



# THE LUMBERJACK LEDGER

Volume 1, Issue 3 April 2007

Greetings to all friends and family of the 20th Engineer Battalion. The Lumberjacks are still defending liberty here in Baghdad. The battalion is truly on the cutting edge of efforts to implement the new Baghdad Security Plan. As new brigade combat teams arrive in the country, Soldiers from the 20th are out building combat outposts and joint security stations so these units can operate in their assigned areas throughout the city. The work of the engineer companies provides Soldiers throughout Multinational Division - Baghdad with the necessary bases to carry the fight to anti-Iraqi forces. Soldiers from HHC, FSC, 510th, 642nd, and 887th have been all over Baghdad working to win this fight against the bad guys. You can be proud of all of them. I can assure you that they are doing their duty and then some. In addition to the joint security stations and combat outposts, we are still working on other construction missions, repairing road craters caused by IEDs, and maintaining obstacles on the Baghdad Security Belt. There has been a surge in the number of brigade combat teams, but not in the number of engineers. In late March, the battalion conducted mobility, countermobility, survivability, and general engineering missions for nine different brigade combat teams in the Multinational Division - Baghdad area of operations that wear six different divisional shoulder patches. The "Mighty Seahorse" is well known throughout the city; everyone wants the 20th to come work with them. I am certainly privileged to command such an outstanding unit.

Baghdad is a large city and we are getting to see a lot of it. The citizens of the city are starting to clean up and rebuild. Everywhere I travel, I see Iraqis cleaning up trash, rebuilding roads and bridges, repairing houses, and opening businesses. Iraqi children are going to school and playing in their neighborhoods. Iraqi Soldiers and police are on the streets walking the beat and arresting lawbreakers. These Soldiers and policemen are fighting each day to impose the rule of law in Baghdad and throughout the country. For every bomb blast you see on the news, there are dozens of positive actions taking place. Most Iraqis want to live in peace and work to create a modern, prosperous country. The United States has to stand by them; it is our unique destiny in the world to complete this task. A small minority of Iraqis want to create a territory of banditry and chaos. Remember what our Founding Fathers wrote in 1776: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. These are our truths as Americans and we must remain willing to fight for them.

We are in contact with engineer units in the United States that are training for deployment to Iraq. The plan is in place for more engineers to arrive in Iraq later in the year, to include ones to replace every company in the 20th on schedule. We appreciate all the support and encouragement that families and friends are providing to the Soldiers each day. We wish all of you a wonderful springtime.

**BUILD AND FIGHT!**

LTC James Raymer

## **LUMBERJACK 9**

The pride and confidence of Soldiers within the Lumberjack Battalion continues to speak for itself. As we rebuild and reinforce much of Baghdad's infrastructure, our Soldiers' work continues to be among the best. Whether placing barriers for a JSS or COP, or doing vertical construction at those places, the motivation and effort the Soldiers display is simply outstanding. I am always amazed with their perseverance and work ethic. This unit's support to Iraq and our fellow Coalition Units is irreplaceable.

As we continue our deployment it is important that we do not become complacent and lose focus. Responsibility and safety are tasks everyone should undertake, whether here in country or at home with our families on rest and recuperation leave. The unwavering support from our families is overpowering and continues to help us excel in our everyday tasks. We appreciate their commitment to the battalion and all of the Mighty Lumberjack Soldiers.

"Build and Fight"

# "BREACH HELL!"

# DIABLO

**"Picking up Speed!"**. You may not know this, but the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion is currently a major contributor to make Baghdad secure. Through construction of Joint Security Stations (JSS) and Combat Outposts (COP) in and around Baghdad, the battalion is doing its part to provide a safe environment for the people of Iraq. As a result, the battalion's operational tempo is picking up speed. We are focused on creating JSSs, COPs, and "gated communities". The need for synchronization of manpower, equipment, and construction materials are paramount. As a response, the S-3 section (operations and plans) has grown to keep up. We welcome CPT Charles Cathcart and 1LT Richard Steel to the S-3 section. Both are coming from the 642<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Company and bring a wealth of experience to the section. Sadly, at a time when activity is gearing up, we will soon be saying goodbye to a human juggernaut of energy in the S-3 section, Sergeant Major Federico Boyce. We wish him success as the battalion command sergeant major for a new unit presently standing up at Fort Hood. SGM Boyce's departure will be a real loss, as he has continually fought to reduce the number of "ankle biting" jobs we are tasked with on Camp Liberty. His endeavors have freed up over two platoon's worth of Engineer Soldiers that now contribute directly to off the aforementioned FOB construction missions. His boots will be tough to fill. However, his replacement, Sergeant First Class Michael Negron, is up to the challenge. SFC Negron just completed a tour with the 887<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company as a platoon sergeant. Prior to the 887<sup>th</sup>, SFC Negron was "on the trail" (a Drill Sergeant) at Fort Leonard Wood (FLW).



SGT Ruechegrad reenlists.  
Yes it says \$15,000!

**"Order of the Flaming Pumpkin Patch"** Speaking of Drill Sergeants, I want to personally welcome SFC Jerrold "Woody" Wilson to the S-3 Construction Cell. SFC Wilson is also coming from drill sergeant duty at FLW. He served along side SFC Negron and SFC Arredondo (S-3C) in the 169<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. *(As you might suspect, having a Trifecta of former Drill Sergeants has some great perks. Productivity in the S-3 section has risen 83% just in the last week! –Just Kidding!)* I am personally ecstatic about having SFC Wilson with us, as we served in the same company together during OIF I. On the home front I want to personally extend the same welcome to his wife Jacque and the four Wilson children. My wife, and Rhonda Murphy know Jacque from their time FLW, and will agree they are one are one tough Army family! We are all thrilled to have them!

**"The More Things Change, the More they Stay the Same..."** In an effort to ensure our Soldiers gain invaluable experience while deployed, we continue to exchange Soldiers with our sister company, 510<sup>th</sup>. We have given the "Sappers" of 510<sup>th</sup>, two quality NCOs, Sergeants Ellison and Mack. They also received two of our most beloved Soldiers, SPC Parsons and PFC Sisson, and a darn good medic, PFC Ouchakov. They also received a really smart young Soldier, PFC Perry, who as a Combat Engineer, did wonders in the S-1 section. I'm positive these Soldiers will make great contributions to the 510<sup>th</sup>. We also said good bye to our senior NBC Soldier, SPC Caraballo, who is now back with the Rear Detachment. I know she is already an invaluable asset to SFC Kent and CPT Aguilar. From the 510<sup>th</sup>, we welcome a well seasoned medic, SPC Kelly, and two outstanding NCOs, Sergeants Bagwill and MacDougall. We also welcome back a familiar face, SPC Bengue who is taking PFC Perry's place in the S-1 section. Superbly filling the void in our company operations, left by SPC Caraballo, is SPC Mendoza from FSC. *Hope you got all of that!*

**Other Stuff:** We are staying busy here. The HHC operations section continues to run a monthly battalion level qualification range to ensure everyone in the battalion stays proficient with their weapons. As a company, we also just completed diagnostic P.T. test. While some of us were a little rusty, the results were good for a unit deployed. Some people have lost weight, and made great improvements from where they were on previous tests back at Fort Hood. Great credit goes to 1SG Lingenfelter for spearheading these two events. We are also excited that two of our Staff Sergeants, Irvin and Guillecepeda, made the Sergeant First Class list!

**Final Thoughts:** It is starting to warm up here. We have put away our "snivel gear" (a.k.a. winter clothing), and have started to use our air conditioners. The "Iraqi Air Force" lives again...Our flyswatters are getting their first work out in months dealing with some of the most determined flies you will find anywhere in the world! My X.O., 1LT McCormick is starting to wear sunscreen (SPF 200 in his case...). Yes, spring is in the air, Iraqi Style! Looking back to last November, time has gone by quickly. We are already starting to plan for our retrograde back to Fort Hood; a positive sign that our days here are numbered. So far, we are on track to return on schedule. Once we get through what promises to be a *hot summer* (is there any other kind?), we should be home free. Things could change very rapidly, and there is always the possibility of extension; but right now, everything looks good. Until then, continue to keep us in your prayers! You are in ours!

CPT King (tony.king@us.army.mil)

**Next Month:** Another Soldier Profile



Captains sharing a meal together at the March Sapper Call!

### **Commander's Update by Captain Joe Contreras**

Hello, once again, to all of the Workhorse Family and Friends! We have reached the five month mark in our deployment and are looking April straight in the face. There have been some long days, but the weeks and months have gone by quicker than expected. The company continues to do great things supporting the battalion in accomplishing the mission.

We have been fortunate enough to promote some hard working individuals since our last newsletter. Our executive officer, 1LT Lullen was promoted to CPT and 2LT Buckingham was promoted to 1LT. The SFC list was released during March, and SSG Rojo was selected for promotion after 18 meritorious years of service. SGT Alexander was promoted to SSG, after working hard for two years toward this rank. Other promotions include: SPC Johnson to SGT, PFC Gudmestad and PFC Franks both to SPC. I also want to congratulate SPC Biles, who re-enlisted, and gets to serve our great country for four more years! We say farewell to CPT Lullen, as she moves back to 887<sup>th</sup> to serve as their Maintenance Technician. 1LT Jesionowski takes over as the executive officer, and we welcome 1LT Edrington as the Maintenance Platoon Leader.

This is the first combat deployment for the majority of our Soldiers. A third of us are serving over here for a second time, and we have eight Soldiers that are on their third deployment. 1SG White and I would like to thank all of you for the sacrifice that you all have made in the past and are making! Not a moment goes by without us thinking about your safety and well being too. Workhorse 6 out!

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Platoon "Distribution" by Second Lieutenant James Wilson**

The Distribution Platoon has been very busy, moving material and equipment all over Baghdad. Once again, the courage and skill demonstrated by everyone is bringing the platoon closer everyday. Recently, we awarded some of our first Combat Action Badges. These are awarded to Soldiers who engage or are engaged by the enemy when they are out on missions. SPC Haufe and SGT Phillips were our first Soldiers to receive this badge. We submitted SGT Pipkin, SGT Joyner, and PFC Augustyn as well, and are awaiting the official presentation. Also, the fuel line recently became more active, with our fuel missions expanding from providing fuel to generators inside the FOB, to providing fuel to the engineers we work with and now to the Iraqi Army. Soldiers, including SGT Glass, SGT Applewhite, SPC Cooper, SPC Williams, PFC Michael, and PFC Watts, have been doing an outstanding job with this. We are expecting a few more Soldiers to join our team; we can't wait to meet them and get them integrated into the platoon! As always, our thoughts are with our families, and we couldn't do what we do everyday without your support. Thank you for all that you do. Lead from the front!

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon "Maintenance" by First Lieutenant Cody Edrington**

The Maintenance Platoon continues to do an outstanding job. All sections continuously worked hard to ensure all equipment was fully mission capable. The welding shop finished adding armor to eight more 22 ton cranes for a total of ten. The mechanics, under the leadership of SSG Damian, SGT Ellis, and SGT Grocke, worked feverishly to repair the HET trucks and trailers. This is critical, as they are essential for the battalion's current mission. SGT Herman, SGT Stenquist, SPC Roberts, and SPC Black have done a remarkable job during recovery missions. The HEMTT wrecker and M88 that they operate, have been instrumental in aiding the construction of command outposts and joint security stations. We have taken over a new mission, the command and control for the command visits that occur around Baghdad. SPC Lopez and Burke have performed superbly during these missions as my driver and gunner. Working with myself, CPT Contreras, and SSG Byrne, these Soldiers have provided a large contribution to the success of these missions. The platoon continues to be the foundation for the success of the unit, and SFC Sanchez and I are grateful for their work. Thank you for all of your support, as you, the family and friends at home are the motivation for our success.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon "DFAC" by Staff Sergeant Thomas Wilson**

Greetings! We have continued to stay busy, some of the highlights include: PFC Wesco became the proud father of a son, PFC Brown helped out in the battalion mailroom, and SPC Leibacher is now working in the Workhorse TOC. Everyone else continues to do great things; whether it is supervising in the Caf  Defluery DFAC, distributing water and MREs to the battalion, or sustaining security while assigned to the Mayor Cell. Thanks for all the support.



SPC Lopez and Burke prepare to head out on a command visit

WORKHORSE



PFC Banches gives a block of instruction to Soldiers from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division on stacking flat racks, while PFC Augustyn watches.

# 510TH SAPPER COMPANY

MARCH 2007

ISSUE 3

## *Commanders Corner*

Howdy once again to the Family and Friends of the 510th Sapper Company. I am happy to report to all of you that the Soldiers of the 510th are doing well and are doing great things for the Army and the citizens of Iraq. Your Soldier has been diligently doing his part to ensure the success of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I am continually impressed at the lengths to which your loved one will go through on a daily basis to help other Soldiers, Coalition Forces, and most importantly the people of Iraq. The efforts of the Soldiers of the 510th Sapper Company are shaping this country in more ways than I can mention in this article.

The 4 month mark of our deployment has come and gone. While the days are long and hard, the time continues to fly by at an steady rate. As an encouraging note, the Army has notified us that are replacements are coming and will be here on time for our scheduled redeployment.



I thank each of you for the continued support you show to your loved one on a daily basis. Your support and well wishes are more important than you can imagine. Please continue to keep us in your thoughts and I look forward to seeing all of you again when return.

## *First Platoon - "Shake and Bake"*

The months of February and March brought a couple of changes and special events to the group. First Platoon would like to welcome our new Platoon Leader, 2LT Wynn. We're all very excited to have him, and have welcomed him in to the Platoon accordingly. But at the same time, we are all sad to farewell 1LT Edrington. We wish him the best of luck in his new assignment with FSC. Throughout the past month there have been a couple of promotions and re-enlistments, including SSG Stanley, being promoted to E-6, along with his re-enlistment. Also promoted to the rank of SSG was SSG Shepp, who plans to re-enlist in the coming weeks. Other Soldiers like PFC McFadden and PFC Barker are a few of the first Soldiers

to receive the Army Achievement Medal for their hard work and dedication.

The motivation of all Soldiers within the platoon is out-



standing. Our Soldiers are eager to continue with missions that will impact the overall success of coalition forces within the Baghdad area. Their skills are improving daily and our Soldiers are adapting

to unique challenges, as the platoon and company are tackling diverse missions. The Soldiers of First Platoon are developing into model combat engineers, taking on any mission at a moments notice and executing with proficiency. As far as daily routines are concerned, Soldiers are continually improving their physical fitness, and with summer and extreme temperatures around the corner, this becomes critical.

We would like to thank all the family members for their enduring support, while their loved ones are away, in addition to the support they've provided and the quality time spent with our Soldiers while on R&R leave. Soldiers are happy to return to the unit well rested and ready for follow on missions.

# 510TH SAPPER COMPANY

MARCH 2007

ISSUE 3

## *Second Platoon - "Breach the Wire"*

The last month for Second Platoon was busy and full of changes. The platoon spent three weeks down in Patrol Base Jurf and FOB Iskandariyah improving the living and working conditions for the Soldiers stationed there. All of the Soldiers worked hard, completing the mission a week earlier than expected. They were able to refurbish four guard towers and construct another one from the ground up. The guys used their electrical expertise to

upgrade the current electrical system at Patrol Base Jurf. Their hard work and dedication to the job made the mission a complete success.

After returning from Jurf, we implemented many changes. Promotions and awards were given on our return. Following the promotion of Sergeant Velasquez to Staff Sergeant, he was moved over to third platoon to have the opportunity to be a squad leader. Also promoted was SGT

Gaiser, SGT Johnson, and SGT Reed. We also received four new additions to our platoon, including SSG Ellison, SSG Stedman, SPC Parsons and PV2 Perry. These new Soldiers will help strengthen our platoon even more, bringing us to even greater heights. The happiest news of all is that SFC Young and his family are celebrating the newest member to their family. On March 7<sup>th</sup>, SFC Young welcomed Dominic Katrell Young to their family.

Congratulations to the happy

## *Third Platoon - "Seek and Destroy"*

Nearly six months into deployment, 3<sup>RD</sup> Platoon is doing well and is firing on all cylinders. Life is going well as we have all the food we want, a 24-hour gym, and easy access to phones and internet. As time has gone by, the platoon has seen some of its members moved to other areas. SSG Cruz, SPC Mart, and SPC Ellington have assumed new roles working in company headquarters. The absence of PV2 Shoop is felt and the platoon

wishes him speedy and full recovery. Recently the platoon was informed that PFC Templeton will be moving to work in the Battalion TOC as part of the S-3 Shop. While this move is a credit to his abilities, he will be missed. The platoon has also welcomed new members in SGT Velasquez, SPC Clayton, PFC Woodward, and PFC Long. It has been good to see SGT Pilger, SPC Marzka,

PFC Webber, and PFC Johnson promoted.

Third Platoon has done well, receiving compliments on many occasions for the work they do. Squad leaders SSG Ferrer, SGT Velasquez, and SGT Greene have been consistent and proactive in caring for their Soldiers and ensuring that all their needs are met.

Congratulations to SFC Shatto and his family as they welcome Aubry, their newest member.

## *Fourth Platoon - "Quick Reaction Engineers"*

The months of February and March found the sappers of 4<sup>th</sup> platoon very busy, working all over the Multi-National Division area of operations. Whether it was Adhamiyah, Yusafiyah, Al Hurryah, Mansour, or Sadr City, 4<sup>th</sup> platoon spent the last six weeks convoying to sites throughout Baghdad to provide Coalition Soldiers with the

facilities and infrastructure that they needed to fight terrorism. Their largest effort was a two week mission to support the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division by helping them establish a new combat outpost in Baghdad's Adhamiyah Neighborhood. They worked long hours to get the 82<sup>nd</sup> on it feet and were commended by

LTG Odierno during a command visit for their outstanding efforts. 4<sup>th</sup> platoon worked hard the last few weeks and performed brilliantly, in spite of their high operational tempo.

## *Headquarters Platoon*

Headquarters welcomed and said goodbye to several Soldiers in the headquarters section during the last month. Our additions include PFC Ouchakov, a medic previously with HHC, is now with us and like all medics is constantly being attached to platoons as they conduct missions throughout the city of Baghdad. In exchange we said goodbye to SPC Kelly, SSG Cruz, who recently came out on the list

to be promoted to Sergeant First Class, moved from 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon up to headquarters to be the operations sergeant.

The maintenance section is doing a tremendous job in maintaining the company's vehicles. They have been working from sun up to sun down installing parts on vehicles and heading out with platoons as they conduct their missions. The mechanics will

continue to do great things for the 510<sup>th</sup> Sapper Company.

Headquarters had three great Soldiers demonstrate their leadership abilities and join the NCO ranks when SPC Eichling, CPL Finkel, and SPC Pitkin were all promoted to Sergeant on March 1st.

# 642ND ESC

## "DEUCE"

Greetings to our friends and family back home, from the Soldiers, NCO's and Officers of the mighty *DEUCE*!

It's March in Baghdad, which means the rainy season is finally coming to an end, the weather is starting to warm up, and the *DEUCE* hit the half-way mark in our year-long deployment! Quite a benchmark, since half way done means half way home and we can, at least intellectually, start counting down as opposed to counting up. Six months is still a significant amount of time and we have a lot of missions to accomplish. We know it is hard on our loved ones back home, just as it is hard on us here. And yet, the Soldiers of the Deuce remain focused on the task at hand and continue to perform superbly. They are extremely busy and making considerable contributions to the Baghdad security effort. In fact, many of the construction projects being mentioned in the

news are being constructed by the Deuce. When they are not out on missions, Soldiers are constantly battling complacency but the platoons are finding ways to break up the routine, with cook-outs, sports, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) events.

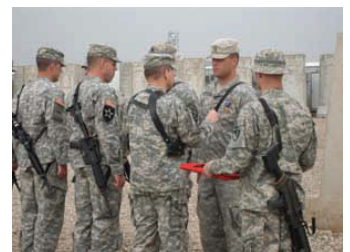
Though the operational tempo usually keeps at least one or two platoons constantly in rotation and off-the-FOB at any given time, we have had a couple of opportunities when the whole *DEUCE* family was back on base. While we had the majority of the company on FOB, we held an awards and promotion ceremony. The Lieutenant's formerly known as Cathcart and Segraves are now both referred to as Captain. PFC Harrell was awarded his Purple Heart. And all the Privates have now achieved the status of Private First Class (PFC). While the list is long, each Soldier has done an outstanding job since arriving in country and is well-deserving of the new promotion.

Recently, 1SG SanPedro, SFC Leonard, and I had the opportunity to see Chely Wright in concert during one of the MWR events. You'll notice the picture of First Sergeant and Chely cheesing it up for the camera. If you are not familiar with her work, she is a very patriotic country music artist who is well known for visiting the troops. Many of her relatives were and are in the military, including her brother who is a master sergeant in the Marines. She sings that song about a Marine sticker on the bumper of her SUV. It was a good concert and everyone seemed to have a good time. Except maybe SFC Leonard who is not much of a country music fan. Of course, it is hard to tell when SFC Leonard is excited, except when he is mad.

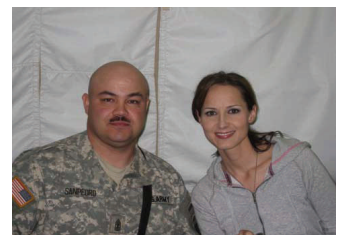
In closing, I want to again thank all the supporters, family and friends of the *DEUCE*. Your support means more than you probably realize. I appreciate everything you do for the Soldiers in the 642nd. Their accomplishments are something they and you can be proud of. For all of you support, in all we do, we are truly grateful. Till next month, this is *DEUCE 6, OUT!*



2LT Schumer, the new PL for 3rd Platoon, poses with his roommate SFC Leonard on a recent recon.



PFC Harrell receiving his Purple Heart.



1SG enjoying the limelight, posing with Chely Wright.



# EMPIRE

Greetings to all from the mighty 887<sup>th</sup> Empire! By the time you read this, we will be starting our sixth month of deployment – almost halfway done! The Soldiers of the Empire hope that the last month has gone as quickly as it has for us here in Iraq – we have been fortunate in staying very busy during March, which has helped make the time pass faster.

First Platoon has been busy working on both the Baghdad Security Belt and emplacing barriers throughout Baghdad in support of the “gated community” mission. On the Baghdad Security Belt (or BAGSBE, as we refer to it), they emplaced four point blocking positions and dug a ditch over two kilometers long. This will keep insurgents from getting into Baghdad, and keep them from supplying other insurgents already in Baghdad. Their barrier emplacement missions are also very critical to Coalition success, as they keep insurgents and their supplies fixed in one place during clearing operations.

Second and Third Platoons continued working on Joint Security Stations (JSS) and Combat Outposts (COP) throughout Baghdad. These JSS and COP sites are providing Coalition Forces safe havens from which they will secure the different parts of Baghdad. These missions have lasted anywhere from three to seven days, and Second and Third Platoons have been working extremely hard getting these sites constructed quickly and safely; usually, they only have three to four days between each mission. Between the two platoons, they have built seven JSS/COP sites in the month of March alone.

Finally, Empire Soldiers are seeing a familiar face around the company since March 15<sup>th</sup>; the newly-promoted CPT Lullen has rejoined us, and is now the Company Maintenance Officer. She’ll be working hard with all of the platoons to make sure that their equipment is ready to go on missions. Welcome back, CPT Lullen!

All of the platoons have earned accolades and commendations from our own Battalion and Group Commanders, but also from each Infantry and Cavalry Battalion, Squadron, and Brigade Commander we have supported. I am very proud of each one of my Empire Soldiers, as I’m sure you are.

We hope that as we approach our half-way point in the next month that our time (and yours) passes as fast as it has up to now. Until next time...EMPIRE



CPT Hudson

Empire 6



1. (L to R) SPC Scott, PFC Williams, and SSG Fields pour concrete at a blocking position. 2. SPC Reif clears a broken barrier with his D7. 3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon constructing a COP.

Congratulations to SSG(P) Patricia Fleming on making the promotion list for E7!

Congratulations to the following Empire Soldiers on their recent promotions:

SSG Fields

SSG Rivera

SGT Culleton

SGT Sudduth

SPC Bartlett

SPC Steiner

PFC Adorno

# LONG LIVE THE EMPIRE!!





# REENLISTMENT



## GREETINGS FROM THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER AT CAMP LIBERTY!

Greetings from the Chaplain's Corner at Camp Liberty!

Well, here we are again. Time flies when you are having fun! March is nearing the end and April is fast approaching. We are almost at the halfway point. Can you believe it? We are so proud of every one of our Soldiers. These guys are unbelievable. They are handworkers. As I sit down to write this article I have just come back from spending some time with your Soldiers prior to a mission. I prayed with and for them before they went out on a mission to put up some barriers. Moreover, as I watched them leave to do their mission, which puts their lives on the line, I was overcome by a sense of honor and humility to be given the great privilege to serve such wonderful men and women that are in our BN. It is my highlight and honor as your Chaplain to pray for the protection and peace of your warriors as they go out to do their missions on and off FOB. I also enjoy the times when I get the privilege to go with them as they head out on missions. As I think of how often they are tasked with various missions I think of the word DETERMINATION! It is amazing to see their hard work and spirit of determination even in the midst of having little rest in-between missions. You would be proud to see this determination displayed in their craftsmanship, speed, and ingenuity at which they complete any and every mission given to them. As I think of the word determination, it reminds me of the wonderful and joyful time of Easter that is just around the corner. Most if not all of us have Easter memories as kids. We remember it as a fun time that involved parties at school, Easter Egg Hunts, the Easter Bunny, and the culmination of all these events in the loaded down basket on Easter Sunday surrounded by family and friends. We have these memories and we make sure that children have them also by carrying on some of those traditions. So for many of us the very thought of Easter brings to mind the candy, eggs, and bunnies.

Thinking of, candy, eggs, bunnies, and baskets is not bad in itself as long as we put God first. These are all good things, especially if you are not on a diet! There is a deeper meaning to this though. In the Christian tradition, Easter, or as I like to call it, Resurrection Day, should be the single most important day of celebration. On that day, God the Father was determined to prove his love for us and secure for all who believe, the hope of eternal life by raising His Son from the dead. You see, it was not enough just for Jesus Christ to die on the Cross for us, he also had to rise from the grave to prove his true nature and secure for us a way to have a relationship with God and to be a part of his family. He was determined to finish the mission of redeeming us. The Apostle Paul tells us, "For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living" (Romans 14:9). So, I want to encourage everyone back home to enjoy Easter Holiday. Put out the eggs and candy for the kids for an egg hunt of a lifetime. Then create wonderful memories and pictures to celebrate with your very own Lumberjack. In spite of our absent enjoy the season. In addition, always have a spirit of determination to encourage and help one another in the extended Lumberjack family at Hood. We need each other! As I close I am reminded of the words of our Lord: "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love another (John 13:3). Happy Easter, to our families!

Thoughtful Reflection:

**The best way to forget your own problems is to help someone else solve his.**

*"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."*  
 Philippians 2:4

Chaplain (CPT) Rickie Wambles

Chaplain Asst. (PFC) Avery Owens