

BRAVO



DEATHMASTERS

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MOSUL, IRAQ

Dear Family and Friends,

I would like to take a moment to introduce myself as the new Bravo Company Commander. I have been in the Army for 15 years and consider each unit that I have served with as part of my family, and that is exactly how I feel about Bravo Company. I have already received warm emails from our FRG leaders, Ann Tucker and Linda Lusk, and I would like to thank them for reaching out and welcoming me into Bravo Company. Prior to becoming a commissioned officer I was an enlisted soldier for 8 years and I have had many long deployments along the way. I have three children Christina, Steven Jr., and James and I miss them dearly. Much as you all miss your loved ones. It is very important to me that all of our soldiers and their families understand that this command group will do everything in its power to assist any family in need. Being in Iraq is a tough separation for all. I ask that we all work together, with patience, caring, and understanding we will get through OUR deployment together.

During this separation from our family and friends communication is the essential element in keeping piece of mind. I have asked each of my soldiers to call or write home at least once a month to let you know how they are doing. I ask that we work with our family readiness group well as our rear detachment to assist us in moments of need. They have a wealth of information that is open to anyone. Please do not hesitate to use them.

Your loved ones are doing great work. They are working extremely hard with long hours but they do it with pride and we are proud of all of them. We have just recently started the leave program. Each month the company will put up to 20 soldiers on leave and it is this commands goal to have all Bravo Company soldiers take their leave. As always mission requirements and time in country will have a vote but the 1SG and I will work hard to meet our goal.

Lastly I would like to announce that this is just the first newsletter and I will ensure that we put one out every month. Each platoon will submit articles for the newsletter to allow everyone to see what a great job your husbands, sons and brothers are doing. I look forward to working with all of you.

Sincerely,

**CPT Steven J. Szilvassy
"DEATHMASTER 6"**





FROM THE TOP



Hello Ladies,

It has been a long time since the last edition of "From The Top" and I couldn't even begin to pick up where I left off, except to let you all know how proud I am to be the 1SG of the Deathmasters; all of the boys are doing a great job. We have done a bit of traveling since our arrival; from Camp Cooke, to Camp Delta, back to Camp Cooke and on to FOB Marez. We have also had two trips to FOB Sykes in the western area of the BDE Area of Operation (AO). Most of these moves have been on short to no notice and we have moved and normally gone right into a mission with out loss of effectiveness. This is a true credit to the Officers, NCOs & men of B Co. I wouldn't say all the war stories you might have heard are true, but ever one of you ladies can be proud of these soldiers, they are true professionals.



I want to take the opportunity to thank all the ladies for the holiday cards we have received and for bearing with us through the times of limited communications with you all on the home front. B Co has never lacked for receiving mail (packages included); although some of the PSGs began to wonder if I was hiding their mail from them 😊 It may be hard for some to really understand how a letter, or better yet a package, from home lifts even the hardest veterans spirits. Thanks for all the support ladies. The moral has been high among the Deathmasters and I thank you for your support.

As you all should know by now we had the company Change of Command on 27 December, I would like to wish CPT Brown and Theresa a fond farewell, even if he is only going to work at BDE. You all will always be Deathmasters. Good Luck at the Palace.

CPT Szilvassy is now at the helm of the company and has stepped in without missing a beat. Sorry Anne, Heather, Linda and the rest of the FRG leaders, another single commander...no rest for the weary. 😊



Hail & Farewell

I would like to extend our Deathmaster welcome to:

CPT Steve Szilvassy-CO, coming from the BN S4, 1LT Josh Dailey-3rd PLT, 1LT Bobby Kessner-1st PLT & 1LT Sam Burling FSO all coming from the S3 Bull Pen. 1LT Rittenberg-XO coming from the BN S4, SGT Carlberg came to us from BN Commo and SGT Waltens-Supply coming to us from C Co

We wish the following God's Speed in their next Adventure:

CPT Kermit Brown going to BDE, CPT Adam Landsee going to the School For Advanced Suffering (SFAS), 1LT Derek Loveland going back to Artillery land, 1LT Marty Wakefield-S3, CPT Chris Rowe took over as the S4 and SSG Starks moved to HHC

A note in regards to R & R leave; although we are able to project out roughly one month in advance of when the boys will be scheduled for leave, please remain flexible in your plans as we never know when a flight might get canceled or diverted. Once your guys get to Germany they have a pretty good itinerary, but even those change on flight availability. Just so you know, the chargeable leave starts at midnight the day the soldier arrives at the hub airport in the US and it ends at midnight the night before he is to fly back to the hub. I know this is probably confusing as I had to have it explained to me about three times, but the bottom line is that the soldiers get 15 days of leave and the time it takes to get to and from the hub from/to OCONUS is not counted. I let you know this so you can tailor your Honey-Do-List to maximize his time at home. ☺

I would like to send our Deathmaster regards to SSG Smith, SPC Olson (Commo guy) and PFC Murray who were injured and were evacuated back to the States. God's speed in your recovery. All the rest of our wounded heroes have healed and are back to duty.

For those that made it this far down the column, if there are any questions or concerns I do have internet from time to time, the service is not that dependable but I do get my e-mail pretty regularly and you can reach me by e-mail at the below address. It is usually quicker than through normal channels. I would be happy to entertain any concerns.

One last note; the 5th Infantry Association has a web site that they have invited us to post pictures to; I have posted several and will post more as the internet allows. The url is <http://bobcat.ws/> if you would like to take a visit.

I hope all of you had an enjoyable holiday season and that Santa found you well and well behaved. I know I will enjoy this years holiday season that much more. We here did our best to spread the holiday spirit through out our AO. There was lots of decorations and holiday music. We even set up a buffet from snack gifts we had received. It gave us a little bit of home for the holidays.

Deathmaster 1SG

1SG Douglas

kirk.douglas@us.army.mil

**Welcome to the Newest
Deathmasters**
Congratulations to John & Margaret
Scriven on the arrival of Tyler
and to Richard & Sherry Martel
on the arrival of Zoe

PROMOTIONS
SFC Jerry McCullough to MSG
SGT Kevin Pelayo to SSG
SGT Lawrence Bush to SSG
SGT Jeremy Smith to SSG
SPC Dustin Alger to SGT
PFC Kelly Beberniss to SPC
PV2 Michael Billingsly to PFC
Also we have two Deathmasters who have been
Selected for promotion in the Senior NCO ranks
SFC Michael Tucker for MSG
SSG Clair Gilmore for SFC
Congratulations and well done to all of you



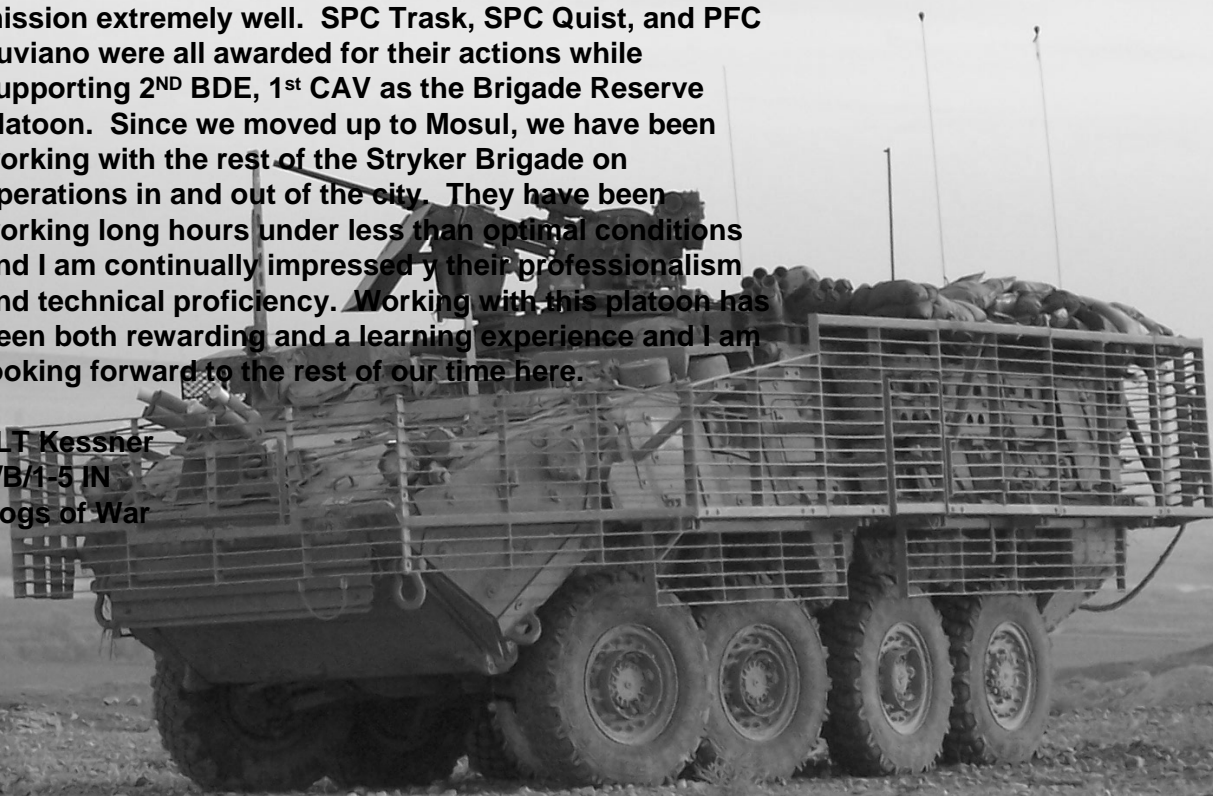
First Platoon Bravo Company- Dogs Of War

Since we deployed roughly three months ago, first platoon has been through and seen a lot. From our start at Camp Cooke to operating with the Marines at Fallujah, all of those long field problems and trips to Yakima are paying off.

For those of you who haven't heard, CPT Rowe is no longer the Platoon Leader for First Platoon. He has moved on to become the Battalion S-4 and as of about a month ago I took over as the PL. I'd first like to take a moment to introduce myself and tell you what I think of the platoon. My name is 1LT Robert Kessner, I am 23 years old and originally from Honolulu, Hawaii. I graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point as an Infantry officer with a degree in Business Management. I ran Cross-country, Track and played soccer there. I spent 12 months at Fort Benning completing the Officer Basic Course, Ranger and Airborne school and up until I took the platoon was working in the S-3 shop at Fort Lewis as an assistant planner/Battle Captain.

I did not have the privilege of operating with the platoon in Fallujah, but from all accounts, they conducted themselves professionally and executed their mission extremely well. SPC Trask, SPC Quist, and PFC Luviano were all awarded for their actions while supporting 2ND BDE, 1st CAV as the Brigade Reserve Platoon. Since we moved up to Mosul, we have been working with the rest of the Stryker Brigade on operations in and out of the city. They have been working long hours under less than optimal conditions and I am continually impressed by their professionalism and technical proficiency. Working with this platoon has been both rewarding and a learning experience and I am looking forward to the rest of our time here.

1LT Kessner
1/B/1-5 IN
Dogs of War



Hello from 2nd PLT,

Well it's been 3 months now and 2nd PLT has been busy to say the least along with the rest of the Death Masters. 2nd PLT saw it's first heavy action within our first month in Iraq when the Deathmasters traveled to the beautiful township of Al Karma, Iraq and occupied Camp Delta, AKA Fort Apache. 2nd PLT had ample opportunity to react to indirect and direct fire, putting into practical application the months and years of hard training and preparation that 2nd PLT has endured. The mighty Deuce fought through a well planned and coordinated ambush and eventually departed Al Karma, leaving it's populace with the knowledge that they now have a more peaceful and secure environment.

Since arriving at FOB Marez and Mosul, " the pearl of SW Asia", 2nd PLT has busied itself rounding up insurgents and making friends. To date 2nd PLT has detained a total of 53 insurgents in the Mosul area and 27 in the Tal Afar area. Yes, we have considered painting our STRYKERS black and white and adding red and blue whoopie lights and a siren.

On 21 December, our strength and determination was tested by the enemy when they used a cowardly suicide attack to destroy our dining facility and take so many of our fine soldiers lives. Thankfully none of our Death Masters were seriously injured. Thank God they were there for without the immediate response and care given by the Death Masters, many more of the injured would have succumbed to their wounds. A special thanks and job well done goes out to the following 2nd PLT soldiers:

SPC Wood Robert
SPC Diss Christopher
PFC Bare Brandon
PFC Curl Brian
SGT Jack Wendell
SGT Kabalac Aaron



These fine soldiers put their training of life saving instead of life taking to work that day and made the Death Masters proud.

2nd PLT was honored to be the main effort in a mission that captured a valuable suspect in that attack, and despite our feelings, accomplished the mission without firing a shot. Finally I would like to give a special thanks to all our ladies that do so much to support us and what we do. Know that without you and your support this mission would be much more difficult.

Again, thank you for your support and love.

SFC Lusk
2nd PLT. B Co. 1-5



Why we do what we do !!!

B Co, 1/5 IN
MGS Platoon

The MGS platoon has had an extremely busy but successful late November and month of December up here in Mosul. After the quick move from Camp Taji we assumed our mission and new area of operations which is just south of the city. The landscape and weather are very different from down south. Our patrols usually take us through the countryside in rolling hills with small villages. The weather has been mild with a fair amount of rain. There are actually some nice scenic views of the Tigris river and the city of Mosul as you get up into the hills.

Daily operations for the platoon consist of patrols in our area of operations. Up until recently the patrols have lasted for 12 hours. We usually set up traffic control points where we search vehicles or observe an area in hopes of trying to catch the bad guys. With the MGS vehicle MTAS system we are very efficient in observing activity from a distance. Both as a company and platoon we have been very successful in catching anti-coalition forces. About 3 weeks ago while working west of the city we managed to bag one of the most wanted guy in Iraq. That was a huge boost for all of the soldiers and we received major props from battalion. In addition to patrols we sometimes serve as a quick reaction force for the battalion or conduct convoy operations to other forward operating bases. In the small villages and towns in our area we have been making a difference also. With the aid of an interpreter we are able to assess the needs of the local schools and health facilities. Recently we brought school supplies and heaters to a primary and secondary school. It is amazing how just a pencil can make a world of difference to the children. Everyday operations can be grueling and sometimes our "off" days get cancelled but we manage to make the best of it.

As far as the platoon, everyone is in good spirits and definitely counting the days down till we come home. The crew on vehicle B41 (SSG Smith, SGT Amundson, PFC Ortiz and PFC McCombs) have been attached to 2nd platoon and operating with them on all of their missions. B44's crew(SFC Stephen, SGT Bledsoe, SPC Hodge and SPC Tasi) and B42's crew(SSG Zeissig, SGT Cecilio, SPC Kent and SPC Morrison) have been operating with an infantry squad(SGT Kabelac, SGT Talamantes, SGT Jack, SPC Pitcher, SPC Castro, PFC Amell, PFC Nava, and PFC Pol) which the PL(1LT Behsudi) rides with and a Mortar vehicle (SSG Lehew, SPC Hooper, PFC Davis and PFC Summers).

In our down time we watch a lot of movies, play video games, go to MWR and the gym. Everyone is appreciative of the tons of care packages that are sent. All the food/snacks that have been sent are great since we are still waiting for the new mess hall to open. All the mail and packages definitely help keep the morale up. It seems like humor has been our best way of handling all of this. Everyone busy is either planning or avoiding all the practical jokes.

Well three months are down and we are looking forward to and soon going on mid-tour leave. I hope this little blip has given you an idea of how we are doing over here. We take it day by day and hope for the best with our families and friends always in our thoughts.

Joshua F. Behsudi
1LT, MGS Platoon Leader



HEADQUARTERS

Headquarters has had a very busy time over here in Iraq. As we have traveled from Fort Lewis to Iraq, supply and the executive officer worked long and hard to ensure that all the equipment and supplies were gathered and signed for. Later, as Bravo Company and all of 1-5 IN moved to the fight in Fallujah and then north to assist 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry in Mosul, once again SSG Antonio Starks and SPC Thanh Phan worked hard to ensure all the soldiers personal baggage and the units supplies made it to Mosul as well. Now, SSG Starks has moved to fill an opening in Headquarters Company and SGT Anthony Walton has filled in from Charlie Company. With the loss of our chow hall, these two have been making twice a day chow runs, providing two hot meals for the whole of Bravo Company.

For Mortars, SSG Kenneth Lehew and SGT Ramon Pena have been split up, with SSG Lehew and his crew of Kris Davis, Josiah Summers and Matthew Hooper working as a fourth vehicle crew for the MGS Platoon. SGT Pena with SPC Nazar Sikander, SPC Walter Stewart and PFC Yuslandy Figueredo filling in a variety of rolls. Both mortar teams enjoyed the opportunity to hone their mortar firing skills, shooting a host of rounds during our short stay at FOB Sykes, near by the western city of Tall Afar.

SPC Justin Oberbeck has worked diligently as the commander's radio operator, both for CPT Kermit Brown and now CPT Steve Szilvassy. In addition, he has pulled double duty as the company armorer. SSG Shawn Griffin and PFC Robert Reynolds have moved to join 2nd Platoon with SGT Raymond Shirley and SPC Anthony Martinez moving in to become the vehicle commander and driver for B-66, the Commander's vehicle. SSG Andrew Steen and SPC David Haynes remain with the executive officer as his crew, working multiple missions with every platoon in the company.

For the Fire Support Team, LT Derek Loveland was promoted to 1st Lieutenant before moving on to Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery and is now stationed on the northern side of Mosul in FOB Freedom. Taking his place, is the assistant fire support officer from the battalion, 1LT Samuel Burling, from Providence, RI. SSG Shaun Barrett, along with PFC Rey Quinones and Patrick Turner make up the best vehicle crew in the company, keeping B-40 in top shape. SSG Kevin Pelayo has moved up to the Battalion Fire Support Element to help assist them while SSG Lawrence Bush has moved directly into 3rd Platoon.

SSG David Morgan, SGT Sean O'Brien and SPC Jerihco Sink, the elite sniper team, have been busy providing excellent long range surveillance during our urban and hinterland operations. Even when certain Squadron Commanders have attempted to walk away with their ladders while inside cities, they have always completed the mission.

SGT Dustin Alger and SGT Jimmy Novak have worked many long hours working on keeping track of the company, both out on operations and the day to day personnel requirements that have remained even as we have moved from the garrison environment of Fort Lewis to the FOB's of Iraq.

HELLRAISERS

3rd Platoon Deathmasters has accomplished much since their arrival in Iraq. Since our movement to FOB Marez, we have had the opportunity to interact with the local populace, improve their quality of life, and generally make Iraq a safer place to raise their families. We hope that our continuing interaction will allow Iraq to prosper and regain its place in the international community.

To this end, The Hellraisers have been working hard to understand the Iraqi people and culture at the lowest level. We have been conducting dismounted patrols in small, isolated towns neighboring Mosul. Abu Sayaf, one of these towns, was the first chance for the soldiers to interact with the people. When we first patrolled this area, the people were very wary of us. Many of them hid inside their walled homes and peered out through keyholes. The shops, of which this town has many, were desolate and devoid of any goods. Even though, the town seemed anti-American, the men began to coax out the local population. The children were the first to come out. It would seem that a child's curiosity transcends borders and they were the first to approach us with out fear. Many of the soldiers began playing with the children and soon our friendship with the people of Abu Sayaf grew.

With each subsequent visit, we did a little more to help the people. On another occasion visiting the city, we encountered an Iraqi National Guardsman who had been wounded by the enemy. Without hesitation Doc Scott and the men of 1st Squad gave the man immediate medical care. We asked the man why he had not gone to see the doctor, but his only reply was that he was worried he would be killed if he went for help. We took him to our medical facilities and soon he was treated, and as a bonus, got to keep his leg. We would see this man on subsequent trips to Abu Sayaf, and the men know that it was due to their actions that the man is still alive today.

If you go to Abu Sayaf now, you will see a changed place. The shops are open, the people talk and mingle in the streets, and the children are always out playing. The shops are now stocked with all sorts of candy and goods. In fact, the last time the platoon was in the town, the soldiers purchased Iraqi candy for themselves, and when they couldn't handle anymore they bought some for the kids. Food is an important way to understand a different culture. While candy and treats work well for the children, its bread and tea that the adults like.

While conducting a mission in Sinjar, we had a chance to break bread with a local Kurdish family. The family made their living growing olives and selling them to the community. 3rd Squad was invited to sit down, have tea, eat a few olives, and try delicious bread they call Na'an. SPC Harbin was surprised by the taste of the tea. He said, "It reminds me of Southern sweet tea, not that crud they make in Washington either," and with that he downed three more glasses. Many of the men had not had an olive with the seed still inside. I think if it wasn't for our interpreter, they wouldn't know how to eat it.

The men face a lot of hardships in Iraq. Long hours, dirty streets, distance from loved ones. They are starting to see that the effort they are making to connect with the people makes a lasting impression. Regardless of how many dangerous situations they may experience while they are here, it will be the stories of how they made someone's life better, that will be told around the fire. These men are making a difference; one child at a time.

1LT Daily
3/B/1-5 IN
HellRaisers

