



Deuce Four



Volume 1 Issue 3 1st Battalion 24th Infantry Fort Wainwright, Alaska November 2008

Notes From the Commander

Family and Friends of Deuce Four:

As I write this, we have just turned the corner on November and are getting settled into our new mission. We officially assumed responsibility for our area of operations on 20 October. This concluded several weeks of preparation in Kuwait and two weeks of handover operations with the outgoing unit, 4th Squadron 2nd Cavalry Regiment.

The Legion's area is large. In order to cover this area, the line companies operate from combat outposts (COP). HHC is also a "land owner" and primarily operates from FOB Warhorse, which is also the location of the Battalion HQ. This is not the same Iraq as many of us experienced on previous deployments. The Government of Iraq has taken enormous strides forward in all aspects: security, essential services, and governance. While there is much work to be done, the future is bright. The Soldiers of Deuce Four are absolutely critical to the ultimate success of this mission.

Thank you for all of your support, thoughts, and prayers.

STRENGTH AND HONOR!

Legion 6

LTC Brian Reed

CDR, Deuce Four—The Arctic Legion



Notes from the Chaplain

We have moved into our areas and are making changes to suit ourselves. We are making ourselves as comfortable as possible while we work at our mission over here. We are now establishing our routines in Iraq while you at home establish your own routines. This is important because routines help to keep us sane. While we are developing our routines we need to remember to build in time to keep in contact with each other. Staying connected while deployed is important to husbands and wives but also to children. Circumstances and events will always try to get in the way so we must build time to communicate into our routine. Schedule it, plan for it, and follow through with it.

For all of us the first few weeks were hectic. For us in Iraq, we have new sights, locations and responsibilities. Back home there is the same work to do with fewer hands to help. Children need to be played with and cared for, dinner needs to be made, the trash needs to be taken out, snow shoveled and surprisingly there are still only 24 hours in a day to do it all. The bottom line of our life apart is that we all have too much to do and we miss each other. We will make it through this separation as long as we remain in contact with each other.

I will warn you that some here have great communication opportunities, some do not. Do not compare yourself to others. Not all of us are at the same place nor do we all have the same facilities. Some Soldiers have the ability to purchase internet access in their living quarters and can e-mail, or video call anytime they want. Others only have MWR internet and will face lines and equipment that does not always allow them to get through. The bottom line is not everyone has the same opportunities to call home.

I ask you to bear this in mind and do not take it personally. The temptation we have is to look at the person who is in constant communication and think of this as the norm. When your husband does not match up with this perceived norm, then you may assume he does not love you as much as he should. Do not yield to that temptation. Give your husband the benefit of the doubt on this. Ask what types of communications are available where he is located.

I know it is hard to realize that your friend can talk with her husband often and you keep getting cut off when you and your husband try to talk to each other. Plans are under way to find solutions for these problems. That is all part of the changes we are making to situate ourselves better here. Things are getting better.

Remember to remain in contact with others back there for the emotional and spiritual support you need as well as the social contact with other adults. There are many great organizations that offer help, support, or the opportunity for friendship with other wives. I recommend you keep in contact with the FRG, seek fellowship and friendship at organizations such as Protestant Women of the Chapel (PWOC) or Catholic Women of the Chapel. If life becomes too overwhelming, seek help from Mrs. Sherilin Andersen, Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA) or CPT Bolcar. You are always welcome to contact any of the Chaplains back in Wainwright through the Garrison Chaplain office at 353-9825. You are also always welcome to contact me here in Iraq through Mrs. Andersen or CPT Bolcar.

CH Brian Palmer
Chaplain, 1-24



CH Palmer holds Pinata for Iraqi Children

Headquarters & Headquarters Company

Dear Friends and Family of Hammer Soldiers,

Through the month of October your Soldiers have faced and overcome several challenges. Our task here is not an easily defined one, as we are part Soldier, part policeman, part politician. Our interaction with the local populace ranges from speaking with town mayors or mukhtars (local religious leaders) to eating lunch with Iraqi families to walking patrols with Iraqi Police, Army, or Concerned Local Citizens. Your Soldiers have adapted themselves to the ever fluid situation flawlessly. I am honored to be serving with each and every one of them, as these Soldiers epitomize the Army Values every day on or off mission. I have watched proudly as they have interacted with young Iraqi children, or coached a young Iraqi Soldier in tactics, though they are usually more interested in our equipment.

Of note, four Soldiers will soon be pinning Staff Sergeant; SGT's Marcellus Carrington, Mark Smith, Travis Smith, and Kevin Smith. SPC Brian Mueller not only did impeccably at the board but will soon be wearing SGT rank. SPC Carnes continues to

excel and has the confidence of an NCO, he too will soon be wearing stripes. SPC Moreno represented Hammer Company during the Soldier of the Month Board.

We are pleased to have 4th Platoon, A Company working along side us. They are true professionals and a welcomed addition to Hammer Team. As you know, HHC is a conglomeration of numerous sections and elements. I will write about each one from time to time but have limited space with which to relate our successes. Know that all of the Hammer Soldiers are doing an outstanding job and we are truly making a historical difference in Iraq.

We all miss you and hope all is well on the home front. Stay safe and keep in touch when you can.

Hammer 6.

CPT Matthew Mackey
HHC, 1-24 IN
Commander



CPT Eberlein meets with the Sheik

HHC Points of Contact

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Alpha Company ATTACK!

To the families and friends of Attack Company,

Greeting from Diyala Province, Iraq! First, I would like to let you all know that your soldiers are well and doing a fantastic job, having just completed our first month in Iraq. However, we are now just starting to realize the full scope of the job ahead of us this year.

While the security in our area is unexpectedly good, it requires constant vigilance to prevent it from falling back under enemy influence. We do this through a combination of tactics focused on security, economic development, partnership with the Iraqi Security Forces, and building the capacity of the local government and essential services such as water, education, sewage, and electricity.

While our area is relatively calm as far as attacks on coalition forces goes, it is still a very exciting and challenging time to be in Iraq. Every day we find ourselves facing issues that we never expected. For instance, the water supply throughout our area of operations is in a sad state of disrepair and our soldiers are becoming adept at noticing when the water level in the canals is low, finding the cause (whether it's a pump station operating below the necessary level or a blockage of the canal), and notifying the proper personnel in the local government to address the problem. We are also becoming sensitive to other needs in the community such as schools and clinics with inadequate supplies and facilities. The path to success for us relies on our ability to transition the local government and the citizens at large from reliance on Coalition Forces to a sustainable level of independence.

That's a fair rundown of our mission parameters, but I know what you really want to

hear about... How are the guys living? Believe me when I tell you, conditions are pretty good. Actually, we're more comfortable here than we were at NTC. We have adequate living space and soldiers have the opportunity to take showers almost every day. Our Company Outpost, COP Blackfoot, even has a very nice area we call the "Oasis" which is essentially a courtyard within the walls of the compound with shade, palm and olive trees, and a gazebo where the men frequently go to socialize with each other, enjoy a quiet meal, or just decompress after a hard day. Also, we have internet and phone lines available for the soldiers to use, and we expect the number of lines to double very soon. We have a gym and several large screen TV's for the soldiers to relax with, as well. At least once a week, everyone gets a chance to go back to FOB WARHORSE to visit the PX, get a haircut, and maybe grab a slice of pizza from the Pizza Hut or get a good cup of coffee from the Green Bean shop. However, I have noticed that most of the men would rather stay at the COP. To put it in perspective, I have seen homes in Fairbanks that weren't as nice as where we're living now!

I know one concern many of you have is mid-term leave. Believe me, I share your concern. At our last FRG meeting before the deployment I briefed our leave plan for the company; however, due to new guidance from Brigade and operational requirements, the plan is in a state of flux. The plan is being worked furiously to come up with a leave schedule that is fair and equitable while still meeting our mission requirements. Our first soldiers to take leave will begin leaving towards the end of November

ATTACK!

CPT M. Scott Jones
A CO, 1-24 IN
Commander

A CO Points of Contact

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Bravo Company Barbarians

Barbarian friends and family members,

The company has made it safe and sound to Combat Out-Post (COP) Key West. The trip took about two and a half weeks total to get from Ft. Wainwright, AK to here – but it allowed the Soldiers a chance to acclimate and get used to the deployed “environment.” We spent about one week in Kuwait receiving and preparing our equipment, shipping it north, and taking theater specific classes to prepare ourselves for the journey ahead.

From there, we flew on C-17s, Chinooks, and Blackhawks to FOB Warhorse, and ultimately drove our Strykers down to Key West. We immediately began the transfer with the old unit that had been stationed here. Everyday our Barbarians would go out into sector with the Soldiers from the old unit and learn all that they could. We learned that this deployment, while still dangerous, is going to be very different from that of the 172nd.

We are attempting to put the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in the lead for all operations. Soon they will be completely responsible for their own country, so it is up to us to ensure they are fully prepared when the time comes. The Iraqi Army unit we have been paired with is one of the best I have ever seen and are fully capable of running operations. We also have Iraqi Police and an Emergency

Response Battalion, similar to SWAT, working in our area of operations. (AO)

Most patrols are spent talking to the ISF leaderships and planning future joint operations, the rest of the time is spent talking with local civilian leadership over chai and massive lamb dinners.

The COP has an MWR center with 5 internet capable computers and 3 SPAWAR phones. We also have a small gym with free weights, a mobile kitchen and dining facility, and are currently working to make a wireless internet drop available to each of the soldiers.

Security is good, quality of life is improving every day, and the local civilians are genuinely glad we are here. I have added some pictures so that you can get an idea of what we’re up to. The company web page should be up within a week courtesy of Mr. Stoltz, the father of our executive officer, CPT Brian Stoltz. On the page will be more pictures and a spot for updates from the platoons and comments from the FRG. Take care at home, and we’ll stay in contact!-

-Barbarian 6
CPT Jeffrey Harmon
B Co, 1-24 IN
Commander



B CO Points of Contact

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Charlie Company Centurions

The journey has been long but we are finally settled in at COP Zag. We started our trip with a short visit in Kuwait. Although it was roughly 70 degrees hotter when we landed (at 2AM,) the weather wasn't a significant issue. It was a long wait to receive our equipment but it gave us a great opportunity to start working on the beach muscles for our return home. As our equipment was loaded onto trucks to be moved to FOB Warhorse, the Centurions began the next leg of their journey. The company flew to Balad and began the long wait for flights to FOB Warhorse. Due to the dust storms this time of year, travel by helicopter is often delayed as a safety precaution. By the time the company finally arrived at FOB Warhorse I had already begun our Right/Left seat rides with the outgoing unit. We quickly pushed the company out to Combat Outpost (COP) Zag to begin their area familiarization missions. When our Soldiers first saw the area of operation (AO), they were surprised. Never would you believe that a triple canopy jungle would exist in the desert. Well...it does. Centurion Company has made its home along the Diyala River in some of the most fertile lands in the Middle East. The palm groves near us are world famous for the quality and quantity of dates produced. During the early years of the war, many of the factories and homes in our AO were destroyed. The local population is growing accustomed to their new neighbors, and continue to rebuild their homes and businesses with our support.

Life on COP Zag is very different than anything most have experienced. Our neighbors are a Mosque and a girl's primary school. The surrounding town is friendly and enjoys the security we bring to the area. We live in a small compound that consists of a

few abandoned Iraqi houses and an old school. We have our own gym, cardio room, MWR facility with phones and internet, dining facility and assortment of pets. (When we moved here some of the soldiers from 3rd PLT found 3 newborn puppies. The company has since informally adopted Larry, Moe and Curly.) Life here continues to have its struggles but we are working through them quickly. During our transition with the outgoing unit we ate MREs and Jimmy Deans for a few days until SSG Barry and our cooks were able to get the Kitchen up and running again. We also burned out the water pumps for the latrines and showers, which took a few days to replace. Now that the initial growing pains have ceased, we are beginning to look at long term improvements for our quality of life.

We are currently working to double the number of latrines and showers on the COP. We are also looking to build a new Gym, TOC and living quarters. This will allow soldiers to spread out a little more and increase their personal space. Finally we are trying to find a solution for getting the AFN signal from the satellite. The previous unit was unable to receive a signal but we will continue to work this issue. I know all of us here would like to watch some bowl games and the Super Bowl this year.

As always you can reach me on the Yahoo Group if you have specific questions or concerns. I hope the winter is treating everyone well.

CENTURION 6
 CPT Jeremiah Hurley
 C CO, 1-24 Infantry
 Commander

C CO Points of Contact

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Battalion News from Ft. Wainwright

Walk-To-Iraq-and-Back Stats

The Walk to Iraq program is in full swing, and 1-24 Infantry is representing themselves well among the other units involved. For the month of September, our Battalion has walked 2649 miles! We are currently in first place for the number of miles walked per individual Battalion/Unit. The following individuals have contributed to that total:

Natalea Andersen, Sherilin Andersen, Maren Best, Maria Bretches, Mary Cheney, Adahmarie Chum, Tanya Dalton, Tawny DeBolt, Ashley Frenette, Julie Green, Misty Hack, Dawn Hurley, Trisha Kaer, Karen Lewis, Peri Lund, Joy Martin, Jeanette Mitchell, Sharyn Moore, Lindsey Parish, Michelle Porreca, Melinda Quick, Andrea Ryker, Melanie Terrill, Dee VanAcker, Lisa VanAcker, Steven VanAcker, Michelle Whittier, and Rebecca Woolwine.

Congratulations to Lisa VanAcker of Charlie Company for having walked the farthest distance in September, accumulating a total of 552 miles!

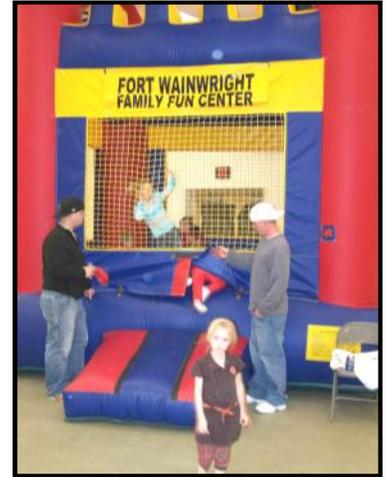
It isn't too late to join. Contact Army Community Service (ACS) at 353-7298 for more information.



Alpha Company FRG

Battalion Harvest Party

We had approximately 60 children and 30 adults help with the BN Harvest Party this year. There were many fun games and activities for the children to participate in. Thank you to all the family members and E CO soldiers who helped make the event a success. If you missed out on the fun, be watching for information about our upcoming BN Holiday party. Contact your FRG for more information on how you can be involved.



Congratulations Cyle Smith, whose guess was the closest in the "Guess the Number of Candy Corn" game. He won the pumpkin jar FILLED with candy!



Echo Company — Rear Detachment

Holding It Down...

I would like to remark with certainty that Echo Co. has grown and developed since our last newsletter. The load out of our Battalion was a challenging time, for both our deploying brothers, their families, and E Co. as most of us have never experienced remaining behind while our brothers and friends have gone into harms way. I can assure you that it has certainly given us a fresh outlook and respect for what the families experience when their loved ones deploy.

Following load out, many challenges arose for E Co. in the realm of Mission Essential tasks that I feel we could not address effectively during our NTC Test phase. These two areas are casualty notification and the training of new Soldiers who will eventually go forward to Iraq. In the area of casualty notification, I would like to take this opportunity to say, at times, official word to battalions who do not sustain casualties will be dramatically slower than to battalions who are directly affected. Notification to primary and secondary next of kin are of highest importance, with notification to all units occurring next. Army regulation requires a 24 hour period after official notification to the next of kin, before any information can be officially released. This includes notification to other battalions. The reason for the 24 hour delay is to provide the family of the injured or fallen service member some time to themselves following such a tragic event. The purpose for this explanation is to perhaps bring you some insight into the notification process and, to that end, some understanding that no one in the rear detachment, for this battalion or otherwise, is with-holding the release of information without good cause. We hope that this is acceptable and you will understand that we, on the rear detachment, take casualty notification extremely seriously. Our intent on such matters is always to operate in the best interest of the family and soldier affected.

On a better subject I am happy to say that the training of Events such as Combat Lifesaver, Force XXI

Battle Command Brigade-and-Below (FBCB2), Heat, Language, and Marksmanship training is proceeding well. All of these are skills which will certainly apply overseas and will set these new Soldiers up for expeditious integration to their Platoon, Squad, and Team and set the stage for a safe and successful deployment.

I am also happy to remark that the FRG Harvest party was a huge success. While E Co's support of this event was minimal compared to the efforts of the FRG and it's leaders, we are thankful for what we did contribute to the event, as a good time was had by all involved. I am also proud to announce that many of the company FRG's have taken advantage of the rear-detachment mail room for the shipment of mass care packages to the forward Companies. It is certainly our pleasure to assist and support in those endeavors, or any that bring direct support to families of the Legion and our brothers overseas! We remain at your service!

Strength and Honor!
CPT Joseph M. Bolcar
E Co., 1-24 IN
Commander

Deployment Mailing Address

SOLDIER'S NAME AND RANK
COMPANY, 1-24 IN
FOB WARHORSE
APO AE 09336

You may give out this address to your family and friends. Please check www.usps.com for guidelines on what can and cannot be mailed. A customs form will be required for all packages. Please allow a minimum of 2 weeks for delivery.

E CO Points of Contact

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