

SPARTAN SUN

THANKS FOR THE MAIL!!

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A big "THANK YOU!!!" goes out to the friends and families who send packages and letters to the soldiers in the Task Force. The Task Force conducts mail runs 3 days a week, and they always come back with a packed 2.5 ton truck and trailer! It takes almost a half an hour to sort the mail, even with 10 people helping! When the convoy comes back to the Forward Operating Base, the Task Force S1 Office calls the units and lets them know the mail truck has returned. Each unit then drives their own truck over to the big mail truck in preparation for off-loading. One person gets in the back of the mail truck/trailer and starts handing out packages and calling out the units. "Alpha!! One-oh-deuce!! 123!! Who claims a SSG Johnson?" (Did we mention it really helps when you put the soldier's unit right after "TF 793 MP" on the address? Like, "TF 793 MP/ A/1-194 AR." That way it's easier for the mail handlers to make sure your Soldier gets the



Downloading mail at Spartan Forward Operating Base.

package you sent them.) All mail is sorted by certified mail handlers, with one certified mail handler acting solely as "Observer/Controller" to make sure everyone's mail gets routed correctly. Everyone helps put the mail in the correct unit's truck, and once all the packages, letter mail, and bundles of Stars and

Stripes (our newspaper) gets sorted, the units drive back to their company areas to further distribute the mail to the proper platoons and soldiers. Everyone loves Mail Day—the favorite question around the Base is "Has the mail truck come back yet?" Thank you for sending mail—it really brightens our day!!

FOB SPARTAN IMPROVEMENT

The plan is under way to completely renovate Forward Operating Base (FOB) Spartan. Currently soldiers live in tents in long dusty rows that are prone to flooding in high rains. The Shoppette, gym, and Dining Facility are spread out over the FOB. After the

engineers are done in a few months, we will have living areas for each company, with a Spartan Commons in the middle for the Shoppette, chapel, internet café, phone center, and post office. Engineers are currently grading the area to ensure proper

water run-off and a solid foundation for living trailers. The improvements completed at the time of publishing include a new gym, Shoppette (doubled in size), TVs in the dining facility, hot water for the showers, and the construction of a post office.

“A CO soldiers have been proud to showcase the many diversified talents they bring to Task Force 793 Military Police that go above and beyond their ability to perform their combat mission.”



Easter Support from families in the rear makes Easter a happy time. Thank you for helping make special days Special—otherwise they would all blend together in one tan blur.

A/1-194 MAKES A MOVE



Alpha is moving in to their new temporary home

A CO, 1-194 AR had another busy and successful month in Iraq as part of Task Force 793 Military Police. During the month they had the opportunity to promote **CPL Cuadros** to SGT and **SGT Reiten** to SSG. Both NCOs were very deserving and ready to take the step to the next level. We awarded the 1-194 AR Battalion Coin of Excellence to **SPC Ogborn** for his efforts in all areas that have attributed directly to the success of the company. **SPC Houck** was awarded a Battalion Certificate of Achievement for being the Maintainer of the Month. Additionally, **SGT Schoonover** and **SPC Chavis** were selected as the A CO, 1-194 AR NCO

and Soldier of the Month and Quarter. Simultaneous to our diverse mission set, A CO also completed a move of the en-

tire company area, and the construction of a new transient tent area, in preparation for the Forward Operating Base reconstruction plan which will pave the way for new living trailers for all soldiers. In the span of 10 days, A CO constructed 28 tent floors, moved the entire company area, and wired the new transient tent area—a truly impressive feat! **SPC Marchell**, along with **SPC Guzman** of 102 FA, completed all the electrical work. A CO soldiers have been proud to showcase the many diversified talents they bring to Task Force 793 Military Police that go above and beyond their ability to perform their combat mission.



A/1-194 AR has their own “Band of Brothers”

VHS Conspiracy in the DFAC

The DFAC (Dining FACility) finally got 3 TVs installed! One TV has satellite connection, so soldiers can watch sports. In the other corner, the TV is connected to a VHS player. An informal debate has begun over the most popular VHS movie in the DFAC. Several movies have played, including Joe Dirt,

Hard Target, and True Lies. However, the perennial favorite is Air Force One. Air Force One has played more times than all the other movies combined. Several members of TF 793 MP have suppositioned that someone in the DFAC is secretly addicted to Air Force One and conspires to ensure it gets more playing

time than any other video. Recent headway has been made in altering the VHS fare with new videos, but any support from home would be appreciated. Please send us the VHS you don't use anymore that's **not** Air Force One) —we can put it to good use!

TF 793 MP COMMANDER'S CORNER

Since our Transfer of Authority (TOA) back in Jan 05, we have embraced three additional units into the Spartan family; A/1-194 AR (Apaches) out of Minnesota, B/1-123 FA (Hot Steel) from Illinois, and HHB/1-102 FA (Patriots) from Massachusetts. All three units to include our very own Gladiators (HHD) have easily internalized and established the high standards and disciplines within this command. I couldn't have asked for a better crew.

In these three short months, Spartan Forward Operating Base (FOB) has transitioned from "worst to first" and is known throughout Iraq by senior leaders and Soldiers for its professionalism, discipline, aggressiveness, and "can do" mission focus.

Every leader and Soldier that visits Spartan FOB leaves here forged with the lasting impression of discipline, standards, and pride. They are amazed of what they've experienced and question how they can get their units and Soldiers to emulate the Spartan organization. In fact, senior commanders want to bring in their officers and senior NCOs as part of their professional development program to show them what right looks like. That says something about the Soldiers and leaders here. It's all attributed to the commitment, professionalism, and hard work by each and every Soldier. I could not be more proud.

The mission here is unlike any other. It's a huge paradigm shift from the normal MP tactical operations. Not only is the organization focused on the battalion mission, but it is also responsible for the security, sustainment, and operations of our own remote, stand-alone FOB. Inside the wire, you find Soldiers working static security, maintenance, the fuel point, the dining facility, the gym, the internet café, base clean up, negotiating with a certain population, etc. Outside the wire, our mission set includes area security patrols, quick reaction forces, running daily logistical convoys to sustain our base camp, and keeping the enemy off-balance. The Soldiers of the Spartan Task Force do it all.

Like true professionals, the Spartans have easily adjusted to meet the demands of this complex challenge. The staff has been rearranged to handle a multitude of functions. In fact, many staff members are wearing two or three "hats" and are performing phenomenally well in each area. They all understand the importance of supporting the Soldier on the ground. The countless hours, initiatives, and innovative ideas surprises even me. I'm proud of my staff for what they do.

There have been many of operational successes at the tactical and strategic level as well as within our FOB. The highly successful repatriation missions, numerous combat support operations with the armor battalion in our area, the restructuring of the TIPF, and the major shift to improve our FOB all reflect the hard work, "can do" spirit, and resolve of our Soldiers and leaders.

For many of the Soldiers, it seems like the taskings never stop....but that's okay. Our plan is to stay ahead of the ball game and keep the momentum rolling. With this command, there will always be a continual push to improve our defenses, operations, and quality of life. We will never let complacency set in.

As you will see in the articles, significant improvements are being made daily through the persistent and committed efforts of the staff, the subordinate commands, and the Soldiers. Part of the Spartan Campaign plan also focuses on the Quality of Life for Soldiers. It is absolutely critical that Soldiers have pride in their home away from home and in their organization. We will continue to improve all the way to the day we depart and leave a lasting legacy. They will know the Spartans were here and made a difference.

To our family members back home, I can't thank you enough for the support you've shown thus far. This includes the care packages, letters, school supplies for the kids in the surrounding villages, to the intangible ingredients of strength, love, compassion, prayers, laughs, and memories. These are all critical to keeping our mission focus and maintaining a high morale throughout our deployment. Bottom line...you guys are doing a magnificent job! Continue the great support and my hat's off to you all.

I probably haven't said it enough but know that everyone of our heroes amaze me day in and day out. As I meet our Soldiers out on mission, in the mess hall, at the gym, or on patrol, I see professional warriors standing firm, committed to the success of their unit, our Army, our Nation, and most importantly to you....our families. They definitely take pride in what they do; they serve with distinction with their chests out and heads held high; they are living and representing the values of our American way of life. They represent all of us. Be proud of them for all that they do.

I can tell you that I am proud to be their battalion commander. They are all spirited, battle focused, and are Soldiers/leaders that most commanders wish they had. The great thing about it is...they are all outstanding warriors. I truly look forward to getting up every morning to see their smiling faces and talk to these great professionals. They are our family...the Spartan family. You have to know that I will do everything in my power to ensure their success and for every one to come back with their Shield. Spartans leaning forward and staying engaged. Facta Cum Honore....always "fighting in the shade." (Battle of Thermopylae 480 B.C.)



Spartan 6
LTC Dan McElroy
TF 793 MP Commander

MEDCAP TO KHONGERFET



MAJ Miller, CPT Martin, and SGM Malauulu with school children

Twenty-one Soldiers and one Arab Interpreter from Task Force 793 Military Police conducted a MEDCAP in a school of Khongerfet, a tiny town of 400 people about half a mile north of our Forward Operating Base. Two NCOs from

520th MED, SFC Erickson and SSG McCaughtry, provided basic medical care to approximately 30 children and 10 adults, while 7 soldiers from B/2-123 FA handed out shoes, school supplies, stuffed animals, and food/

candy from home to the children in the school and town. SGT Mudd led the Copperheads, who provided security for the MEDCAP element. The security team's professional vigilance outside the school yard walls ensured that the Soldiers inside the walls could focus on the children. Part of the Task Force Headquarters element was present for the MEDCAP, and helped teach the children how to jump rope and throw a Frisbee. Hasna, the interpreter, served as a critical link between the soldiers and locals, ensuring children received medical care, and the adults understood the Soldiers' intentions. The soldiers agreed that it was the highlight of the deployment so far, and everyone was happy to do something positive for the people of Iraq. The people were genuinely happy to see us, and the school principal even invited us back, no matter if we came empty-handed.



Soldiers and children after the MEDCAP in the school in Khongerfet pose for a group photo

candy from home to the children in the school and town. SGT Mudd led the Copperheads, who provided security for the MEDCAP element. The security team's professional vigilance outside the school yard walls ensured

BRAVO SUPPLY LEADS BY EXAMPLE

The Bravo 2-123rd FA Supply Team has been working diligently to maintain the level of professionalism this unit expects of them. **Staff Sergeant Bigford** has been doing a superior job as the Unit Supply Sergeant. He is responsible for the requisitioning of all supplies and insuring the requisitioned items arrive as quickly as possible. He also is responsible for motivating his soldiers to per-

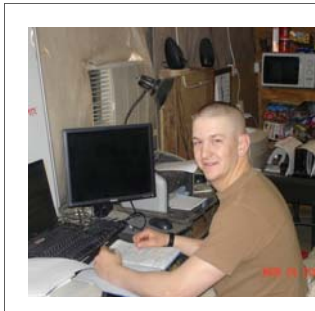


form to the best of their abilities with outstanding results. **Sergeant Anderson**, who serves as the Unit Armorer, has been performing above the standards expected of him since our unit's mobilization in October. It came as no surprise when he recently was promoted from Specialist to Sergeant for his level of professionalism, outstanding performance, and leadership abili-

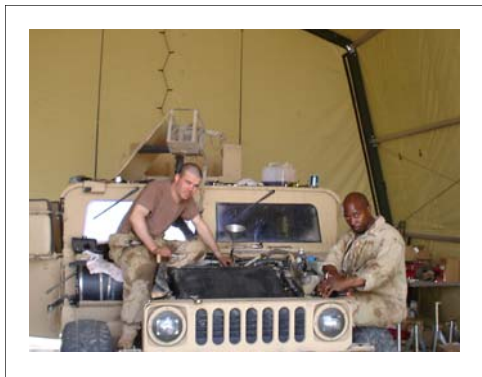
ties. **Specialist Hadley** is serving as the Unit Supply Clerk. He is responsible for maintaining 100% accountability for all supplies Bravo 2-123 has. He also is in charge of requisitioning all supplies the unit orders from LSA Anaconda. He has never failed to have the supplies to the unit before they are needed. With this outstanding team assembled, the sky is the limit!



Inside the new shoppette



HHD ROUNDUP



The S-4 shop, overseen by **CPT Crowe** and **SFC Watkins**, does an outstanding job logistically supporting the entire Forward Operating Base. The units don't have to worry about support from the

PFC Kennedy, February's maintainer of the month, and **SPC Ashley** are hard at work repairing one of HHD's vehicles (above). They, along with the other mechanics, work diligently, and long hours to keep HHD 793D vehicles at a high state of readiness. They are both working on one of the BN Commander's PSD team vehicles. The BN Commander works hard to keep these guys highly trained.

S-4 shop; they are always two steps ahead. **SGT(P) Cormier** will make HHD would like to give a big "Congratulations!" to SGT Cormier for winning BN NCO of the quarter, and wish her good luck at Brigade.

The Signal section, lead by **1LT Harris** and **SGT Pippin**, have done an astounding job maintaining the units' communication equipment and ensuring we can communicate with all the units on the ground.

Morale is high on FOB Spartan, and the signal section is large reason why. They maintain the internet café and telephones ensuring that soldiers can talk to and email there families. Last, but not least, there is never a dull moment when the Signal

OIC is around, S-6, BS officer, BN Sigo. Congratulations to **SPC Smith** for winning the soldier of the quarter board. Good luck at Brigade.



Keeping watch over one gate to the Forward Operating Base



The S6 Shop: SGT Pippin, LT Harris, SPC(P) Smith, SPC McElhannon, SGT Wakefield, and SGT Acquino



The S4 shop: SGT King, SFC Watkins, CW2 Mallette, CPT Crowe, and SGT Cormier



Touring the new gym after its grand opening

BRAND NEW GYM!

The soldiers our on Forward Operating Base Spartan had been using 2 dusty, dirty, musty tents to work out in. The "gym" had a few bench presses, a squat rack, weights, benches, and a hefty coating of grime. Attendance was markedly low. After TF 793 MP took over, concerted efforts focused on providing

the soldiers an actual building with lights, heating/AC, water, and a clean workout area. After 3 months of hard work, the gym opened in early March. Morale soared 150%. The gym is filled all day long as soldiers enjoy the air conditioning, Stairmasters, treadmill, bike, 2 complete free weight sets, and a variety of

Hammer Strength weight lifting machines. Soldiers actually have machines for ab and leg strength improvement, a huge improvement! A huge thanks goes out to Sergeant Major Palmer, who did all of the traveling and bargaining that made our new gym possible.

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR SPEAKS



Yes, we are still here and still standing. The Spartans have now been on the ground for approximately four months. The Soldiers have made a huge impact on operations and quality of life. Every visitor that visits the FOB, comments on the improvements that have been made since our arrival. Thanks to the support of each family member and love one, we have

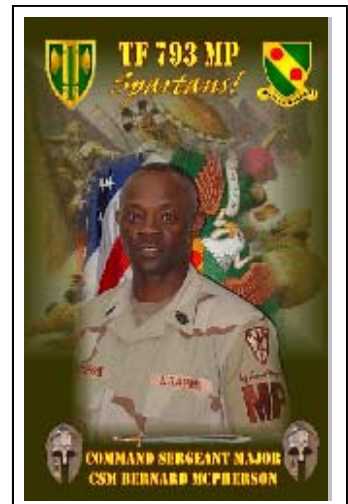
been able to remain mission focused and battle ready. We are improving the quality of life daily.

“Blessed be the Lord my rock who trains my hands for war, and fingers for battle.”

Spartan 7
CSM McPherson

You have read about a few changes, such as the new gym and shoppette. However; there are other areas being improved as well. We are awaiting the arrival of new living trailers and dining facility equipment. Plans are under way to renovate the MWR tent. Soldiers have submitted floor plans for this project. The internet café will eventually be renovated, but will stay as is, for now. Soldiers haven't had any problems emailing or calling home.

We are continuing to conduct Soldier recognition programs and promotion boards. These systems will continue throughout this deployment. Every Soldier works 7 days a week and extremely long hours. TF 793D MP is united and dares to be challenged. Keep those packages coming!



Grand opening of new shoppette

“Every visitor that visits the FOB comments on the improvements that have been made since our arrival.”

B/2-123 FA PROMOTES SOLDIERS

On Saturday, the 26th of March, Bravo Battery 2/123rd Field Artillery promoted **Staff Sergeant Shawn Hopper** to the rank of Sergeant First Class and **Sergeant Brad Marion** to the rank of Staff

Sergeant. SFC Hopper was the squad leader for second squad, second platoon. He is now serving as an assistant to the Operations Section and is preparing to take over for the platoon sergeants while they



are on leave. SSG Marion is serving in the Bravo 2/123rd motor pool as a mechanic. When this unit returns to Illinois

and separates back into its respective batteries, SFC Hopper will be a platoon sergeant for Bravo 2/123 Field Artillery and SSG Marion will be the Motor Sergeant for Headquarters 2/123rd Field Artillery.



NEW EYES IN THE SKY



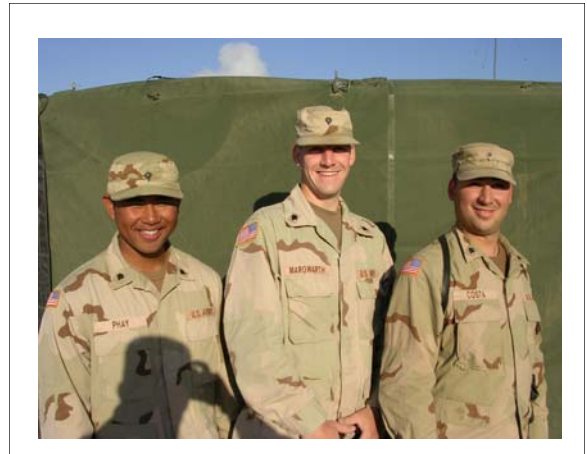
A new tower out at the TIPF

A major face lift is under way for the TIPF and the members of the HHB 1/102nd FA. The TIPF has been around for over 18 months and it was time for some improvements. The entire Block 6 has been taken down and new tents will be put up for the Protected People. A new dining tent, interview tent and MWR tent are being built for the soldiers as well. The highlight of the reconstruction so far is the building of three new inner towers. These new towers will give the soldiers of the 1/102nd FA a better overall view of the TIPF as well as some creature comforts that the old towers did not have. The old inner towers were about the size of a phone booth on top of a conex container. There was no electricity or climate control unit in the inner towers either. There was no need because there were no doors either. On the warm sunny days we have been having the soldiers would be up on the conex's just baking in the sun. What was worse were these cold rainy nights we have had the last couple months. Soldiers would be in their winter gear huddled over an old tent heater burning pallets or anything else they could get their hands on to stay warm. That will all change soon thanks to the support we have gotten from the Bn staff. They have made the TIPF a priority and have spent a lot of money to help make things better for our soldiers who work the 12 -14 hour shifts day in and day out.

Soldiers like **SPC Joe Costa**, 21, of Lancaster, MA. SPC Costa thinks about his wife Lindsay and his 1 year old son Riley when he is sitting in his tower for hours on end. SPC Costa left a job in landscape construction to deploy with the unit. He hopes to start his own business when we get back home. While sitting in his tower he likes to listen to alternative music as well as rap. When asked what he thought about the new towers he said they look good and is glad the soldiers will be out of the elements.

Another soldier who spends many of his working hours high above the TIPF is **SPC Jeremy Margwarth**, 19, of Westborough MA. Back home, SPC Margwarth worked for a landscaper in the summer and plans to enter college when we get home. He is not sure what he will major in yet but he has time to decide that later. He listens to Rock and Roll while he watches over the TIPF in the towers. When asked what he thought of the new towers he said he liked the fact that they had a catwalk all the way around the tower. It means the soldiers can get out and walk around the tower, helping to reduce the boredom.

Their day shift colleague, **SPC Seta Phay** has also spent many an hour in the towers of the TIPF. SPC Phay is 19 from Lowell MA. He will turn 20 on 2 Apr 05 and you can be sure he will be working, looking down on the TIPF on that day. SPC Phay plans to begin his college career at UMASS Lowell when we get back to the states. He likes to listen to R&B as well as techno/trance music when he is watching the Protected People. He likes the catwalks on the new towers as well and likes the fact that they are much bigger and more comfortable than the current towers.



Our Night Shift has a few veterans of the towers as well. **SPC David Posluszny**, 20, from Northborough MA. is one of those tower veterans. SPC Posluszny had to put his college education on hold to deploy with the unit. He is a student at UMASS Amherst studying building materials and wood technology. He plans to design new residential homes when he graduates. He gets some studying in while in the towers but always keeps a watchful eye on his lane. He likes to listen to country music and a bit of classical music at times. When asked about the new towers he likes the new look and the function of the catwalk.

SPC Luis Rodriguez, L-Rod to his friends, is 25 and lives in Lowell MA. He was born and raised in Puerto Rico before moving to Massachusetts. He spends his time in the towers thinking about his wife, Bourbeau and his unborn child. She is due Apr 23rd and SPC Rodriguez has requested leave for that time. If all goes right he will be home for the birth of his first child.

Back home, SPC Rodriguez works for a landscape irrigation company. He listens to good old Rock and Roll when he is in the towers. When asked about the new towers he is glad they will have AC and heaters and hopes they will be furnished with comfortable seats.

Then there is **SPC Jason Spinney**, 19, of Amesbury MA. SPC Spinney has spent many a night in the towers thinking about his girlfriend Sarah back home. Back home, SPC Spinney works in construction. When asked what music he listened to, he stated that he enjoyed a wide variety of music but Rock is his favorite. He thinks the new towers will be good for the TIPF and the soldiers. The catwalk alone makes them better than the inner tower on the conex's. He is looking forward to when they are finished so he can try them out.

The good news really is that the soldiers who work long hours will have a more comfortable environment to work in. It's all about soldier caring and quality of life.

Task Force 793 Military Police

Task Force 793 Military Police

APO AE 09391

We are on the web!

Locate us at:

www.bamberg.army.mil/793MP/

Spartans!!



Task Force 793 Military Police is made up of an HHD and three line companies as follows:

Headquarters, Headquarters Detachment 793rd Military Police Battalion from Bamberg, Germany (Active Duty)

Headquarters, Headquarters Battery 1-102nd Field Artillery from Quincy, Massachusetts (National Guard)

Alpha Company 1-194th Armor from Brainerd, Minnesota (National Guard)

Bravo Company 2-123rd Field Artillery from Macomb, Illinois (National Guard)



The Task Force Chicken (awarded for humorous errors) gets operated on by the medics

From the Editor

A big thanks goes out to the units for all their contributions to the newsletter. Their stories and photos are what makes this newsletter relevant and special. I look forward to making more newsletters in the future, and keeping the home front up to date on what is happening here in Iraq. In future issues, you can expect to hear more from our units, see more pictures of your loved ones, and keep up to date on what is occurring with our Forward Operating Base improvements. Thank you for all your support—as someone who helps sort mail, I know how much you care, and how much it means to the soldiers. — CPT Martin



An aerial photo of Camp Ashraf (left) from late March. You can see a great deal of the progress we have made with our FOB - where we have torn down tents and how we are getting more "hard sites" instead of tents! The grey building is the new gym, and the white building in front of the trees on the right is the Dining Facility.