



# *Raptor 6*



Hello again and I hope you enjoyed your block leave. As you all have noticed, we've been getting pretty busy since you've returned. Over the last couple of weeks, we've been shifting property and organizing for our deployment to the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE) in Hohenfels (and other places). This should be a great training event and provides us with the first real opportunity to work our missions with the Brigade as a whole. We should have everyone back mid-September.

With the MRE being a month of separation for the families, we'll be shaking out our rear detachment and FRG communications. In order for this to work well, we'll need your help. Communications is again the key. Make sure you communicate your needs to the chain of command, the rear detachment, or the FRG leader and we'll do the same. If we know about an issue, we can take action. The most critical piece to that is communicate and realize that regardless of appearances, we always work to take care of our battalion family.

After the MRE, we'll have a max leave period for your Soldier. The first period, 2-12 Oct, is for the early deployers (torch, ADVON, and C Co.) and the second, 30 Oct-11 Nov, will be for the main body. Which group your Soldier will be in will come through your company. Those leave periods will be more case-by-case since we will be shipping equipment and Soldiers will deploy in stages. During the MRE and the month of October, we will be jumping again as well as conducting last minute training to keep our readiness level high. If your Soldier is Airborne qualified, they will need to make a jump during this next couple of months to ensure we keep the jump pay.

The events are now speeding up towards deployment. Deployment time is tough on the whole family. It will be better if you have friends to share with and things to do. I encourage you to get to know your neighbors and get out and see some of Germany. Odds are someone from the battalion lives near you. Most Germans speak some English and some speak it fluently. There are plenty of interesting and fun things to see and do. Pretty much everyone in the battalion is in the same boat with a loved one deployed and most Soldiers and spouses in the other units on post have experiences that match or come close to what you will be going through. On 15 October we will have a pre-deployment briefing and town hall to ensure you have all of the information you need while your Soldier is deployed. We'll have experts there to answer your questions and will have some references to give to you. I hope you can attend. Remember, though, whatever you decide to do during the deployment, plan ahead and keep communicating and we will all be closer to meeting our expectations.





# Sergeant Major's Camera





## PYTHON HERALD

THE PYTHON COMPANY HAS BEEN GEARING UP FOR OUR MRE ROTATION TO HOHENFELS GERMANY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS IN ANTICIPATION FOR AN OUTSTANDING, TOP NOTCH TRAINING EXERCISE. THE COMPANY HAS A VERY DIVERSE MISSION WHICH INCLUDES PROVIDING MANEUVER ENHANCEMENT TO THE BRIGADE INCLUDING PERSONAL SECURITY DETACHMENT OPERATIONS, VARIOUS PATROLS, TCP EMPLOYMENT, KEY LEADER ENGAGEMENTS, LOGISTICS, INTELLIGENCE, COMMUNICATIONS, PERSONNEL, AND SUPPLY SUPPORT TO THE BATTALION. THE SUCCESS OF THE COMPANY IN GARRISON, DURING OUR DEPLOYMENT TO HOHENFELS, AND EVENTUALLY TO AFGHANISTAN RESTS ON OUR ABILITY TO PRACTICE GOOD DISCIPLINE AND REMAIN ADAPTIVE AND INGENUITIVE. EACH PLATOON AND STAFF SECTION SUPPORTING ALL BATTALION OPERATIONS HAS PUT IN MAXIMUM EFFORT DURING TRAINING, RANGES, AND VARIOUS FIELD EXERCISES TO DO JUST THAT. AS WE NEAR DEPLOYMENT WE CAN EXPECT TRAINING TO CONTINUE TO REMAIN EFFECTIVE AND ENHANCE OUR ABILITY TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS.

**W**E HAVE HAD SEVERAL NEW PERSONNEL ARRIVE TO THE COMPANY WITHIN THE PAST FEW MONTHS TO INCLUDE THE BATTALION EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MAJOR TRACY MICHAEL AND THE BATTALION FRSA, MRS. JOYCE DODSON. WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO THEM BOTH AND ARE EXCITED TO HAVE THEM ON THE TEAM.

**T**HE COMPANY WILL BE HAVING A PRE DEPLOYMENT BRIEFING ON 20AUG09 AT FREEDOM FITNESS FACILITY. IN ATTENDANCE WILL BE VARIOUS POST AGENCIES AND COMPANY LEADERSHIP POISED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF INFORMATION AND ANSWER WHATEVER QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING THE UPCOMING DEPLOYMENT. THE INFO SHARING AND Q&A SESSION WILL LAST FROM 1700-1930. IT IS GOING TO BE MORE IN DEPTH BRIEFING THAN PREVIOUS BRIEFINGS. YOUR ATTENDANCE WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

**L**OOK FORWARD TO SERVING THE COMPANY ALONG WITH THE OUTSTANDING BN AND COMPANY LEADERSHIP NOW AND DURING THE DEPLOYMENT.

### COMMAND TEAM

CPT Mason J. Wilson

ISG William E. Porter

### FAMILY READINESS GROUP

[Hhc173dfrgconnection@googlemail.com](mailto:Hhc173dfrgconnection@googlemail.com)

Leader: Tina Porter

### BIRTHDAY'S

#### AUGUST:

SGT Pleitez, 15 Aug

PV2 Madden, 30 Aug

PV2 Bennett, 19 Aug

### PROMOTIONS

PFC White to SPC

PV2 Azcona to PFC

PV2 Garcia, C. to PFC

PV2 Hall, D. to PFC

PV2 Madden to PFC

PV2 Williams, P. to PFC

### PICS OF THE MONTH



(Left) PVT Kindred showing off his guns  
(Above) SPC Ryan doing Push Ups on a PT Test after an overnight Stress Test



# SKY SOLDIER SAPPERS

## “WOLVERINE”

JULY—SEPTEMBER 2009

Alpha Company  
173d Special Troops Battalion  
(Airborne)  
“Wolverine”

### Happy Birthday!!!

#### Sappers

- PV2 Almanza 4-Jun
- PFC Fontaine 5-Jun
- SGT Mora 15-Jun
- PFC Cresap 18-Jun
- SSG Harris 18-Jun
- SPC Cruz 26-Jun
- PFC Thao 3-Jul
- SSG Walsh, A. 9-Jul
- SGT Guzman 13-Jul
- SPC Fleming 14-Jul
- SPC Avondstondt 18-Jul
- PFC Flynn 19-Jul
- SSG Whitfield 25-Jul
- SPC Basantes 26-Jul
- PV2 Young 16-Aug
- SGT LaChapelle 17-Aug
- SFC Romani 20-Aug
- PFC Orozco 23-Aug
- SGT Henry 29-Aug
- PV2 Eklekampwood 10-Sep
- PV2 Copeland 11-Sep
- SGT Hux 13-Sep
- SFC Tello 16-Sep
- SGT Cole 23-Sep
- PV2 Maurath 25-Sep
- SSG Heath 30-Sep

#### Family Members

- Alicia Orozco 28-Jun
- Tuesday Whitfield 24-Jul
- Erin Magana 26-Jul
- Lauren Tabacchi 3-Aug
- Jullie Arguello 8-Aug
- Chrissy Flynn 2-Sep
- Melissa Hux 4-Sep
- Desiree VanBuren 29-Sep

### Family Day BBQ—31 July 2009

The A Co FRG Family Day BBQ on 31 July was enjoyable for all.

The excellent food, camaraderie, and various activities were a big hit.

Highlighting the activities was the Dunk Tank, where leaders and Soldiers in the company braved the cold water while

friends and family did their best to hit the little orange

target and send the ‘victim’ crashing into the water. Al-

though it took a while to get set up due to some electric

issues, the “Whopper Hopper” was also very popular for the kids.

A big thanks to all the volunteers from the FRG that made side dishes, desserts, ran games, and helped with setup and cleanup. Without your help our day could not have been a success!



Soldiers and spouses relax, eat, and socialize at Friendship Park during the Company BBQ

### Commander's Corner

I am honored to write my first note to the Sappers, families, and friends of the Sky Soldier Sappers! Since I took command from Captain Charles Wells in June, the company has been gearing up for the Mission Readiness Exercise in Hohenfels and preparing

for our upcoming deployment.

It has been great meeting all the Sappers and their families here in Bamberg and I look forward to continuing to build the Sapper team through our deployment to Afghanistan

this fall. Our Sappers have already proven to be adaptive, capable, and professional Soldiers who will be successful with any mission we are given.





## Bold Company From a Cadets Prospective Cadet Troop Leadership Training



Besides Airborne school, I hadn't truly experienced the Army. Everything I had done prior to arriving in Bamberg was scripted. As a cadet, we rehearsed the same battle drills, land nav, and other basic infantry tactics over and over again. Though I was prepared for the Leadership Development and Assessment Course (LDAC), anything outside a squad element in a tactical setting was unfamiliar. With that, I had no idea what to expect when I arrived to the unit. I also had little idea of where I was going, besides the city: I was left in the dark. About an hour before I boarded the plane I received an email from my PL. In the email he informed me that I would be with a MI Company and that would also be spending some time in the field. From this new information I came up with some questions, what exactly does an MI company do, what is the daily garrison routine, what would we be doing in the field and for how long? These were just some of the questions I had.

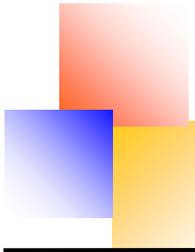
At first I was confused. I had no previous knowledge of MI. The only previous info I had was either taught to me by my ROTC cadre, Airborne school, or from my parents. Either way, no MI experience. So I approached the situation with interest and open ears. When I first arrived, I talked to the company's 1SGT, he instructed me to be a sponge, and soak up everything. And that's what I've tried. After going to numerous meetings and being involved with the company, I've started to pick up the lingo and how the system works.

The company I'm with can be pretty hectic at times. There are 3 platoons: UAV, HUMINT, and SIGINT. Each has a different job to do with different needs. This however, has helped me get a better insight of how a PL needs to manage and work with other platoons. One thing I wasn't expecting was the respect I have received. I have heard from other cadets who did CTLT, that they were coffee getters and were pushed to the side. But here, that's not the case. I have been actively involved in the company's operations. From attending numerous meetings, participating in Raptor Stakes (a Lieutenant competition), MOU training, reflexive fire range, Engagement Skills Trainer, and others. I've done a lot of training that most cadets won't have the chance to do.

When I got here, I had no idea what to expect. But after 4 weeks, I've been able to experience army training and see what it's like to be a PL. Now going into my final year of classes, I have a much better understanding of a Lieutenants life and what to expect.

CDT WEST, JASON R





# COMMANDER'S VOICE



**W**E ARE SOON APPROACHING THE JMRC EXERCISE IN HOHENFELS. EXPECT EVERYDAY TO BE HECTIC IN PREPARATION FOR THIS EVENT AS WELL AS PERFORMING TASKINGS THAT ARE MANDATORY IN ORDER TO RAMP UP MISSION READINESS OF EACH SIGNALEER. ALL PLATOONS CONTINUOUSLY TRAIN TO STANDARD AND ARE WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE EACH MISSION.



## COMMAND TEAM

CPT LUKE PEREIRA

ISG LUIS CRUZ

## FAMILY READINESS GROUP

Frg.c173dstb@googlemail.com

Leader: Kimberly Pereira

## BIRTHDAY'S

AUGUST:

SSG SMITH

SGT KOCH

CW2 BOND

SPC DAVIS

## PROMOTIONS

SGT SMITH TO SSG

PV2 CANNON TO PFC

PV2 KELLY TO PFC



**E**VERY SOLDIER RECENTLY ATTENDED SEVERAL DUTY SPECIFIC TRAINING TO INCLUDE: REDCOM, PROMINA AND STT TRAINING. SEVERAL SOLDIERS WERE ALSO SENT TO DRIVER'S TRAINING COURSE THAT BROUGHT THE COMPANY'S LICENSED DRIVERS UP TO 90%.

AND SETTING UP RAPTOR STAKE COMPETITION FOR THE LIUTENANTS IN THE BATALTION, THE TEAM LEADER COURSE FOR JUNIOR NCO'S AND THE CULTURAL LANGUAGE AWARENESS TRAINING.

**S**IGNALEERS ALSO LEAD THE WAY BY SUPPORTING AND SETTING UP RAPTOR STAKE COMPETITION FOR THE LIUTENANTS IN THE BATALTION, THE TEAM LEADER COURSE FOR JUNIOR NCO'S AND THE CULTURAL LANGUAGE AWARENESS TRAINING.

**D**ESPITE OUR BUSY SCHEDULES, OUR SOLDIERS CONTINUE TO SUPERBLY ACCOMPLISH EACH MISSION WHICH DID NOT STOP THEM TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE ON DIFFERENT EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS THAT THE BATTALION, BRIGADE AND POSTS HAVE TO OFFER.

**O**N 26 JUNE TO 03 JULY THREE OF OUR SOLDIERS COMPETED IN THE SLOVAKIA CHALLENGE AND ALSO PARTICIPATED ON THE NORMANDY JUMP IN CELEBRATION OF D-DAY. THE COMPANY ALSO PARTICIPATED IN THE COMBATIVES TOURNAMENT SPONSORED BY THE BATTALION AND BRIGADE. TO SUM IT ALL UP, NO MATTER WHAT THE MISSION IS AT HAND, CHARLIE COMPANY ALWAYS MAKES IT HAPPEN.



## C CO WELCOMES THE NEWEST

MEMBER OF FAMILY!!!



THE WHITE



# Chaplain's Notes



On July 24-26 173<sup>rd</sup> Germany Families from the 319<sup>th</sup> FA, 191 CAV, BSB and STB attended a Chaplain led marriage retreat. Over 60 couples attended this event in Willingen Germany. Couples and family enjoyed time with each other while learning some helpful way to draw closer together and prepare for the upcoming deployment. Several spouses said that this time helped them understand the different needs that they have and how to support each other here and through the challenge of separation in the upcoming deployment. Families also enjoyed some of the local attractions to include an indoor water park, historic Willingen, a glass blowing shop and nearby sky slopes that had slides on the slopes for the summer time. Many of the families that attended recommend that soldiers and their family members take advantage of the trips that your chaplain has to offer because not only are they fun and relaxing but they are informative and give you tools to better yourself and the relationships with loved ones.



# Virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG) website registration

We welcome you to become a member of the 173D Special Troops Battalion's Virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG) website, to help you stay up to date on the latest happenings in the STB. Once you are a member you will be able to view many topics such as the latest news related to the STB, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), 173D links and downloads, the weather forecast from our latest training area and recent training pictures of the Soldiers, plus much more.

To become a member, please follow these steps:

1. Go to the vFRG website at <http://www.armyfrg.org>
2. Click on "register here" to begin.
3. Select the OCONUS location "Germany" by clicking on the map.
4. Under 279<sup>th</sup> BSB, BAMBERG, click on "173D STB (ABN), 173D ABCT".
5. Since you are a family member, please make sure "family member" is selected from the drop down menu. Enter your first and last name and the first and last name and last four of your Soldier's social security number. Registrations should be approved within 24 hours. If you encounter any issues while registering, please email [joyce.l.dodson@eur.army.mil](mailto:joyce.l.dodson@eur.army.mil)

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## Family Readiness Contact Information

### HHC

FRG Leader – Jacquette (Tina) Porter – [hhc173dfrgconnection@googlemail.com](mailto:hhc173dfrgconnection@googlemail.com)

### Alpha Company

FRG Leader – Mary Lou Mora – [a173stb@googlemail.com](mailto:a173stb@googlemail.com)

### Bravo Company

FRG Leader – Kathleen Reese – [reesepieces108@hotmail.com](mailto:reesepieces108@hotmail.com)

### Charlie Company

FRG Leader – Kimberly Pereira – [C173stb.frg@googlemail.com](mailto:C173stb.frg@googlemail.com)

### Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA)

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