



# THE MULESKINNER

*“No Task Too Large”*



10 Mar 08  
Special Edition

## From the Muleskinner Editorial Board:

We are currently in the process of preparing the next full issue of THE MULESKINNER which should be published by the end of the week. Typically our publication is focused on the Soldiers of the 35<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade and its engineer mission while deployed to Iraq, and our purpose is to keep our loved ones and friends back home informed about the Muleskinners in a combat environment. However, we at THE MULESKINNER feel compelled to pass along a special message from our 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Commander, Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond.

We encourage you to take a few moments to read this letter about the current situation in the Baghdad area of operations from a commander with “boots on the ground.”



**A Special Message From  
Major Gen. Jeffery Hammond  
Commander, 4th Infantry Division**



3 March 2008

To all Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers, Sailors, Airman, and Marines

— Mission — Soldier — Family — Team —

Multi-National Division – Baghdad, the Iraqi Security Forces and the people of Baghdad have come a long way since the combined Iraqi and Coalition Forces Operation, Fardh al Qanoon (Enforcing the Law), began a year ago. Daily attack levels in Baghdad have dropped from an average of 36 a day last February and a high of 48 in July to an average of 14 a day in the past four months.

The Baghdad Operations Command, under the capable leadership of Iraqi Gen. Abbud Qandar, is protecting the Iraqi people side-by-side with their U.S. counterparts. The Iraqi Security Forces have increased both in quantity and capability. Nearly 48,200 Iraqi Army soldiers and National Police are partnered with the 34,500 MND-B Soldiers in our formation.

As a result of your personal dedication, the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines have given the people and the Government of Iraq the time necessary to move forward and come back from the brink of an all out civil war. The results of your selfless service are evident in the GOI's passage of 2008 Budget, the Amnesty Act and the Provincial Powers Act, which represent enormously significant political progress in Iraq. The way these three pieces of legislation were packaged together shows tangible political growth.

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### MULESKINNER STAFF

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(Who cares about  
Copyright in Baghdad ☺)

"THE MULESKINNER" is a publication focused on the Soldiers of the 35<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade (a.k.a. Muleskinners) and its engineer mission while deployed to Iraq in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The purpose of this publication is to keep our loved ones and friends at home informed about the Muleskinners in a combat environment. THE MULESKINNER will be produced exclusively by Muleskinner Soldiers to ensure accurate reporting and authentic information.

"THE MULESKINNER" is organized and edited by the Muleskinner's Command Judge Advocate, LTC David Lowe, and his cohort in crime, fellow Judge Advocate, CPT Kelly Parker. Paralegal SGT Jake Boswell provides technical assistance by overseeing the layout and design. It is our genuine desire to provide timely, insightful, and entertaining information to our readers.

Regarding Al Qaeda in Iraq, according to a recently recovered diary in Balad, their organization has been routed. A letter from the Emir in Karkh, Baghdad, describes things are so bad that he quit. We have inflicted serious blows upon Iraq's number one threat; however, they are still our number one enemy. They have the potential to inflict the most murderous and heinous atrocities against the people of Iraq and we will not rest until AQI has been eradicated. My guidance is to deny AQI sanctuary and safe haven in and around Baghdad – pursue, pursue, pursue.

We are in the process of drawing down our U.S. presence in Iraq. The drawdown is underway and is a planned event. This summer, as the Secretary of Defense and our leadership reassess the situation on the ground, they may possibly reposition forces. Regardless, my intent is to not give back any part of the city that we have paid a high price for. I ask each and everyone one of you to observe operational security, not to discuss troop movements or our potential issues affecting our mission.

Please join me in saying farewell to our brothers and sisters in arms from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 'Falcon,' 82nd Airborne Division. The Falcons were the first unit to answer our President's call for a surge in U.S. troops. In the past 15 months, they have returned hope of a brighter future to the people in north-east Baghdad.

The Paratroopers established two of the first combat outposts in Baghdad – COP War Eagle and Callahan – executing Gen. David Petraeus', out-going commander Multi-National Corps – Iraq, national counterinsurgency operations philosophies. As a direct result of living and patrolling where the Iraqi people work, gather and live, attacks in Adhamiyah from Dec. 2006 to Dec. 2007 have decreased from 465 per month to 15; a 97 percent decrease. Falcon Soldiers spent \$30 million on reconstruction projects including: renovating 50 schools, micro-generators, water pump repair, trash pick up and micro-loans to revitalize markets; they made life better and safer for the residents of northeast Baghdad.

In closing, please take care of each other. We have come a long way, but there is still a lot of work to be done.

I pray that God may bless you, the United States of America and the Iraqi people.

Ironhorse 6  
"Steadfast and Loyal"



**"FREEDOM ISN'T FREE"**