



FRG FAMILY READINESS GROUP



From: The Desk of the Commander, 1244th Transportation Company, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

COMMENTS FROM

Lt . Petersen

PAGES 1, 2 and 3

R&R TIPS PAGE 4

FAMILY RELIEF

PAGE 4

CHRISTMAS PARTY

PAGE 5

BIRTHDAYS OF
THE MONTH

PAGE 5

1244th UPDATE

PAGE 6

New Deployment

PAGE 6

Coming Events

PAGE 7

The FRG Council and
Committee Chairs;

PAGE 8

Dear Family, Friends, and concerned parties,

Well, it's that time again for our monthly letter. We are doing well here. We have provided additional rotations for your soldiers to come home and enjoy some Rest and Relaxation in December and January. We are trying to complete all rotations by the end of January 2004. The reason for this is due to the large deployment and redeployment of soldiers in and out of theater. This has nothing to do with our timeframe of returning, unfortunately. We are still planning a return in April 2004 for your soldier(s).

The weather here has turned quite nasty. We have received over 2 inches of rain in the last week. Constant winds and leaky tents have compounded this. We have done everything to keep dry with additional issuance of rain gear (gortex jackets and wet weather gear) and to stay warm from the cold with polypro and wool sweaters. Some of our soldiers have acquired sweatshirts and pants that enhance their comfort as well.

Thanksgiving went well. We had the deluxe fixings with all of our officers serving in the dining facility that day. Turkey, roast beef, ham, prime rib, shrimp cocktail, broccoli and rice casserole, stuffing, potatoes, gravy, vegetables, pies and cakes, salads, and of course sparkling cider was served. The dinner lasted from 1200 – 1500 and 1700 – 2000. The weather was beautiful that day with a slight breeze and few clouds.

We have made a disc of pictures of some of your soldiers and sent it to our peacetime battalion for presentations in December. It was hand carried by one of our R&R soldiers to ensure its arrival. We are also making a disc of an individual picture of all soldiers here with a nice presentation to be sent to you in time for the Dec 14th Family Christmas Party. We are doing our best and it should be in the mail (preferably FedEx) the 2nd week of December. We can only make one disc, if someone needs to make copies, please talk to our family Readiness Coordinator, Mr. Bob Brown.

Some of our troops activities:

- On Thanksgiving, there was a 5K Fun Run in which SSG Shawn Holland and 1LT Alex Galicia participated.
- SPC Justin Pippin was promoted to Corporal.
- SPC Oved Hernandez was promoted to Sergeant.
- SPC Noel Calhoun won the Camp Arifjan, Zone 2 Weightlifting competition by bench pressing 425 lbs.
- SSG Larry Bennett coordinated and implemented our weekly Tuesday night Bingo games. It has really been a hit. Thanks to his wife for her support in getting the cards sent to the unit so promptly!!!!
- SPC Roy Jones recently completed the Field Sanitation and Hygiene Course
- SGT Edson Rocha recently completed an 80-hour Hazardous Materials course for Federal recognition and certification
- 1LT Galicia and SSG Mark Grigsby were selected as the Command and Control Element for the Battalion Recovery Team (BaRT) for inoperable vehicles
- 1LT Herman Watkins was selected as Officer in Charge (OIC) for our Force Protection team
- SPC Ivory Hart has been certified and performs as the Unit Mail Clerk
- SPC Aaron Hughes was selected a special Liaison for the incoming Stryker Brigade
- SPC Vincent Echeverria and SSG Ricardo Antunez were selected as Soldier and NCO of the Year for the unit
- SSG Antunez was selected as NCO of the Year for the 733rd Quartermaster Battalion
- The following soldiers scored a perfect 300 on their recent APFT (PT test) – SGT Luis Aguayo, SGT Benjamin Watkins, SPC Sebastian Gawron, PFC Bernardo Huerta, SPC Aaron Hughes, and SSG James Davis.
- The following soldiers scored over 290 on their APFT – SGT Timothy Washington, SPC Andres Hernandez, SPC Sara Hundahl, SPC Roy Jones, SPC Andrew Lang, SPC Raul Magana, CPL Justin Pippin, SPC Nicole Ramirez, and SPC Eric Voirin.
- The following soldiers scored over 280 on their APFT – SSG Larry Westbrook, SPC Anthony Krajefska, SPC Donald Frederick, SGT Tricia Menig
- The following personnel were recently certified as Combat LifeSavers (CLS) – SGT Benjamin Watkins, SPC Vincent Echeverria, SGT Jesus Aguirre, SGT Tammy Johnson, SGT Scott Drabek, SSG Michael Walton, SPC Rodriguez Pearson, CPL Donald May, SGT Melissa Downey, SPC Yelivette Santiago, SSG David White

Many Thanks to the following Groups or Individuals for their contributions to the unit:

- Wife of SSG William Berens for her continued contributions from friends and employers
- Wife of SSG James Davis for her continued contributions from friends and churches
- Wives of CW3 Archibald and SSG Manuel Flores for their Christmas tree and decoration donations
- Family, First Horizon Mortgage, and Employers of 1LT Rhonda L. Petersen for their contributions to the unit
- Wal-Mart and wife of SSG Larry Bennett's donation of the company Christmas Tree and decorations
- 733rd Qm Bn for their donation of a new Illinois State Flag and Garrison size American Flag
- CPT Alessia for his continued contribution and assistance to members of the unit.



**Our condolences to:**

CW3 Ron Archibald for the passing of his father
SFC Robert Howled for the passing of his father

Well wishes, Good Health, and God Speed to:

SGT Ryan Anaya for her recent injury and MEDEVAC to Germany
SSG Daniel Lundeen for his recovery while at Fort Knox
SFC Benjamin Cotto for his recovery while at Fort Knox
SSG Tom Curtis for his recovery while at Walter Reed Medical Center
SGT Maurice Richardson for his recent surgery while at Fort McCoy
SPC Steven Wells for his recovery while at Fort McCoy
SPC Martin Kempf for his recent MEDEVAC, surgery and recovery while in Germany and Walter Reed Medical Center
SSG Henry Padilla's father during his recent illness

I want to thank everyone for his or her support and care during our deployment. The letters and care packages have been a godsend to our troops and their well being and emotional state. There are items that every soldier can use and donations are greatly appreciated. We do have an MWR (Morale, Welfare, and Recreation) tent set up with a 43" TV, DVD player; card tables, chairs, and couches. Any movies, cards or games are appreciated. Phone cards (30 or 60 minutes) are needed as well for the troops. Early on, we received a donation from Wal-Mart of disposable cameras that troops used while on missions to take spontaneous shots of their friends as well. We have run out and those contributions really mean a lot to the troops. Any donations received can be provided to the FRG Coordinator, Mr. Bob Brown. He can work with our Battalion to get items sent over.

Thank you again. God Speed and Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,
LT Rhonda L. Petersen
Commander

If you have an email address, please let us know. This information is very important to us. Contact us by emailing the FRG at frg1244tc@yahoo.com as soon as possible. In the subject box write:

Family of 1244th email address request.

Be sure to include your full name, your soldier's name, your relation to the soldier, and your phone number so we can reach you if we have any questions. Thank you so much. **AS CONFUSING AS IT SEEMS WE ARE NOW BACK ON YAHOO! EMAIL IS THE MOST EFFICIENT DISTRIBUTION OF THE NEWSLETTER AND OTHER INFORMATION.**

<http://yahoogroups.com>

<http://www.il.ngb.mil.1244/trans>

Short, but sweet R&R Tips

Army Times November 24, 2003

Do's

1. Before R&R discuss through email, phone and letter how to maximize the leave.
2. Spend time alone with each child and your spouse.
3. Remember R&R means time off for the soldier. Do things the soldier wants to do.
4. Remind the soldier he/she is loved and needed by the family.
5. Express to the soldier how proud you are of him/her.
6. Take time to discuss important family matters, such as finances, school issues, and household needs.

Don'ts

7. Don't ask questions about the war. Let the soldier be the one to reveal feelings and share experiences.
8. Don't book social functions. If friends want to see the soldier have them drop by or meet them somewhere that's easy for the soldier to get to.
9. Don't make the soldier get out of his/her comfort zone.
10. Don't assume the soldier wants to be treated like a hero.
11. Don't have specific expectations about the leave.
12. Don't spend the time you have together being anxious about the soldier's upcoming departure.

The Illinois Military Family Relief Fund

\$500,000 Awarded so far to state military families

Chicago Tribune, November 28, 2003

The state of Illinois has given out more than \$500,000 to needy families of military personnel, with more money on the way.

Officials put \$5 million in the state budget this spring for the Military Family Relief Fund. Groups have donated an additional \$75,000, and people will be able to make donations on their tax returns next year.

The money is for the families of people called to active duty in the Illinois National Guard or the military reserves. The Department of Military Affairs has been taking applications for assistance and deciding who qualifies.

Families can get \$500 for having someone called up. In cases of death or injury, the family gets \$1,000, and families having trouble making ends meet can get up to \$2,000.

"We owe it to our soldiers and airmen to ensure that their families have assistance available to them, whether financially or emotionally through our family readiness groups," said Brig. Gen. Randal Thomas, the Illinois National Guard adjutant general.

<http://www.il.ngb.army.mil/familyreadiness/FamilyRelief.htm>



Christmas Party Dec 14th

The 1244th's Family Christmas Party is Sunday December 14th. RSVP's were due to Caroline Perkins (630) 719-1314 by Dec 1st. If you missed this deadline, please give Caroline a call to see if we can still work your family into the plans. Santa is planning to attend, bringing a gift for all children of the soldiers that are 16 and under. For Santa and the planners to get things "right" we must know exactly who to expect at the party. We are happy to report that several significant donations have been received to finance the entire party. In particular, we have the USO to thank for a very significant donation.

See you at the Christmas Party. Time: 12 noon to 5:00 P.M.



At: ARMORY
8660 WEST Cermak Road
North Riverside, IL 60546
R.S.V.P. Call Caroline Perkins
Phone: (630) 719-1314

November 22, 2003, we held a successful COOKIE BAKE and packaging event. About 25 people attended, a few baked at Armory, while many others brought baked cookies to send to our soldiers. We estimate that we had over 350 DOZEN cookies to send. Just the postage alone was almost \$400, seeing the expressions on the soldiers would be a thrill.



Birthday Wishes

Congratulations to the following soldiers that have BIRTHDAYS in the month of December;

HAMPTON-PORTER, MICHELLE, HERNANDEZ, ANDRES, KLEPSE,
DAMIEN, GAWRON, SEBASTIAN, CALHOUN, NOEL, SALAZAR,
FRANCISCO, WILLIAMS, BERNARD, BALDWIN, MACKENSIE,
SCHOENHOFEN, DOUGLAS, ALBA, EDGAR, PORTER, CORY,
DIAZ, SAMUEL JR., CHISENALL, YVETTE, PANTOJA, RAFAEL,
POKORNY, DANIEL, LEMMER, LISA, and GONZALEZ, TAMAYO



1244th Update

By now everyone should have received the news that the 1244th will be “in country” for a minimum of one year. In other words, they will be in Kuwait for a period of one year from the date they actually arrived in Kuwait. This puts our unit in Kuwait until possibly mid-April. At that time they will then proceed to a state-side demobilization station, possibly Ft. McCoy. Upon arrival at the de-mob site, there will be a 45 day period for outprocessing and debriefing which should include some days of leave if the soldier has some leave time coming to him/her. Every soldier accrues 2 1/2 days of leave per month while on active duty. If a soldier has not taken leave prior to date of demobilization, he/she is entitled to take leave within the 45-day debriefing period. This should put our unit back home possibly by the end of May or mid-June. Of course all of these dates are subject to change, as the Army usually does change things. Please use this information as a very general guide to plan for your soldier's return and remember to maintain some degree of flexibility. The Family Readiness Group will be planning a wonderful welcome home reception upon our unit's arrival. We are also planning a tremendous party for them after they arrive in Chicago.

New Deployment

The 1244th's sister unit the 1544th Transportation Company in Paris, IL has been mobilized for deployment to the Iraq Theatre of Operations. Sixteen of the 1244th's soldiers that are not deployed with the 1244th are being transferred to the 1544th to fill vacant position required for deployment. The soldiers being deployed with the 1544th are: Mackensie Baldwin, Steven Bastean, Stephen Begonia, Tonnisha Bolihan, Victor Garcia, Luis Mari, Wendy Molina, Rafael Pantoja, Ivory Phipps, Aparicio Santiago, Justin Villanueva, Johnathon Villanueva, Edward Ward, Robert Williams and Richard Lyon.

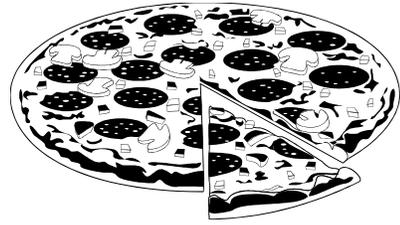
We wish all these soldiers and the entire 1544th God Speed have a safe deployment with a swift return.

If there are packages or letters to be sent, please use the address list below.
God Speed! As soon as we have an address for the 1544th, we'll include it.

LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, RANK

143RD / 32ND / 419TH / 1244TH Trans

APO, AE 09366



Coming Events

Dec14th, Christmas Party, Location and time to be determined. Non-deployed 1244th soldiers will join us for a holiday celebration

Jan 9th, 7 PM Pizza Night at the Armory. Get together to share experiences during the current deployment. Pizza \$3 for adults & \$1 under 10

Jan 30th, 7 PM Pizza Night at the Armory. Get together to share experiences during the current deployment. Pizza \$3 for adults & \$1 under 10

Acontecimientos Que vienen

Dec14th, partido de Navidad, localización y hora de ser determinado. los 1244ths soldados No-desplegados nos ensamblarán para una celebración del día de fiesta

Noche de la pizza de enero 9no, 7 del P.M. en el arsenal. Reunirse para compartir experiencias durante el despliegue actual. Pizza \$3 para los adultos y \$1 debajo de 10

Noche de la pizza de enero 30, 7 del P.M. en el arsenal. Reunirse para compartir experiencias durante el despliegue actual. Pizza \$3 para los adultos y \$1 debajo de 10



The FRG Council and Committee Chairs;**Leader:**

Bob Brown,
(630) 393-1413
blkbt7@aol.com
Soldier, Greg Brown

Secretary:

Theresa Lemmer,
(847) 683-7202
theresalemmer22@hotmail.com
Soldier, Lisa Lemmer and
Matthew Palm

Treasurer:

Carol May,
(630) 637-1946
Soldier, Donald May
clmay@wowway.com

Phone Tree:

Diva Davis,
(708) 345-4719
diva2018@comcast.net
Soldier, James Davis

Newsletter:

Bartolo Nava,
(312) 217-2263
bartolonava@aol.com
Soldier, Eric Morales

Special Events:

Caroline Perkins,
carolineperkins@comcast.net
Soldier, Wes Perkins

Fund Raising:

Renee Berens,
(847) 669-5902,
renee_berens@adp.com
Soldier, William Berens
Jessica Dewitt,
(630) 290-7994,
daisy7997@aol.com soldier,
Greg Brown

Council members:

Claudia Hillsman,
(708) 345-3589,
maeliza18@aol.com soldier,
Daniel Hillsman
Lisa Pupillo,
(630) 837-7355,
lisamarie1324@yahoo.com
Soldier, Clint Thompson
Laura Thompson,
(630) 745-0458
lbthom79@yahoo.com
Soldier, Clint Thompson

Shawna Howard,

(708) 226-1811
Shawnaop@aol.com
Soldier, Len Howard
Cheryl Pokorny,
(630) 616-1528,
cheri81264@cs.com
Soldier, SFC Dan Pokorny &
SPC Dan Pokorny
Tracy Duffing,
(708) 824-1635,
tduffing12@msn
Soldier, Jesse Duffing

Rear Detachment:

SSG Carl Langs,
(708) 824-6030
carl.langs@il.ngb.army.mil

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/frg1244tc/>

See us at:

We're on the Web!



FRG FAMILY READINESS GROUP
1244th Transportation Co.
ILLINOIS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
8660 west Cermak Road
North Riverside, IL 60546