

39th BEB  
2BCT  
101st ABN DIV  
U.S. Army



# Raptor Newsletter

Issue 6

November 2016

## Commander's Update

LTC Christopher D. Payant

Although we continue to push hard to support the Iraqi Army in the fight to defeat Daesh, we did carve out time in the daily routine to share a Thanksgiving meal with each other. By all accounts, it was an enjoyable day for everyone, regardless of location. Throughout this letter and in each of the company newsletters are images of the various celebrations that occurred. I am truly thankful to be a part of this incredible Raptor team and to serve with Soldiers who are genuinely committed to winning, wherever they may be. Fight, build, and destroy.

## Sergeant Major's Update

CSM Vincent J. Silva

Greetings from Iraq! I hope everyone had as wonderful a Thanksgiving as we did here. Once again the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen of the mighty Task Force Raptor came together and made something special. It is a time when we truly give thanks for what we have, and more importantly, what we give. The sacrifices made by our troops and Families give the American people the freedom that has been so hard fought for during our country's history. It is these sacrifices that secure our future as a nation and give our children the chance to succeed and have a better life. I challenge everyone to remember the sacrifices of our Soldiers, Families, and especially those that came before us.



*CSM Silva serves food during the Thanksgiving meal to 39th BEB and Task Force Raptor.*

As we draw closer to re-deployment I encourage everyone to stay focused on the tasks at hand. We still have plenty to accomplish before we go home. As everyone is focused on the mission we can reduce and eliminate injuries. During times of transition, and in haste, the easy route looks tempting, but if we take the time to think and act accordingly we will honor the sacrifices already made and everyone can enjoy re-deployment together.

Everything accomplished this past year has been through the hard work and dedication of the entire Task Force both forward and at home station. These accomplishments reflect the professionalism of the organization and we are extremely proud of the Soldiers and Families who have supported the effort. I sincerely hope everyone enjoys the coming holidays and does so safely and together. Thank you again for everything you do... every single day. FIGHT!

## Raptor HHC



*Members of the battalion staff at their Thanksgiving table—all smiles!*

*Top Right: CPT Baer diligently carves a Thanksgiving turkey. Below Right: CPT Connelly serves food as SGT Christie looks on. All Soldiers appreciate when their leaders serve them first on Thanksgiving!*



## Strike HHC



*Soldiers have the opportunity every month to attend promotion boards and NCO of the month boards at their various locations. Left, Soldiers partake in a professional education class before the board, meant to prepare them.*



*SGT Szymborski, RHHC, received NCO of the Month. Congratulations!*



## Turkey Bowl

39th BEB challenged each other, and other services, to friendly Frisbee competitions on Thanksgiving Day.



## Delta Company

Happy November Nighthawk Friends and Family!

We hope your holidays were enjoyable and that your month of November went as well as ours! As I write this, we are less than 60-days away from returning home and reuniting with our families and the Ready Force team. I'm pleased to say that the team overseas continues to operate at full speed with unwavering motivation and drive! We hope you enjoyed Thanksgiving as much as we did!

There are many things to be thankful for during this time. I'm personally thankful for the sacrifice all the Nighthawks have made throughout this tour and every day of their volunteer service; their willingness to serve for a greater cause is inspiring. I'm also most grateful for the support we receive from back home, both from the families of deployed personnel and the Ready Force alike. We appreciate all that you do back home and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Strike! Air Assault!



*Above: Members of Task Force Strike BISE and IEW section enjoying Thanksgiving in Northern Iraq! Below: SPC Schools, SSG Ivory, and CPL Marshall enjoy their meal.*



## Charlie Company

Charlie Company hosted a Veteran's Day ruck with participants in teams of 4 carrying 35lbs each. After each mile and a half, the team would pick up weight symbolizing something different.—two sandbags symbolizing the burden family and friends have had to carry on with, and then two cases of water symbolizing the tears that have been shed by families and friends. Prior to the event participants were asked to submit honored veterans whom were their friends that had been killed in action. At the start of the event we had nine honored veterans that would be honored and remembered.



On the last lap each team would pick up a honored veteran that had been submitted and would carry that honored veteran to the finish line. Due to the small size of our Army new relationships were formed between Soldiers based upon their prior relationships with the submitted honored Veterans, and the sustainment Company cooked everyone a fantastic meal for afterwards!

Thank you to all who have served.



## Bravo Company



*Above shows some of Inferno's construction, and below depicts IED disposal*

Happy Thanksgiving Inferno Family from your loved ones forward deployed. We hope you spend your day eating turkey, watching football, and giving thanks as we are all thankful here for your continued support. During the month of November, or Movember as some of the Soldiers call it who are growing out their mustaches, we have been truly dedicated to living up to Raptor's Motto of Fight, Build, and Destroy as highlighted below.

**The Fight:** The platoon has divided into two clearance teams and welcomed 1LT Kerry Horan back with additional manning from her new platoon in Sapper Beast. We have continued escort of the advise and

assist teams for three maneuver battalions in support of the Mosul Offensive, and clearance and protection for fires during gun raids.

**The Build:** We have constructed 3x TAAs, conducted clearance for another TAA, and facilitated the improvement of an additional TAA.



**The Destruction:** We started the BOOMS with a fire ball explosion to celebrate the re-enlistment of three Soldiers and the promotion of a few Privates to the rank of Specialist. This month has been all about 'Here Comes the BOOM!' as we found and disposed of three Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Blew In Place (BIP) an additional 4 explosive hazards IOT provide freedom of maneuver for friendly forces. It is safe to say that Iraq is over 3,000lbs of explosives safer. The Inferno Push-up and Crunches Challenge help to sustain fitness during transition and assisted a few Soldiers in increasing muscular endurance and strength, which they displayed in winning their weight class during Erbil's Weight Lifting Competition.

Overall this has been a great month. We submitted our Itschner Nomination to the battalion to represent and compete as The Best Engineer Company in the Army. SPC Conner and SSG Harris both won the Battalion's Hero of The Week. This month

SGT Nilsson and 1LT Volk returned home after completing their honorable duties supporting the company's mission. We hope that you all have a Merry Christmas and we look forward to being your belated gifts for the holidays.



## Thanksgiving Celebrations

It's always hard to spend holidays away from home, but 39th BEB was able to spend Thanksgiving happily! Decorations and setup at various locations are pictured below.



Questions, comments, or concerns about this newsletter? Please contact 1LT Amanda K. Harrison  
[amanda.k.harrison.mil@mail.mil](mailto:amanda.k.harrison.mil@mail.mil) or at [amandakh3@gmail.com](mailto:amandakh3@gmail.com)

## Alpha Company

Sapper Beast Family!

I hope that you all had a happy thanksgiving! The Soldiers of Alpha Company were able to participate in a full day of football and a celebration feast provided by the cooks here at Q-West. November has been a much colder month here, but the change is welcome when it means we are one month closer to coming home! I am proud of all of the Sapper Beast accomplishments this month. Our 12Ns have been improving roads and force protection for the base. Our Sappers have been conducting clearance patrols and logistics patrols routinely. Each day the Soldiers improve their skill mastery by conducting a train-up for Sapper School.



1<sup>st</sup> Platoon's Combat Engineer Train-the-Trainer Course mission is wrapping up, and they are getting ready to join the route clearance elements in Bravo Company. We have also been advising the Iraqis with all bridging efforts.

With some more down-time than we had in previous months, several Soldiers have started attending Financial Peace Military Edition classes here



at Q-West. I am proud of their commitment to invest in such a positive learning experience. Katie and I have learned a lot from the class, and I am so excited for the opportunity for our Soldiers to gain the benefits of financial discipline. I plan to continue offering Financial Peace classes after re-deployment, so please keep your ears and eyes open for those opportunities!



We were fortunate to have several Soldiers reenlist this month including: SSG (P) Dobson, SSG (P) McKee, SGT Jennings, SGT Williams, SPC Hall, SGT Simmons, and SGT Farhat. Congratulations guys and families and thank you for your service!

Sapper Beast! Warm Regards, Alex Carlier



*Left: Alpha Company Soldiers enjoy Thanksgiving. Above: CPT Carlier, 1SG Flakes, 1LT Lacure, and SFC Shane participated in the Veteran's Day Ruck March in honor of SFC Ricardo Young from the 307<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. SFC Shane and CPT Carlier served with him during their time at Fort Bragg.*