



CHARLIE COMPANY 1-506TH "GUNFIGHTER"



NEWSLETTER 15SEP06-15OCT06

Family, Friends & Supporters of Charlie Company,

As we enter the last month of the yearlong deployment the focus remains on what we must continue to accomplish before we return home. I continually review the month's missions and without question I am amazed at what the men of this company have accomplished in securing the most dangerous area in Iraq. When the Gunfighters leave here next month the mark of skillful, proficient and professional soldiers will remain on the minds of people who's life has been improved from our presence. Every commander is proud of their unit and what I feel for the men of this company is no exception. The core commitment to finishing the mission is present in every soldier, NCO and officer in the company. The company has continued to secure vital static positions and conduct offensive operations into the area of operations as we have throughout the deployment. With the new unit beginning to arrive that will replace us in the area, we are now beginning to clean equipment and show our brothers in arms the wonderful Ma'laab district. The success of the Gunfighters in reducing the insurgent threat in the area will allow the new unit to continue the mission of destroying those who oppose the freedoms that we all fight and stand for.

As in past newsletters I now take the time to recognize the platoons for what they have done this last month: 1st PLT has continued the essential positions at OP Hotel & OP Graveyard. The insurgents have "tested" the Platoon without success at both locations. This is attributed to the steadfast dedication and awareness that has deterred the insurgents over the past year. 2nd PLT recently was the task force main effort in emplacing over 1500m of wire in rough ground. The mission success has interdicted insurgent smuggling activity and without question has saved soldiers lives in denying the enemy accessibility to IED material. 3rd PLT completed a recent mission into the Ma'laab that secured Iraqi Army units for recruiting purposes. The security provided allowed the recruiting effort to gain more Iraqi Police for the area of Eastern Ar Ramadi. HQ PLT has been the central core for the company especially this last month. By not only completing missions with each of the platoons but also in preparing the company for the redeployment home, which is no small task. Finally as always I am extremely proud of every soldier in this company as we continue to locate and destroy the enemy in this dangerous area that we have called home for the last 11 months.

Thank you to all that have supported the Gunfighters over the past year. The constant care packages and letters have always been appreciated and welcomed by all. The familiarity of home is never lost when packages and letters are always arriving. Now more than ever be exceptionally proud of your husbands, sons and family members for what they have accomplished over the yearlong deployment. This will be the last newsletter for the deployment, since by the time the next one is ready to publish most of

the company will on the way home. We are excited just as you are at home to be finishing this deployment up and returning home to reunite with family & friends for the holiday season.

CPT Nathan Guthrie
“Gunfighter 6”

1SG Corner,

Hello and welcome to the last Company news letter from Ramadi, Iraq. I have enjoyed reading the letters from each platoon and looking at all the pictures submitted for each edition. With each new edition, they have always confirmed the strength and courage that our Soldiers have had from the beginning. Each and every Gunfighter has proved his worth time and time again. I am extremely honored and proud to be serving with such a fine Company. As the end of our tour rounds the corner I ask that the families back home continue with their appreciated support and patience and to the Soldiers of Charlie Company your continued diligence and professionalism. Remember our Redeployment doesn't end until every Soldier is back from block leave safe and sound. Well, until I see you all on the Army Airfield back home may God bless the Soldier, his family, and our great Country.

GF7



1st PLT

It was just about one year ago. One year ago that the preparation for the upcoming deployment to Iraq started. It was one year ago that the realization for what was coming sank deep in every man of First Platoon Charlie Company. No more questions, rumors, no more uncertainty. We were going. This was not exclusive of course, to the men of the platoon. Each man in this platoon represents a community in and of itself. We who fight, the soldiers, are not the only ones who fear the unknown. Many wives, girlfriends, children and parents looked upon the coming deployment with unease as we prepared for war. Although we are deployed to this country, we are not alone here. We are not isolated from friends and family who await our safe arrival. Brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles, cousins, friends and acquaintances... no soldier is an island in this country's strife. Every one of us represents a family's sacrifice and fear.

We will always remember that Thanksgiving about a year ago. The last time we would be in the company and comfort of friends and family. For the next day, we would be gone. None of us will forget that cold and breezy day we all gathered in our company area while our mothers, fathers, wives, lovers and friends awaited our departure. We will never forget waiting for the flight to Kuwait, and then walking out on the tarmac to see that white bird that would take us there. Loaded down with much of our gear, many of us walked in silence, and some in awe, as we boarded. Our journey had begun.

We arrived in Kuwait during the night. Many of us remember our gear-cramped bus as it took us to Camp Virginia. We remember looking upon the Kuwaiti desert for the first time as we gathered our duffle bags shortly after those long and arduous briefings. This was not a unique experience for many of us. After all, some of us have been here before.

While in Kuwait we wasted no time in preparing for a year in the city of Ar Ramadi; a surprise change of plans from where we thought we'd spend a year. We received classes, briefings, IED training, and a trip to the rifle range. We conducted live-fire MOUT training in the middle of the Kuwaiti desert, and practiced dismounted patrols within the confines of our base. And I doubt any of us will ever forget SFC Copeland's morning runs around camp. One would find many of the luxuries often seen at home: Subway, McDonalds, donut and coffee shops, and gift stores, were all located on this camp. A far cry from hometown cuisine, but not bad nonetheless. Eventually though, we would say our farewells to this installation as well. In mid December, we boarded C-130s on one-way trips to Taqaddum Airbase, TQ to most of us. This was where many of us set foot on Iraqi soil for the first time.

We spent Christmas in the middle of Iraq. The celebrations did not last long, for we had work to begin. We assumed tower guard for the first time, and we will always remember how we cursed the dirty and wet mud on those long grueling walks in darkness to Charlie tower. How we stood and memorized the landscape, the palm trees, the distant fields and sky. How our weapons stood ready to repel any action taken against us by our foe. Most of us spent hours cursing the cold in some of those towers. In the heat of summer we would curse the heat, as we sat in the oven like atmosphere of Echo or Foxtrot tower.

Who will ever forget the sweat dripping down his back? I won't. In the winter, we were cold and wet, in the summer, the only difference was the heat. By the time we leave here, the image of the city, the palms, the distant fields, will be etched in the backs of our minds forever.

Then there was The Hotel. We would visit this luxurious abode usually twice a month. We cursed the cold here too, as well as the heat. I am sure all of us will remember our makeshift kitchen, conversing for hours while passing the time. I am sure none of us will ever forget sitting on an OP with an Iraqi soldier for three hours. We will always look back with humor when we recall how jam-packed we were in those rooms. The rooms that were never cool enough in the summer, and never hot enough in the winter. While we were here, we conducted ourselves as we always did. We would watch our sectors, call to higher when we heard a distant boom or gunfire, and try not to go crazy because of the weird Iraqi trying to make conversation with us.

While in Ar Ramadi, our platoon conducted dozens of missions ranging from source meets, zone clearances, raids, to blocking positions and QRF/CASEVAC. We have detained well over 100 insurgents and murders for further questioning and investigation. We have worked closely with Marines, Air Force, and our Iraqi allies as we took part in the overall mission to bring stability back to the city of Ramadi and the nation of Iraq. Many times while outside the wire, we have been shot at, RPGed, or hit by an IED. Despite the hardships of some of these missions, and the likelihood of encountering the enemy, none of us were ever deterred from venturing outside the wire.

Rarely is a deployment here void of hardships, and unfortunately, casualties. Ours was not. None of us will ever forget March 13th when SSG Shaw was seriously wounded by an IED that detonated under his vehicle. We will never forget that same night as we came to support Third Platoon as they suppressed and repelled the enemy only yards away. Men from our platoon carried wounded members of Third Platoon as well as SSG Silva, who was killed that night, to be evacuated. The gunfire, the explosions, still echo in the ears of many of us. We will never forget the wounded of our company or the sacrifices that they made for us.

When I reflect on everything we have done here, I recall all of these things and more. More than I am able to speak of here. Our platoon has gone out on dozens of missions, and pulled endless hours of guard and security on four of the six guard towers on Corregidor. We have pulled hundreds of hours of guard at OP Graveyard, and taken fire there several times. Each man here can accurately say that he has sat on guard for well over a month, by conservative estimates. Each man in this company can claim this. Indeed, First Platoon has earned the right to be proud of what we have done here, along with the rest of Charlie Company.

During our time here, many soldiers and Marines paid dearly for something greater than themselves. Politics aside, when we think about why we fight in this conflict, I believe it is for the man standing next to us. Of course, this belief is nothing new to a soldier, but now, perhaps, it is better understood by us. Whatever views someone may have about

our time here, or whatever reason they joined this army and wherever they may go after this, every man here fights to keep his fellow soldier from harm. Everyone fears. Every soldier wonders if his journey beyond the wire will yield him a safe return. Every soldier longs to see the familiar faces of loved ones. Every soldier not only appreciates, but treasures the breath he takes. For he does not know how many he has.

As we prepare to journey back across the ocean, and over unfamiliar lands far away from home, we eagerly await the reunion with family, friends, and loved ones. This month we start that journey. In the coming weeks the soldiers of Charlie Company, as well as First Platoon, begin the journey home. By the end of next month, all of our soldiers should be home and safe with loved ones. This coming holiday season will perhaps be a little sweeter than others. For we will be home after a year long deployment in the heart of Iraq. Mission accomplished, relief-in-place complete... Of everything we will do this coming holiday season, remember the sacrifice of the almost 3,000 Americans that have given their lives serving this country. Remember also the sacrifice of their families and loved. Remember these men and women. Remember these heroes.

SPC Matthew Beattie





RAIDERS



2ND PLT



SPC Spears

Finally! The last Raider newsletter in Iraq. Although the 13th brought a severe thunderstorm warning and a great rain did not damper our spirits as we prepare for our return home. Everyone is busy cleaning their gear and the lovely barracks to make it their "home." I have never seen so many soldiers so happy and busy to clean their gear and living areas, but I am sure the thought of returning home and being reunited with family and friends is keeping everyone's spirits high.



SPC Ferrari



SSG Johnson

The Raiders are still pulling security out in sector and keeping the enemy on its toes. Everyone is doing an excellent job of completing their company's mission and their hard work and dedication has gone mostly unnoticed.

I want to take this opportunity to introduce two more new soldiers into the platoon: SPC Tomlin and PVT Haskett. They quickly adapted and executed in this strenuous environment. We are all proud to have them serve with us in combat.



DOC Harmon



SGT Reaser and SPC Maldonado

We also want to congratulate two of our Raiders that were promoted this month. SGT Santoro was promoted from Staff Sergeant to Sergeant. PFC Okolovich was promoted from Private to Private First Class. They are both great contributors to the platoon and continue to excel in whatever tasks they are given.

To everyone back home, we appreciate your support. We could not have done this deployment without you. Thank you for everything you have done for us and we will see you soon.



PFC Rutherford



SPC Crump



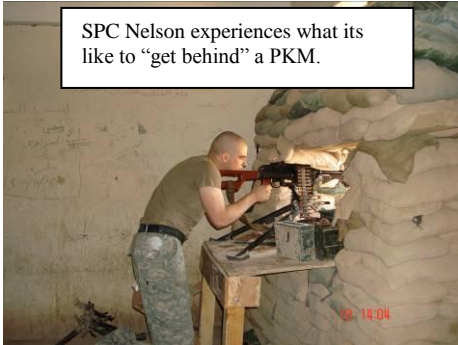
SPC Tomlin and PVT Haskett



SPC Zygmunt

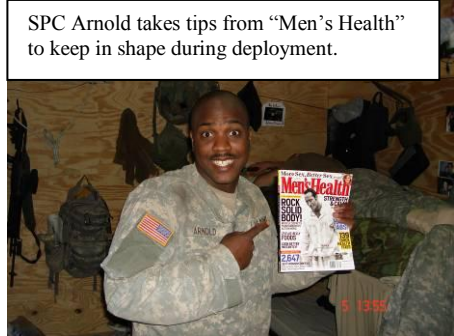
3RD Platoon Carnage

With the final countdown to redeployment ticking away in our heads, Carnage platoon continues to operate with bold enthusiasm.



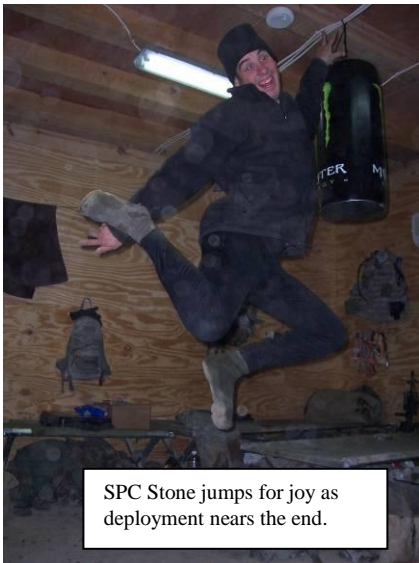
SPC Nelson experiences what its like to "get behind" a PKM.

While mission tempo is reduced from the intensity of the previous months, 3rd platoon is rarely idle. We kicked off Ramadan with a company air



SPC Arnold takes tips from "Men's Health" to keep in shape during deployment.

assault mission, continued to maintain a strong presence in sector, and continued our standard rotations throughout the Graveyard, Hotel, and FOB security month. We also dedicated some time to furnishing our living quarters with a computer lab complete with satellite internet and telephone service. This resulted in a significant morale boost for us, since we can now communicate regularly with our loved ones back home.



SPC Stone jumps for joy as deployment nears the end.

It's hard to look around here these days and not think about just how much this place has changed for us over the past eleven months. The mud pits, nonexistent mail service, faraway tent showers, daily missions; all stand out in our minds as fond memories. We will never forget the friends that can't be here with us today, nor the new friends we made.



SPC Threats and SGT Sommer discover the enjoyment of chem. Light combative's.

As we spend these last few weeks packing up and getting ready to hand control over to the replacement unit here to relieve us, our focus continues to be defense and security. Complacency is our biggest enemy, but rest assured that we will maintain our vigilance and alertness to ensure every man's safe return home.



SSG Crenshaw talks on the newly installed phones at C Co. MWR.



HQ Platoon



Well, here we are at the last FRG Newsletter of this deployment. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the families and friends of the Soldiers in Headquarters Platoon past and present for all your support throughout this year. Your letters and care packages have meant the world to your deployed Soldier. Your loved one will be returning home soon, perhaps a little changed, certainly more than a little challenged. As this year comes to an end the Headquarters Platoon is busy packing, inventorying, cleaning, making lists, putting packets together, filling out forms, sitting through briefs, collecting up equipment, and repacking along with our normal duties.



This past month we have made a conscious effort to not get too comfortable: along with reconfirming the zero of our weapons and qualifying at the range we have also conducted a series of classes designed to help our new guys better understand our job here. This also served as a refresher for the guys who've been here for a while. To keep things interesting the platoon has also gone to the range to conduct more advanced weapons training. The Company Mortarmen also trained with their guns and had the opportunity to fire during day and nighttime training missions. We even gave CPT Guthrie and several soldiers from 2nd Platoon a chance to fire a couple rounds down range. A special thanks goes out to the CO and SSG Bradford for putting that range together on short notice.



HQ Platoon



New to the platoon this month is 1LT Sheep, the Fire Support Officer, who comes to us from B Company. Although there were no promotions in the platoon this month, I'd like to congratulate SPC Collins on his recommendation for promotion earned at this month's promotion board and we'd all like to wish SGT Harvel good luck on next month's promotion board appearance.

Lastly, I'd like to thank the Soldiers of Headquarters Platoon for their selfless service and relentless dedication to whatever mission or detail came their way. Their hard work and professionalism has made for a successful deployment.

SGT Rojas, Carlos

Platoon Sergeant

(God loves Debbie Brown for enduring her un-courteous Curtis.)

