

## Family Readiness Group Newsletter

\* This Newsletter contains official and unofficial information

### Note from COL Potter, Commander, 902d MI Group

The Command Sergeant Major and I recently returned from Iraq and we want you to know that the Soldiers and civilians of the Group are performing magnificently there. They are providing superb intelligence support to coalition forces allowing them to take decisive action against insurgents and extremists.

We had the opportunity to visit many of the locations and base camps where our personnel are working and they are well taken care of. The pictures you see at the bottom are from our trip. Traveling in Iraq is difficult but we managed to get around using convoys and helicopters. No one is living in tents and all living quarters are air conditioned. Air conditioning is extremely important since it was 115 degrees most days that we were there. The food is plentiful and, while not like home cooking, it isn't too bad. They all have shower facilities and laundry is done by contractors in most locations or they have a washer and dryer.

In the US we hear on the news only the negative aspect of things in Iraq. I have seen first-hand the difference our Soldiers and civilians are making. Our Soldiers and civilians are making a huge difference and are proud to do their mission there. While parts of Iraq still remain dangerous, there are many parts where the people of Iraq live in peace and are working with coalition forces to rid Iraq of extremists.

LTC Stagg has a program to provide backpacks filled with toys and items for boys and girls of Iraq that has been a huge hit with local villagers. Kyle Hollenbeck from Washington state, whose father is a reservist, fulfilled an Eagle Scout project helping the children of Iraq. He collected and shipped hundreds of soccer balls and uniforms for the children of Iraq to play with.

I am proud of the job the personnel of the Group are doing under both difficult and dangerous conditions. The training and discipline of our people will ensure they all return home safely and we all look forward to their arrival. Thanks to all of you for standing by your loved ones and for the sacrifices you have made over the past year. Our nation, our Army and all the personnel of the 902d appreciate and admire your sacrifices.



# 902d Military Intelligence Group

## Task Force Vigilant Freedom distributes school supplies

LSA ANACONDA, BALAD, Iraq -

Some local school children have new supplies to start the school year thanks to friends and family members of Anaconda-based Soldiers. Soldiers from Task Force Vigilant Freedom distributed backpacks full of school supplies to more than 50 children who attend Al-Hurriya school in the village of Abu Shalash. The task force sponsored the renovation of the school in conjunction with Operation Anaconda Neighborhood and celebrated the grand opening June 29. When the TF commander, Lt. Col. Marie Stagg, sent her family pictures of the grand opening ceremony they shared the photos with co-workers and friends and the idea to send school supplies to the children was born.

Several companies and families in northern Virginia generously donated the fully stocked book bags, which included paper, pens, toys and even calculators for the older students. They also sent books, maps and atlases for the teachers to use.

The task force plans to distribute additional school supplies to Al-Hurriya and another local area school that they sponsor.

*"I sent back a photo to my sister of the opening of a school we sponsored. The photo made the rounds of my sister's office where people were looking for a way to contribute to Soldiers and to a good cause not associated with politics. Emails were exchanged and eventually I suggested some school bags and supplies for the children. The Stateside volunteers went to work. They have provided nearly 70 bags already and about thirty more are expected to reach our initial goal of 100 bags. They have come from people from Virginia to California. The word just seems to keep spreading" - LTC Stagg - Task Force Vigilant Freedom*



# 902d Military Intelligence Group

## The toss felt around the world

*By Tina Miles, 902nd MI Group, PAO*



Imagine one toss of a Nerf ball would fulfill the goal of a U.S. teen and the dreams of hundreds of underprivileged children in Iraq. Kyle Hollenback, 16-year old son of Sgt. 1st Class Jerry Hollenback, reservist, 307th Military Intelligence Company, received word from his dad, who was deployed to Iraq, that the children there were recreationally deprived. Kyle, a resident of Poulsbo, Wash., said, "My dad would tell my family how excited the kids would get by anything they could play with."

"I told Kyle about the time I tossed a Nerf ball to a youngster and almost incited a riot among the other children there," said Hollenback.

At that same time, Kyle was contemplating ideas for his Eagle Scout project and wanted to do something different. He came up with the idea of sending soccer balls to Iraq, deciding this project was perfect because he could collect equipment that was no longer being used here and send it to children in Iraq.

Becoming an Eagle Scout is rigorous and a great honor. A Boy Scout must advance through a series of ranks and pass certain requirements. He must also earn merit badges, complete an Eagle project, must have held leadership in his Scout troop, and eventually pass a board of review.

Kyle first accepted soccer balls from individuals who donated their personal equipment.

"I placed ads and posters around the community and set-up a booth outside local sport shops to solicit equipment. I received a few balls and some money towards my end goal," Kyle said. He realized that he probably wouldn't be sending very many soccer balls this way. As luck would have it, one of his leaders told Kyle that a local soccer club was trying to dispose of old soccer balls and jerseys. Kyle contacted the club's equipment manager and arranged to collect 300 balls and as many jerseys as possible.

Kyle also took his project to local newspapers for publicity to solicit donations. With the help of church volunteers, the balls were cleaned, deflated and packed for shipping. A local moving company read about Kyle's project in the newspaper, contacted him and said that they would provide boxes and help with shipping.

Capt. Lyle Hackett, 308th Military Intelligence Battalion, was one of the contacts Kyle had in Iraq through his father. Hollenback approached Hackett, while in Iraq, and asked if he would be like to accept and distribute the soccer balls to the local children. Hackett and his comrades loved the idea. "It seemed everyone who helped wanted to do more," noted Kyle.

Capt. Toni Sabo, 310th MI Battalion, who helped distribute the soccer balls, said, "One kid in Kirkuk flung himself at Capt. Hackett and kissed him, I thought they would both cry." Another time, one of the fathers of the children was so grateful he thanked us in his best English, Sabo said.

In appreciation for his humanitarian effort and support, Col. Gregg Potter, commander, 902nd MI Group, sent Kyle a personal letter of appreciation and congratulated him on his great accomplishment in achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

Kyle's favorite picture is the one with Iraqi children wearing North Kitsap Soccer Club jerseys. "Who knows," Kyle said, "maybe as a result of my project, someday an Iraqi kid will be a pro-soccer player and come visit me in Poulsbo."



# 902d Military Intelligence Group

## E Company, 310th MI Bn (Fwd) September 2004

Echo Company is the headquarters company for Task Force Vigilant Freedom. The company is responsible for providing support to the battalion, consisting of the battalion staff sections and maintenance section. The Soldiers and civilians have some truly amazing accomplishments. All have taken part of one or more of the many convoys in hostile territory to push out much needed supplies and equipment to the other companies. Sometimes these convoys are over 500 miles and take several days to accomplish the mission.



Echo Company (-) at a short halt in Bayji during a convoy



CPT Sabo gives out some goody bags

## E Co. Promotions

Congratulations to the following Soldiers:



SGT Mumphrey



SSG Coyle



SPC Francois

### No photos:

SSG Harrison

SSG Koller

SGT Bryant

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### Delta Company

The month of August saw Delta Company bearing several hard-won intelligence projects through to fruition, resulting in the capture of several known Anti-Iraqi Forces personalities in Northern Iraq, and the recovery of one of the largest arms caches ever retrieved in that very difficult area of operations. Persevering through the withering heat while on patrol in the cities and small villages in the Tigris River valley, Delta Company's teams have continued to work diligently to develop information into intelligence the war fighters can use, and as a result have enjoyed significant successes above and beyond other teams who share their battle space. Our new team members, from drivers to agents to senior civilians, have fully immersed themselves into the mission and already feel like they've been part of the team forever (As do the rest of us!!). In all seriousness, the teams are in their full stride, and have proved their worth daily to all levels of the commands they support. We enjoyed the visit from the Commander and Command Sergeant Major from our "home team," COL Potter and CSM Walker, and were encouraged to hear about the impressions / successes of our teams filtering back home.

Having passed the sixth month of this mission, the teams can now consider the fact that there are more days behind them than in front of them, and that the days are growing noticeably shorter. Also an encouraging fact - the temperature when we wake for physical training has dipped into the low 90's at 5:45. It's a very good sign of better weather ahead. We all look forward to rejoining our family, friends, and loved ones. We wouldn't have made it this far without your support. Keep sending the packages, and GO DUKES!!

**REGULAR OR UNLEADED?  
Not Your Daddy's Gas Station!**

Picture taken between Kirkuk, Iraq and Qayyarah, Iraq



# 902d Military Intelligence Group

## Family Readiness Group Newsletter

Please note the upcoming events and contact one of the reps if you have any questions or input, especially if you are located in a remote site.

### FRG UPCOMING EVENTS

- Group Fall Festival: 30 October, 2-6 pm, North Argonne Chapel, Ft Meade, MD.
- Group FRG Meeting: 13 October, 6 pm, HHD Conference Room, Ft. Meade, MD.
- Care Package Assembly: 15 October, 6 pm, Location TBD

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