



THE LETHAL TIMES



Volume 1, Issue 2

21 December 2009

Special points of interest:

- Letters from the Company ISGs and Commanders
- Special Photos from recent Battalion and Company Operations
- Promotions, Awards, and Re-enlistments

LETHAL WARRIOR 6 - LTC BRIAN PEARL

From the Commander,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Afghanistan. Task Force Lethal has had an incredibly good last few months. The weather is cooling a bit, but surprisingly it hasn't dipped below the frigid temperatures our families are experiencing back home in Colorado Springs.

Mail is a priority here in TF Lethal and I want to first say "Thank You" so much to all of our civilian agencies, schools, private organizations, platoon sponsors and every family that has given so generously to our soldiers. We are truly blessed daily by your thoughts, prayers and giving spirit. Right now our mail is coming in twice a day, in most cases, by Helicopter into FOB Blessing and distributed out to the companies within 24-72 hours. Pretty

timely considering the locations we move to via convoy or by helicopters.

Our soldiers are making enormous strides within all our daily activities and missions; working with the Afghanistan National Police, the Afghanistan National Army, and all arms of the Afghanistan Government. It is truly impressive to see this every day.

Our soldiers are helping to mold the future Afghanistan through their hard work, dedication, and selfless service. Not one day goes by where each one of our six companies is not making the country a better place to live and develop.

(Continued on next page)

LETHAL WARRIOR 7 - CSM NEIL RIVERS

Merry Christmas and Happy New Years to all! This is a very special time of year for friends and family.

It is a time to remember the true meaning of the holiday season and what it represents... that's right... **PRESENTS!**

No, wait! I mean it is meant to remind us all about love, humanity, selflessness, caring, giving, and sharing. It's kind of ironic that when you describe the true meaning behind the holiday season you could very easily substitute the word holiday with "military families" or "Soldiers" and the descriptive words wouldn't change very much, if at all. We are truly blessed by all of those that surround us.

Thanksgiving was incredible for a variety of reasons. I was fortunate enough to finally get the opportunity to spend time with our Soldiers in Baker Company out in the Korengal valley. Along with LTC Pearl and myself our Brigade Commander, Colonel George also spent Thanksgiving with Baker Company. SGT Tapia, SPC Rangel, PFC Whitehorse, and PFC Bonofiglio from the PSD also had a great time sharing Thanksgiving with Baker.

First we visited OPI which is one of our very austere locations. After visiting OPI we went over to OP Restrepo.

(Continued on page 3)

LETHAL WARRIOR 6 - Continued

We have also gotten a civilian team consisting of the US State Department, USAID, and an Agricultural Development Team (ADT) to help focus our efforts in governance building and agricultural assessments and recommendations. They are all working towards a common way ahead in our area of operations.....AO Lethal.

We are happy R&R leave is going so well. It's good to see our soldiers getting home to their families for some much needed rest and enjoyment. Operational Security (OPSEC) has been very good and we are appreciative. More importantly, as we move into 2010 all of us need to insure we guard our dates, times, locations, and operations to insure we stay vigilant against a very determined enemy. The safety of our soldiers remains paramount every day.

As we move into the New Year we all must remember the heavy toll our soldiers and families pay as we continue to provide much needed security to the Afghanist population. The enemy is one who wishes to inflict his will and misconceptions by force onto a population devoted to a better way of life. Your soldiers are providing that security and are selflessly insuring our sons and daughters will not be in Afghanistan in later years repaying the same toll. We have lost five Lethal Warrior Brothers and have given out a total of 65 Purple Hearts to date, so it is not easy. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families this holiday season.

Lethal Families, thank you for your dedication and support. You are the backbone of our organization and you take care of our soldiers. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Please enjoy the holidays and continue to pray for our Lethal Team as we go into 2010!

- LTC Brian Pearl
"Lethal 6"



LETHAL WARRIOR 7 - Continued from Page 1



The Soldiers were full of stories and treated us very well. The comradery was great.

At OP Dallas we conducted a re-enlistment, followed by a quick stop to see some of our U.S. Marine counter-parts at OP Vimoto. They

really went out of their way to make us feel at home. We ended up back at the Korengal Outpost where they treated us to a delicious dinner prepared by some of our great cooks and CPT Gutierrez, the Fury company commander. I must say, it was not your typical Thanksgiving and one I will not soon forget.

Tragically we suffered the loss of SGT Kenneth R. Nichols Jr. on the 1st of December after the vehicle he was in charge of was struck by an enemy Rocket Propelled Grenade during an ambush while conducting a combat patrol. Our deepest regrets and sympathies go out to the entire Nichols family. SGT Nichols was one of the finest Non-Commissioned Officers I have ever had the pleasure of serving with and he will be severely missed by the entire 2-12IN family.

LTC Pearl and I both agree that our Soldiers do incredible things each and every day over here in order to improve the security situation and the living conditions for the Afghan people. There is not a single Soldier that doesn't deserve my sincere thanks for all of the hard work and effort they have put into making positive changes. I fall short of delivering how impressed I am by their actions but I promise to continue to try and improve in

this area. The reality is that through their actions our mission is being accomplished and it is all of the support that they receive from you that makes this possible. So thank you all!

I'd like to encourage all of our loved ones at home to write their Soldiers and continue with your superb support. It truly makes a huge impact on what we are able to accomplish. Know that your Soldiers are doing well and that you are constantly foremost in their minds.

God Bless and take care,

CSM Rivers, Lethal 7



(More Pictures on Page 6)

GATOR 6 - CPT Kevin Hutcheson



The last two months have been incredibly busy for the Soldiers of Gator Company. Following the elections, our attention turned to getting back to the basics, getting back out into sector and strengthening already established relationships and going to new areas to try to make friends. Gator Company conducted an Air Assault into the volatile Shuryak Valley, 2nd Platoon flew out to support one of our sister battalions in Nuristan, and 1st Platoon spent two weeks in the Korengal Valley to provide additional boots on the ground for Baker Company. One thing is for sure, when help is needed, the powers that be call for Gator Company. I am always impressed with their ability to do more with less and they are a very flexible group of warriors.

We've also got some new faces around Gator Company. ILT Scott Klaas was called to Brigade Headquarters to assist the Engineer cell. We wish the best of luck for Scott and his wife Jennifer; we have enjoyed the time they spent with us. The new company Executive Officer is ILT Michael Luth of Yorktown, Virginia. ILT Luth comes from Dagger Company 3rd Platoon, where he served as a Heavy Weapons Platoon Leader for 16 months. We welcome him and his wife Katie to the Gator Team. We also welcome ILT Taylor Gillespie as 3rd Platoon Dagger Platoon Leader (I'll explain in a minute), and SFC Jason Findish (who replaced SSG McKinney following his combat injuries).

I know it is sometimes confusing all the people moving around but it is understandable and family members back home sometimes get confused; why this platoon is working with that company, and where they are and who is in charge. We started out the deployment with 1st Platoon Dagger attached to us but since the Platoon that was on Route Clearance (3rd Platoon Dagger) was due to be switched out, well, you know the rest. 3rd Platoon Dagger has been attached to Gator Company

for the past month and is doing an outstanding job here, we are lucky to have them and it is likely that they will be with us for the remainder of the tour.

In the coming months, we will continue to do much of the same as what we've been doing. The focus now is on development, there is plenty of international fund organizations that have donated money for the infrastructure development of Afghanistan. Although our main priority here is security of the people, we also get involved in these projects, pushing the village elders and government officials to use systems that are designed to pave the way for self sufficient management. Much of the frustration your men endure is directed at the very slow pace at which this system works. Make no mistake, Gator Company has over 27 different projects running at the moment and much of our time is taken up by implementing, managing, or protecting these projects.

We are more than halfway through the tour and the job hasn't gotten any easier. The ISG and XO have worked tirelessly to get Gator Company more internet access and with luck should have it within the next month. New billets for 2nd Platoon have been submitted and look to start construction on them in the next two months. Yes, things move pretty slowly here, including time! Christmas is just around the corner, so only about 6 more months to go. Thanks to all of you for the patience and support you have shown to us, we are proud you are all part of the Gator Team.

Sincerely,

**CPT Kevin W.
Hutcheson
"Gator 6"**



GATOR 7 - 1SG Mark Eckstrom



A Christmas note from Gator 7,

I would like to start by saying, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all the families and friends of Gator Company. One of the great things about Christmas is that it happens no matter where you are in the world. Since I have been in the Army I have spent the Holidays in Cuba, Kuwait, Korea, Iraq and now Afghanistan. Of course it is better to build these memories with families; however this is one Christmas that we are sure never to forget. We won't be with family but we will be with our Brothers in Arms.

Here in Gator Company we have Soldiers from every region in the US, all with different Holiday traditions. These traditions can be things like mystery Santa gift exchanges, to who puts the tree topper on each year. One of the things that Tina and I like to do is pile our boys into the car, pick up some McDonalds french-fries and drive around and look at Christmas lights. Another tradition that we have, like most families, is a holiday feast. That is one tradition that the Gator Soldiers will not miss out on this year. This chow hall here on Camp Blessing is the best one I have ever seen on a deployment. I am sure that they will take care of us this Christmas and no one will leave hungry.

The Commander and I will do everything possible to make sure that all of the Soldiers have a special holiday season. We are going to decorate the company area, and we could even be caught singing some Christmas carols. We have talked with outside agencies about Soldiers who do not receive support from families. They will make sure that everyone gets a gift.

Once again I am going to tell you how proud I am of the efforts that your Soldiers are giving us over here. They work in an unforgiving environment, yet they excel in all that they do. Their spirits are high and they are building friendships that will last a life time.

Merry Christmas to all, and have a Happy New Year.

**- 1SG Mark Eckstrom
'Gator 7'**



OP Dallas



Korengal Outpost



BAKER 6—CPT Mark Moretti

Hello and Happy Holidays to Family and Friends of Baker Company,

The weather has finally turned cold on us here in the Korengal, which means that the holidays are coming. The last couple months have been busy for the Company. Patrols have continued and our Soldiers are staying busy. As most of you know, COP Vegas was closed down and 1st PLT moved to the Korengal Outpost. I know they were all sad to leave their home-away-from-home, but the move has paid dividends for the rest of the Company. Supply issues have become easier and we have more personnel to push out into sector. I cannot tell you how proud I am of this Company. They continue to perform well above expectations, and have been able to patrol into areas and towns that had not seen a US presence for over 18 months. Development for the locals still remains slow, but not for lack of effort by your Soldiers. It's hard to convince the population that support of the government is best choice for them. But your Soldiers continue to work every day and are making a difference. They have saved the lives of several locals, including small children who were brought to us with serious injuries. They have also handed out food and winter clothing to the local population.

Leave for all our Soldiers will continue through March. Every Soldier should have a good idea on when he is getting home for two weeks of much needed rest. We are at the half-way point of the deployment and can almost see the end. With the Holidays coming, and the deployment half over, this can be a rough time for fami-

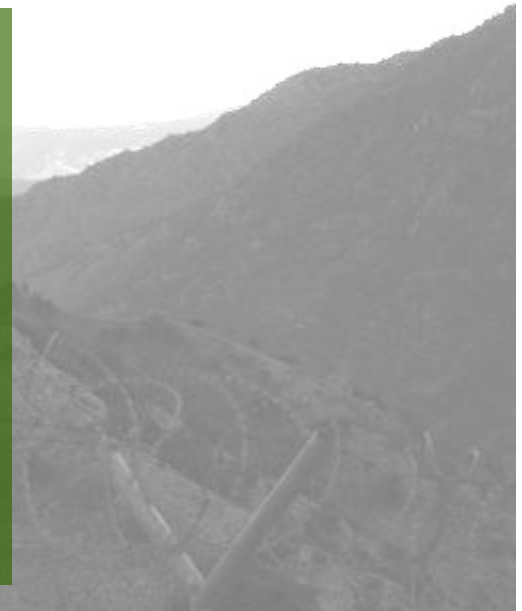


lies and Soldiers. Please make a special effort to stay in touch with your Soldier and show your continued support.

Our prayers and thoughts continue to go out to SGT Goodrich and SPC Vojtas, who are still recovering from injuries. Also keep PFC Repass, and his family, in your prayers. He was injured in the middle of November and we wish him a speedy recovery. I know we also have some families that

are expecting babies around the Holiday time, and we look forward to welcoming the new additions into the Baker Company Family. In closing, thank you again for everything you do and the support you show. I wish everyone back home a Merry Holiday season for you and yours. If there is anything you need, please do not hesitate to let me know.

CPT Mark Moretti
"Baker 6"



BAKER 7 - 1SG Christopher Noell



Greetings to all Family & Friends of Baker,

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!! The time of year is upon us once again where we give thanks for all that we received and endured through this past year. The Soldiers of Baker Company have a lot to be thankful for: a deployment that has been successful and loving and caring families back home. This time of year brings its own set of challenges to deployed Soldiers. The Christmas holiday season is a time for family, friends, and good times. Deployments put the stress of not being around family fully on a Soldier's shoulders and stays there. What can we do to help relieve some of this weight? Care packages, phone calls, cards, and a solid reminder that the loved ones at home are saving a seat for us at the table and anxiously awaiting our safe return. Here in the Korengal we have added a few things that we hope will add to the holidays and aid in keeping the morale up. For the longest time we could not get the Armed Forces Network (AFN) here at in the Valley. But we started thinking outside the box and we made it happen. Thanks to SPC White's hard work and dedication to keeping it up and running, we will have football for the holidays and timely news of what is going on back home and around the world. We also received some new gym equipment and the Soldiers are working out on a pretty consistent basis...bigger, faster, and stronger. It really doesn't sound like much, but when you have nothing and you get something it makes a huge difference.

I think that this upcoming year will bring great things for Baker Company, and this will all be due to the outstanding effort and abilities of the Soldiers in Baker Company.

We have had a lot of additions to the Baker Company Family, little additions that is. SSG Morris, little cowboy Layne in June, SGT Mendez, little Alicia in May, SPC White a little girl in Oct, Olivia, and we have some other Soldiers that will have little ones coming shortly. SPC Dunham, PV2 Long, SPC Rutland, PFC Elliot, SGT Keck, PV2 Hood, SPC Cardenas, SGT Hansen, and the final word on SPC Wright's baby. As you can see we truly have a reason to be Thankful this year. With only injuries sustained through this part of the deployment we are holding fast to the training and tactics we perfected prior to deployment. These skills coupled with the outstanding Soldiers in Baker Company are keeping us moving forward and closer to completing our mission here and coming home.

Happy Holidays to everyone, Stay Safe, and God Bless.

“REFUSE TO LOSE”

1SG Christopher Noell

“BAKER 7”



CHOSEN 6 - CPT Shaun Conlin

Friends and Family of the Chosen,

Happy Holidays from Afghanistan! As the weather gets colder, we are reminded of how far we have come since the beginning of the deployment this summer and how much closer we are to coming home. Our focus is shifting to building the capacity of the emergent Afghan government and continues to develop this impoverished country through basic infrastructure projects. The men of Chosen Company impress me every day with their dedication and commitment to the mission and you should be extremely proud of them.

Although spending time away from loved ones is always difficult, it can be especially tough during the Thanksgiving and Christmas season which is why we are working as hard as we can to make these holidays as special as possible. Our cooks from Fury Company will use their culinary skills to bring a taste of home and First Sergeant and I will be making our rounds to each of our Platoons to share the holidays with our great Soldiers. I know that I cannot come close to replicating holidays spent with family at home, but we will do our best to make this season as memorable and inspirational as possible.

The quality of life continues to improve each day on each Combat Out Post. The 2nd Platoon "Wolfpack" at Xio Haq have had a unique challenge in standing up a brand new COP. The basics that we often take for granted on our other established COPs are sometimes hard to come by but ILT Merrill and SFC Koontz have worked hard to get better showers, phones, and internet access for the men. Sometimes improvements did not come as quickly as we would like, but progress is being made daily. 1st Platoon at COP Able Main now has an operational MWR room to compliment their stellar chow hall and a new gym is almost complete on COP Honaker Miracle for 3rd, Headquarters, and 4th Platoons.

Many of the improvements to your Soldiers' quality of life are due to the extraordinary efforts of our great Executive Officer, ILT Brandon Fridia. Unfortunately, ILT Fridia is moving on to his next position at Battalion and the Chosen Company family is truly going to miss him, Tasha, and their two daughters. We welcome the new XO, ILT William Fio Rito, as well our new Soldiers deploying from Ft Carson; we are



proud to have them on our team and know they will be great additions to our unit.

I know I do not tell you enough, but thank you for all the love and support you give your Soldiers every day. Without the support we receive from our family and friends back home, we would not be able to do the amazing missions we accomplish on a daily basis. Your sacrifices do not go unnoticed, especially during this time of year. I wish each of you a very happy and blessed holiday season and we all look forward to the next 6 months going as fast as the last 6!

Captain Shaun S. Conlin
"Chosen 6"



CHOSEN 7 - 1SG Harold Drager



Family and Friends of Chosen,

The halfway point of this deployment is here, as is the holiday season. The commander and I will be moving in opposite directions in order to spend time with each COP/Platoon during the holidays. I hope you can take some comfort in knowing that we, along with help from the Battalion Command team, will do everything we can to make each holiday as special as possible for your Soldiers. They deserve it! Each COP is preparing for traditional, home-style meals for Thanksgiving and Christmas. On those festive days, we will include some games, card events, and competitions to make those days different than every other day. The goal is to take the Soldiers' minds off the mountains of Afghanistan, even if only for a few hours. At that point, they can re-focus, re-energize, and start getting after it again.

I can't tell you enough how proud I am of this great team! This team includes the FRG and all you do for us. Unfortunately, we will soon be saying good-bye to an outstanding Company Executive Officer, ILT Brandon Fridia. He has worked tirelessly supporting your Soldiers and ensuring they receive everything they need to accomplish the mission. He'll be moving from "Chosen" to concentrate his efforts at the Battalion level. Although he will be missed, ILT Fridia will not be far

away. We will welcome ILT William Fio Rito as our new Company XO. He comes to us from Alpha Company where he was an Infantry Platoon Leader. We have no doubt that he will do an excellent job and assist in taking us to the next level.

Lastly, I would like to take this time to wish you all Happy Holidays! I understand the hardships of being apart from loved ones during this time of year. Your constant and unwavering support of our Soldiers is second to none. You use a significant amount of time and energy taking care of things on the home front and that does not go unnoticed. We appreciate all you do and can't thank you enough!

1SG Harold Drager
"Chosen 7"



DAGGER 6 - CPT Timothy Eastman



Dear family, friends, and supporters of Dagger Company,

It is with great pride that I introduce myself as the new commander for Dagger Company 2-12 IN. This is a great company that does amazing things on a daily basis, both for the security and growth of Afghanistan and each other. Your Soldiers are always moving forward with motivation and a sincere interest in making things happen.

As the holidays are almost upon us, we are doing everything possible to make this season as special as possible for all the Soldiers of COP Michigan. This is a difficult time to be away from loved ones, so please let your Soldiers know you are thinking of them through letters or packages. Your thoughts and time make all the difference when you cannot be together. Speaking of together, with the new DFAC, we will be able to bring most of the company together to celebrate Christmas and will have pictures to send out for all of you.

Lastly, while I am new to 2-12, my wife is also new to the FRG. She will be assuming duties as the Dagger FRG leader and is looking forward to meeting all of you in the near future. I know she will make every effort to communicate with all families and will be sending out news from COP Michigan regularly. Please do not hesitate to contact her if you are not receiving any information.



Thank you for your support of Dagger and Happy Holidays,

**- CPT Timothy Eastman
"Dagger 6"**



DAGGER 7 - 1SG Edward Varrs



Dear family and friends of Dagger,

Another month is down and our Soldiers are still finding ways to remain motivated and alert. From combat patrols to building projects

on the COP they take pride in what they do and it is apparent in the end result. COP Michigan takes another leap forward every month and this month is no different. As Thanksgiving approaches we are trying to get our new dining hall up in time for dinner. The dining hall will double as our movie theater.

This month our FRG is transforming again as we say hello to our new FRG representative Mrs. Eastman. I am confident that she will take our FRG to the next level. As the holiday season approaches and Soldiers and family members begin to miss each other more, it is very important that you have a friend to help you out when you need it. With your support and understanding our FRG will be that organization.

We welcomed a few NCOs to the ranks with SPC Wil-



liams, Richard, SPC Padilla, Lester, SPC Mauldin, Michael, SPC Kreuger, Michael being promoted to the rank of SGT. We have a new member of the Dagger team with SPC Anderson and his wife having a seven pound baby boy.

I hope all of you have a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for your support.

**- 1SG Edward Vaars
"Dagger 7"**



FURY 6 - CPT Edward Gutierrez

Happy Holidays Fury Family and Friends

Well another month has gone by and we have met our 6 month mark. Everyone is doing well and we continue to provide world class support to the Lethal Warrior Battalion. The weather has definitely cooled off considerably now, which is nice change. We are fully set into our battle rhythm and everything is running as smooth as we can make it. The Distribution and Maintenance Platoons devised a training plan on the M1114 vehicle for the Afghan National Army. Over the last couple of weeks at FOB Blessing, Afghan Soldiers have learned the basic preventive maintenance checks and services process and drivers training. They had to spend a little more time on drivers training; some of these Soldiers were behind the wheel of a vehicle for the first time.

Just to keep everyone updated with what has been completed over the last 6 months, the Distribution Platoon has completed 75 combat logistics patrols, moved 100,000 lbs of supplies, issued 700,000 gallons of JP8, and conducted around 400 sling loads. Maintenance has completed around 4,500 maintenance jobs on vehicles, weapons, night vision devices, radio equipment and conducted over 20 recovery missions. The cooks have fed over 432,000 great tasting meals. Our Battalion will be receiving

new vehicles over the next couple of months. The MAT-V is set to replace our M1151 vehicle fleet. The Maintenance Platoon has sent their Soldiers to Bagram to go through classes on maintaining the vehicles and our Distribution Platoon will be sending Soldiers to drivers training. Our cooks have been busy having prepared or getting



ready to prepare the Holiday meals. Lots of time and effort are put in by the cooks ensuring that everything taste good for the Soldiers.



Our mission load has decreased a little with winter setting in. This has given the Company a chance to get some little things done around our work and living areas. We continue to reset the Battalions Theater Provided Equipment in preparation for our replacements. We are getting closer to the end, but we remain focused on the mission and continue to do our best supporting the Battalion. Thank you for all your support to your Soldier and the Company. Happy Holidays!

**-CPT Edward Gutierrez
"Fury 6"**

FURY 7 - 1SG George Ashmore

Hello Fury family and friends,

This month I would like to highlight some thoughts and feelings about the leave process that some Soldiers will experience during their scheduled time.



The week before leave, Soldiers can find themselves full of anxiety, and that time is dragging for them. This is normal and it can sometimes be remedied by staying busy. I have heard Soldiers say they pack and unpack then re-pack to maximize space or just to pass time. Others have cleaned their rooms repeatedly top to bottom the last few days before leaving. The traveling process can be very frustrating because some of the flights are very cramped and the sleep schedule ends up inside out. Once home and surrounded by family, Soldiers can experience

a sense of “what do I do now” or “where do I fit in here”. It is nothing to be alarmed about! It will pass. When I was home I didn’t know what to do with myself the first few days. It can be difficult to get back into the household groove. Some families with children might find their Soldier not used to dealing with the seemingly normal noises of a household with little ones. This doesn’t mean they are mad or don’t love them as much it is more of a culture shock issue. Then usually everything goes pretty smooth up until the last three or four days when the realization of leaving again sets in. I would suggest saving a visit to friends or family that are local in order keep the mind busy the last few days being home. You could also plan a BBQ or special dinner with friends. Upon returning to Afghanistan it is normal for the Soldier to experience a sense of the “blahs”... It can be extremely difficult to get back into the daily deployed routine. It is important for both sides of the family to remain positive and look forward to your Soldiers redeployment. Above all remember to be patient and love each other. We will all get through this together.

**- 1SG George Ashmore
“Fury 7”**



HONCHO 6 - CPT Andrew White

Dear Family and Friends of HHC and Task Force Lethal,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Soldiers of HHC here on FOB BLESSING and throughout the Battalion!!!

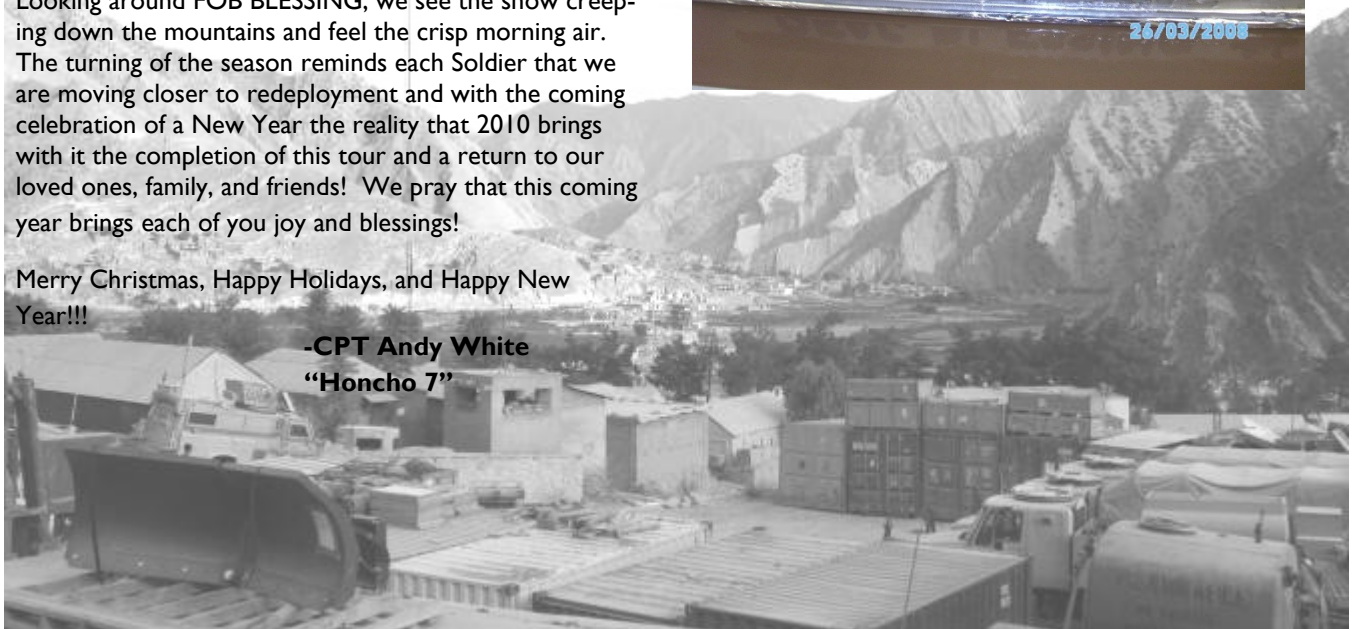
As we near the celebration of Christmas and the ringing in of a New Year, the Soldiers of HHC are turning their hearts and thoughts towards home, family, and friends. We appreciate all the wonderful packages and support that continue to pour in for the Soldiers! On an almost daily basis, mail and packages flow into the Battalion bringing Christmas cheer and the hope of all that lies ahead in 2010!

The Soldiers of HHC continue to work extremely hard on a daily basis providing the vital support to the Battalion as we continue to expand the government of Afghanistan and security within the Pech River Valley of the Kunar Province. Each Soldier is playing a vital role in the continued progress within the Battalion's area of operation. From providing fire support during combat patrols to assisting local Afghans with medical attention to sustaining continuous communications to assisting in the command and control of a complex and expansive battlefield, the Soldiers of HHC execute their jobs professionally while never forgetting their family and friends back home whom we are over here protecting.

Looking around FOB BLESSING, we see the snow creeping down the mountains and feel the crisp morning air. The turning of the season reminds each Soldier that we are moving closer to redeployment and with the coming celebration of a New Year the reality that 2010 brings with it the completion of this tour and a return to our loved ones, family, and friends! We pray that this coming year brings each of you joy and blessings!

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year!!!

**-CPT Andy White
"Honcho 7"**



HONCHO 7 - 1SG Riley Burdine

Families and Friends of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, let me say once again, thank you for lending us your Soldiers for the past 6 months and for the next 6 months. They are still working hard. As we enter the Holiday seasons, which seems to be the hardest part of any deployment, we can begin to look forward to the re-deployment. I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I know the family readiness group is planning a lot of surprises for the Soldiers deployed, and I can't speak highly enough about you folks. Everything you do in the rear really helps out the Soldiers over here, which in turn makes our job easier.

Since the last time we talked the Soldiers have really put their hearts into rebuilding the FOB and helping out the local nationals for a better life. They believe in what they do and it shows. The MWR center is better, the chow is great and mail is getting here faster. You can't ask for anything more. But, freedom isn't free, as we have suffered a few casualties along the way. SPC Dover was wounded, but has recovered and is now doing great things for Baker Company. PFC Repass was injured, and is recovering in Germany. CPL Schoepp has made a full recovery and is doing great things for Fury Company. SFC Dillon, who has made a full recovery and is still a grumpy old man.

We have received numerous new Soldiers since we have arrived. I want to welcome their family members to the company. As I am sure they had a warm welcome from the Honcho FRG. Chaplain Gornall is working hard to setup a marriage workshop that hopefully will incorporate a video teleconference.



I would like to also mention, first the guys at Bagram Airfield who push your loved ones out on leave. SFC Porter has his guys working overtime to ensure your loved ones are on the right plane at the right time to get home. Not only for HHC, but for the rest of the battalion. Job well done. SFC Pak and CPT Main have been doing a fantastic job with the rear detachment which was evident at a small get together called the Hoe-down. They have taken care of all the wounded Soldiers that have returned back to the states and continue to work tirelessly to get the forward Soldiers the items they need.

CPT White and I couldn't be more proud of the Soldiers. They do a thankless job that no one else wants to do, and they do it better than most. From the staff sections who have way too many bosses to the specialty platoons like the mortars, medics, PSD, and the headquarters platoon that have way, way too many bosses, they keep working and pushing ahead to get the job completed. Once again, to the family members who are waiting ever so patiently for their Soldier to return, I wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, you are in our thoughts and prayers, and continue the good hard work that makes the HHC FRG the best in the Army.



Thanks for your Support,
1SG Riley D. Burdine Jr
"Honcho 7"

Promotions for November, December



DEMARCUS L. HYSTEN	HHC
TYLER A. HENSLEE	A CO
JOSIAH RAMIREZ	A CO
MARK A. HAAS, II	A CO
JACKY SMITH	HHC
ANDREW R. REBHUN	A CO
ADRIAN J. MCDANIEL	F CO
RILEY C MCNABB	A CO
ABRAHAM C. DORROUGH	D CO



WILLIAM HOEKSEMA	F CO
BRANDON A. MAILLET	HHC
JUSTIN I. MOORE	C CO
CARL G. TAYLOR	HHC
HENRY F. KUNKEL	HHC



MARTIN A. RODRIGUEZ	A CO
NORMAN G. PUGH	D CO
LESTER PADILLA-	D CO



RAUL ESPARZA, JR.	D CO
BRIAN A. STESKAL	HHC
KEITH A. WRIGHT, JR.	F CO
RYAN E. ROJAS	HHC
STANLEY G. FRANKLIN	HHC
JAMES A. MUNOZ	HHC
JUSTIN B. HENRY	B CO
TERRON L. RICKETTS	HHC
JACOB R. KRUEGER	HHC
WILLIAM L. FREEMAN, JR.	HHC
BRADLEY N. PARKER	HHC
SHANE T. WILSON	D CO
RAY A. WILSON	F CO
THOMAS A. PERLMAN	F CO
CHRISTOPHER M. MOORS	F CO
BRANDON S. FUNCHESS	F CO
KEVIN SIDA	HHC
ROBERT M. CANTOR, JR	B CO



JOSEPH M. MULLINS	F CO
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Awards for November, December



The **Purple Heart** was established by General George Washington during the Revolutionary War on 7 August, 1782, and is awarded to members of the Armed Forces who have been wounded while serving in combat and peacekeeping operations.

SPC JASON STEINMENTZ	D CO
SPC ANDREW STROUPE	HHC
SSG BRIAN TALKINGTON	A CO
SPC ANGEL R. VALDEZ	A CO
SPC KYLE M. VOJTAS	B CO
SPC ALEXANDER ZACHARY	B CO
PFC JOSE ZAVALA	C CO



The **Army Commendation Medal** is awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States other than General Officers who distinguished themselves by heroism, meritorious achievement or meritorious service.

PFC LUKE SPANGLER	HHC
1LT GREGORY SULLIVAN	HHC
SPC LUKE WALLACE	D CO
PFC FREDERICK WALTON	B CO
PFC SHANE WILSON	A CO

Valorous Awards for November, December



The **Army Commendation Medal** with "V" for Valor

SPC MARTIN RODRIGUEZ	A CO
PFC LUKE STEELE	D CO
PV2 KYLE G. SUKHBIR	D CO
PFC GEOFFREY THOMAS	C CO
SGT EUGENY TILVALDIEV	HHC
SSG BRANDEN VELAZQUEZ	B CO



The **Bronze Star Medal** with "V" for Valor

SSG JONATHAN WEDEMEYER	C CO
SSG CHRISTOPHER DALLUGE	F CO
CPT KEVIN HUTCHESON	A CO

Combat Action Badges and Combat Infantryman's Badge



PV2 SHION BENTLEY	A CO	CIB
CPL DUSTIN MOORE	A CO	CIB
PV2 RILEY MCNABB	A CO	CIB
CPT RYAN BALAGTAS	HHC	CAB
SSG JOSEPH MULLINS	F CO	CAB
PFC DAVID CLIFTON	D CO	CAB
SGT ROLANDO RODRIGUEZ	F CO	CAB

The Night Before Christmas in Kunar

*'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the COP
Not a Soldier was stirring, not even to mop;
The smart wool socks were hung by bunji's with care,
In the hopes that the Colonel George and Sergeant Major Sasser soon would be there;
Major's Senti and Owen were nestled all snug in their beds;
While visions of FLIPLs and OPSUMS danced in their heads;
And LTC Pearl in his silk weights, and I in my patrol cap,
Had just settled down for our daily, "You better not wake me for the next 12 hours!" nap,
When out on the Pesh road there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my fart sack to see what was the matter.
Away to the TOC I flew like a flash,
Tripped over those damn stairs and my face I did smash.
Incinerator smoke from the trash pit aglow obscured my vision of the circus below,
When, what to my wandering eyes should appear,
But a miniature Blackhawk being drawn by a Harley, 9 goats, and one tiny reindeer,
With two old drivers, and their satchel of Claymores and candy,
I knew in a moment it must be CSM Sasser and Colonel George affectionately known as "Saint
Randy".
More rapid than TOW missiles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;
"Now Burdine! Now, White! Now Eckstrom and Hutch! Moretti ease off the gas, Noell give some
more clutch, Drager and Conlin continue the course, On Eastmon! On Vaars you are truly a horse,
On Ashmore, On Gutierrez!
To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!
Now Dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!
As dry leaves before the hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky
So up to the DFAC on Blessing they flew,
With a sleigh full of Asolo boots and multi-cams too.
And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof
The skidding of two tires and the pawing of 44 tiny hoofs.
As I drew in my head and was turning around,
Down the exhaust fan St. Randy came with a bound.
He was dressed all in ACU's from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all covered in deep fryer fat, ketchup, and soot;
A bundle of rockets he had slung on his back,
And he looked like a Ranger just opening his rucksack.
His eyes shaded with Wileys! His dimples so merry!
His cheeks were like razors, damn he looked scary!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And his hands in two fists so tight that they were white as the snow;
The stump of a cigar he held in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a lean face and absolutely no flab,*

(Continued on next page)



**TF LETHAL
WARRIOR**

*As was evident by his left shoulder that was sporting a Tab!
He was lean and mean, a right jolly good shot,
I began to reach for my M4 when LTC Peal said "you ought not!"
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know that I had nothing to dread;
He spoke not a word but went straight to his work,
And filled all the Smart wool socks; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger to the side of his Mic,
He depressed the push to talk button and Sasser started the bike;
As the Blackhawk arose with SPIES rope below,
He clipped in, gave a thumbs up and shouted let's go!
As the bird flared doing one final spin fading from sight,
I heard him exclaim,*

"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a hooah night."

**Neil C. Rivers
CSM, USA
Command Sergeant Major
Task Force Lethal Warriors**