

Bushmaster Newsletter

January 22, 2004

Hello once again from Iraq. I want to start off by apologizing for it being so long since we have written you with news from the front. It has been a very busy month for the entire Company and as you will soon read, one that has kept us all on the go.

Once again, I have to tell you that all of the soldiers are safe and doing well. Our living conditions continue to improve, with the addition of an internet center, phone center, and beds. The soldiers have already begun to enjoy these, and hopefully all of you have heard from your loved ones via the information super highway since they came up and began operations.

The entire Company is very busy spearheading the implementation of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) into the Area of Operations. Your Bushmaster soldier has conducted numerous missions assisting this fledgling organization into missions within the neighboring community. They have the mission of assisting and eventually taking over the missions that we currently are responsible for conducting. They have already begun to prove their worth, as they have relieved us of many tasks and missions that we had been responsible for in the past. Because of our involvement with the ICDC and the phenomenal job that your loved ones have done, we are receiving a lot of notoriety from the Press, as Julie Jacobsen (Associated Press) and Gregg Jaffe (Wallstreet Journal) came to Camp Junction City to focus stories on the Bushmasters and the work they have done with the ICDC since its inception.

In addition to working with the ICDC personnel, the Company continues to conduct offensive operations to assist in the establishment of the Free Iraqi Government. Though the implementation of ICDC and capture of Saddam Hussein have assisted in quieting the attacks against us, we still face an enemy insurgent threat that is weakening daily.

The Company celebrated Christmas with a magnificent meal in the newly opened Dining Facility, which is currently providing four hot meals per day. Unfortunately for us our Christmas was interrupted as intelligence warranted us to conduct a raid against a reported Foreign Fighter safehouse. No one was injured during the operation and the personnel targeted were all captured. I know that many of you may not believe this, but when asked prior to Christmas what the soldiers wanted to do for the holiday, most wanted to conduct a raid in order to continue with our streak of holiday missions. That is one holiday wish that Santa was able to grant.

In addition to conducting many raids to rid this area of Foreign Fighters and Terrorist cells, the Company has also been busy locating cache sites of enemy munitions. Many of you probably already know, but on the 13th of DEC 03, 2nd Platoon located one of the largest caches of weapons and munitions found in Iraq since the President declared an end to major combat operations. A story about this can be found on the Ft. Riley Website. Also with a little searching on Yahoo, you will find pictures of Bushmasters in action, thanks to Associated Press Reporter Julie Jacobsen, during one such cache search. (See next page)



Corporal E. searches a home for weapons and contraband while a baby sleeps.
CPL E. is assigned as a team leader in 2nd Platoon.

Your loved one's many efforts have not gone unnoticed. We were fortunately able to finally present Army Commendation Medals to three very deserving individuals in SPC S (Medic), SPC C (Medic), and SSG H (2nd Platoon Squad Leader). All three were awarded for their actions against the enemy.

Deuce Deuce is not the only platoon to receive recent recognition, as 2LT D was promoted to 1LT on 21 December. 1LT D, came to the Company just before the deployment to Iraq and has done an outstanding job of leading the Mad Dawgs. To quote LTC H "1LT D came to the Battalion, was told that he was going to work in the S3 shop and took it. Then when I had to send someone to B Company, 1LT D was the obvious choice. He continues to learn and lead in the true spirit of the infantrymen."

As many of you already know we have been reacquainted with Bushmasters that were sent home and then redeployed to Iraq due to Stop Loss. While we are happy to have our brothers in arms returned to us we are also very grieved by their untimely separation from the families that have been so supportive. We will get your loved ones back to you as soon as possible. They along with the rest of the Bushmasters are in very good and competent hands. The FRG will be e-mailed a list with all the new arrivals and their spouses so you will all be able to formally welcome them into our little family. Please get out and say hello; let them know they are not alone during these trying times.

In closing, we would like to thank everyone for the continued support you give this Company during this deployment. Special thanks go out to the Family Readiness Group leaders and ladies for not only the projects you have done for the soldiers, but for the support you have given each other there at Ft. Riley. We, the Company Leadership, would like to let all of you know that we have the best FRG in the Battalion and probably the Brigade. This is shown in the few issues that we are dealing with while here, because you are taking care of them there. Thanks again.