



Deuce Four



Volume 2 Issue 1 1st Battalion 24th Infantry Fort Wainwright, Alaska January 2009

Notes From the Commander

Family and Friends of the Legion:

Happy New Year! 2009 brings a new year and a new start. The great thing about 2009 is that we will redeploy back to Ft. Wainwright during the latter part of the year. However, before that occurs there is still a lot of hard work ahead of us. Three major events happen this month alone. First is the new Security Agreement between the United States Government and the Government of Iraq (GOI). While our mission has not changed, there are some minor adjustments we need to make in terms of how we conduct operations with the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). Because we have a great relationship with our ISF brothers, this has been a relatively easy adjustment. Also this month is the transfer of the Sons of Iraq (SOIz) from Coalition Forces to GOI. If you remember, it was the creation and implementation of the SOIz which helped eliminate much of the violence in Iraq a couple of years ago. Because of the work of these Iraqi patriots, it is important that this transfer goes well. Lastly, at the end of the month, provincial elections will occur. This is the first time elections have been held in Iraq since the national elections several years ago.

I am extremely proud of all of the hard work that the Soldiers of Deuce Four are doing here in Iraq each and every day. We are making a difference in many important and sustainable ways. Thank you for all of your support.

STRENGTH AND HONOR!

Legion 6
LTC Brian Reed
Cdr, Deuce Four



Notes from the Chaplain

Christmas has come and gone without too much fanfare here in Iraq. We celebrated as best we could and we wished we were home, but mostly we carried on with our missions. I managed to get hold of a Santa suit and visited the companies distributing Christmas stockings filled with goodies. I had a great time doing that, it was a chance to have fun with our situation.



This month, I want you show you the way I have been privileged to see the generous people of America. As a Chaplain, people send me things to pass out to your loved ones. Most who send these items do not know our Soldiers, have never met them and will likely never meet them. Still, they feel a sense of kinship with us and a desire to see our Soldiers as comfortable and stocked up with snacks, socks, books, soap, shampoo and other items.

I have the opportunity to see how truly generous Americans are. I have received gifts from churches and church groups, from corporate organizations, from clubs, from schools, from families and from individuals; all to give out to your Soldiers. I tell you this for a couple of reasons; the first is that I want to remind you how great a people Americans are. Americans are kind and generous and this is felt and seen in a real way out here. The second reason is that Americans appreciate the sacrifice you are making with

your Soldier deployed. I read the letters that mention these folks are praying for the Soldiers and their families.

I am telling you this because they will not send these notes to you, because they do not know who you are. It is easier to for them to contact Soldiers because they can get hold of them through me. I wanted you to start this New Year knowing that America supports you as well as your Soldier. Americans are praying for your Soldier and for you. They appreciate your sacrifice and know that they cannot fully understand how much of a sacrifice it truly is. On their behalf, I say thank you for being the faithful loving family and friends of our deployed battalion, despite how hard it is. My prayers are with you, America's prayers are with you.

CH Brian Palmer
Chaplain, 1-24



Headquarters & Headquarters Company

Greetings Family and Friends of Hammer Company,

First I would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous 2009. Your Soldiers and I have been very busy and it is making the time here fly by.

The company is currently engaged in two essential missions: Iraqi Elections, and the transfer of security workers to the Iraqi government. Both missions will be vital towards Iraq's goal of self governance. Everyday, Hammer Soldiers are coaching and mentoring Iraqi Police and Army men. These men are grateful for our support and they are

SFC Shack, our reenlistment NCO, will represent all of Iraq at the upcoming national reenlistment board at the Pentagon.

Finally I want to thank each and every one of you for making the holidays such a memorable experience. As you all know, Christmas can be a difficult time being away from loved ones. Fortunately, every person on the Hammer team had a piece of home thanks to your generosity. The company received countless trees, stockings, and goody bags to pass out. Hammer Company has a 24 hour mission, but everyone had some time off to reflect on the day. Christmas itself was celebrated with a delicious meal at the chow hall and most of the company playing football, basketball, watching movies and, of course, calling home.

Again, best wishes for a great 2009!

CPT Matthew D. Mackey
HHC, 1-24 IN
Commander



making their towns safer and more prosperous. In the four months we have served in Udaim and the surrounding villages, we've witnessed almost daily change for the better. The biggest change is the "can do" attitude we hear from the Iraqi people. They want to provide for themselves, and they have the tools to do this.

Hammer Company truly is a close knit team and this is evident by the number of Soldiers choosing to stay with the team. It is a truly patriotic act to volunteer and reenlist during a time of war. Due to our Soldier's dedication,



HHC Points of Contact

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Alpha Company ATTACK!



Dear Family and Friends of Attack Company,

Another month is behind us as we find ourselves through the first quarter of the deployment. As I'm sure you've all heard by now, December was a particularly trying month for Attack Company. However, out of great trials come great successes and great heroes.

This month the platoons found their days consumed by joint security patrols with the various Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), peppered with key leader engagements with local sheikhs, muktars, council members, and service managers. Identifying the root causes of the severe problems surrounding irrigation, potable water supply, electric power distribution, sewage and trash management, and education was a task none of us had been fully trained on and required keen observation, analysis, and creativity. So many things were done differently here than they were at home; cultural awareness necessarily permeated every aspect of our operations. The month of November was frustrating because determining the locations, functions, and inter-relationships of all of the key pieces of infrastructure was a tedious and time-consuming task, and as hard as we were working, there was no visible improvement in the Area of Operation (AO).

Finally in December, however, we started to see some of the fruits of our labor. A key canal cleaning project begun by the previous unit in the Tahwilla area was finally completed. Also, our engagements with government agencies regarding the power requirements to run the Zanbour water pumping station finally paid off, and more electricity was allocated to this critical pump station. These two events had a synergistic effect that combined to increase the water flow in the irrigation canals throughout our AO, and even into Barbarian Company's AO to our south. This progress was the result of weeks of work by 1st Platoon - who is responsible for the Zanbour Pump Station, 2nd Platoon - who is responsible for Tahwilla and the projects in that area, and our FSO, 1LT Schwiller - who manages all of our non-lethal projects and helps bring in outside

agencies for support. Since our AO was about 60% farmland, this was a major success and the first tangible impact we had on the area, and it was just the beginning.

Also in December, 3rd Platoon made great strides in improving the electricity situation in Kobat, and the trash problem in Amarat Seconiya, both areas just outside of the city of Khalis proper. By bringing the service managers together with the local Muktars, 3rd Platoon had been able to get the parties to talk about the problems and how to fix them. Both sides made agreements on how to solve the problems together, and 3rd Platoon assisted in the negotiations and the follow-up inspections on progress. As a result, within a couple of weeks, Kobat had gone from receiving about 30 minutes of power a day to a full 12 hours a day. Likewise, the difference in the streets of Amarat Seconiya was like night and day. No longer were children playing in piles of trash carelessly discarded. The community had taken ownership of their problems, and with a little help, had improved their lives and the lives of their children. The new found sense of pride was visible on their faces.

Unfortunately, we suffered some setbacks in December, as well. 22 December, was a particularly bad day. It started out like any other day so far, with the morning LOGPAC run back to FOB Warhorse and platoons preparing for the days patrols. Then, at about 0940 hours, an IED went off near the Khalis market district. This was only the second such event to occur since we had arrived in sector. 3rd Platoon was returning from FOB Warhorse at the time, and they diverted to the scene to respond. Once there, they found that 3 local nationals had been wounded, and the local police were dealing with the situation. 3rd Platoon requested EOD and other assets to exploit any evidence that might be found at the blast site, but due to the ISF's poor crime scene procedures, much of the evidence had already been scurried off as souvenirs. Later that afternoon, our 150k generator gave off a power surge that fried many of our interior lights, most of our climate control units, and thousands of dollars worth of personal electronics. But the worst was yet to come.

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At around 2100 that night, 1st Platoon set out on a routine security patrol of a town called Sadiyah. En route, they encountered another Coalition convoy moving through our AO from Balad. Due to the oversized quality of our vehicles, the road wasn't wide enough for both elements, and A11, the lead vehicle from 1st Platoon, was forced off the road, causing it to flip into a canal. Several heroic acts occurred that night in the minutes that followed the roll-over, but two are especially notable.

Inside the darkened Stryker, SGT Farrell, the vehicle commander, crawled through the "hell-hole", a narrow passage connecting the driver's compartment with the troop compartment. He located PFC Perryman, who was having difficulty releasing the back of his seat so he could move to the rear of the Stryker, the only possible exit, now. SGT Farrell was able to engage the seat release, and then grabbed PFC Perryman, and dragged him to safety in the crew compartment.

Meanwhile, outside on dry land, the other members of 1st Platoon were scrambling to try to help their brothers. SSG Clark was in the second vehicle in the order of movement as the squad leader. He was the last man to exit the vehicle, but, sprinting past the others rushing to the scene, he was the first to reach the banks of the canal and see what the situation was. Without hesitating, SSG Clark leaped into the canal, still wearing all of his 45 pounds of equipment, his only thoughts to help his fellow soldiers. SSG Clark furiously worked the lever on the rear hatch and was able to get it open. Immediately the water level inside the Stryker began to lower. SSG Clark and others assisted their comrades out of the Stryker. He then went inside the Stryker to make sure no one had been left behind in the confusion. All 11 passengers were accounted for, and in the end, the worst injury sustained was a dislocated shoulder. This injury was sustained by 1LT Cook, who had just joined the platoon 4 days prior. I attribute much of the credit for the minimal injuries to the outstanding dedication of

our NCO's. The training that all of the platoons diligently executed at home station, NTC, and continue to execute in theater on roll-over drills and personnel recovery is directly responsible for the fact that those 11 men were back at the COP that same night. The outcome of this potentially tragic incident was a Christmas miracle for which we were all grateful.

This past month we also had some personnel changes in the company. 1LT Jarzab moved out to take on the position of Executive Officer for Barbarian Company. Likewise, 1LT Shibilski went to the Centurions to take over their XO slot. SSG Clark left 1st Platoon to serve on the Battalion TAC, and SFC Larzelere will be leaving soon to work in the Battalion S3 shop. SSG McDermott also left the company to serve on the Brigade Military Transition Team. We wish all of these fine soldiers much success in their new positions. We also welcomed several troops to the Attack Company this month. 1LT Meihaus came on board as the Platoon Leader for 2nd Platoon, and close on his heels was SFC Barbour who is now his Platoon Sergeant. SSG Vanvarick joined 1st Platoon, and SSG Bucklin moved into 2nd Platoon. We also received a new soldier straight from Basic Training, PV2 Hudnall.

We hope you all enjoyed the recent holidays. They weren't quite as festive for the men, but we had each other. It was actually quite touching to see the number of Iraqi's who understood what it meant for us to be away from home for the holidays, and we were met by many grateful well-wishers. We did manage to incorporate a little of the Christmas spirit into our operations on the 25th by conducting a mission to drop off much needed school supplies to a school in 1st Platoon's sector. We found out later that the children were supposed to be off that day, but the headmaster had them all come in to receive our gifts. Sorry, kids!

Very Respectfully,
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,

This deployment seems to be flying by, at least on our end! The men are already cycling home for leave and back again, but it seems as if we just arrived here last month.

The New Year has brought with it a new dynamic for the Barbarians to operate within. The Status of Forces Agreement, or SOFA, has been signed and passed by the Government of Iraq and has established some new ground rules for us. The good news is that this is one of the last steps we'll need to take in order to hand the country of Iraq completely back to a legitimate and capable government. There are many rumors out there concerning what the SOFA will mean to your soldiers here. Several range from us redeploying immediately after we're expelled from the country by the Iraqi Government all the way to soldiers being charged with crimes inside of Iraqi Courts. The truth on the ground is that life looks and works pretty much the same way this month as it did last month. The men have already been working extensively with the local Iraqi security forces and within the Iraqi judicial system to detain the enemy and search suspected homes. The SOFA is actually a good thing for us because it provides us with an Iraqi method and Iraqi forces to fix Iraq's security and governance problems.

You may have heard about our dog Meat Loaf. We had a pet we inherited from the previous unit that lived here with us. Well, I'm sad to report that the dog has run off! Apparently she prefers the "diet" found on the outside and the "fresh" Iraqi air to that provided on JCOP Key West. We had a good run together. However, it is much quieter at night and no one has been sick since she left...

The area the men are working in has really turned around since we've been here. One platoon is in the middle of what the locals are calling a "year of rebuilding," which is really an agricultural renaissance. The platoon leaders are working hard to locate the root problems associated with the power and water troubles the locals have been having and then fixing them. Each platoon can be compared to a governing body for their areas of responsibility. They work with the local Sheiks and security forces, find solutions to their problems, and then help them implement them. Most of our area is farmland, fed by a very simple irrigation system. The water was not flowing when we arrived, but due to their hard work, we have green fields again. We have also developed a large chicken farm here. The first chickens were delivered about two months ago as chicks and have now fully grown and been sold. From the money made, the locals are building fish farms and stocking more chicken coops. With money to be made, there is no room for the insurgents.

Having been here from the beginning, it is good to see what victory looks like now, due to the efforts of your soldiers. These people had nothing under the old regime. Now they are in the "year of rebuilding" and the insurgency has been pushed out to the border areas. Smart platoon leaders, disciplined NCO's, and young soldiers working hard have made a big difference in the lives of the people here and made it impossible for the insurgents to regain a foothold in AO Barbarian.

Take care, write to your soldier, and we'll see you soon.

-Barbarian 6

CPT Jeffrey Harmon

B Co, 1-24 IN

Commander

B CO Points of Contact

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FRG Leader:	Kristin Harmon	theharmons02@hotmail.com

Charlie Company Centurions

I never thought I would say that 50 degrees was cold, especially after seeing the recent Fairbanks weather. Nonetheless, it's cold. We are in the middle of the winter months and probably the only months that we won't be talking about the heat.

Activity has picked up in AO Centurion since the last newsletter. We are going through a lot of transitions right now in our AO. We are working on handing over responsibility of the Sons of Iraq program to the Government of Iraq as well as trying to understand the new Security Agreement between the US and Iraq. It is surely an interesting and historic time to be here.

Christmas and New Years were great. As usual, the cooks prepared a feast for us. We didn't have the flow of visitors for Christmas like we had for Thanksgiving. I think the guys were happy about that. They were able to spend some time at the COP relaxing and enjoying some down time. We did have one special visitor, Santa Claus. Santa showed up at the COP riding on a Stryker bringing gifts for Soldiers. Again, something I never would have imagined in a million years.

We have worked our way through the first Wounded In Action (WIA) in the battalion. SGT Brady was wounded (gunshot wound to the arm) during a dismounted patrol. We believe it was a sniper in the area. 3rd Platoon's response to the incident and care of SGT Brady at the scene was outstanding. He is currently at Fort Wainwright recovering. We are all looking forward to having him back here as soon as he is able to return.

There have also been some personnel moves in the company over the last month. SFC Lafontaine

has departed C CO and is now the NCOIC for the Battalion TAC. SSG Burger has moved to the MITT team that supports the IA in the BN AO. 1LT Troy has departed 1st Platoon and is now in B CO. Finally, CPT Pfeiffer is departing the company in the next week to attend the Captains Career Course and the Special Forces Qualification Course. 1LT Troy was replaced by LT Helmsing from Weapons platoon and CPT Pfeiffer was replaced by 1LT Shibilski from A CO.

All is well in AO Centurion. We hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We wish we could have all been home for the Holidays but our flights, just like everyone else's, were delayed due to the Ice Storm in Seattle.

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

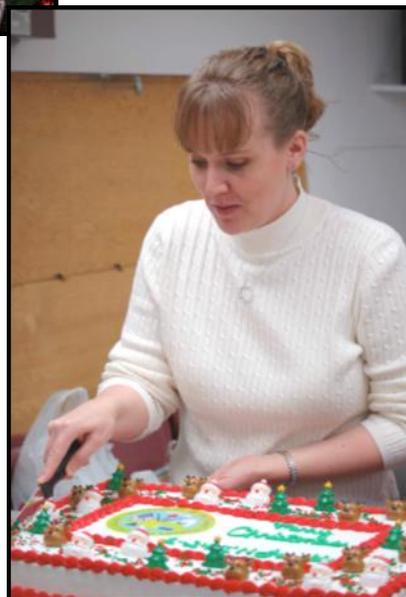
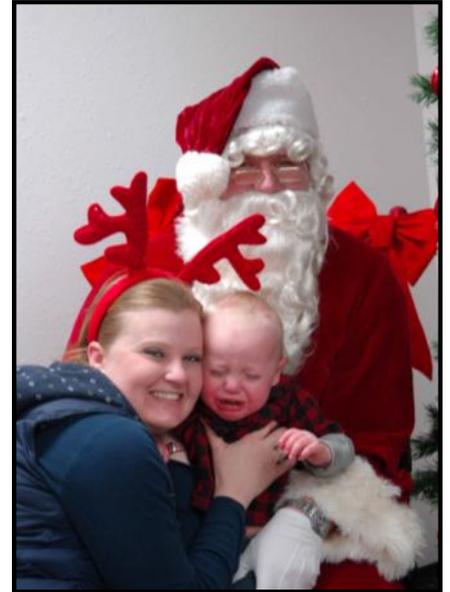


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*Photos from the
2008 Battalion
Christmas Party*







The *Walk to Iraq and Back* program is in the middle of the 5th month, and 1-24 Infantry continues to represent themselves well among the other units involved. For the month of November, the total number of miles walked were 17,727. Our Battalion walked 6448 of those miles! We are currently in first place for the number of miles walked per Battalion or Unit.

The following individuals have contributed to that total:

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

Congratulations to Maria Bretches of HHC for having walked the farthest distance in November!

Thank you to all the individuals who helped with the planning, set-up, clean-up and activities at our Battalion Christmas Party. We had approximately 60 children come and visit with Santa and participate in the afternoon of activities. We also want to thank Mike and Peggy Pollen for their generous donations which, along with others, made our festivities a huge success. Thank you for your generosity!

We will be planning the next Battalion party starting in February/March. Be sure to mark your calendar for April 11, 2009....we will be hosting an Easter get-together on that date. If you would like to be a part of the planning or volunteer to help on the 11th, please contact Sherilin Andersen at 750-2191.



ALPHA CO FRG prepares goodies to send to our soldiers.



Echo Company — Rear Detachment

Post Holidays – Change of Command

Over the course of the last month, E Co 1-24 IN had the privilege of executing yet another training package for replacement personnel in support of the Legion’s forward operations. We are also proud to submit that a fourth one is in the training process at this time and expected to be arriving in country mid to late February. To refresh the subject, the training packages consist of such classes as Force Battle Command Brigade and Below (FBCB2), Combat Life-Saver (CLS), TIGR, HEAT, Basic Marksmanship, Close Quarters Marksmanship, and last but certainly not least, Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT). All of these are designed to set the stage for rapid integration with the forward portion of the unit and set these new Soldiers and their platoon’s up for success in the coming months.

We are also proud to remark that E Co did provide limited support to the 1-24 IN BN FRG Holiday Party which took place on December 20th and was certainly a huge success and a great opportunity to build bonds and have fun. Plus, Santa was present for a time, and who wouldn’t be happy to rub elbows with old St. Nick!

If I may take a moment all to myself as the E Co Commander, I would like to bring something to light in this forum to the Families of the Legion who may not be aware of the changes coming up. This will likely be my final newsletter as the E Co Commander, as I am scheduled to deploy within the month. My replacement, CPT Josh Bost, is en-route to Ft. Wainwright as I write this. I would like to take this opportunity to thank LTC Reed and the BN Command group for this opportunity and entrusting me with this honor, all the FRG, but most especially Mrs. Reed and Mrs. Andersen for their faith and support, my replacement CPT Bost, for allowing me the opportunity to deploy with this unit and whom I am confident will be a far better commander than I could ever hope to be, and last but certainly not least the Soldiers and NCO’s of E Co. 1-24 IN who are probably not aware of the lessons they taught me and how they

helped me grow and develop in this profession of arms... “Fear the Reaper!”

To all the families, I would submit that this has been an outstanding experience and honor, as well as a service I am very grateful to have been a part of...rest assured and as usual...

We remain at your service!

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

- Military Family Life Consultants – 388-2552
- Army Community Services - 353-7298 or 347-4636 after hours
- Social Work Services – 361-6284
- Community Mental Health – 361-6059
- Alcohol/Substance Abuse - 361-9872
- Family Advocacy – 353-7315
- Financial Readiness – 353-4369
- Army Emergency Relief – 353-7453
- American Red Cross – 353-7234 or 1-877-272-7337 after hours
- Brigade Family Help Desk – 353-4180

Deployment Mailing Address

SOLDIER’S RANK AND NAME

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

E CO Points of Contact		
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