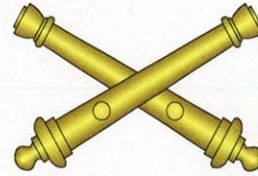




Ball, now that O'Neal is part of the 151st FA "family", I thought a copy of our latest newsletter might be interesting.

Jim Grise



# Gamecock Artillery News

From the 151<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery Brigade

Issue 3

11 May 2007



From left, moving clockwise: At FOB Justice, SGT Taylor stands watch; SGT Powell "making copies!" in the Aviation Support Request cell; SC flags fly proudly over the trailers of the 151<sup>st</sup> FA BDE; MSG Hampton and 1SG Morgan hard at work (or hardly working?) in the Iraqi Security Force cell; MAJ Sauls and SGT Jackson stand next to a sign marking an unexploded ordinance; SFC Jordan and MSG Hampton enjoy a brief smoke break; the Iraqi Security Forces Detainee Operations team; the Division Fires and Effects Cell; 1LT Young and MSG Balsler plan the war effort; CPT Griffin after his weekly brief to Iraqi General Abadi at the Ministry of Defense.

## Operation Fardh Al Qanoon and the 151st FA BDE

As the new security plan, Operation Fardh Al Qanoon ("enforcing the law") enters its ninth week, members of the SC Army National Guard's 151<sup>st</sup> FA BDE continue to play an active role in the implementation of the Baghdad security plan. In the past, coalition forces would sweep through and clear the area of insurgents and then leave. Under Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon, however, both coalition forces and Iraqi security forces (Army and police) remain in neighborhoods after clearing them. "We and our Iraqi partners recognize that improving security for the Iraqi people is the first step in rekindling hope," GEN Petraeus stated in a February Department of Defense briefing. "The upward spiral we all want begins with Iraqi and coalition forces working together and locating in the neighborhoods those forces must secure."

(Continued pg. 3)



## From the Brigade Commander: Colonel Griese

8 MAY 07

*As we begin the routine of 100 degree days here in Baghdad, we realize that the summer of 2007 is almost upon us. Even though this marks the end of the "chamber of commerce" weather which we have been enjoying since our arrival last October, these triple digit temperatures are a welcome sign. They make us realize that we are finally past the six month mark and that we may well be into the home stretch of our deployment to Iraq. Although we still have several challenging months ahead of us, at last we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel.*

*Soldiers from HHB(-)151st FA Brigade are doing more than observing the passage of time, however. Our Division, the 1st Cavalry, is in combat and every day the significance of what we do is apparent. I am proud to tell you that 151st FA Bde Soldiers approach this serious business with competence and professionalism. The more we do, the more is expected of us, and we have no intent of disappointing the leadership of 1st Cavalry Division, its Brigade Combat Teams, its Soldiers, or ourselves. Our fellow American Soldiers deserve our best effort and they will continue to get it.*

*After over six months in Iraq, our level of performance and contribution to the overall war effort is now "hitting on all cylinders." As you at home watch the news from Baghdad, please know that if the story is about coordination of Iraqi Police and Army operations, countering enemy mortar and rocket attacks, or bringing Iraqi Security Forces into the fight, odds are there is a 151 FA Bde soldier directly behind the headlines. We will all have some interesting perspectives on this war when our deployment ends.*

*The days are long and the work is difficult, but we are sustained by the support from family and friends back home. Some of these "friends" are fellow Americans whom we have never met and we deeply appreciate the support of organizations such as Blue Star Mothers of South Carolina. It is you, our immediate families, however, whom we appreciate the most. This is your deployment also and it is your unwavering support that will get us to the finish line in just a few more months.*



**DUTY ABOVE ALL!**

**COL James Griese.  
CDR, 151<sup>st</sup> FA BDE**



MAJ Fryman, SSG Pope and 1SG Morgan help MAJ Gunnels carry his bags as he left for EML. I hope they were not expecting a tip!

## **EML is TNT!**

Three sweet letters to a soldier's ear are "EML." Short for "Environmental Morale Leave," it means two full weeks at home in America and an opportunity to relax! Although the trip home is exhausting, it is also inspiring as strangers in the Atlanta airport stop and roundly applaud the returning troops home. In Myrtle Beach, the airport homecoming for MAJ Cox was especially memorable, as a Wisconsin cheerleading squad (traveling to SC for a contest) spontaneously cheered his arrival! Most soldiers attempt to time their arrival home with major family events. SGT Ayers arrived for the birth of his daughter, while LTC Wallace is looking forward to his daughter's high school graduation and CSM Dorner is returning for a family reunion. Sometimes, however, events are changed to match the arrival of the returning soldier. CPT Griffin's daughter, Abby, (pictured) turned 2 years old in April, but the birthday party is postponed until his arrival home in June. Sadly, the weeks home end too quickly and soldiers must return to Iraq. "Leaving my wife and children again was very hard," stated SGT Weeks, "but now I am on the final stretch. The next time that I come home, I stay home!"



SGT Weeks waits at Baghdad International Airport to leave on EML.



(continue from page 1)

To be successful, Operation Fardh Al Qanoon required a significant increase in manpower. The task of moving Iraqi forces to the capital was given to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) cell of Multi-National Division of Baghdad (MND-B). Manned entirely by the 151<sup>st</sup> FA BDE, the ISF cell has coordinated the movement of 13 Iraqi Army battalions, to include equipping them and providing them housing and life support in the Baghdad area.

Since the start of the operation, over 40 joint Iraqi-U.S. security posts (JSS) have been established across Baghdad as Iraqi led clearing operations continue. To date, more than 200,000 patrols have been conducted, resulting in the discovery of 300 insurgent weapon caches and over 800 improvised explosive devices.

In his briefing, GEN Petraeus noted that Fardh Al Qanoon encompassed more than simple military objectives. Operation Fardh Al Qanoon also entails the restoration of the "rule of law" and the development of the Iraqi criminal justice system. In support of this effort, the ISF Detainee Operations Cell, which is centered around two 151<sup>st</sup> FA Judge Advocates, conducts surprise inspections of Iraqi run detention facilities throughout the Baghdad area.

Despite several high profile bombings, the level of sectarian violence in the Iraqi capital has steadily decreased and there has been a sharp decline in the number of murders in the Baghdad security districts. On the other hand, terrorists continue to use sectarian slayings to intimidate the local populace.

"The bottom line is that we are in a very tough fight with our Iraqi security force brothers and the government of Iraq," stated BG John Campbell, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Deputy Commanding General for Maneuver. "We remain committed to them and the Iraqi people."

Duty Above All!

**Celebrity Visit:** While reporting from Iraq on the Baghdad Security Plan in February, FOX news correspondent Geraldo Rivera visited Camp Liberty. While waiting outside the dining facility, a friendly Geraldo spoke with SGT Crosby and SSG Pope and thanked them for their service.



Does anyone know whether Saddam Hussein kept a vault around here? Geraldo Rivera thanks SGT Crosby and SSG Pope for their service.

**It's only May but it is HOT!** At home, March is in like a lion out like a lamb. In Iraq, April is in like a hotplate and out like a baker's oven! With the start of May, temperatures have reached over 100 degrees Fahrenheit and are climbing slowly higher each new day!



Where's the pool?! As temperatures climb, SGT Glymph and SGT Colclough take a moment to examine the heat index warning board.

**MANY THANKS!** to the Student Council at Chesterfield Elementary School (Chesterfield, Missouri) who sent the 151<sup>st</sup> FA 63 boxes filled with batteries, tea, snacks, wipes, phone cards, and well wishes. According to Assistant Principal, Sharon O'Day, "Donations (came) from throughout the local community and a lot of time and money (was) spent packing and shipping the boxes." As COL Griese noted, "These volunteers are all strangers to you and me; but clearly they care about us as fellow Americans and they appreciate our service."



Chesterfield teachers mail student care boxes to 151<sup>st</sup> FA.

**Promotions:** Congratulations to the following soldiers on their recent promotions:



From Left to Right, COL Griese promotes: SGT Jonte Colclough, SGT William Jackson, CPT Thomas A. McDermott, and LTC Mathew L. Wallace.

**Re-enlistments:** Taking advantage of the Army's tax free re-enlistment bonus, these soldiers "re-upped." Congratulations and thank you for your continued service!

**6 years:**

SGT William Jackson  
SGT Robert Osteen  
SFC Robert Perry  
SGT Aaron Powell  
SSG Elizabeth Smith  
SGT Anthony Taylor

**3 years:**

1SG Robert Morgan  
SGT Jimmy Weeks

**Extended 1 year:**

SGT Jonte Colclough



(Back Row) MND-B DCG-S BG Brooks, COL Griese, CSM Dorner, 1SG Morgan; (Middle) SGT Taylor, SFC Perry, SSG Smith; (Front) SGT Colclough, SGT Weeks.

**Congratulations to the happy parents!!**

Sa'Nyia Renee Frank (6lbs 6 oz, 19 1/2 inches long) was born 25 December 2007 to Shatiqua Elizabeth Jones and Anthony Frank. Sa'Nyia is the granddaughter of SSG Elizabeth Smith.

Grace Ann Ayers (7lb 5 oz, 20 inches long) was born on 3 March 2007 to SGT Chris Ayers and his wife, Beth Ann.



Clockwise: SGT Ayers (home on EML) and wife, Beth Ann, hold baby Grace Ann; Grace Ann Ayers sitting pretty; beautiful Sa'Nyia in her Easter outfit.

