

Lumberjack Ledger

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Lumberjack 6

Merry Christmas to all family and friends of the 20th Engineer Battalion. As you know, we are now in Baghdad as part of Multinational Corps – Iraq. We have received two new companies here, the 887th ESC from Fort Campbell and the 642nd ESC from Fort Drum. All Soldiers, regardless of home station, are working together to accomplish an important mission. You can be sure that your Soldier has the best equipment to do his or her job, and that the Army is providing outstanding service support to each individual. No one will deny that the environment is dangerous, but we are proud to follow in the steps of the Lumberjack Sol-

diers that fought in World War One, World War Two, Vietnam, and Operation DESERT STORM.

The battalion is engaged in a new mission: combat theater construction. Your Soldiers are building all over the area of operations, providing survivable positions and living areas, as well as electricity and plumbing, to coalition Soldiers all over the Baghdad area. They are cleaning up routes so IEDs cannot be hidden among trash and debris, and filling in craters with rock and concrete to prevent their use again. The Soldiers are making an important contribution each day to the coalition effort in Iraq.

The papers and television are full of speculation and commentary concerning the Iraq Study Group and the future strategy of the United States in Iraq. This is of little concern to us here in Baghdad. The Soldiers of this battalion are building and fighting in Iraq right now. They need your full support to complete this important mission.

Best wishes for a safe and prosperous New Year.

Build and Fight,

LTC James Raymer

Lumberjack 9

As I think about what to say for this first news letter, the thought that comes to mind is of the great Lumberjack Soldiers that are here serving beside me. Just to see the level of motivation and the manner in which the Soldiers work is absolutely fantastic and it motivates me every day to see

them. I extend a great Lumberjack welcome to the Soldiers of the 887th ESC (Empire) and the 642nd EN CO (Deuce). This year will be challenging and I foresee great things from the battalion.

The families left in the US have a

big challenge, to support your Soldiers and keep things going on the home front. Your support means so much to us here. To our great Soldiers keep up the good work and I will see you on the ground while we execute our missions. Until next time God Bless you all. "Build and Fight"

HSC - Diablos



The first month of this deployment has gone by quickly. We can only hope the remaining time will go by as fast. Since the headquarters company left Fort Hood in late October, we have been busy and things seem to be changing for the better everyday. In case anyone didn't know, here is a recap of what we have done to date. Our advance party (ADVON) arrived in Kuwait to pave the way for the rest of the battalion back in mid-October. They quickly coordinated for billeting space, drew necessary equipment and vehicles for our time in Kuwait, (and figured out where the PX and Dining Facilities were). They did a great job, and when the company main body arrived on the 2nd and 3rd of November, we had plenty of time to recover from the enduring the long flight from Fort Hood. During our almost two weeks in Kuwait, we conducted training on theatre specific equipment that will keep us safe during this deployment, and then engaged in an intensive three day convoy training exercise. This was also a valuable time to acclimatize to the region which right now is colder than Fort Hood at the moment. On 8 November, MAJ Alexander, CPT King, CW2 Rush, SGT

LTC Raymer and CSM Murphy uncased the colors during the Transfer of Authority Ceremony

Meyer, (and the commanders and supply sergeants from FSC, 510, and 887) flew from Kuwait to Baghdad as part of the ADVON to Iraq. They linked up with their counterparts in the 62nd Engineer Battalion and began the task of transferring of equipment and learning the rhythm of day to day operations. They also used this time to learn where everything was to pave the way for the rest of the battalion which arrived at Camp Liberty on the 16th.

Almost immediately upon the battalion's closing in on Camp Liberty, we began to shadow our counterparts from the 62nd, beginning by learning the intricacies of their jobs here in Iraq, and seeing our "new" equipment. Our company found itself filling some mighty big shoes. The 62nd Engineers staff had two and a half times more Captains on the battalion staff than the 20th and more depth in personnel in almost every other section. Our counterparts, the HSC of the 62nd had over 200+ Soldiers, compared to our current cadre of 83. On 1 December, the 62nd officially gave the reins to us during the Transfer of Authority (TOA) ceremony. While the 62nd was very helpful in getting us situated and prepared to assume missions here, we were happy to finally see them go. If we are replaced by another unit at the end of the deployment, they will surely feel the same way about us.

Managing expectations became the first order of business from the Battalion Commander and the staff. Overall the transition of equipment and facilities has been very good for our company, as we now have more stuff than we know what to do

with. This is a big change for a company that only recently had a hard time getting toilet paper at Fort Hood (an exaggeration, but only a slight one). The company equipped well enough that it is now frequently everything to our sister companies to help support their operations.

Things are changing quickly in the company. The most obvious difference is the name, HHC. On 3 December, LTC Raymer instructed the battalion that we were no longer the HSC, and that all Headquarters companies for Combat Effects battalions would be HHC because of the role the Forward Support Company (FSC). (A matter of semantics, as our mission remains the same.) We have also made some personnel

changes recently. 2LT Tatum is now 1LT Tatum, and has taken over a platoon in the 887th for the duration of the deployment. She will be in the company of members of the security platoon which are also spread among the platoons of the 887th. We sadly had to leave 1LT Davis behind at Fort Hood for medical reasons, and she is missed.

With her absence, we have welcomed to the company 1LT James McCormick from the 887th. 1LT McCormick is already doing great work, and we wish we could take him back to Fort Hood at the end of the deployment. Other changes include the promotion of PFC Franciosa (who got his wish and is now in 510th), the promotion of 1LT Lao, who will taking a platoon in 510th very soon, and the promotions of PFCs Owens, Presley, Proctor, Ramirez,

and Van Hovel



MAJ Kelly "pinning" PFC Presley - One of the many recent promotions in HHC

"Our company found itself filling some mighty big shoes"

FSC - WORKHORSE

Hello to all of the Workhorse Family and Friends! The first month of deployment flew by faster than any of us imagined. We sent LT Duke and SGT Rogers on our advance party (ADVON) to Kuwait in mid-October to ensure that our arrival was a smooth one. Along with the rest of the ADVON they laid down the foundation for our company and the rest of the battalion. We spent almost two weeks conducting training and getting accustomed to the climate. The training we received varied from classroom instruction on theater specific equipment, ranges, and a three day convoy training exercise. We received accolades on our performance during the convoy training exercise by our observer controllers.



LTC Raymer and CPT Contreras pin LT Duke, Tatum and Jesionowski during their promotion.

PFC Gudmestad and I arrived as the ADVON party to Camp Liberty, Iraq. We began the task of inventorying and transferring the equipment from the departing unit. The rest of the company reached our destination on 15 November. The Soldiers were pleased as they saw the pleasant living accommodations (trailer rooms, dining facility, post exchange, etc.) We began to shadow our counter-parts and learned the ins and outs of our mission. We officially took over on 1 December as we participated in the Transfer of Authority Ceremony.



Workhorse soldiers display their artistic talents in Kuwait!

"We received accolades on our performance during the convoy training exercise by our observer controllers"

1st Platoon has the daunting task of running the logistical package convoys (LOGPACs). They have conducted a couple to this point and continue to support the battalion in all that it needs.

2nd Platoon is also faced with a complex mission – fixing and maintaining all of the equipment that we inherited. There have already been many late nights for both platoons in our motor pool as they strive to attain equipment that is always ready to roll. 3rd Platoon is working out of the dining facility ensuring that the food that our Soldiers are eating is properly prepared with standardized sanitization requirements. They also have a couple of Soldiers supplying the battalion with water and meals ready to eat on a daily basis.

We had several promotions in the company. Both, LT Duke and Jesionowski are now 1LTs. SPC Grocke made the cut-off score and was rewarded for his hard work as he was promoted to SGT. In addition, PFC Cooper was promoted to SPC and Trenche and Banchs were promoted to PFC. 1LT Duke has taken over a platoon in 887th, and we welcomed 1LT Lullen from 887th as our new executive officer. Finally, 1SG White and I would like to express our gratefulness regarding the opportunity to lead, and continue leading your husbands, wives, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and loved ones in combat, the honor is ours. Until next month, WORKHORSE!

Sapper

510 EN CO

Seasons Greetings to the families and friends of the 510th Engineer Company! After months of preparation and planning, the Soldiers of 510 Sapper are finally deployed in defense of our nation. The time thus far has gone by quickly and your Soldier has performed admirably.

After a tearful goodbye on Halloween's eve, we spent the next two days traveling to Camp Beurhing, Kuwait, where we would spend the next two weeks. Our time in Kuwait was spent getting acclimatized to the Middle East, training up on the new equipment, and learning the latest secrets for success that would help us in Iraq.

At the conclusion of our training in Kuwait, the company boarded a C-17 cargo plane bound for our final destination, Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq. After a day or two of orientation to our new home here in Iraq, we began the hectic process of learning our new job from the people whom we were replacing. This included drivers training on new vehicles we had not seen before, some additional electrical training specific to the Middle East, and classes for our leaders on how to manage our upcoming construction projects.

Within days of our arrival in Iraq it was time for our first mission, the large scale upgrade of a US Army patrol base in the town of Yusafiyah. 3rd Platoon was quick to step up to the plate for this challenging mission and have performed very well to date. So far they have completed a battalion headquarters building and are on track to complete a separate company headquarters building. We have been amazed at the efficiency and quality of work being produced at Yusafiyah. We hope to have 3rd Platoon back with us at Camp Victory by Christmas.

One of the big focuses for the upcoming year will be the Baghdad Security Belt, which is designed to control access into the city of Baghdad. At several of these sites, 2nd Platoon has been establishing Life Support Areas (LSA), complete with electricity and environmental control units, for the Iraqi Soldiers manning these access points. Their hard work is ensuring the success of the Baghdad Security Belt and helping to create a stable Baghdad.

1st Platoon has been busy with masonry work for a military outpost called Forward Operating Base Justice. Here they are improving the existing sewer infrastructure that has been failing. This has been a vital project that will improve the living conditions for both the US and Iraqi Army Soldier's who occupy FOB Justice.

4th Platoon has been performing a variety of mission here on Camp Victory and elsewhere. They started work on upgrading the electrical systems on motor pools immediately upon arrival in Iraq. Next, 4th Platoon traveled to a forward operating base in southern Baghdad to install a new shower facility for US Army Soldiers who have been living in harsh conditions. Currently, the platoon has begun work on building a new tent city that will be utilized by the Iraqi Army. 4th Platoon has truly answered the call and we are proud of their efforts.

This month has been good for the growth of the company. We saw the promotions of 1LT Haller, SSG Battle, SPC McElaney, PFC Koch, PFC Moore, PFC Reynolds, and PV2 Nelson. The 510th grew by 3 Soldiers with the addition of SPC Bengé, PFC Franciosa, and PV2 Jenson.

The company has been gone for a month and half now and the time has flown by. Hopefully that trend will continue. We would like to thank our family and friends for your continued support and for all the care packages that you send. Your Soldier misses you and thinks of you daily.



Company logo painted at Camp Beurhing, Kuwait.

CPT Kenneth Rockwell Commander, 510th Eng Co

Soldiers from 3rd Platoon building a company headquarters building at Yusafiyah, Iraq.





642nd EN CO (ESC) “DEUCE”



Three months down and only nine to go...if the rest of our time here passes as quickly as it has in this first quarter, we will be home before you know it. I contribute the fleeting days to the operational tempo (optempo), and the frequency and number of missions we have participated in since arriving. Recently, however, the pace has slowed a bit with many units around the Baghdad area of operations leaving and being replaced by incoming divisions, brigades, battalions and companies. In the past month we said goodbye to the division in charge of our operations in and around Baghdad, the 4th Infantry Division (Ivy Leaf), and welcomed the 1st Cavalry Division (First Team). We also said farewell to the 62nd Engineer Combat Battalion, under which we previously worked, and said hello to the 20th Engineer Battalion. With new people on-the-ground and in-charge, it creates a lull in the operation flow while they organize, evaluate the situation on the ground, and restructure their scope and priorities of work. Still, we've been continuing on with our important engineering missions, and bridging the gap between the departure of the 62nd and the arrival of the 20th.

As the largest construction unit in /around Baghdad, the unique abilities of our battalion are in constant demand. Deuce Soldiers recognize their important role in expanding the reach of our forces and bringing the fight to the enemy. This often calls for operating in dangerous areas. They have faced this danger in true U.S. Army tradition, with courage and tenacity. It has been a team effort, from the mechanic who ensures the equipment is mission capable to the operator who spends long nights slinging barriers on the dark Baghdad streets. I am constantly and continually impressed with their professionalism and mission accomplishment.

For those at home the time is probably crawling by. Those who support us have our deepest gratitude for the sacrifices they make and the support they give their Soldier. Without their support, we could not accomplish what we do day-in and day-out.

Till next time, this is Deuce 6 signing off.

RESPECT ALL, FEAR NONE, DEUCE!

“As the largest construction unit in /around Baghdad, the unique abilities of our battalion are in constant demand.”



887th ESC "EMPIRE"



3rd Plt goes through reflexive fire training in Kuwait.

Greetings to all at Fort Hood and Fort Campbell from the mighty Empire! We hope that all is well there at home.

A quick recap on the last month and a half: after a long enough stop in Ireland to promote now-SFC Schmitt, the Empire arrived in Kuwait on November 2nd. Upon our arrival, we joined the 20th EN BN (C). We also welcomed the 20th's Security Platoon into our ranks; to fill our personnel shortages, the 20th attached to us a small platoon of Combat Engineers to serve as drivers and security.

Additionally, we gained two new Platoon Leaders for 1st and 2nd Platoon, 2LT Duke and 2LT Tatum. 1LT McCormick and 1LT Lullen are now Executive Officers of HHC and FSC, respectively. After a variety of training and equipment issue in Kuwait, the Company arrived in Baghdad on the 16th of November. We quickly started our Relief in Place of the 62nd Engineer Battalion (Combat)(Heavy), learning exactly what they did the year

they were here and extensive training on our newly assigned equipment. (Who would have thought that the 887th would ever have heavy, armored equipment?)

The Empire hit the ground running. Since our Transfer of Authority, we have been going full bore.

As of this writing, 1st and 2nd Platoons have run a combined 5 short day/night counter-mobility missions, 2nd Platoon has begun a two-week-plus survivability mission, and 3rd Platoon has been busy every day with a critical force protection mission.

Maintenance Platoon has been occupied with inspecting all of our "new" equipment, maintaining it, and going out on missions with the line platoons.

We have been very fortunate; we have had no accidents or injuries. You all should be very proud of your Soldiers – they have been very vigilant and safety-conscious.

With all of our missions and day-to-day operations, the time has gone relatively quickly. We hope that it has gone as quickly for you, and that you have a happy and safe holiday season!

- CPT Hudson
Empire 6

A 1st Plt Armored Dozer on a combat mission



The Field Maintenance Team



BUILD & FIGHT!



510th Operation's Christmas Spirit

Chaplain's Corner

Greetings from the Chaplain's Corner at Camp Liberty!

Chaplain's Corner, apparently this is where they put us when we're disobedient. All kidding aside, Happy Belated Thanksgiving and a soon-awaited Merry Christmas from the battalion's Unit Ministry Team. We owe our thanks to God for getting us here and keeping us safe in the past month and a half. Through Camp Buhering to running missions here at Camp Liberty, where the food is tolerable, the laundry is free, and a 24 hour gym is very accommodating. Can you believe it, we live in luxury? What a wonderful place this is. The companies have been running missions for about a month now, and God has granted us His mercy and safety through all of them. There are many religious services going on here at Camp Liberty, many of which have gained the interest of the Soldiers in our battalion. Most of our Soldiers participate in the services held at the Engineer Chapel, where we as a UMT serve diligently. A few companies have already gotten into the joyfulness of the Christmas season and begun decorating their areas, which reminds us of our families back home and shows us the grace and love God shows us daily. As I talk with the Soldiers daily, I'm reminded of loved ones back home and the struggle we all share with the separation from them. It also reminds me of the importance of faith and the closeness corporate worship brings to each of us in our Army family, which is why faith and worship are an intricate part of a growing family. I hope back home that each of you are participating in some form of worship in your daily life; it brings hope and stability. As this Christmas season draws near, I see Soldiers helping one another out and celebrating the joy of the season, for which we thank God for sending his Son as a baby in a manger to make a way for us to be a part of his family. So I urge each of you to cherish one another, which is your adopted family back home. In the Bible, Philippians Ch. 2 verses 1-4, reminds us that we should love as Christ loves when Paul states: "Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit but in humility consider others as more important than yourself. And everyone should look out not only for your own interest but also the interest of others." So, as an Army family, take care of one another and may God bless each one of you this Christmas season with joy, peace, and hope. See you next Christmas!

Thoughtful Reflection:

The greatest achievements are those that benefit others.
"To be the greatest, be a servant." Matthew 23: 11

For God and Country,

20th EN BN, UMT
Chaplain (CPT) Rickie Wambles
Chaplain Asst. (PFC) Avery Owens

