY, SHAPE OR FORM FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNIT AND THE FIGHT AT HAND. ADDITIONALLY SOME OF THE UNIT'S SOLDIERS WERE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LARGEST, DEPLOYED REENLISTMENT IN IRAQ SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE WAR, WHICH WAS TELEVISED LIVE BACK IN THE STATES ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY. WITH GENERAL PETRAUS PRESIDING, OVER 700 SOLDIERS RAISED THEIR RIGHT HAND AND EXTENDED THEIR COMMITMENTS TO THE ARMY. OUR VERY OWN SGT SAMPSON AND SPC CARRUBA WERE AMIDST THE SEA OF SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AIRMEN AND MARINES PARTICIPATING IN THE REENLISTMENT; BOTH GOT THEIR PICTURE WITH THE GENERAL. IN ADDITION TO THE REENLISTMENTS THE DEUCE ALSO HAD TWO MORE SOLDIERS PARTICIPATE IN THE FOURTH FESTIVITIES — TAKING THEIR OATH OF CITIZENSHIP ALONGSIDE OTHER MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN GALLANTLY SERVING THE UNITED STATES IN WAR, STILL CITIZENS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES. BOTH PFC YARTEY AND SPC NESCA CAN NOW CLAIM THEIR ALLEGIANCE LEGALLY — ALTHOUGH WE'VE KNOWN WHERE THEIR PATRIOTISM AND FAITH HAS LIED SINCE WE ALL DEPLOYED OVER HERE IN SEPTEMBER.

IN CLOSING I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT IT IS AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE TO SERVE ALONGSIDE EACH SOLDIER IN THE 642<sup>ND</sup> ESC. PLEASE KEEP YOUR SOLDIER AND THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE DEUCE IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS DURING THESE FINAL MONTHS. IT IS THE LOVE AND SUPPORT OF OUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS THAT HELP US GET THROUGH EACH TRYING MOMENT AND MAKE THE DAYS FLY BY. WE CONTINUE TO KEEP YOU IN OUR THOUGHTS AND CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU ALL ON THE TARMAC AT FT. DRUM SOMETIME SOON.

**RESPECT ALL, FEAR NONE, DEUCE!**

**DEUCE 5**



Soldiers in HQ, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and Maintenance receive CMB/CABs from LTC Raymer and CSM Murphy on 1 July 2007.



**DEUCE**

# EMPIRE

Greetings to all who read this; the Empire hopes that this newsletter reaches all of you in good health (and with cooler weather than we have right now)! Considering that the daily temperature is getting closer and closer to 120 degrees, we have been fortunate that our pace of operations has slowed somewhat since the winter and spring months. Nevertheless, the Empire continued to be busy from the end of May through July with a wide variety of projects that spread across the spectrum of our capabilities.

Since the last newsletter, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon has conducted a route sanitization on a main highway, constructed a road bypass around a damaged overpass on a main highway, repaired another critical road, improved two of the entry control points onto Camp Liberty, and built three more enduring control points in a historically volatile area of Baghdad.

2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon has likewise been very busy, having constructed two outposts and a joint security station, provided emergency crane support to Camp Victory, and sanitized four routes in southern Baghdad, all since the last newsletter. Similarly, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon has constructed two other outposts, sanitized a heavily-traveled route, and provided gravel-spreading support at an outpost. Additionally, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon provided emergency crane support for a hard-landed Blackhawk here on the FOB.

As all of the Empire Soldiers can attest, the operational tempo that we must sustain combined with the wide variety of missions described above puts an amazing amount of stress on not only the Soldiers, but the company's equipment. The Field Maintenance Team, headed up by CPT Lullen and SSG Bush, has done an amazing job of keeping the Empire's equipment in operating shape. I am extremely proud of our maintenance team, who are definitely the company's unsung heroes.

The Empire, along with the rest of the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion Lumberjacks, is definitely in the home stretch of the deployment. Soon, the daily high temperatures will start to go in the right direction (down!), and we will begin our redeployment timeline. We thank you for all of your thoughts and prayers both up to this point and through the rest of the deployment. We have been very fortunate up to this point, and will remain vigilant in our operations to ensure our fortunes hold out.

I am incredibly proud of all of the Empire Soldiers, as I am sure you all are; what we have accomplished thus far is nothing short of amazing.

Until next time,  
CPT Hudson  
Empire 6

Congratulations to the following Soldiers on their promotions:

June: PFC Cole SGT Baker SGT Oliveros  
July: SPC Stephenson SPC McCormack SPC Northcutt



(L) 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon improving an ECP.  
(R) 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon recovering a Blackhawk.

# LONG LIVE THE EMPIRE!!







# REENLISTMENT



Greetings from the Chaplain's Corner at Camp Liberty!

Oh my word, it is HOT here! I mean Texas doesn't even measure to this category of HOT. Iraq adds a completely new meaning to HOT for me. Therefore, needless to say, we are ready to get back to our Families at Fort Hood. It may be hot here in Iraq, but the great news is that we closer to going back home. If everything stays the same, we only have approximately 3 to 4 months to go. However, as I make daily strolls around our pad, or when I go out on convoy missions to visit our Soldiers who are out the wire, I get a chance to see their dedication, hard work, and commitment as engineers. Moreover, just think, they do all this work between 12-18 hours a day (or more) in this 120-140 (or more) degree heat here Iraq. Love one, you should be proud of your Soldier! He or she is doing their best to make sure that not only Iraq is safer, but that every Outpost is secured and safer for other units in order for them to live in and to perform their daily missions. Your Soldier's hard work makes the life of other US Soldiers much more efficient and easier. It is amazing to see what your Soldier can do under what feels like unbearable heat. Even though we have a mission to accomplish in spite of the heat, it is still a great refreshment to be able to get back to your room, take off your ACU's, and just lay on your bed while enjoying the refreshing cool air from the air-conditioner. Now that is refreshment! And one that we have taken so often for granted back in the States. I know I have, even though I spent 17 years repairing such equipment. As I think of the word refresh or refreshment, my heart turns to you our loved one back home. How are you doing? I know you miss us are tired also. You are tired of being both mom and dad and all the other various rolls that your Soldier always took care of when he or she was with you. So I know that if you're tired just as much as us, then I know you need refreshment too. So, let me encourage all of you to look out for one another back home. Help your fellow FRG spouse in watching the kids, mowing the grass, going to the store, and etc. Recognize the need of your fellow FRG spouse and lend a helping hand, and let them return the favor. We have a tendency to drift apart during this part of the separation. Do not let that happen! We all need each other to make it through this last leg of the deployment. And you too need to be refreshed at times, especially spiritually. It is from your faith that you will gain the greatest part of your strength for all things. Let me encourage you to spend time with God and in Church, where other believers can encourage you. Listen to what the prophet Isaiah says, "Yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary" (Isaiah 41:31). So, instead of just sitting at home on Sunday morning, call up a fellow FRG spouse and say, "Hey I am going to Church for some refreshment and I need some company, will you come with me?" Remember even the strongest person still needs a helping hand or more important strength to make it through another day. Relay on each other, especially your faith in God. He is your greatest strength and refreshment. Until we speak again, may the love and strength of God, refresh your heart, soul, mind, and body these coming months.

Thoughtful Reflection:

***You cannot change the whole world, but you can make a difference in the life of others, one life at a time.***

*"And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward." (Matthew 10:42)*

Your Caring Chaplain,

Chaplain (CPT) Rickie Wambles

Chaplain Asst. (PFC) Avery Owens