

30 June 2008

Dear Family and Friends of the Wolfhounds,

Happy Father's Day from hot Camp Taji, Iraq! We are now almost seven months into this deployment, which means we're almost at the half way point. It seems that time has really flown by. I suppose with our constant mission set, it doesn't really give us time to sit and wish time was moving faster. In fact, there have been times when we could have used a little more time. With the constant pace, it also helps us keep our minds off the heat. There hasn't been a day that has passed by when the temperature wasn't in the triple digits. It's really hot and it's only going to get hotter. Sure makes one thankful for air conditioning; even if it only works part of the time.



It has been an exciting time here in the Taji area this past month. We have restaurants opening where the local citizens can get a nice meal for a low price. Won't be long and there will be restaurants popping up everywhere. Just one more sign that things are getting back to normal for these people. Another sign of things returning to normal here is the installation of sidewalks in the Taji Market area. No more walking in the dirt or on the road. Additionally, we have begun several road paving projects that will help with transportation and should reduce the ease of placing IEDs by the insurgents.



Recently we opened the first Taji Women's Council center this past month. This is a huge step forward for the women of Iraq. As the Iraqi people move forward, so do the rights of all the people in this country. It won't be long before women are considered equals in this area.

Another important event here in the New Taji area is the possible arrival of Iraqi Police. This arrival would mark an important step in expanding the safety and security for the people in this region. Until recently, there has been no IP presence in this region. The local citizens believe they will feel safer and more secure with an IP presence.

It is evident that the local leaders are concerned about the public. Recently a new wheelchair was donated to a local man who lost the use of his legs from an IED. Also, the Iraqi Army recently donated food and clothing to women and children in the Taji area. These gifts help to improve the quality of life of these less fortunate locals. It was very moving to see this man in his new wheelchair. He was so excited that he now has more mobility. It is things like this that make this all worthwhile.

Probably one of the most important events to take place in the local area this past month was the election of local government officials. Even after several attacks on Sheik Support Centers, the local leaders showed “NO FEAR” when they came together to hold these elections in order to better govern this region.



I sit here once again to ask you for your continued support and prayers for not only our Soldiers deployed, but also for our Wolfhound families left behind. Take care of each other, and know that we are thinking of you as you think of us. Pray that we all may continue to be patient and strong as we begin the second half of this deployment.

Until next month!

**ONCE A WOLFHOUND, ALWAYS A WOLFHOUND!**

Respectfully Yours,

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