

31 April 2008

Dear Family and Friends of the Wolfhounds,

Hello to all from Camp Taji, Iraq! It is now almost five months since we left Schofield Barracks. It's hard to believe we have been here this long. It feels like just yesterday we boarded the buses for the drive down to Hickam AFB. At this rate, we will be home before you know it. However, until that time, we continue to be very busy here as we bring this area closer to Iraqi control. Our work with the Iraqi Army has come to a point where they are now starting to take on several patrols a week.

On April 20, 2008, the Gunslingers passed the guidon in a traditional change of command ceremony. In the hot sun of Iraq, CPT Brian Sweigart relinquished command of the company, and passed the guidon to the capable hands of CPT Lucas Yoho. We even had a couple of our local sheiks in attendance. It's not every day you have Iraqi leaders at your change of command. At this same ceremony, CPT Sweigart was inducted into the Order of Saint George. Saint George is the patron saint of Armor and Cavalry, and it was an honor to see Brian be knighted.



Great things have been happening in our area of operations. The Iraqi unit that we work closely with is now patrolling more and more. Through their efforts, more and more caches of weapons are being found.

We were really excited this month to finally finish cleaning up some local school sites. The Iraqi people along with the Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces have been working diligently to clean up schools after they were destroyed by terrorists. This month the rubble from two of these schools were finally cleaned up so that reconstruction can begin on them. As we get these schools ready to be opened, we feel a sense of accomplishment and worth that we are able to provide an essential service to the children of this area.

The sand storms are now upon us. Almost once a week, we now have a sand storm. The storms are a large inconvenience to us, as it doesn't allow our Soldiers to fly out on leave when originally scheduled. We don't look forward to the storms combined with triple digit temperatures.



One of our most rewarding missions here is when we go out for a medical operation. This month, working closely with the Iraqi Army and local leaders, we performed two medical missions where we treated over 400 people ranging from infants to the elderly. Our

outstanding medical team treated residents for such things as eye injuries, general illness, gunshot wounds, and high blood pressure just to name a few. This is a very rewarding mission because the people here are in such need of quality health care.

As we finish up this month, we look back and see how much we have accomplished so far. The future may not be certain, but we are positive that over the next several months, we will accomplish good things here. With prayer and support from our Wolfhound family we know this is possible. Once again we ask for your prayers for our team that we will endure the next 10 months with strength and patience.

Until next month!

ONCE A WOLFHOUND, ALWAYS A WOLFHOUND!

Respectfully Yours,

RICHARD A. WILSON
LTC, IN
Commander, 1-27 Infantry "Wolfhounds"