



FOB Warrior  
Kirkuk, Iraq

# 225<sup>th</sup> FSB Newsletter “Strike Lightning”



Volume 4, Issue 04

July/August

## Inside this issue:

<i>Purple Heart Ceremony</i>	2
<i>Truck Roadeo</i>	2
<i>MG Batiste Visits</i>	3
<i>Training is the Key to Success and Survival</i>	3
<i>Mascal</i>	4
<i>Lightning Bolt Challenge</i>	4
<i>Good News Story</i>	5
<i>Chaplains Corner</i>	6

## Commander's Corner



As we approach the month of July, two months have already passed us by since our last Battalion Newsletter. The time continues to tick away for OIF-2 as we approach our sixth month of deployment. It seems like just yesterday when we were getting ready to deploy and had our last FRG meeting at Schofield Barracks. I trust that all of you are doing well whether back at Schofield Barracks or at other locations that you and your families may have traveled to for the Summer.

The Soldiers continue to perform magnificently every day throughout our deployment. We approach the month of July with great expectations as we prepare to transition sovereignty to the new interim government of Iraq. The Soldiers' daily routine will remain much the same as we continue to stay focused on assisting the local population

during the transition and in providing world class support to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

We have several events planned for the Soldiers over the next quarter that will keep them focused on the mission and provide them with recreation as well. The Battalion will conduct a "Strike Lightning Talent Show" at the end of the month that will offer several prizes for the winners. The Soldiers have worked extremely hard on putting the event together and I am certain that it will produce a night of laughs and fun for all involved.

I have received a lot of comments regarding the FRG video that we sent back to all of you earlier this month. 1LT Russell from B Company led the effort in putting the video together and did a super job. If you didn't get a chance to see it at last month's meeting make sure you attend the July meeting. 1LT

Smith is planning on running the video again for those who missed it. We will try and send another video home to you in the next few months.

We also have our first Web Cam Teleconference scheduled later this month. Our intent is to try and schedule each Company over the next several weeks to give family members an opportunity to talk and see their spouse "real time" and live from here in Iraq. Ensure you stay engaged with your Company FRG Leaders for more information on this program over the coming months.

Keep the letters coming to your loved ones. I visit them often and they all tell me that the mail system is working well. This is the best morale builder we have out here so keep the letters coming. God Bless you all and stay safe.

**Battalion Commander**

## Command Sergeant Major's Corner



Families and friends of the 225<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Light), I hope this newsletter finds everyone in high spirits and doing well. First, I would like to wish all of the mothers and fathers a belated Happy Mother's Day and Happy Father's Day. Mothers and Fathers play a very significant role in all of the Soldiers lives and I would like to say thank you to all of you that support our Soldiers.

The Soldiers have been giving it their all here in Iraq and it shows on a daily basis. In the month of June we received visits from MG Batiste, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Commanding General, and COL Wentz, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division DISCOM Commander. On both occasions the 225<sup>th</sup> Soldiers were recognized for their outstanding efforts and support that they have been providing to the 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT. On June 26th the Battalion

will be having a talent show to give the Soldiers a night to sit back, have fun, and enjoy themselves. The talent show will consist of gospel and opera singing, poetry readings, musical selections and much audience participation. We have received donations from MWR, AAFES and other organizations, to ensure that the Soldiers have prizes and everyone leaves the talent show with something.

Please, be sure to keep us in your prayers as we conduct daily missions here in Iraq. The chain of command has done everything in their power to ensure that our Soldiers are safe. When you go to bed at night please rest assured that your sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers are in good hands.

**Battalion Command Sergeant Major**



*MG Batiste speaks with SPC Manning and SGT Jackson during his visit to FOB Warrior*

# Headquarters & Alpha Company “Titans”

Aloha from Kirkuk, Iraq. I hope that this newsletter finds the entire TITAN family doing well. HQ&A has just finished another month of duty in support of Operation Iraq Freedom II. Like always the TITAN Soldiers continue to make history and set the standard for all HQ&A Companies in the U.S. Army. The Soldiers of this company amaze me everyday with their dedication to mission accomplishment, operational area improvement and as always training.

The TITANS have been keeping a very busy schedule over the last month and the workload has really paid off in a number of areas from force protection to collective level training. For the month a typical TITAN day would consist of two-a-days and no I am not talking about football practice. The company would fill and emplace sandbags in the morning and at night in order to improve our force protection posture at the FOB. The TITANS would then move into their direct support role whether it be: distributing fuel, breaking rations, issuing repair parts,

producing water or going on the road for a LOGPAC to another FOB. Once the direct support missions were completed, the Soldiers would conduct individual training that ranged from weapons familiarization to first aid. This hard work was scheduled to ensure that the Soldiers remain safe, to accomplish their direct support mission and to constantly be focused on their combat skills.

The TITANS have steadily improved their operational areas, they now have handstand buildings with air conditioners and either freezers or refrigerators allowing the Soldiers to sustain themselves in the 100 (+) degree heat. A lot of the work areas also received their first coat of paint. The company has removed tons of trash and old equipment that has been in this area for years. The hard work has

paid off and each Soldier takes pride in their operational area.

The amount of training that was incorporated into the operational tempo is remarkable. The company made history in several areas to include establishing the first Refuel on the Move (ROM) during support of combat operations as well as training on the FOB. To mix things up a bit the company began hand-to-hand combat training; showing Soldiers how to defend themselves and how to take down another individual and place them into flexi-cuffs. To round out the training the TITANS completed their first diagnostic APFT to ensure everyone keeps physical fitness as priority.

I would like to close by saying that the TITANS will continue to be dedicated to their mission and we thank you all for your everlasting support. TITANS!

## TRUCK Roadeo

The Soldiers of the 225<sup>th</sup> FSB HQ&A Company continue to provide the 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT with timely combat service support throughout the area of operations. On 1 June 2004, Soldiers from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon “Rough Riders”, were geared up and ready to start their first of three phases of the

Operation Iraqi Freedom-2 (OIF-2) Truck Roadeo. The Rough Riders bean the competition with a 10 level Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) on the M1088 (tractor with trailer), M1083 (troop carrier) and the M1084 (with crane). Once they completed the first phase, the next phase was a driving course,

and finally a written test concluded the competition. After grading the tests and totaling all the points from the previous events the overall winner was announced. PFC Vicente Perez was given the title as the Driver of the Quarter and OIF-2 Truck Roadeo winner with a 96% average in all of the events.

## PURPLE HEART CEREMONY

The 225<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion conducted its first ever Purple Heart Ceremony on 24 May 2004. Chaplin Echols began the ceremony with a prayer followed by remarks from LTC Walker. 1LT Lane read the history of the Purple Heart and read the citations for the Purple Heart for Awards that

were presented to SGT Burt, SPC Bear, and PFC Malveaux of Charlie Company. These Soldiers were involved in a mortar attack on FOB Warrior on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February. The 225<sup>th</sup> FSB Commander LTC Walker and Command Sergeant Major Herring presented the

Purple Hearts.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division PAO was on site to cover the event and video tape it as well.



225<sup>th</sup> FSB Purple Heart awardees

*“...it's first ever Purple Heart Ceremony”*

# Bravo Company “Bulldogs”

The time here has been flying by. It is yet another month. We are still conducting our mission here and the morale of the Soldiers is still high. Each of them continues to do a great job.

We have had several promotions here. First, WO1 Taylor was promoted to CW2. CW2 Taylor’s promotion is well deserved and he has done a superb job in his field of expertise. Other promotions consist of PFC Weldon, PFC Morgan, and SPC Lisemby. SPC Weldon is currently performing duties as the training NCO. SPC Morgan is doing an outstanding job as the SAMS-1 clerk. SGT Lisemby works at UMS and sets the standard in organizational maintenance. Special note of congratulations to ILT Russell and ILT Thompson on their selection for promotion to Captain.

Additionally, the company sent SSG Dourson to attend a three day EHAT training course. With this training SSG Dourson will ensure B Company maintains environmental awareness, as well as, provide the company with a subject matter expert on environmental matters.

A special note goes out to the Soldiers that have been recognized for their outstanding achievements going above and beyond the call of duty. We had several personnel recognized for their speedy reaction to a crisis situation. Those personnel are the “Logistics Warrior of the Week” for their outstanding support and dedication to duty. This month’s selectees are SGT Wiley and CPL Lang.

A special thanks goes out to ILT Russell, SGT Wylie, and SPC Au for their contribution and dedication in

making the special FRG video for the families and friends back in Hawaii. Though, we are so far away our hearts and minds are with you and hopefully the video expresses some of those emotions. It was a very special project and something very worthwhile for everyone here to do. I hope that all of you enjoy it!  
**BULLDOGS!**



**COL Wentz speaks with SSG Paulino during his visit to FOB Warrior**

## MAJOR GENERAL BATISTE VISITS

Major General Batiste, Division Commander for the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division (Mech) visited the 225<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion at FOB Warrior. The S3, CHSO, and SPO briefed the General on the Battalion’s Concept of Operations and Concept of Support. LTC Walker escorted MG Batiste on a tour of all the Battalion’s

Operational Areas. He was very impressed with the Soldiers in the Battalion and with the stellar support the Battalion is providing the 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT. Several Soldiers received coins from General Batiste for their outstanding performance.

The Battalion also received a visit from COL Wentz, DISCOM

Commander for the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division (Mech). COL Wentz toured all of the Battalion’s Operational Areas and he spoke with many Soldiers in the Battalion. He mentioned that the Battalion should continue to provide the stellar support to the 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT and that he would continue to send support where it is needed.

## Training is the Key to Success and Survival

The Bravo Company “Bulldogs” conducted several training events this month. The Soldiers participated in POSH, Suicide Prevention, Level II IED training, and a NCOPT on battle drills. The unit also spearheaded the Battalion Driver’s Training course. This one week course was conducted in order to afford Soldiers not licensed on vehicles the opportunity to train and become familiar with the proper use and care of vehicles. SFC Benson, the Battalion’s Master Driver, was instrumental in having four Soldiers make it through the Driver’s Training Course. At the conclusion of the

Driver’s Training Course Soldiers were licensed on four types of vehicles.

The Charlie Company Medics rekindled their Air Assault expertise this month by conducting air assault week. The week began with air assault physical training, two days of classroom training; one day of rigging, hand and arm signals, and the final day consisted of high speed slingload operations. SGT E. Gonzales led the training that went off without a hitch. His Soldiers conducted four daylight slingload missions and night slingload missions under Night Vision Devices.

The aviation support was provided by the 82<sup>nd</sup> Dustoff which is based out of Ft. Riley, Kansas, but currently operates from the Kirkuk Airbase.



**Charlie Company Soldiers conduct Air Assault Training on FOB Warrior**

# Charlie Company “Charlie Rock”

As temperatures rise, Charlie Rock Soldiers continue to push harder to keep the 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT healthy. Despite the increase number of patients due to heat, mission and skills training we continue to keep our medics in top shape. The big training push this month has been the yearly skills validation training called SACMS-VT. Charlie Company is leading the Division with a near 90% completion rate of the training. The medics are working hard and it is paying off. Training exercises with the local Air Force emergency services were another focus for the month. A simulated fire with training casualties helped Charlie Company work with the Air Force and work out the details of who

would be responsible for aspects of patient evacuation and treatment. Combat Lifesaver training continued as Charlie Rock and medics from 1/21 Infantry Battalion joined to train over 70 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT Soldiers over the course of the month. This training teaches non-medical personnel basic lifesaving techniques that are critical for units that maybe miles from a medical treatment facility.

Three Soldiers from Charlie Company became the first Soldiers in the Battalion’s history to receive the Purple Heart. SGT Burt, SPC Bear, and PFC Malveaux received their awards from LTC Walker on 24 May. The ceremony was

attended by high level officers and NCOs from the Army and Air Force units located at FOB Warrior. The continued support we all get from everyone back home raises our spirits daily. Our mission is tough, but with your support we are able to keep our heads up and drive on.

**CHARLIE ROCK!**



**Charlie Company Soldiers standing tall**

## MASCAL

In conjunction with Air Force medical, fire and security assets, the 225<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion and 1/21 Infantry Battalion coordinated and executed a FOB MASCAL exercise on 22 May from 0900-1200 hours. The scenario included enemy indirect fire causing 19 casualties as Soldiers were conducting rehearsals for an upcoming convoy. Medical, fire and security assets from the Air Force,

225<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion and 1/21 Infantry Battalion quickly converged on the scene and completed the triage, treatment and evacuation of all 19 casualties in less than sixty minutes. An after action review (AAR) was held at

1500 hours following the exercise at the Air Force, 506<sup>th</sup> EMEDS treatment facility to review lessons learned and to ensure further synchronization between all elements involved in preparation for the next exercise in June.

*“.. Included enemy indirect fire causing 19 casualties as Soldiers were conducting rehearsals...”*

## LIGHTNING BOLT CHALLENGE

On 22 May 2004, every company in the Battalion competed in the Lightning Bolt Challenge (LBC). The LBC consisted of 5 teams with 8 Soldiers per team. Each team had to complete 225 push-ups, 225 sit-ups, run 2.25 miles and to top it off the commander had to negotiate the monkey bars obstacle. There were rules for those competing in the LBC, but it was up to the team’s

imagination on how they were going to split the 225 repetitions and 9 laps amongst 8 Soldiers. The overall winner of the event was the Charlie “Rock” Company with an outstanding time of 16:51. Charlie Company was the winner of the March Madness Basketball Tournament, so they retained the Strike Lightening Trophy and the coveted Gold-6 Tee-shirt.



**The Charlie Company LBC team that ROCKS!**

# Good News Story

**FOB WARRIOR** – On 16 June 2004, 32 Soldiers made up four teams for the Battalion’s monthly team building event termed Warriors Rage. There were three goals for the event. The primary goal was to have an event for the E5s and below to use their critical thinking and decision making skills. These are the Soldiers that make things happen on daily missions and combat logistics patrols. It is essential that they have the necessary exposure to situations where they must “think outside of the box.” Every mission will not be textbook, so the junior leaders and Soldiers need to be able to make decisive decisions in order to accomplish the mission. The second goal was for the troops involved to work together as a team with the third goal being to build unit esprit de corps.

The Soldiers showed up at 0600 hrs with limited information about the events they were going to encounter forcing them to react to unusual situations. The night before the event the only information they received was the uniform, time, and location of the event. The teams received a broad overview briefing that provided the commander’s intent with six key tasks and a clear endstate. Each team was provided several pieces of equipment to include cases of water, shovels, pads, pencils, plywood, tough boxes, and an array of other items. The team leader would have to decide what items were required to complete the mission. The first key task of the

Warriors Rage team building event was an eight point orienteering course on the FOB. Eight points were strategically placed around FOB Warrior for the sole purpose of the Soldiers working together as a team to determine how they would navigate from point to point. The Soldiers were told that they had to arrive at the first point as a team and conclude the event as a team. The team leader had to determine the most efficient and fastest way to accomplish the mission. At each point a Soldier would pick up a card with a troop leading procedure on it. The second key task awaited at the farthest point on the course (four miles away) where the Soldiers found a filled sandbag that needed to be carried back to the start point. The Soldiers pushed their minds and bodies to the limit in figuring out how to accomplish this task. Upon arrival back to the start point the Soldiers were then faced with their third key task requiring them to put the eight troop leading procedure cards obtained at the eight points in chronological order.

Next, the Soldiers prepared themselves for the fourth key task, the Track Revolution event. In this event the team was challenged to find the best way to get each Soldier on the team around the quarter mile track while carrying two cases of bottled water. The only rule for this event was that each team could not run a lap around the track all at once. With some quick thinking by the junior leaders the teams were able to complete

thinking by the junior leaders the teams were able to complete the event in two laps by using the litters that were provided to them at the start of the competition. The fifth key task required each team to negotiate the monkey bar obstacle, which consisted of twenty three bars seven feet above the ground, as fast as possible.

Finally, the sixth key task that concluded Warriors Rage was a quiz to test the Soldiers’ knowledge of the 225<sup>th</sup> FSB history. The team was required to answer questions regarding the 225<sup>th</sup> history before the clock would be stopped to end the competition. The winner of the Warriors Rage competition was the Charlie Company Medics with a time of one hour and four minutes. Charlie Company has won their third Battalion competition in a row and all of the Soldiers involved benefited and learned from the event. The Soldiers of the 225<sup>th</sup> FSB continue to maintain their Warrior Support Spirit and their ability to “Strike Lightning” at anytime.



HQ&A Soldiers work their way through putting the 8 TLPs in order



Charlie Company Soldiers converge to plan their strategy for the land navigation portion of the Warriors Rage team building event



The Warriors Rage winning team Charlie “Rock”

# WARRIORS RAGE

# Chaplain's Corner



## More Than Expected

*What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see?*

John 11:7

Jesus asked his disciples what they expected to see when they went to the desert to meet John the Baptizer. John was more than could be imagined. Some said he was a wild man with fire in his eyes prone to strange dietary habits. He was in the least more than expected.

What did we expect to see in the desert? For the Soldiers of the 225<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion the last six months have been more than expected. Many Soldiers have faced challenges and forged friendships that would have been inconceivable in Hawaii.

Families who remained on the Island or returned to the Mainland discovered a world they had never imagined. Some have encountered financial challenges, illnesses and loneliness. Some have experienced a new level of independence never expected.

As we face the remaining months apart we stand in awe of what God has done and wait in joyful expectation for the future. What I have found more than anything in these last months is prayer. Prayer that my family is well, prayer that the convoys arrive safely, prayer that the evening passes peacefully, prayer that Soldiers recover from injuries, prayer that we will all be together again.

Carlo Carretto, a Roman Catholic social worker who left everything he had and went to the desert wrote in Letters From The Desert, *A few ideas matured in solitude and taking shape around an activity which has been, without any doubt, the greatest gift that the Sahara has given me: prayer.*

While the voice that summoned us may have been given through a set of military orders it was surely influenced by the will of God. These months have challenged us in new ways totally unexpected whether we were called to the desert or remained at home. But like so many others before us we have started the journey towards a relationship with our God and with one other and it began first in prayer.

<sup>1</sup> Carlo Carretto, Letters From The Desert

# XO's Corner



Aloha to the "STRIKE LIGHTNING" families and friends. We have had several changes on the staff in the past month to include Lieutenant Lane replacing Captain Willingham as the S1, who moved over to be the S3. Captain Santayana is the new S4 replacing CPT Woods who along with CPT Fearnow moved into the Support Operations section. Major Starks takes my place as the Support Operations Officer as I move over to try and fill Major Mason's shoes as the Executive Officer. The only section we did not have any changes was the S2 shop were 1LT Jordan and SGT Seroka continue to do a super job.

The staff and the rest of the Battalion have been incredibly busy the past month supporting the Warrior Brigade and improving our overall quality of life.

SFC Huitron and her Soldiers have been doing a great job making sure your loved ones are getting mail and more importantly getting your loved ones on the R&R flights home. MSG Espinoza is continually working to keep improving the Battalion headquarters with the rest of the NCOs on the staff. SFC Sherrod and the S4 shop are focused on improving the living and working conditions for all of the Soldiers in the Battalion. They are the ones that have gotten every air conditioner and freezer we have in the Battalion before it reached 110 degrees. Our S3 battle NCOs SSG Dale and SSG Brown are doing a phenomenal job keeping all of the operations running for the Battalion. MSG Callahan with her communications Soldiers are by far the best communications section in the brigade. MSG Callahan is the one who made this newsletter possible. She is also responsible for setting up the first

family readiness video teleconference (VTC) in the BCT from Kirkuk to Hawaii. It is a great honor for me as the Executive Officer to work with all of these outstanding Soldiers and leaders on the staff.

Before Major Mason left we made sure we threw him a big party where he was the guest of honor (or victim)! It was a very good time mostly at Major Mason's expense but he took it all in stride.

We are all doing fine and staying safe. GOD BLESS you all. STRIKE LIGHTNING!!!!!!!

**Battalion Executive Officer**



The 225<sup>th</sup> FSB Staff