



**Charlie Company, 4-101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment**  
***Blackwidows***  
**CPT Melissa A. Jones**

As I type, all the soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers from the current Blackwidows are packing up and preparing for a deployment to the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana. We will self deploy the helicopters the day after Easter to train for our next rendezvous with destiny in Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom 3.5. Right now we do not have a deployment timeline for Iraq but we assume it will be this fall.

Currently we have 50 soldiers on the books for the company. We have 4 commissioned officers, 22 warrant officers, 6 non-commissioned officers, and 18 soldiers. And we own and operate 10 UH-60L Blackhawks, 2 HMMWVs with trailers, and other associated company equipment. This year we have been to the field twice in the back 40 of Campbell to support Battalion and Brigade field training exercises. We also supported an Infantry FTX from the ramp at Sabre Heliport. All these FTXs were in preparation of JRTC, and of course JRTC is in preparation for the deployment to Iraq! While at JRTC our battalion will support two Infantry Brigades' rotations. This is due to the transformation of the Division as each multi-functional Aviation Brigade supports two Infantry Brigades. It has been a busy time to say the least. After JRTC we will get a much needed break during the summer where we will get block leave, and our helicopters will receive several modifications prior to deployment.

Our company has come a long way since our activation last summer. When we activated we received officers and soldiers from our two sister companies to make our company. Essentially we had two different teams who had to learn how to live and work together to become a completely new team. We have done quite well. Our pilots are growing immensely, and we have trained 5 new Pilots in Command since activation. This is huge considering that when we stood up the company, besides the Instructor Pilots, Maintenance Test Pilots, and the Safety Officer we only had ONE other Pilot in Command! The enlisted soldiers are taking on huge responsibilities as well and we have promoted one to E5, and laterally promoted 3 Specialists to Corporal. I feel that this company will learn so much in the next few months, and I feel privileged to be a part of the team.

The company received the "Beats Walkin" signs this week, and we truly appreciate your thoughtfulness. Our historian plans on taking pictures during JRTC with the signs posted and we will send them to you. Of course, we hope to carry on the tradition and have them with us on the deployment to Iraq as you all did in Vietnam. What a great way to build esprit de corps and company pride. Thank you.

The Division is already planning this year's Week of the Eagles. It will be in late May. If any of the former Blackwidows can come, please look me up and we'll have a company party! I look forward to meeting more of you in the future. For now, this is Blackwidow 06, signing off.

*Mate and Kill!!*