



# THE LUMBERJACK LEDGER

Volume 1, Issue 4, May 2007

## LUMBERJACK 6

Greetings to the families and friends of the 20th Engineer Battalion. Most of the battalion has completed seven months in theater; one of the companies even more than that. We remain grateful for all the prayers and good wishes of those of you back in the United States and elsewhere. "Build and Fight" is our motto; it is time to give you an assessment of just how much of the former we have been doing: over 40 coalition outposts and joint security stations built! This has involved more than 17,000 concrete barriers, over 2000 HESCO bastions, and more than 40 guard towers, as well as over 1700 lights and electrical outlets installed. The new MNF-I Command Sergeant Major remarked to CSM Murphy that everywhere he goes, he hears about and sees the work of the 20th Engineer Battalion. CSM Murphy and I are immensely proud of the work done each day by the Headquarters Company, the Forward Support Company, and the 510th, 642nd, and 887th Engineer Companies. What a tremendous engineer mission force these five companies have become in Iraq. It has truly been something special to be a part of over the past seven months in country.

The vast majority of the surge force is here on the ground in Iraq. The rest of the deployment will focus on the critical tasks of halting sectarian violence and establishing a secure, stable environment for the Iraqi people. These are tough tasks and among the most difficult ever tackled by the US Armed Forces. But small successes achieved by your Soldiers each day will contribute to large successes by Multinational Forces - Iraq over the rest of the year 2007. The Soldier's Creed states, "I will never quit." We won't quit, and I know that you won't, either! Keep providing support to your Soldiers as they move forward in this historic and important mission. Pray for their safety and well-being. We always keep you in our thoughts and prayers.

Best regards! LTC James Raymer

## LUMBERJACK 9

As the Soldiers of the Lumberjack Battalion continue to do great things around the Baghdad Area of Operations, I see the Soldiers smiling and working hard. We have seen the promotions and advancement of many Soldiers throughout the deployment. It does my heart good to see the smiles on these great Lumberjack Soldiers as they work hard in the extremely hot conditions which often exceed 110 degrees. The drive and ambition of these Soldiers in these conditions makes me very proud to be their Command Sergeant Major. I am sure the Families are equally as proud of their Soldiers and what they are doing in this Global Mission. More and more the Soldiers are spreading their expertise around to the units in the Multi-National Baghdad area and leaving their mark on every location showing just what hard working engineers Soldiers can do. These Lumberjack Soldiers exemplify the term "Essayons" Let us Try.

"Build and Fight"



CPT King receives the company guidon from 1SG Lingenfelter during the change of command ceremony.

# HHC "Diablos"



SGT Bagwill, SSG Nixon and 1LT Edrington make final checks before SGT Bagwell's re-enlistment.

This last month has seen a great number of changes take place. First and foremost, HHC conducted a change of command between CPT Jerome King and CPT Jessica Wayment. CPT King took command of HHC on 31 JAN 06 and was instrumental in the standing up of this company from nothing. He ensured that all required standard operating procedures (SOP's) were emplaced and eventually led HHC through two battalion level mission readiness exercises (MRX's), had the lead on training personnel for the annual Best Sapper team competition and many other training events all in preparation for our current mission, operation in a combat zone. HHC deployed to the current theater of operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08 under CPT King's command on 01 November 2006. His leadership was key to this company's establishment of combat operations and taking over from a decidedly different company headquarters and succeeding where many lesser persons could fail. CPT King's presence was great among his fellow officers and Soldiers. He will be sorely missed as a valuable and knowledgeable asset to this company and the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. While he leaves under duress, we know he will always be a "Diablo" and a member of the HHC family. As CPT Wayment moved from the S4 position on the battalion staff to take over for CPT King, so another officer moved to take the S4 position. CPT Eric Wright has spent the last two years working as a planner and will now have an opportunity to learn the logistical side of battalion operations as the new battalion S4. He has a great team in CW2 Vickie Rush and SFC Ramon Caraballo willing and able to help him jump in feet first in the battalion combat logistical fight. CPT Wright brings a wealth of technical engineer knowledge with him the will help smooth out the requests for specific equipment or BOM for missions.

HHC continues to conduct training, daily company operations and mission taskings with a limited number of personnel. This month HHC has run 2 ranges with a total of 90 Soldiers given the opportunity to zero, qualify and/or familiarize their personal weapons; 16 of those Soldiers had the opportunity to fire and familiarize themselves to the M2 .50cal as many of them are required to man these impressive weapons as the designated vehicle gunner while conducting convoy operations. 1SG Lingenfelter, SGT Buker and SSG Bourget have brought distinction to HHC for their continued success in running these ranges for the entire battalion.

This month also heralded the news of potential extensions for all active duty units. While news of extension occurs with most every deployment, we were all just as surprised as you to hear Secretary Gates' announcement of the tour extensions from 12 months to 15 months. I ask you to remember that this was a broad statement and while we all must mentally prepare ourselves for this possibility, no official word on specific units to be affected by this announcement has been made. We all would like to know if we will be here a little longer, but for now, we are still looking forward to coming home, on time, heads held high and proud of our accomplishments while serving in support of OIF 06-08.

-CPT Wayment



PFC Sather counts ammunition as part of command inventories.



The outgoing commander, CPT King and the incoming commander, CPT Wayment.

# WORKHORSE

## Commander's Update by Captain Joe Contreras

I am once again proud to write this update regarding your Soldiers. Time has flown by faster than any of us imagined; it seems like we were in Ft. Hood just a short while back. Fortunately, that is not the case and we are on month six working towards seven. You would be proud of everything that your loved ones have accomplished. We have definitely earned a reputation as the support company that can get it done!

I want to welcome our newest team members to the Workhorse Family: SFC Arnold, SSG Chaverria, SSG Martin, SGT Hernandez, CPL Moore, SPC Parmenter, SPC Willilams, K., PFC Perkins, PFC Workman, PV2 Bozeman, and PV2 Lewis. We are very glad to have them. Congratulations to the following Soldiers promoted on 1 May: PV2 Frazier to PFC, PV2 Stanley to PFC, PFC Cholko to SPC, and PFC Watts to SPC. SGT Rogers, SPC Peral, and SPC Shuler, raised their right hands, gave their oath of re-enlistment and will continue to serve our country; each one of them receiving a significant bonus\$\$\$.

I'm truly blessed to serve with each and every Workhorse Soldier. They do more than any commander could ask for, and I look forward to each day that I can spend with them. Thank you once again for all your support, and God bless you all.

Workhorse 6 Out!



SPC Watts prepares for an upcoming mission.

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

There have been many changes in the Distribution Platoon, since our last newsletter. We are proud to welcome our newest members: SSG Willie Martin, SPC Byron Parmenter, SPC Kareem Williams, and PV2 Alicia Bozeman. Three of the Soldiers came from Ft. Hood to join our efforts here, and are already making strong contributions to our platoon. SPC Williams came over from HHC to provide another hand in the supply room, assisting SGT Rogers and crew. As our new Soldiers integrate themselves into the platoon, we are also adjusting to the recent change of platoon sergeants. SSG Oralia Orteguel moved into company operations office, allowing SSG Matthew Byrne to assume the position. We thank her for all she did for the platoon and are excited to welcome SSG Byrne to our team. Through all of this, we are continuing to execute missions throughout Baghdad, assisting the battalion in creating a more secure environment for Americans and Iraqis alike. Lead from the front!

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

The Maintenance Platoon is continuing to do remarkable work. SSG Rojo has officially taken over as the new platoon sergeant, and I am grateful for the leadership and expertise he provides. We are eagerly waiting for his promotion to SFC. The Soldiers are maintaining a high performance level and remain pleasantly motivated. The welding shop has been busy, having completed over 200 steel signposts to be used by coalition forces throughout Baghdad. They have also built several steel ladders for the line companies, enabling them to be used during their missions. The mechanics led by SFC Sanchez, are doing a superb job keeping our equipment fully mission capable. They have continued to stay busy providing M88 and recovery support for the construction of COPs and JSSs throughout Baghdad. The command visits have continued to be a success, thanks to the professionalism of SPC Lopez, SPC Burke, SPC Blas, and PFC Larkey. The knowledge and hard work of this platoon is the reason that our unit has kept a high level of success. We thank you for all of your love and support back home, it is greatly appreciated.



SSG Johnson gives a block of instruction on clearing weapons during Safety Day.

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

Since our newsletter we welcomed PFC Workman to our platoon. PFC Brown has permanently moved to the mail room and is busy distributing mail to over 600 Soldiers in the battalion. SPC Splattstoesser conducted escort missions for Iraqi Nationals while assigned on detail. SPC Morgan and PFC Swigert provided security for the camp, while escorting local nationals at the mayor cell. Everyone else has continued to provide food service support daily to over 12,000 Soldiers.



PFC Banches, Larkey, and Cuevas displayed their artistic talents outside the Workhorse TOC.



# 510th Sapper Company

MAY 2007

ISSUE 4

## Commander's Comments

Hello Family and Friends! Howdy once again from the other side of the globe. The weather in Baghdad, Iraq has changed drastically with temperatures over 100 degrees daily. Despite the weather, I am happy to tell you that your Soldier has been performing admirably. I am pleased and honored to be working with your loved one, and I thank you for that honor. The work done by the Soldiers of the 510th has proven to be some of the most important work in theater.

The 510th continues to prove itself during our deployment for Operation Iraqi

Freedom. We are continually on the move, establishing brand new coalition outposts, joint security stations, and



4th Platoon gets a visit from COL Martin.

patrol bases all over Baghdad and surrounding areas. I am repeatedly com-

mended by Battalion and Brigade Commander's for the extraordinary efforts of Soldiers of the 510th Sapper Company.

We are enabling Coalition Soldiers to perform their mission, ensuring the security of the Soldiers and also for the citizens of Iraq.

Your Soldier continues to wish he was home, spending time with his Family. We want to thank all of you for your continued support, your well wishes, and your prayers.

## 1st Platoon

Greetings, from the hot land of Iraq. We've been pretty busy in the last couple of weeks. The platoon has taken on new missions due to the high demand of work required by other units. During the month of April, our platoon was tasked to take over the crater repair mission from 642<sup>nd</sup> engineers. The endeavor was challenging due to the introduction of new equipment, but our Soldiers persevered, setting new standards for the battalion. While the missions are challenging, the hardest part might just be trying to sleep during the day so we can do our missions during the dark of night.

We have also continued to support the rapid build-up of Coalition Outposts in and around the Baghdad area, by improving living conditions for coalition

forces. The platoon has traveled to many different locations and conducted long, difficult projects. Time and time again our guys are making it happen



1st Platoon Soldiers receiving a coin from BG Johnson

under difficult conditions, regardless of the conditions.

We would also like to congratulate our soldiers on their commitment to the

Army, by reenlisting and taking advantage of their bonus options. Some of the Soldiers that have reenlisted to date are SSG Shepp, SGT Hernandez L, SGT

Allan, and SPC Morton. We also want to congratulate SPC Rosales on his promotion to Corporal, and welcome him in to the NCO corps. The Army desperately needs noncommissioned officers of his caliber to maintain the tradition of the corps. And last but not least, we would like to welcome a new addition to our Sapper family, SPC Morton recently received word that his wife gave birth to a beautiful baby girl.

We would like to extend our gratitude to all of the family members of the 510<sup>th</sup> for keeping up the spirits of our Soldiers, and spending quality time with them while on R&R leave.

## 2nd Platoon

The last month went by quickly for 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon. After handing over the Transload Yard to 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, our pace picked up. 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon was now back in business, helping set up new security stations throughout the Baghdad area. During the month of April, there were two large projects that we took on full force. The first mission was at Joint Security Station Torch. The guys worked hard for three straight days constructing a staircase and a catwalk on top of a building, allowing easy access to all the buildings.

The second mission was a little bit more time intensive. The whole platoon headed south to build up a new patrol base from scratch. The guys did an awesome job, battling the heat and dust, wearing full gear for six days. We constructed two guard towers and transformed eight shipping containers into living areas and administrative offices. The Platoons hard work and dedication to the job ensured that the Soldiers living at the patrol base would have a place to hang their hats after a long, hard days work.

During the last month we also welcomed PFC Mackey back into our ranks. He was with the platoon just before we left and was unable to join us for the beginning of the deployment. He has returned to the platoon and his presence has greatly helped the platoon in our mission. The happiest news of all is that SSG Lyles and his family are celebrating the newest member to their family. On March 30<sup>th</sup>, SSG Lyles welcomed Iyana Priscilla Lyles to their family. Congratulations to the happy family and their new little girl.

## 3rd Platoon

As the temperature rises, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon continues to roll along. Over the last month we have been on a less busy schedule, working daily on a mission on a FOB. The slower pace has been a welcome relief, allowing us all a little time to relax from our busy schedule.

Soldiers continue to go on leave, always returning looking well-rested and ready to resume work. We have seen several more soldiers leave to new jobs with other soldiers taking their places. We said goodbye to our construction resi-

dent expert PFC Kramer, who is now working in the S3 Shop. PFC Long, who came to us for only a few months, left to join his brother at the



SGT French Re-Enlists

United States Military Academy where he will graduate with a commission as an officer. Joining us are PFC Stern and PFC Bigelow, who have transitioned well to their new jobs. We have also been pleased to promote PV2 Webber to the rank of PFC and SGT Greene to SSG. Overall, all the members of 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon continue to excel in everything under the leadership of SFC Shatto, SSG Ferrer, SSG Velasquez, and SSG Greene. Again, thank you for all your love and support. Your prayers are needed and felt.

## 4th Platoon

4th platoon spent the last six weeks establishing and improving eight new coalition outposts and joint security stations. Our heavy workload has often forced 4th to split the platoon to work at two remote sites at once. The work has again taken us all over Baghdad, and even outside the city to the north to the city of Saab Al Boor. 4th Platoon made the long road trip to Saab Al Boor and was temporarily operating out of Camp Taji to do missions. We have since returned to Camp Liberty to rejoin the rest of the company. The

temporary division of the platoon, long hours, and time away from the company were tough, but 4th Platoon is always on standby to help Coalition Soldiers wherever they are. The last six weeks also saw recognition of 4th Platoon's colossal efforts to provide construction support to Coalition Forces. PFC Santiago was promoted to Private First Class, in recognition of his hard work and dependability on missions with 4th Platoon. In addition, five of the Soldiers were awarded coins from the commander of Multi-National Corps-

Iraq, Lieutenant General Odierno. He was very impressed with the work at Coalition Outpost Gator in Baghdad's Al Doura Market. The Soldiers provided the austere outpost with power, working courageously despite the high threat in the area. The entire platoon was also recognized by the commander of 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry with coins for our remarkable work improving force protection as Joint Security Station West and South. We thank you for your continued support and love.

# 642ND ESC

## "DEUCE"

How does that line from Good Morning Vietnam go? Because it's hot, so hot you could probably fry an egg on the sidewalk. The temperature has reached triple digits and we are only in May. While you back home, at least at Drum, are enjoying moderate temperatures, we are enduring some of the hottest days we have ever experienced. And according to the weatherman we have not seen the hottest days yet. The Soldiers are doing very well though. Hydration and eating regularly are stressed so that the body can better cope with the heat. It is amazing what you can get used to.



Regardless of the heat, Deuce Soldiers, your Soldiers, continue to push on and complete their assigned missions. The mission continues to be providing safe locations throughout Baghdad from which Coalition and Iraqi Forces can operate. The Deuce has operated in every area of Baghdad, helping to make it a little safer. 1<sup>ST</sup> Platoon recently joined the Coalition Outpost/Joint Security Station (COP/JSS) construction rotation after transferring the concrete mission. They picked it up very quickly and are doing a great job. The Soldiers are enjoying their time operating the heavy engineer equipment. 2<sup>ND</sup> Platoon continues to sling barriers with the best of them. Their expertise and pride in their work has grown with each mission. 3<sup>RD</sup> Platoon recently

returned after an extended stay at the local mud pit. Their last mission was hampered by broken water lines that flooded their job site. In true Engineer fashion, they adapted, overcame and, eventually, preserved. The successful outcome of the mission is a testament to their character. Maintenance continues to work miracles in the motor pool, keeping the equipment mission capable.

Congratulations go out to SGT Galloway, SGT Powley, and SFC Leonard for their much deserved promotions. The following Soldiers reenlisted recently, renewing their dedication of service to the United States Army: SGT Heller, SGT Hernandez, SPC Knox, SSG Schwartz, SPC Whitaker, and SGT Shriver. It is great to see such talented Soldiers reenlisting to stay Army.

This letter would not be complete without recognizing the efforts and support of you back at home. Whether you are family, friends, and/or patriotic supporters, I want to thank you for everything you are doing to support the Deuce. Knowing your there, behind us in our deployment, makes it easier. The care packages are great too! The Soldiers love getting little pieces of home. I want to thank the Deuce Family Readiness Group for providing such support to the families back home. And to the Rear-D, I apologize for all the headaches, you are doing a fantastic job. Keep up the good work.

Till next time, this is Deuce 6 signing off.



# EMPIRE

Greetings to all! The Empire continued to be busy in April and May, which thankfully has made the time go by quickly. By the time you read this newsletter, we will have been here over seven months!

Throughout the last two months, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon executed a variety of types of missions, continuing to be the company's "jack of all trades" platoon. At the beginning of April, for almost two weeks, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon was out almost every night on missions emplacing barriers along one of the heavier traveled routes in Baghdad. Through their hard work, this route is now more protected from Anti-Iraqi Forces and the IEDs they like to emplace. Additionally, they constructed three check points, a blocking position, and a JSS, and conducted various other route sanitizations.

In April and May 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon has continued to construct COPs and JSSs; they constructed four in the last two months alone. Third platoon also continued to build the same, constructing five separate JSSs and COPs. While 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoons both had a fewer number of total missions than 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, none of their JSS or COP missions lasted less than four days, with most lasting more than five days. This has meant that 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoons have spent a lot of time away from the FOB.

Headquarters platoon, as usual, continues to provide logistical, administrative, and medical support to the platoons, and the Field Maintenance Team continues to keep us rolling despite our best attempts to prove otherwise.

However, as most of you know, we have recently been hit with a heartbreaking loss. It is with a heavy heart that I report the death of CPL Jason Beadles. On April 12<sup>th</sup>, CPL Beadles and the rest of 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon were finishing up the construction of a COP by emplacing a few last barriers. As CPL Beadles was guiding a barrier into place, the crane lowering the barrier got too close to some electrical wires. Electricity arced through the barrier and Jason to the ground, knocking Jason unconscious and killing him. CPL Beadles was a good Soldier and a great friend, and will be missed by all who knew him. The world is a lesser place because of this terrible loss.



A 3<sup>rd</sup> PLT Soldier uses a 5-yd Bucket Loader to move a barrier.

However, we do have some more encouraging news. As of the writing of this newsletter, the company has had sixteen reenlistments (not counting the attached personnel), with Empire Soldiers receiving over \$243,000 in bonuses. Additionally, we will have three new E5's and one new E6. (See below for the names.)

I know that everyone is anxiously awaiting news as to whether or not the Company will be extended. As of this writing, we still do not know. I would encourage all Family members to prepare yourself that your Soldier will be extended. In the case that he or she is not, and then it will be a welcome relief.

Until Next Time,

CPT Hudson – Empire 6

To Sergeant: SPC Baker, SPC Padgett, SPC Oliveros

To Staff Sergeant: SGT Knighten



1<sup>st</sup> Platoon Soldiers emplace a barrier at a control point



SGT S. Risner (foreground), SPC Scott, and SPC Williams at work at a COP.

# LONG LIVE THE EMPIRE!!





### Greetings from the Chaplain's Corner at Camp Liberty!

Well I am back! I just came back from a wonderful time of R and R leave. Ah, yes! Rested and refreshed, having spent a wonderful time with my truly missed wife and children. R and R leave is a great opportunity to recharge your batteries by spending it with the ones you love, doing the things you use to love to do. Before the deployment that is! Well, I hope those who have had their 15 days of fun in the States thoroughly enjoyed themselves and got some much-needed rest. On the other hand, if you were like me, you probably did not get as much physical rest as needed. This was due to the realization that I was too excited to spend as much waking hours enjoying the company of my wife and children. However, it is extremely important to find time to rest, even while we are deployed here in Iraq. This applies also to you our wives, children, husbands, and other family members. Some of you have had to fulfill the role of both the mother and the father. In addition, some of you have to do things that were normally done by your love one that is currently deployed. Therefore, with that understanding, you need to pace yourself and lean on other family and friends to help you get much needed rest. We all need to be each other's keeper and look out for the well-being of one another while your love one is deployed. As I think of the concept of rest, I am reminded of how much God emphasizes its importance in our daily lives. So much so, that He set the example in Genesis chapter one when it tells us that even God himself (who needs no rest) rested on the seventh day when He completed the work of creating all that exist. There are several other passages such as Psalms 37:7, 116:7, and Joshua 1:13. However, my favorite passage comes from the words of Jesus Christ found in Matthew 11:28-29. In this passage, Jesus states, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls." What a wonderful and encouraging passage. There are three facts given from this passage. First, we all get tired. Second, we all must rest. And third, we all need to lean on others at times for that rest. I would suggest three groups that you should depend upon for that much need rest. They are your family members, friends, and your faith. Do not neglect them as you seek to pass through this trial of deployment. Also, as I think about R and R and the losses that this unit has suffered; I am overjoyed that some of you will be seeing your love one soon to hopefully enjoy what I have previously mentioned. And, with that realization, I truly can leave you with one important advice. One that is most dear to my heart. "CREATE WONDERFUL MEMORIES!" Every day we are creating memories, hopefully good ones. You see, life is short and we are never promised tomorrow. Therefore, I encourage you to make the most of every opportunity that you spend with your love one. Cherish every moment that God gives you and set the mood and environment to create and capture wonderful and lasting memories. After all, that is what life is truly all about. It is about the relationships that we make and the memories we create from them. Until next time, may God bless you and keep you in your time rest.

Thoughtful Reflection:

***The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.***

"But store up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Matthew 6:20

Chaplain (CPT) Rickie Wambles

Chaplain Asst. (PFC) Avery Owens