



FOB Warrior  
Kirkuk, Iraq

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



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## Commander's Corner



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Greetings from all of us at FOB Warrior here in Iraq. We are rapidly approaching our eighth month of deployment and the Soldiers continue to exceed the standard in executing daily mission requirements in support of our OIF-2 deployment. A special thanks to all the families and FRG representatives that worked to send school supplies in support of “Operation Crayon.” Both the chapel staff and volunteers here on the airbase appreciate your contributions for the needy children of Iraq. We will be sure to send all of you photos that capture the event when the Soldiers deliver the supplies to the local Kirkuk schools in mid September.

We have made much progress since the publication of our last Newsletter in July 2004. We just hosted the OIF-3 unit that will replace us later this Winter. This is the first step in transitioning our Soldiers back home but we still have much work to do over the next few months. Acting Secretary of the Army R.L. Brownlee also visited our base last week and several of our Soldiers had the opportunity to meet him and hear him speak. Additionally, we are also in the final production stages of our second battalion FRG video that you should see at the October FRG meeting. Be sure to check it out, it promises to be just as good as the last one. Finally, good news on R&R.

The BCT has received an increased number of slots over the next two months so stay in contact with your loved ones to see when he/she will be afforded the opportunity to come home on leave. I know that this is a very important program to all of you and the Soldiers and I assure you we are doing all we can to give everyone a chance to participate. God Bless all of you and continue to provide support and encouragement to the Soldiers. They make me proud to serve each day and continue to do superb work for our Nation.

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## Command Sergeant Major's Corner



Strike Lightning Battalion family members and friends, time is just ticking away and the months continue to breeze by and the Strike Lightning Battalion is stronger than ever. First, I would like to thank everyone for the outstanding support that you have been providing. The Soldiers really appreciate your generosity and kindness.

The month of August has been very busy for the Battalion. Just to name a few highlights, we have been consistently working with the Iraqi National Guard in ensuring that they are properly equipped and trained to defend their nation. The pre-deployment site survey was completed

with the unit that will tentatively be replacing the Strike Lightning Battalion in our current area of operations; also the Battalion successfully hosted the 1<sup>st</sup> ID DISCOM Command and Staff. In early August the 1<sup>st</sup> ID Assistant Division Commander for Support, BG Mundt, visited the Battalion. BG Mundt enjoyed his visit and had only good things to say about the Soldiers and the excellent job they have been doing.

It is wonderful to also mention that the logistics task force that supported operations in southern Iraq for over a month made it back safely. Everyone that supported the 1<sup>st</sup> ID operation really made a difference in

the stabilization and support operations in southern Iraq.

In addition to working hard we are ensuring that the Soldiers have the opportunity to have fun. In line with the 2004 Olympics, we had the Strike Lightning Olympics. This event consisted of weightlifting, basketball, track and field, swimming, and a host of other events. Of course, the Strike Lightning Trophy was up for grabs and the HQ /A CO Titans took home the gold dominating the competition from the other companies. Upcoming events for the Battalion include a flag football tournament and the Strike Lightning Casino night by the pool.

I would personally like to thank everyone again for your unwavering support, encouragement and generosity. Continue to keep us in your prayers as we continue to conduct operations in order to maintain a stable and secure environment to make way for successful elections here in Iraq; furthermore, the Battalion successfully completed the voter registration/absentee ballot drive and the Soldiers will be receiving absentee ballots in order to vote in the November elections. Please ensure that you are exercising your right to vote too.

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# Headquarters & Alpha Company "Titans"

Aloha from the always-sunny Kirkuk, Iraq. HQ&A Company continues to make history and set the standard for all HQ&A Companies in the U.S. Army while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom II. The company's operational tempo has not slowed down since we arrived into theater, yet somehow the Soldiers continue to accomplish every mission to standard and do so with a high level of motivation.

The TITANS have plenty of good news stories to share with families and friends; however, I would like to highlight a few of the stories for the Soldiers that sometimes are too shy or humbled to talk about their accomplishments while in Iraq.

The first major accomplishment for the company was continuing to provide the split base direct support operations to the 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT. The company sent a group of Soldiers to An Najaf, Iraq for little over a month to support the 1-14 IN while conducting combat operations in and around one of Iraq's holiest cities. The platoon was led by 1LT White and SSG Ferrell who not only ensured all direct support missions were accomplished to standard but also supported an Infantry Task Force with a QRF (Quick Reactionary Force) and FOB (Forward Operating Base) perimeter security.



**PFC Vincente Perez translates between El Salvadorian Army First Sergeant Ivis Yael Zeraya and 1LT Michael T. White of 225<sup>th</sup> LTF.**

The Soldiers were living in a very austere environment and were often working, living and sleeping in buildings in excess of 120 degrees. The Battalion Commander and Battalion Command Sergeant Major visited the platoon during this operation and said that not one time did a Soldier remotely complain about the mission or the conditions and all of them were highly motivated. As their commander, I could not be prouder of their dedication to placing the mission first.



## **The first convoy serial approaching the reception station area supervised by SFC Reynolds**

While Soldiers were in An Najaf, the rest of the company had to continue the mission back at FOB Warrior. The missions did not slow down at all. The mission actually picked up and one of the major missions we had was supporting the Korean ROK Army as they passed through 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT battle space. This mission turned out to be much bigger than we initially anticipated. The support was not only for the Korean ROK Army but also for a Stryker unit that was escorting them through our area. The mission was a big deal to the Soldiers because they got to work hand-and-hand with other Coalition Units. The Soldiers got a good look at



the Stryker unit. Most of you know that our BCT is transitioning to Stryker when we get back to Hawaii and Soldiers are literally knocking the door down to the re-enlistment NC in order to reenlist for the Stryker Brigade.

Another accomplishment for the company was winning the highly coveted Strike Lightning Trophy. HQ&A Company won the trophy by dominating the Battalion's Volleyball tournament. The company placed first and second in the tournament and proudly displays the trophy in the TITAN Command Post. The company put the trophy back up for grabs in the Strike Lightning Olympics and it looks like the TITANS will keep the trophy. Although they are not officially over the TITANS have dominated every event from Track & Field to Basketball to Weightlifting and the always-popular Volleyball. We do not like to brag too much in HQ&A Company but we have double the amount of medals as the second place company.....we do have a special place in our heart for the CHARLIE ROCK-ROCK SOLID.

In closing I would like to thank the Family Readiness Group for their continued support to the TITANS. We appreciate your dedication to the company and we look forward to thanking you in person upon our redeployment.

**TITANS!**

# Bravo Company "Bulldogs"

We have continued to do great and wonderful things here. I am very proud of each and every one of the Soldiers for what they have done out here so far. Their morale is high and they continue to overcome the heat here and stay on task. We are continuing to send our Soldiers back on R&R and FMPP to get the well deserved rest and recuperation time they so greatly deserve. The morale of the Soldiers is still high. They continue to do great things for the country and the Brigade.

Some of the things we are doing out here to make a difference. A project the company is involved in is Operation Crayon, which provides Iraqi children with school supplies. Bravo Company has the task of providing pencils to the project. We have contributed many to the cause, but we continue to solicit more for the children. It is a great project and the Soldiers are all getting involved to make a difference in the community. Another cohesion building event was the volleyball challenge. Bravo Company competed in a friendly challenge of a volleyball game. We made it into the semi-finals, but unfortunately we were not victorious. All of the Soldiers did a great job. It was great fun and it inspired good teamwork from everyone. We have had several promotions within Bravo Company. First, SPC Patterson was promoted to SGT, a great honor to have another NCO within the ranks with us. PFC McMasters and PFC Katenay were both promoted to SPC. Lastly, PV2 Chico was promoted to PFC. All of these Soldiers have proven to have the potential and capability to achieve greater success for themselves and each were deserving of their promotions.



**SGT Gilman performs maintenance on a vehicle in the B Co Organizational Support bay.**

The Soldiers who had a birthday in July were SPC Aguinaga, SPC Au, SPC Fuller, PFC Gordon, SPC Katenay, SPC Mente, SGT Padilla, PFC Solcum, and CPT Wong. Each month the dining facility has a special dinner and cake for the Soldiers celebrating their birthdays within the month. Their names are on the cake and we have a company celebration with everyone.

A special note goes out to the Soldiers that have been recognized for their outstanding achievements going above and beyond the call of duty. SPC Katenay was selected as the

Battalion's Logistics Warrior of the Week for her outstanding support and dedication to duty. We also received a very special recognition for PFC Biore who was recognized by the DISCOM Commander, COL Wentz, as the DISCOM Top Combat Logistician of the Month. This was a great honor to have the first Bulldog to receive such a prestigious award. Congratulations to both Soldiers.



Another piece of great news is our newest addition to the Bravo Company Bulldogs family. SPC Au's wife, Mai, gave birth to a baby boy, Timmy. I want to give a special thanks to all that helped in the support of making sure that everything went well for her.

A special thanks goes out to SPC Rainer for his efforts and contribution in making the Bravo Bulldogs Company FRG video for all of the families and friends in the rear. 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 all of you enjoyed it.

**BULLDOGS!**



**PFC Biore is presented the DISCOM Top Combat Logistician Award from COL Wentz and CSM Cardoza**

## Warrant Officer Corps Changes Insignia

12 July marked a historic event within not only the Warrant Officer Corps but also the entire Army. 225th FSB Warrant Officers exchanged the symbol of their corps, the "Eagle Rising," for the insignia of their respective branch at a ceremony in the Strike Lightning Conference Room. During the ceremony CW2 Taylor read the history of the "Eagle Rising,"

while CW4 Leandry read the occasion; additionally, LTC Walker rendered remarks at the ceremony. The conversion on the wear of branch insignia and colors by Warrant Officers is a first step toward the full integration of Warrant Officer recruiting, accession, education and management into the branch-based system of the larger officer corps.



**LTC Walker displays CW2 Taylor's Ordnance branch insignia during the Warrant Officer Ceremony on 12 July**

# Charlie Company

## “Charlie Rock”

Charlie Company has new living quarters! We have moved from the outhouse to the penthouse. Rock-star housing has arrived and we are all thankful. The movement of the new facilities to the Ivory Combat Clinic finally gives Soldiers a place to relax in after being in tents for almost six months. The project took several months to approve and a few weeks to accomplish. It took tremendous coordination and much combined effort from KBR, HHC Brigade, 65th Engineers and Charlie Company. Our area of operation looks great and continues to look better on a daily basis as we have several area improvement projects lined up in the next few weeks.

On 21 July CPT Nelson, 1LT Shaha, and 1LT Almeida conducted an officer professional development class on MEDEVAC training to the officers of the 225<sup>th</sup> FSB.



**CPL Knox dashes to the finish line during the 4X100M relay during the Strike Lightning Olympics**



**CPT Nelson and SGT Smith pause for a picture following SGT Smith's Reenlistment ceremony.**

The officers training covered the principles of the combat health support system, how to execute a 9-Line MEDEVAC request, the medical capabilities in our area of operation and the different echelons of care in the combat health support system. The training went off as planned and everyone took something away from it. Our medical sustainment training, SACMS-VT, began on 22 July. SSG Garmon and SSG Paden spearheaded the training for our company. Both NCOs planned and coordinated the training and testing in order to ensure that our medics meet the standards set by the AMEDD Center and School. The training took four days and we have set the standard for the rest of the brigade to follow.

Our jump team safely returned from An Najaf on 4 August led by MAJ Freel and SGT Gonzalez. The medics provided medical care not only to 1/14 Infantry Soldiers, but also civilians at the local hospital.



**CHARLIE ROCK**

To think that it could get hotter than 127 degrees, as it has been here in Kirkuk is almost unthinkable, but it could and it did for the troops down south. On occasion it soared to an unthinkable 145 degrees. Beyond the heat, the team performed admirably and everyone came back to a well deserved pool party. We bar-b-que'd, swam, played dominoes and spades while taking the time to wind down for a bit. It wasn't like a cook-out back home on the North Shore, but it was an awesome time and it got us recharged for the upcoming week.

Your continued support keeps our spirits high. We are on the downward side of this mission and we keep all of you in our thoughts and we make our way closer to you. We miss you all very much and appreciate all that you do to help keep us going.

**Charlie Rock!**



**SGT Diest from C Company checks the status on a cell count.**

## MG Olson Visits the Battalion

The Battalion received a much anticipated visit from Major General Olson, Division Commander for the 25th Infantry Division (Light) and CSM Ashe, Command Sergeant Major for the 25th Infantry Division (Light). The S3, SPO, and CHSO briefed the Battalion's Concept of Operations and Concept of Support. Immediately after the concept brief MG Olson and CSM Ashe received a tour of all the Battalion's

operational areas. Escorted by LTC Walker and CSM Herring, MG Olson and CSM Ashe had the opportunity to speak with many of the 225<sup>th</sup> FSB Soldiers. On one occasion they spoke with HQ&A Soldiers that were preparing for a Combat Logistics Patrol. MG Olson and CSM Ashe explained that they were very proud of the Soldiers in the Battalion and with the stellar support the Battalion is providing the BCT.



**MG Olson, Commanding General for the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (L) addresses HQ&A Soldiers prior to leaving on a CLP during his visit to FOB Warrior**

## Good News Stories

### Strike Lightning Talent Show

The 225th FSB once again made history on 3 July by hosting the first ever 225th FSB "Strike Lightning" Talent Show. The talent show consisted of modern and African dance, guitar and drum solos, Christian music, comedic skits, poetry, art and opera singing. The event was a big hit on FOB Warrior, civilians, Airmen, and Soldiers made up the crowd of some 250+ attendees.

MWR and AAFES were among the sponsors which provided prizes for all of the participants in the talent show. CDs, DVDs, portable CD players, Plug and Plays, daily planners, and phone cards were

among the prizes. The first place winner was PV2 Tarr of Charlie Company. She sang "Think of Me" from the Phantom of the Opera. PV2 Tarr received a \$100 gift certificate and the Battalion Commanders Non-Tactical Vehicle for a week.



**The 225th Strike Lightning Talent Show winner PV2 Tarr accompanied by LTC Prauner sings "Think of Me," from the Phantom of the Opera**

### Combat Patch Ceremony

The Battalion conducted its first ever Combat Patch Ceremony on 13 July 2004. Chaplain Echols began the ceremony with a prayer followed by remarks from LTC Walker. LTC Walker presented the Combat Infantryman Badge to 1LT Jose Rodriguez, a platoon leader in B Co. 1LT Rodriguez came to the 225th from the 1-27th Wolfhounds and is branch detailed Quartermaster. LTC Walker, CSM Herring, MAJ Weaver, and MAJ Starks presented



**CSM Herring, presents the 25th Infantry Division (L) Combat patch to SGT Knox of B Co**

the combat patches to the Soldiers along with the Company Commanders, Executive Officers and ISGs. As the combat patches were being presented 1LT Lane read the history behind the tradition of wearing the combat patch. He also read the history of the 25th ID patch, and unit history. The ceremony was a huge success and the special guests included CSM Taylor, 2BCT CSM, and CSM Ashe, 25th ID (L) CSM.

### SSA Employs Local Iraqi Workers

The HQ&A Company has employed 17 Local Iraqi workers to assist the 225th FSB Supply Support Activity (SSA) Soldiers. The Local Nationals are proving to be a valuable addition to the SSA workforce. Prior to the addition of the Local Nationals, the warehouse Soldiers found themselves sometimes overwhelmed with the workload they faced. Since the Local Nationals arrived, the Soldiers have experienced a considerable amount of relief and the processing time for incoming classes of supply has decreased significantly.

SGT Rockwell Botchway, SPC Nadia Jackson, and SPC Shawna Herron, are among the SSA Soldiers that have been working with the Iraqis on a daily basis. SGT Botchway explained that the men are very hard workers.

He went on to explain that most of the Iraqi workers are fast learners with work experiences in a wide variety of professional occupations. They are electricians, truck drivers, photographers, mechanics and former military personnel. "I try not to show any sign of weakness or fatigue because they are all workaholics like me," said SGT Botchway.

In order to maximize productivity, SGT Cynthia Kirk, SSA NCOIC, has divided the men into two groups. Each group consists of members that understand some English making it possible to disseminate information effectively. Group one consists of workers that are mostly responsible for completing administrative tasks while group two is responsible

for the completion of manual labor jobs throughout the SSA. The relationship between the Iraqi workers and the SSA Soldiers is developing more and more each day. SPC Jackson explained that "Working together has exposed many of our differences, but through it all, we've found that we have many things in common." The SSA Soldiers and the Local Nationals working together has become an invaluable part of the SSA Team.



**SGT Botchway (far right) and SPC Herron (far left) pose for a picture with the Iraqi workers in the SSA.**

## Iraqi National Guard CSS Visits

As U.S. Forces continue to train and assist the Iraqi National Guard (ING) to be self sufficient a key area that has not received a lot of attention is the ING combat service support (CSS) structure and training. In mid-July the 225th FSB began working with the Kirkuk ING Brigade Headquarters to develop a CSS training plan for the 207th BN, 208th, BN, 209th BN and the Brigade S4. MAJ Robert Weaver, 225th FSB XO, CPT Herbert Willingham, 225th FSB S3 and CPT Karl Hatala the 2/25th ING liaison met with the ING Brigade commander and XO to determine what areas in which they wanted assistance. Iraqi officials laid out several focus areas to include: property accountability, supply procedures, equipment service schedules, vehicle dispatching, repair parts management, maintenance facility layout, weapons maintenance and medical training. The ING leadership is very interested in this

because they understand in order to be self sufficient they must be capable of supporting themselves and maintaining their own equipment. The ING are very appreciative of the vehicles and equipment U.S. Forces have provided them, and they understand if it is not maintained it will not last. CW2 Danny Taylor, 225th BMO, provided a walking tour of his area taking the time to explain some of the scheduled services being conducted and also how unscheduled maintenance was performed. The ING officers received a brief overview of dispatching procedures, service scheduling, prescribe load list (PLL) management, tool room procedures and the Unit Level Logistics-Ground (ULLS-G) system. The ING BMOs were very interested in watching SPC Barney work on a M998 HMMVW engine and were ready to provide assistance if they were asked. After the ING tour CW2 Taylor stated, "When I deployed, I never thought I'd

be briefing the Iraqi National Guard on maintenance procedures. When I think about the big picture though, I realize it will enhance or improve their overall way of doing things, especially maintenance." SPC Barney also mentioned that "It was good to know that our operations can help ING better their operations. I was glad to be a part of the ING learning how we operate."



**SPC Barney, B/225<sup>th</sup> and ING BMOs discuss the maintenance of a M998 HMMVW**

## Kirkuk Pediatric Patient

On 25 May 2004, a Turkomen family was involved in a shooting incident. Immediately after the incident, the family was brought to the EMEDS Hospital on FOB Warrior. The mother had gun shot wounds to the chest and abdomen. The older child, "Kasim", approximately 2 ½ years of age suffered gun shot wounds to the abdomen and also had several superficial wounds. The youngest child, approximately one year of age, was uninjured as well.

The mother underwent surgery at the 874th FST. The older child, Kasim, was treated for his injuries at EMEDS by the Air Force surgeons and LTC Ronald Prauner, a pediatrician with the 225th FSB located at FOB Warrior. Although Kasim was awake and alert, he had a chest tube placed and also underwent abdominal surgery. Findings at the time of surgery included small intestinal perforations secondary to the gun shot wounds. After their surgeries were completed, both Kasim and his mother were evacuated to the 31st CSH in Balad for further management. The mother ultimately recovered and was released. Further evaluation for"

Kasim" at the 31st CSH included a CT scan of his head. This revealed a small fragment of retained shrapnel near his brain stem; however, this did not appear to be causing any clinical deficits. Unfortunately, over the next several days, Kasim was unable to eat or drink any food. The surgeons at the 31st CSH placed a gastrostomy tube in order to facilitate his feedings. Once Kasim and his mother were stable, they were transferred to a local Iraqi hospital in Daquq. They were in that hospital for approximately one week, at which time they were discharged back to their home. Kasim had his gastrostomy tube in place at the time of discharge.

On 2 July, Kasim was brought to the Ivory Combat Clinic escorted by his uncle. He was seen by MAJ Don Helman, the battalion physician from 1/21st Infantry Battalion and LTC Prauner. The child was noted to be severely malnourished and cachectic. There were marked wasting of his muscles and subcutaneous fat. He was very weak and could no longer walk. SPC Mellissa Jackson, a medic with 225th FSB, and LTC Prauner checked the positioning of the G-tube and determined that it was in proper place

and was functioning properly. SPC Jackson proceeded to clean the skin around the G-tube and placed a new dressing at the site. The child was alert and acted hungry. He was given some milk, but shortly after drinking a few sips of the milk, he regurgitated the milk back through his nose. No anatomical deficits were noted on examination of his mouth and nose, however. Further questioning of the uncle revealed that the family was most likely not providing the proper nutrition, both in content and quantity, to Kasim. It was also apparent that they were not managing his wounds properly or doing dressing changes as needed. On 17 July, MAJ Helman again visited Kasim, this time at his house. MAJ Helman reported that Kasim had again gained more weight and was now beginning to walk again on his own.

LTC Prauner and MAJ Helman were very grateful for the assistance of the pediatrician at the Azadi Hospital. With her assistance and the help of personnel from 225th FSB and 1/21st Infantry Battalion, Kasim should ultimately completely recover and resume a normal life.

## Chaplain's Corner



### OPERATION CRAYON

The 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT team sent out a call for support for Operation Crayon and in typical Strike Lightning Style the mission was accepted.

Boxes of crayons, bottles of glue, pens, pencils, scissors and chalk flooded the mailroom at FOB Warrior. Crayons from Alabama, scissors from Kentucky, glue from Hawaii and a mixture in between were transported to the Operation Crayon warehouse where Soldiers gathered to assemble school supplies for local Iraqi school Children. The Family Readiness group at Schofield sent six enormous box loads of materials so big reinforcements had to be called in to help the mail clerk, PFC Ramos.



**Soldiers, Airmen, and civilians after packaging supplies at the Operation Crayon Headquarters on FOB Warrior**

The mission is almost complete as supplies continue to flood in. The generosity of our supporters has been overwhelming and a source of inspiration to all our Soldiers. A special thanks goes out to everyone who helped make Operation Crayon a huge success.

In October when all of the supplies are delivered and distributed to the Iraqi school children we will make sure we capture the moment by taking plenty of pictures and sharing them it with everyone.

## XO's Corner



Aloha to the "STRIKE LIGHTNING" families and friends. The past few months have been very busy for the battalion and the staff, which is good because it makes the time go by a lot faster. For several members of the staff and battalion July was a travel month to different parts of Iraq. CPT Fearnow, MSG Anderson, SFC Wilkes, SSG Prue, SGT Cisneros and PFC Anderson provided the command and control of a logistics task force providing support to the 1-14th IN, Golden Dragons and other 1st ID units in An Najaf where they did a fantastic job. When everyone returned from An Najaf, they did not recognize the battalion area since we completed the extreme make over of the battalion headquarters and several company areas while they were gone.

For the rest of the staff the pace remained hectic providing support to the battalion and hosting several VIP visits and briefings to include, MG Olson, 25th ID (L) Commander, BG Mundt, 1st ID ADC(S), COL Wentz 1st ID DISCOM CDR and CSM Ashe, 25th ID (L) CSM to name a few. In between all of the visits we managed to participate in the Strike Lightning Volleyball Tournament where the staff did very well. We were very close to having an all Staff finals in volleyball but the Bulldogs got some assistance from the battalion commander during a hard fought match where they squeaked by the staff team consisting of Major Starks, Major Weaver, CPT Willingham, 1LT Reider, MSG Callahan, and SGT Neal. CPT Santayana, SSG Cornog, and SSG Velez were the nucleus of Titan

Team #4 the Strike Lightning Champions that dethroned Charlie Rock the reigning champions. We continue to do well and stay safe. GOD BLESS you all. STRIKE LIGHTNING!!!!!!!

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**SGT Neal, MAJ Weaver, MSG Callahan 1LT Rieder, MAJ Starks and CPT Willingham make up the Staff Volleyball Team**