

From: William Lord [thelordbill@yahoo.com]
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Hi all,

I've been overseas for just over 2 months now. Just the other day I was promoted to First Lieutenant, 18 months has gone by real fast. I am hanging in here. I really miss the United States. There is a whole lot of talk about how long we will be here, my orders say at least 6 months but no more that a year.

I am have been busy doing non-standard missions. I am a Automotive Platoon Leader. My job description usually consists of managing resources. Examples are how many mechanics does it take to fix our vehicles, how long it takes, and when will the part get here, or how many vehicles have the latest armor, how many welders are available, and how long it takes, etc. Of course I tell my Commander what is hot and what's not and he tells me "Fix it, Ranger"

But that job description is saved for the sorry "Fobbits", Soldiers who never leave the HEAVILY guarded Forward Operating Base (FOB). I live in an urban Combat Outpost. I am finding my mechanics on my left and right as I lead daily patrols, on foot and mounted, down the streets of Baghdad, Iraq. I also conduct SNAP VCPs (quick Vehicle Check Points), where I will pull over certain vehicles that are in the wrong place at the wrong time. I have an interpreter (TERP) and she's a big help when I talk to the local leaders. The other day I conducted an assessment on a Rehabilitation Clinic, to see what resources they need and what are they capable of. During that mission 2 reporters from the LA Times were with me. I have also visited many schools within my district, again to asses the conditions and develop projects to improve the conditions. I even played soccer with the kids in full body armor, talk about a workout! Even better my Commander is back at the FOB and his only way to check on me is the situation reports I send to him with the cool, but wicked slow, satellite internet that is here.

There is a Field Artillery unit here too, I am attached to them, 2-319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division. If you didn't know, I went to Basic Training at FT Sill OK, Home of the Field Artillery, King of Battle. So I know a little bit about the "Thinking man's" combat arm. Cool thing about them is they are Airborne. They jump onto the drop zone and so do their guns! However they have been packaged up like infantrymen, like me, and do the same thing I do.

Like every Airborne Ranger, I make wish-lists. I know that when I get home I want that flat wall mounted TV. I do much of my driving off-road and I 've got the itch to purchase a 4x4 vehicle. I also want a house to park my 4x4 and put my TV in. I want to find some good running trails, go on multi-day hikes, drive all over creation to visit friends and family, see Live concerts, see the Red Sox this summer, and make it back for my 10 year high school re-union.

I want to let you know that I miss you all. Thank you for your support.
All The Way, Airborne!

Bill

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1LT William H. Lord
B/407BSB/82AB