

"The Guardian Times"

April 2009



91st Military Police Battalion
Operation Iraqi Freedom

Guardian 6

“Notes from the Field”

April 2009

Well, the Guardians have had another good month and the HHD has actually reached the halfway point of the deployment. In reality, the time has passed rather quickly, although I am sure most people would be happy to see the time move at an even quicker pace. One thing that I am happy to announce is the creation of our “Guardian Times” newsletter and the battalion’s website. Both can be accessed at <http://www.drum.army.mil/sites/tenants/division/SPT-BDE/91mp/tfg/>. This website will have information on units here in Iraq and those still at Fort Drum. So, please let your friends and Families know about this site so they can keep tabs on the current happenings within the battalion.

We have had a few changes within the battalion over the last month. On 7 April, the 340th MP CO transferred authority to the 810th MP CO from Tampa, Florida. We wish the 340th MP CO the best of luck and happy reunions. We thank you for your hard work in support of OIF 08-10. The 810th MP CO has hit the ground running and they are doing a great job. We wish them the best of luck as they support operations here in Iraq for the remainder of the year. Also, on 1 May, we will transfer Det. 2, 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, to the 93rd MP BN and will pick up administrative control of the 563rd MP CO; a happy Guardian / Titan reunion.

So, with all the changes, I would like to review the composition of the battalion as of 1 May 2009. The battalion is comprised of the HHD from Fort Drum, New York; the 39th MP CO from the Louisiana Army National Guard; the 110th MP CO from Fort Carson, Colorado; the 135th MP CO from the Ohio Army National Guard; the 300th MP CO from Fort Riley, Kansas; the 563rd MP CO from Fort Drum, New York; the 772nd MP CO from the Massachusetts Army National Guard; and the 810th MP CO from Tampa, Florida (United States Army Reserve). I would personally like to welcome all of the new Soldiers and Families to the Guardian Family and thank each of you for your support and dedication.

On a sad note, I would like to pause for a moment of remembrance in honor of SGT Raul Moncada from the 563rd MP CO who was killed in action earlier this month. Please keep his friends, Family and fellow Soldiers in your prayers. Also, remember SPC Crawford, SPC Tolentino, and PFC Montenegro; Soldiers from the 563rd MP CO wounded in the same incident.

Also, with a mixture of pride and sadness, we said goodbye to 12 Soldiers from the 191st MP CO from North Dakota who had voluntarily extended to serve with our battalion from 1 January through the end of April. These Soldiers provided personal security for the CSM and I and I thank them for their professionalism and commitment. We will miss you.

In closing, I am proud of this unit and the Soldiers and Families that support it on a daily basis. I want to personally thank all of the Families and FRG leaders for supporting the units, leaders, and Soldiers of this battalion. We could not do it without you. Honor Above All!

LTC Mike Thomas
“Guardian 6”



HHD, TF 91 Military Police “Blackjack”



OIF 08-10 Camp East Liberty, Baghdad, Iraq April 2009

TF 91's S1 Strives for Excellence

Camp Liberty, Iraq – Task Force 91 Military Police's S1 is doing great things for Soldiers as they continue to improve daily operations. As the hours of daylight get longer and the temperatures begin to rise, it is easy to develop a negative opinion of Camp Liberty, Iraq; however, the motivated Soldiers of the TF S1 continue to play a vital role in increasing the morale of approximately 1,300 Soldiers by processing awards, promotion documents, NCOERs, OERs, leave requests and postal operations, just to name a few.

While daily operations continue to be the main effort, training is still a high priority. The TF S1 Soldiers continue to conduct correspondence courses, PT five times a week, and maintenance on their equipment. Although currently deployed, TF S1 Soldiers continue to exercise initiative in the absence of guidance to ensure that challenges are handled with immediate action. Upon the battalion's move from FOB Rustamiyah to Camp Liberty, the TF S1 was forced to transform a 20 foot connex into a temporary mailroom to ensure Soldiers were able to receive mail from Family and friends.

With the summer months quickly approaching, SFC Rena Davis, TF 91 MP S1 NCOIC, and SGT Corey Button, TF 91 MP Mailroom NCOIC, coordinated, synchronized and managed the delivery of a trailer for mailroom operations with the assistance of the TF 91 MP S4 OIC, 1LT Anthony Douglass, and TF 91 MP S4 NCOIC, SSG Michael White. PFC Bernal stated, “When a deployed Soldier receives a package from a Family member or friend, it usually brings joy and thoughts of happier times from home. Not to mention, it will usually satisfy a sweet tooth or a need for other comfort food items or products.”

As TF 91 MP S1 continues to conduct operations, they are reminded that their part in the fight is important and without them, Soldiers would not receive the benefits they deserve. SGT Fargo stated, “The duties and responsibilities of the TF 91 MP's S1 section are time consuming and tedious, but they are rewarding when a Soldier thanks you for waking up in the middle of the night to fill out emergency leave paperwork.”





110th Military Police Company Hellraisers!



OIF 08-10 Ad Diwaniyah, Iraq

April 2009

Saving Grace!

Grace is the unofficial name given by 1LT Faulkner, Platoon Leader, 2nd platoon, 110th Military Police Company, to the baby that was left on the side of the road and brought to the Iraqi Police (IP) station where elements of one of his squads were conducting Police Transition Team (PTT) operations. 1LT Faulkner and SSG Puga, Squad Leader, 2nd Platoon, heard through the interpreter, that the IP's just brought a baby into the station. The two Soldiers looked at each other, not as platoon leader to squad leader, but as two fathers knowing they had to inquire about the situation. "After we discovered the baby, my paternal instincts kicked in and I knew we had to help. This baby was in trouble," said SSG Puga. SSG Puga asked the IP station commander what the procedure would be to resolve the situation, while 1LT Faulkner controlled the onlookers from getting too close. "It is our job to teach, coach and advise the IP on these situations. Unfortunately, the situation did not allow for time to make mistakes," stated 1LT Faulkner. "The baby was in a crate and tied up and appeared to stop breathing at times. I had to act." The Iraqi Police were ready to investigate as they were trained to do. However, the urgency of the situation with a newborn added a blindside to their procedures. "They had a plan in place, but it was for an older child and not a 3 week old baby," stated SSG Puga. The IP's were sensitive to the needs of the child, but they didn't necessarily seem to have the knowledge needed to properly care for her. SSG Puga offered advice to the IP from the knowledge he had gained from raising two daughters himself. The IP station became an unsafe environment for the child. 1LT Faulkner secured the child and crossed a line that he did not want to cross. "SSG Puga and his squad were being overwhelmed by the IP and the

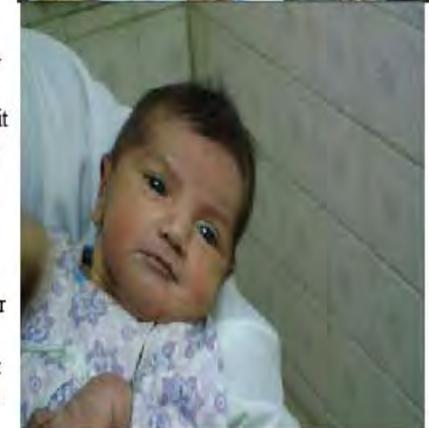
crowd that was gathering outside and I noticed the baby stop breathing. The immediate care of the child took precedence over the investigative process." SSG Puga realized the escalation of the situation was beyond advising. After 1LT Faulkner secured the child, SSG Puga and his squad took immediate measures to protect the two. "I knew I had to get the baby to the hospital and, fortunately, I just had a meeting there with the administration to secure more space for the IP station located there. I was in the best position to get the care for the child." SGT Duran, SGT Brett and SGT Hardy, 3rd Squad team leaders, maintained a keen awareness of the situation. They performed crowd control that allowed the other leaders to focus on the situation at hand. "We trained for this a few weeks earlier, but we never thought we would have to use it in our current situation," stated SGT Duran. "Our training allowed us to keep cool and focus on the situation," SGT Hardy agreed, "The most important thing was the welfare of the child. It was my job to secure the area so that happened." SGT Hardy also maintained communications with their TOC so that any further guidance could be relayed. Fortunately, everything was under control. That is until the hospital the squad was in could not treat the child. The child was assigned a nurse that assisted in the immediate care of the child. 1LT Faulkner and SGT Duran escorted the nurse throughout the Diwaniyah Hospital, while SSG Puga and SGT Brett developed a security plan. "Security is always our number one priority and a lot of things had to happen simultaneously," stated SGT Brett.

(story continued on the next page)

Saving Grace (Cont.)

"We had to protect the child and our Soldiers, control the crowd and assist the IP with the initial start of the investigation. It got hectic extremely fast."

While the LT and SGT Duran assisted with the care of the child, SSG Puga coordinated for the use of an ambulance through the hospital administration. The hospital maintains few transport vehicles and this proved to be a difficult task. SSG Puga, noticing an ambulance heading out, coordinated to transport the baby and the nurse to the Children's Hospital. After a quick brief by 1LT Faulkner, the patrol was on their way. Upon arrival at the Children's Hospital, the squad repeated the security process while 1LT Faulkner and SSG Puga followed the nurse to the administration office to finalize the care of the child. Once it was determined that the child was in good hands, the squad inquired about the future of the baby. The adoption process was explained and the squad was pleased that the child will have a good future. The adoption process mirrors that of the U.S. "Everyone on scene wanted that baby and was willing to take her home right then!" stated SGT Hardy. "She made me miss my son that much more." "We have made great gains here in training the IP. I am very proud of what we are accomplishing. But this is what really made this tour worth it all," said 1LT Faulkner. SSG Puga agreed and added, "She will always be a part of me. I will never forget what we did here today."





39th Military Police Company



OIF 08-09 FOB Shield, Baghdad, Iraq

April 2009

39th Military Police Company Newsletter April 09

Corporal Amy Hrin performed her duties as the Alpha Team Leader for 3rd Squad, 1st Platoon, 39TH Military Police Company, flawlessly and consistently demonstrating her ability to maintain a calm demeanor while executing a multitude of tasks that are integral for successful Police Transition Team (PTT) operations at the Al Quant Iraqi Police (IP) station. As the Alpha Team Leader, CPL Hrin ensures that the day to day PTT D-Cell operations and route planning for convoy operations are properly planned and executed without error. CPL Hrin was specifically chosen for this job by the company commander and exceeded all of his expectations. Her professionalism and dedication to duty provided critical support to the success of the 39th Military Police Company and 91st Military Police Battalion. For her efforts, CPL Hrin was nominated for Guardian of the Week by the 39th MP Company. CPL Hrin also prepared for the FOB Shield 4K Challenge Run that took place on 10 April 2009. CPL Hrin placed 2nd overall.

The Guardian of the Week, selected by the 91st MP Battalion, for the first week of April 2009, is none other than SPC Leslie Gravouilla, the 39th MP Company RTO. SPC Gravouilla consistently demonstrates her ability to maintain a calm and cool demeanor while executing a multitude of tasks that are integral to successful PTT operations. SPC Gravouilla was also instrumental in supporting missions for other elements that fall within MND-B, as she relays critical information and radio traffic, including emergency traffic, for a multitude of Military Police elements in order to ensure their mission success. SPC Gravouilla's unique ability to operate complex communication systems, accurately maintain records and logs, and accurately report all incoming and outgoing communications without error or delay is extremely critical to mission success. She is the "Voice of East Baghdad!"





135TH Military Police Company “Brutus”



OIF 08-10 FOB Carver, Baghdad, Iraq

April 2009

First Steps

“Soldiers watch as five year old boy walks for the first time”

FOB CARVER, Iraq – Soldiers of the 135th Military Police Company, watched as Ali, the five year old son of a local Iraqi Police officer, took his first steps. Staff Sergeant Scott Czerr learned of the boy’s condition on a routine visit to the station and decided to take action. SSG Czerr’s own son is afflicted with cerebral palsy and had a walker that he had outgrown. He was able to contact his family and have the walker, along with shoes, socks, and wrist supports, sent to Ali.

SSG Czerr of the 135th Military Police Company first met Ali in Al-Huda, in a small town within Wahida, Iraq. The Soldiers of first squad, second platoon, were on their way to meet a local Sheik when Hamed Kallum, an Iraqi Police Officer, approached them. He explained to SSG Czerr that his five year old son, Ali, was unable to walk and soon returned with the boy. After seeing Ali’s calloused knees and torn pants and watching his attempts to move about on his hands and knees, SSG Czerr immediately drew a connection to his own son who is afflicted with cerebral palsy. As a child, SSG Czerr’s son could only get around by hopping or walking on his knees. This realization, along with other similarities that SSG Czerr noted, led him to believe he had the means to help them. He advised Ali’s father to begin simple exercises with him every day in order to strengthen his severely atrophied leg muscles. SSG Czerr told Ali’s father to help the boy walk upright everyday by holding his hands, similar to the way a parent would teach a baby to walk, and to encourage him to stand and move about on his own while holding

onto a couch or table. “That family had to do their part because the muscles were really shrunken; he wouldn’t have been able to walk,” SSG Czerr explains. The platoon medic, Specialist Craig Miller, of Auburn Township, Ohio, agrees, “I would never guess that first day we saw him that he would ever walk, even with a walker.” With little available at the time, SSG Czerr measured the little boy’s feet with a pen to gauge a shoe size. Within a few weeks, SSG Czerr was able to arrange for a walker his own son had used briefly and long since outgrown, along with shoes, socks and wrist supports, to be sent from home. Ali and his father were “overjoyed” when SSG Czerr and his squad returned with the walker. Soldiers and members of the local community snapped pictures as Ali, alongside his proud father, took his first steps. Hamed, Ali’s father, was soon overwhelmed with emotion as he watched his son laughing and walking with his peers for the first time. Columbus Ohio native, First Lieutenant Matthew Martling, Executive Officer of the 135th Military Police Company, had this to say, “This is what it’s about, people helping people.” Sergeant Justin Taft a Mentor, Ohio, native stated, “It feels good to give the Iraqi locals gifts that will last forever, things that are more important than candy or bottles of water.” SSG Czerr plans to continue to help Ali and his family and has already arranged for additional shoes and socks, as well as knee and elbow pads to be sent from home. “Watching, it was hard for us not to get choked up,” SSG Czerr explains, “but I think it betters our relations with the Iraqi Police and the community. They are more receptive to us now.”





300th Military Police Company “War Dawgs!”



OIF 08-10 Old, MOD; Baghdad Iraq

April 2009

RKG Threat- Safety Mitigation Training

On 28 March 2009, the 300th Military Police Company took time to conduct RKG-3 training due to the increase in recent threats and attacks. Each platoon completed classroom instruction that described the latest tactics, techniques, and procedures for employing RKGs along with different safety mitigations that may be useful in eliminating and combating the threat.

The RKG training was conducted in a five lane rotation with each lane representing a different scenario. In addition, Soldiers from another squad, as well as headquarters' personnel, provided role players in order to provide the most realistic environment. During this training, squads successfully identified some areas they wanted to improve as well as some modifications they will need to make to the gunners' screens and seats to allow for better movement and reaction time while maintaining the proper posture within the turret. Teams realized how much more communication would be required to take place to identify possible threats from the many pedestrians that surround the trucks on a daily basis when traveling through the markets.

During the After Action Review, SSG Michael Gibson, a Tacoma, Washington native, stated, “While outside the wire you don't want to have problems with your gunners' screen. In order to ensure your main focus is on engaging the enemy, we must continue to conduct thorough rehearsals to identify problems you can fix before you go outside the wire.”





732 ESFS Det 2 “Rough Riders”



OIF 08-10 FOB Mahmudiyah, Baghdad, Iraq

April 2009

MND-B Airmen prepare Iraqi Police for the future

MAHMUDIYAH – Multi-National Division – Baghdad, FOB Mahmudiyah - “Airmen prepare Iraqi Police for the future.”

Airmen from Rough Rider 1-3, 732 ESFS Det 2, TF 91 Military Police, 8th Military Police Brigade, conducted a RIP and hit the ground running. TSgt Patrick Gaudet assessed his station and determined to make it a better place. “Our biggest challenge is relieving units who in the past had funds for quick temporary solutions to problems. We think outside the box, coming up with creative, permanent solutions and teaching our Iraqi Police (IP) how to function as an effective police force,” said TSgt Gaudet, Squad Leader, Rough Rider 1-3.

In 12 short days after taking over the mission, Rough Rider 1-3 was side by side with Iraqi Police in a combined effort to secure a weapons cache. The rapport Air Force personnel have built with Iraqi counterparts facilitated a rapid and smooth recovery of those weapons.

It has been a challenge inheriting the duties associated with mentoring IP. The troops are motivated, each one embracing their personal piece of the pie. SrA Ryman Dockter, fire team member, Rough Rider 1-3, designed and presented a blue print for a tool shed and motor pool for the Mahmudiyah District Headquarters to Gen Abd, Commander, Mahmudiyah Iraqi Police District. SrA Richard Booker, fire team member, Rough Rider 1-3, utilized his background in detainee operations to instruct his IP counterparts on how to run their facility in a smoother manner. SSgt Brian Lafreniere engaged Directorate Supply IP directly to gain knowledge of the Iraqi supply process. His efforts resulted in immediate approval of supply requests for IPs. The Airmen of 732 ESFS Det 2

are here to find solutions to the problems IPs face on a day to day basis. “I’ve enjoyed helping the IP give back and re-establishing their reputation within their community. I love the interaction with the Iraqi people. You wouldn’t get that on a normal deployment,” said A1C Steven Rivera, Gunner, Rough Rider 1-3.





772nd Military Police Company “Patriots”



OIF 08-10 FOB Delta, Baghdad, Iraq

April 2009

Patriots Conduct Operation: “Who’s In the Jailhouse Now”

FOB Delta, Iraq- The 772nd Military Police Company has been operating in the Wasit Province of Iraq for several months now, and has begun to expand its range of operations to include areas not visited by Coalition Forces in some time. Due to this issue, Operation “Who’s in the Jailhouse Now”, was put together and implemented by 1st Platoon Soldiers, led by 1LT Paul Mabee, a Dorchester, MA, native. “The scope of our mission, was to coordinate with the FA (Field Artillery) that are assigned the Police Transition Team (PTT) operation, provide them with some of our insight, along with tools to use in their assignment. We were able to get to seven local police stations and one DHQ station. In five days, we were able to visit the areas of Dubuni, Zubadiyah, Al Azizziyah, Hafria, Masrah, Suwayrah and Shumaniyah.” 1LT Mabee continued, “We just gave them the information we had, and tried to put them on the same path our unit has been operating on. The overall goal is to have the LNs (local nationals) look at the Iraqi Police (IP) as role models, and not just an armed force.” Civilian IPAs were also present, and a combined effort was made to assess both strengths and weak areas, where the focus would be to reinforce good training, or “sustain,” and to possibly introduce new methods of assisting Iraqi Police Stations. Some of the areas that were evaluated were what many American and law enforcement personnel take for granted, such as dispatch, basic managerial skills of the chain of command, and administration personnel issues. SSG Derek Martin stated, “With all the shuffling around that the IPs have had to do recently, we weren’t surprised to find some areas that were lacking in attention. It appears the FA units, both the 1/77 and 3/66 leaders, have already built a good rapport with the station leaders, which is a huge plus. Our goal was to assess the areas that need attention, or improvement, and there is no doubt in my mind that they are fully capable of helping the IPs get their stations operating more efficiently. Every station that we visited, had different needs, some were easy for us to see, others weren’t quite as obvious. For example, some stations had vehicle maintenance and inspection issues, things that we take for granted in the United States, where most departments have maintenance sections, or even sub-contractors. Several of the IP stations we visited now have personnel in leadership positions that are not uncomfortable with positions of authority. In these cases, senior command staffs are present who have served previously in the Iraqi Army (IA), or the IP, and not surprisingly, leadership operations and administrative operations issues weren’t major factors in those stations. Due to differences in our cultures, our approach and emphasis is quite different,” stated 1LT Mabee, who went on to say, “We noticed a need, and a desire for further training in the areas of crime scene protection and analysis, dispatch and the tracking of patrols. The concept of Community Policing was introduced, which is almost a given back in America, but a fairly new thought process here in Iraq.”

One tactic that was utilized, and has proven itself through implementation in the US Military, is the “Train the Trainer” concept. This a training method in which a proven, and experienced, trainer will then impart their knowledge and experience to several students who display a solid grasp of the material provided, and who also display a natural teaching ability. Those students are then taught to instruct their peers in those same skills. In many ways, this acts as a force multiplier, and eases the burden on the limited number of coalition trainers, who can now focus on other weak or problematic areas in need of attention. SGT Bert St. Germain, a retired police chief himself, and now a team leader, stated, “We see in many of the IPs that we deal with, a strong desire to be more professional in their approach to law enforcement. For example, many of what we in the United States see as the traditional role of the cop, is quite different here. The sharing of information and intelligence is quite different, and a new concept to them as is the entire focus of much of this new training. Here, a cop on the street has the added stresses of possibly dealing with a suicide bomber, back home, that’s a pretty remote thought process for almost any American cop on the beat. We need to remember that it is often a completely different world altogether. Are there similarities? Sure, but many differences too.” The findings made by both the 772nd MP Company, along with the observations and suggestions made by the civilian IPAs will be broken down and disseminated. 1LT Mabee stated, “Fortunately, the Army National Guard often brings a diverse wealth of experience to the table. We have civilian police officers, and corrections officers here, and a host of other skills too. We, along with the IPAs, can offer several different approaches to solving problems, and more importantly, teaching the Iraqi Police how to solve them on their own. You can’t just force the American method or approaches on them. These guys know what works for them, so we’re also getting an education on their culture and how they are adapting our methods to suit their needs. This type of mission will allow us to go home, and in turn allow the IPs to conduct police operations without the assistance of Coalition Forces.”





810th Military Police Company



OIF 08-10 Camp East Liberty, Baghdad, Iraq April 2009

Assuming the Reigns of Vigilance

CAMP Liberty, Iraq – On 7 April 2009, the 810TH Military Police Company (MP CO), known as the “Crusaders”, assumed authority for the Police Transition Team (PTT) mission in the New Baghdad and Karadah Districts from the 340TH MP CO, “Gotham Knights”, during the transfer of authority ceremony (TOA) at Warrior Chapel on Camp East Liberty. This was a key highlight on the 810TH MP CO’s OIF journey which began on 2 January 2009, when the Army Reserve unit left their Family and friends in Tampa, Florida, enroute to Fort McCoy and Fort Dix for pre-deployment training and eventual departure to Iraq.

All Soldiers in the 810TH PM CO clearly understand the importance of their PTT mission and look forward to making a difference with the Iraqi Police (IP) and Iraqi people. The importance and seriousness of the mission was emphasized by the 340TH MP CO CDR, MAJ Lawrence Clossum, who said that he could summarize his unit’s deployment in three words: Joy, Gratitude, and Sorrow. Joy because they have successfully completed the mission and Soldiers were returning to friends and Family; Gratitude to God for completion of the mission and to the Soldiers for their hard work and dedication, and Sorrow because he was unable to return with all of his Soldiers. These words further focused the Soldiers of the 810TH MP CO and helped prepare them for the rewarding, yet challenging, days ahead.

CPT Calvin Graham, the 810TH MP CO Commander, said, “I know that the road before us will not always be easy, but I have no doubt that the Soldiers of the 810TH MP CO will successfully execute their duties as Guardians of Justice. I have already observed my Soldiers on mission and I have to admit my pride concerning their

professional demeanor and efficiency in dealing with minute by minute changes. I believe these Soldiers will serve incredibly well during this deployment.” With that said, it is official: “Crusaders – On Mission!”

