

Polar Bear Tracks



EDITION 14
MID JUNE 2007

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Dilbert and Classic Calvin and Hobbs
- Editor's Parting Shot
- Pictures Around AO Bear
- Promotion Pictures

DILBERT INSIDE



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NEWS ON THE FRONT, OF THE FRONT, FOR THE FRONT

FORWARD OPERATING BASE YUSUFİYAH, IRAQ

C/4-31 IN Moves to Patrol Base Dragon

Story by SGT Joe Caron

For the Soldiers of C Co. 4/31 IN, moving seems to be getting to be an easier task the more times that you do it. During the first week of June 2007, the Soldiers of C/4-31 IN moved from COP Corregidor to Patrol Base Dragon, which is located to the west of Qarghuli Village. The patrol base is set up in the confines of the Yusufiyah Thermal Power Plant and it is much more spacious than any other area that C/4-31 IN has been to during this deployment. Since arriving at the patrol base, C/4-31 has been busy cleaning up areas and building living quarters for their soldiers. The move took a matter

of days and went very smoothly. As soon as the Soldiers got on ground at Patrol Base Dragon, they started work on making living quarters. They found suitable areas to live in, cleaned up the areas by sweeping out the dirt and started construction on the living quarters. The Soldiers also started working with A/2-14 IN, who are already stationed there, getting to know the local area and establishing a base defense force for the patrol base. The move to the west is the first portion of the Task Force to make the move. In the coming weeks, more units from TF 4-31 IN will move farther west, in order to make room for the Iraqi Army, as their units will eventually take over control of the entire Polar Bear AO. This is just the first step in that process and the Soldiers of C/4-31 IN took the task and did the transition relatively smoothly. With almost 5 months remaining in country, C/4-31 IN continues to make every mission that they are tasked with exceed the standard and they strive to make a difference wherever they are assigned. The leadership of the company has done an outstanding job with everything they have done and they will continue to push forward with helping the people of Iraq and to finish our mission, until our job is done.



(Above) C/4-31 Vehicles lined up at PB Dragon

Photo provided by 1LT Michael Ip



(Above) Soldiers from C/4-31 IN remove some unwanted dirt at PB Dragon

Photo Provided by 1LT Michael Ip



(Above) C/4-31 IN Soldiers begin to build living quarters for themselves at PB Dragon

Photo Provided by 1LT Michael Ip

TF 4-31 IN Scouts Are Always On The Go

By: 4-31 PAO Staff

The Task Force 4-31 IN Scouts are a platoon of Soldiers that like to keep busy while here in Yusufiyah, Iraq. They have had numerous jobs while here such as conducting ambushes throughout the Polar Bear AO, escorting personnel to Camp Striker, establishing observation posts, just to name a few. Moving around so much is just part of the job for the Scouts. They are flexible

when it comes to doing different tasks from their assigned jobs. Whatever they are tasked to do, they do it to the best of their abilities and they get the job done! No matter what the task is, the TF 4-31 IN Scout Platoon is ready and always prepared to do the job to standard.



(Above) SSG Kendrick's team gets a photo taken during a recent mission

Photo provided by SSG Jester

(continued on page 2)

TF 4-31 IN Scout Are Always On The Go Cont.....



(Above) The TF 4-31 IN Scouts move across an obstacle during a mission



(Above) SSG Ramsey and SSG Jester ready to go on a mission



(Above) All camouflaged up and ready to go
Photos provided by SSG Jester TF 4-31 IN Scouts

Soldier Spotlight: SGT Fennelly

Story by PAO Staff

Name: SGT Dennis Fennelly B/4-31 IN

Job Title: Unit Supply Sergeant (92Y)

Hometown: Auburn, California

Hobbies: Traveling, fishing, snowboarding and trying different foods.

Reason I joined the Army: I wanted a change of pace from a normal 9 to 5 civilian job.

Thoughts on deployment: I think the Battalion is doing good considering the difficult situation that we are dealing with.

Future Plans: I plan on getting out of the Army when the time comes. I would like to work abroad and try something different.



(Above) SGT Fennelly in the B/4-31 IN Rear CP on FOB Yusufiyah

Photo by SGT Joe Caron



(Above) SGT Fennelly working on the computer

Photo by SGT Joe Caron

1/A/4-31 IN Prepare New IA Checkpoints On Route Malibu

Story by PAO Staff

If the Soldiers of 1/A/4-31 IN take anything back from their experiences in Iraq, they can say that they definitely know how to build a Battle Position. The platoon just recently started work on their third battle position down near Battle Position 151, located just outside of Qarghuli Village. They have already established BP 155 and BP 156, both of them are currently being manned by the 4/4/6 IA. SGT Alberto Lopez, originally



(Above) CPL Mullet pulls security while 4/4/6 IA Soldiers pass by

Photo by SGT Tierney Nowland Combat Camera

from San Pedro, CA had this to say, "The new battle positions went up pretty quick. They are just small positions so it takes only a couple of hours to set them up. The IA helped out a lot by helping us with the Hesco baskets. Every one of the new Battle Positions will be for the IA so they can help with security along Route Malibu." Building battle positions for better security in Iraq.



(Above) 1LT Minor talks to a local woman during a recent patrol

Photo by SGT Tierney Nowland

B/4-31 IN At PB Shanghai

Story by PAO Staff Over the past month, the Soldiers of B/4-31 IN have continued to impress as they have done numerous missions and helped the people of Rushdi Mullah and Ahmed Suhel try to make the area a safer place. With daily patrols to both Rushdi Mullah and Ahmed Suhel, the people have come forward more often for help and information about insurgents in the area. With elements of the 4/4/6 IA going along on every mission, it makes the eventual handover to the Iraqi Army much easier when that time comes. Recently, B/4-31 IN conducted a school supply drop to Ahmed Suhel, giving the local children pens, pencils, notebooks, backpacks and markers that they will be using when the next school year begins within a few months. Whenever there is a medical emergency, the B/4-31 IN Soldiers are there to help and assist in anyway that they can. There also has been numerous Sheik meeting that have taken place recently at Patrol Base Shanghai, keeping the local leaders informed on what has been happening and listening to the Sheiks with their problems that they have been having within their tribes. With the upcoming move getting closer, B/4-31 IN will be prepared to hand over their portion of the sector to move on to new tasks and new missions.



(Above) CPT Christopher Vitale listens to the discussion during a Sheik meeting at PB Shanghai



(Above) The Tribal Sheiks and Leadership from TF 4-31 IN talk to each other during the meeting

Photos by CPT Christopher Sanchez



Polar Bears On The Move



(Above) B/2-69 IN conducts reed burning along Route Sportster

Photo by 1LT Bertolino B/2-69 AR FSO



(Above) SPC Kohl, F/4-31 IN Mechanic, works on a part for an M1114

Photo by SGT Joe Caron



(Above) Soldiers from C/4-31 IN prepare for moving to PB Dragon

Photo provided by 1LT Michael Ip



(Above) SPC Seitz, D/4-31 IN, hands out school supplies to local children in Qarghuli Village

Photo provided by CPT John Gilbreth

B 2-69 IN Keeps RTE Sportster Safe



(Above) 1LT McGorman talks with locals in Al Taqa

Photo provided by 1LT Bertolino B/2-69 IN FSO

Story by PAO Staff

Since arriving at Patrol Base Bataan over a month ago, the Soldiers of B/2-69 IN have had one main objective that they had to accomplish, ensuring that Route Sportster stays a safe route for traffic traveling on the road. While doing many patrols along the route daily, they have also conducted patrols

into Al Taqa and Arab Jassim to talk to some of the local people who live there to see if they know anything about our missing Soldiers. They have found numerous IEDs and interdicted many IED emplacers since arriving at Patrol Base Bataan, but it is just part of the job and they are doing

extremely well! The Soldiers of B/2-69 IN will continue to keep Route Sportster safe and help the people in Arab Jassim and Al Taqa any way that they can. That's what they are her to do.



Story by ILT Doug Livermore

Jill is a very special dog to the men of D Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment. She was originally inherited as a puppy from the 2nd Battalion of the 101st Airborne Division in September of 2006 when the company arrived at Patrol Base Jufr-al-Sakr Bridge and assumed control of the area. Jill had been cared for from birth by the men 2/101, and her continued care was entrusted to D/4-31 IN. In reality, it has been Jill that has always been there for us, following the company to three separate patrol bases. From PB Jufr-al-Sakr, Jill went with D/4-31 IN to PB Bataan, and finally followed them to PB Inchon in the town of Jumbalatiyah, Iraq. She has been a loyal and constant companion, pulling more than her share of guard around our various bases. Along the way, Jill has borne 2 litters of adorable puppies of her own, in a way exponentially increasing the joy she has brought to our company. Her puppies, Meadoaf, Maya, and Pork Chop, have given our Soldiers ample opportunity to play the role of nurturer in this otherwise hostile area. Not to mention more than a few cases of hilarity, as her puppies have never been known for their agility. Jill is a real trooper, too! Whenever we step off on a mission, we can count on Jill to be leading the way or following closely along. Being tired, hungry, or even pregnant has never dissuaded Jill from going out on a mission, even if she has discouraged some of us by the ease with which she can cross the numerous canals in our area! Jill has endured the same hardships, eaten the same chow, and been under the same fire as we have for the last eleven months. She has never abandoned us, and we have no intention of abandoning her. The end of this deployment is in sight, and the men of D/4-31 IN do not want to leave our loyal Jill behind when we depart Iraq. Responsibility for our area will be transferred to our brave Iraqi brothers, who do not look on dogs quite the same way as we do. Opinion in the company is unanimous that Jill should remain a member of our family. One of our Soldiers has already agreed to take responsibility for and adopt Jill into his home, but the biggest hurdle remains getting her the required medical care and clearance to travel to the States. We need help overcoming these barriers. After all the long patrols, the freezing nights, the baking days, and the other hardships we've endured together, we can think of no better way to return Jill's loyalty than by bringing her back to the States.



(Above) Jill poses for the camera

Photo by ILT Doug Livermore



(Above) Jill does a recon of the area while on patrol with D/4-31 Soldiers

Photo by ILT Doug Livermore

Promotions, Awards and Re-enlistment Pictures



(Above) Newly Promoted SPC Bravo and SPC Guevara HHC 4/31 IN

Photo by CPT Chris Sanchez



(Above) SSG Campbell, SGT Chabot and PFC Bobian of the 1481 TPT get their CABs

Photo by SGT Joe Caron



(Above) SPC Delaney HHC 4-31 IN PSD

Photo by SSG Joseph Illesca



(Above) SPC Kohl F/4-31 IN

Photo by SSG Joseph Illesca

F/4-31 IN Maintenance Teams Work 24/7

By: 4-31 PAO Staff

For over a month now, the Maintenance Platoon of F/4-31 IN have been working two different shifts in order to cover more ground and get more vehicles up and running and back into sector. The hours for the wrecker teams are from 0800-2000 and the maintenance teams is 1100-2300. The change was done in order to get more time to fix vehicles

and to be able to cover down on anything that does happen to need maintenance at anytime during the day or night. So far it has worked very well for them and they will continue to keep this current schedule until it is deemed that will not need it any longer. There is a bit of competition between the two shifts, but as long as the job gets done, it about working together to get everything up and running.



(Above) SPC Smith, F/4-31 IN Mechanic, works on an M1114



Congratulations SSG Nick Atkins!

SSG Atkins was the Weapons Squad Leader for 3/A/4-31

Sudoku

		4 3						
3 7								1
	2		9	7				
6		2						
	1	4	9					
			5				8	
4	9			7				
9					5 6			
		7 2						



Ukhaidhir, Iraq

Ukhaidhir, the colossal pre- or early Abbasid (late 8th century) fortified pleasure palace is 50 km south west of [Kerbala](#) and about 173 km south west of [Baghdad](#), standing alone in the desert as one of the most impressive buildings in the whole World and one of the greatest monuments of early Islam. It was built with stone and plaster on a plan which suggests the high skill of its architects in the use of vaults and arches, consisting of a fortified rectangular enclosure measuring 175x169 m, with a gateway in the center of each side. It has 4 rounded corner towers and 10 intermediate half-rounded towers. Ukhaidhir's huge walls rise like a cliff out of the plain, and inside them you have the feeling of being in a particularly large warlike castle. The walls are immensely thick, the chambers legion, the whole massive structure 21 m high. Every room is vaulted and majestic. **The open-fronted hall (or ewan)** and its archway framed in a rectangular panel are both Persian in origin. Byzantine acanthus leaves decorate fallen stone capitals. The whole building with its circular buttresses and vaulted colonnades is neither Greek nor Persian, but the first, perhaps overbold step in the evolution of an individual (Arab) style, which later produced the Caliph's palace in [Samarra](#).



**Top Movie
Ocean's 13**

Over 37 Million Dollars
For the week of 04 June-10 June 07



**Top Song
Umbrella by
Rihanna
Feat. Jay Z**

For the week of 04 June -10 June 2007
According to [Billboard.com](#)



Then and Now

Gasoline Price
(per gal regular)

14 Aug 06
\$3.09

10 Jun 07
\$3.12



Editor's Parting Shot

"Sooner or later we all discover that the important moments in life are the advertised ones, not the birthdays, the graduations, the weddings, not the great goals achieved. The real milestones are less prepossessing. They come to the door of memory." *Susan B. Anthony*

"Life consists not in holding the good cards but in playing those that you hold well." *Jack Billings*