



FRG FAMILY READINESS GROUP

Newsletter Date
March



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FLASH - LT Petersen wrote the following around February 25th. Since then the unit has been ordered to continue with trucking missions and the dates indicated below are not accurate! No new dates are available. **Flash**

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

Dear Family, Friends, and concerned parties,

Welcome to our last newsletter! We have received word of a fly date from theater on 2 April. However, we will begin working at the wash racks to clean our equipment on 6-8 March. What this means is that IF we can get through customs inspections of our connex containers and personnel baggage, along with mandatory briefings for our soldiers we could be out of country by the end of March. We will leave no later than 2 April, so regardless we will be home very soon. We are in a crunch period of preparing to leave theater so our soldiers will be very busy. We will have all of our troops back together in one area officially on 25 February when we will have completed our Force Protection mission. Our troops have done an excellent job and have been complimented on their steadfastness and uncompromising leadership skills in this area. Our remaining mission of acting as an MCT (mission control tracking) for Al Hamadah General Contracting services has gone so well that we have the responsibility for this local vendor. We have over twenty personnel acting in this capacity and 1244th has set the standard for the incoming units to take over. We are currently controlling over 700 items of rolling stock (our unit only had 170) with no losses. We act under General Whitehead (143rd Transportation Command) and General Diamond (377th Theater Support Command) and have almost weekly visits from both of these VIPs. Our soldiers have acted in a capacity that most group transportation staffs do not ever have the opportunity to work with. This mission will be completed 6 March.

We had our one-year anniversary of being on Active Duty on 3 Feb. All of our soldiers were able to participate in a company picnic that was catered from a local vendor with MWR funds that the unit had accumulated. It was very nice to all be together if at least for one day. We had a softball game that was played hard by several members of the unit and because of the officiating, I still do not know the official score. Everyone (that desired) to go on leave was accommodated and I am proud that everyone returned refreshed and ready to prepare to go home.

We would request that families and friends do not send anymore packaged mail after March 1st or letter mail after March 5th due to the severe delays that we have been having.



Some of our troops activities:

- SPC Sara Hundahl placed 2nd in the Women's division (29 and under) for completing the Escape from Arifjan Half Marathon (13 miles), 1 hour 51 minutes
- SPC Brittany Hohoff placed 3rd in the Women's division (29 and under) for completing the Escape from Arifjan Half Marathon (13 miles), 1 hour 55 minutes
- SSG Tony Holland, SGT Melissa Downey and CPL Aaron Hughes competed in the Half Marathon
- The following soldiers were awarded the Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM): SGT Aguayom Marquez, CW3 Archibald, CPL Morales, SPC Lara, SGT D. White, SSG Howard, SGT Duffing, SGT Jones III, SSG Padilla, 1SG Ruiz, CPL Pippin, SGT Wirtz, SPC Echeverria, SGT Sanchez, SSG Davis, SPC Santiago, SPC Brown, SSG Grigsby, SSG Berens, SPC Hohoff, 1LT Galicia, SPC Gawron, SPC Sounthala, CPL Lang, SSG Flores, M., SGT Rocha, SPC Campus, SPC Magana, CPL Melendez, SPC Palm, SPC Frederick, SFC Scott
- The following personnel were presented with 32nd Group coins from Col Luis Visot: SGT Banks, SPC Sounthala, SGT Daniels, SPC DeLeon, SPC Arreguin, CPL Pippin, SPC Williams, J., SPC Hohoff, SPC RodriguezLagunas, SSG Bennett, SPC Echeverria, SGT Wirtz, Sgt Drabek, SPC Wackerlin, SPC Santiago, SGT White, D., 1SG Ruiz
- The following personnel were presented coins from the 419th Transportation Battalion, LTC Todd Burch: SGT Watkins, SPC Hart, SPC Klepser, SPC Frederick, SPC Palm, CPL Morales, CPL Warner, CPL Hughes, SPC Schoenhofen, SPC Collazo
- SPC Adam Smith was coined by the Brigade Commander of the 101st Airborne for capturing 6 local nationals stealing government property while on duty with Al Hamadah General Contracting Services
- SPC Calhoun placed 1st in the Bench Press competition for overall placement and division placement of lifting over 450 lbs.
- CPL Hughes, SPC Echeverria, and SPC Morales were coined by the 226th Group Commander for enhancements to the Truckville complex by providing signs drawn by hand on their off-duty hours
- SPC Eric Morales was advanced to the rank of Corporal (CPL)
- Soldiers completing one year of their tour will be awarded the Overseas Service Ribbon (OSR)

Well wishes, Good Health, and God Speed to:

SGT Timothy Washington for his recent illness and recovery at Ft McCoy
SPC Michael Downs for his recent illness and MEDEVAC to Germany
SPC Lisa Lemmer for her recent illness and MEDEVAC to Ft McCoy
SPC Wayne Golden for his recent surgery and MEDEVAC to WRAMC
SSG Aaron Hoard for his recent surgery and MEDEVAC to WRAMC

We are preparing to come home to Fort McCoy in April. We have been given a tentative date of the 15th (+ or - 48 hours). The 48 hours is due to the high amount of personnel that will be leaving theater at roughly the same time. This is the date we have been given "for now". Everything is subject to change. We are NOT being replaced by another company which makes our processes for leaving much easier. We have been preparing equipment for turn-in and exchange, cleaning, and maintenance. There will be a few personnel that will be Super Cargo. These 3-4 personnel are volunteers (that is all I will accept) to ride on the boat to return our equipment to the states. I only accept volunteers because due to the amount of time that we have been away from home, it would be unfair / unjust to force someone when there are willing volunteers to meet this requirement. I hope the families understand and I will be happy to explain of necessary to any family member who writes to me.

Sincerely,
LT Rhonda L. Petersen
Commander

Family Readiness Conference 2004

The 15th Annual Illinois National Guard Family Readiness Conference will be held April 23-25 in Champaign, IL. The conference is open to ALL Army civilian volunteers. Volunteers must have a Volunteer Agreement on file with the State and must complete Level 1 of the Army Family Team Building program on the internet. (<http://www.armyfamilyteambuilding.org/home.asp>) , if these requirements are met funding for lodging at the conference is available. The cost to those attending will be \$25 registration and meals (except continental breakfast) both lodging and mileage will be reimbursed.

This is a very good conference for all FRG volunteers. Last years conference consisted of many very important and educational sessions. As the 1244ths FRG evolves into a new area of Family Readiness during non-deployed times this years conference will be very important to those family members that will carry on the FRG mission.

If you are interested in learning more about this conference and are considering attending, please contact Bob Brown (630) 393-1413 or frg1244@yahoo.com.

IG Tip of the Week # 73 - Army One Source

The Army has recently stood up a program called Army One Source which is designed to assist soldiers and family members with a host of topics. They offer a 24hr/7 day a week toll free number (800-464-8107) in which callers can actually talk with a live person and not a recording. This is a great tool for unit family support groups to share.

This free service offers referrals to military and community resources such as credit counseling, basic legal information, day care and school information and other local community services that service members may not be aware of. They also have a very useful website at <http://www.armyonesource.com>.

It will ask you for a User ID, type in "ARMY"; it will also ask for a password, type in "ONESOURCE".

Site for local tax help

You can refer to the above site for tax assistance for military personnel.

<http://www.cpaspi.org/icpas/consumer/military.asp>

Chicago Land CLEP Testing

The state education office is proposing administering CLEP and/or any other type of civilian or military testing on 21 and 22 May 04 at the N. Riverside Armory, start time 0930. If interested, or know someone who may be, please let me know what test and what day you will participate.



Family Visit at De-mobilization Sites

(The following is a message to families of the units in the 67th Troop Command. The 1244th is not part of the 67th but the message is the same. Demobilization stations are attempting to process units as quickly as possible. A single soldier can inadvertently delay the entire unit in being released from the demobilization station.)

"This message is an attempt to clarify the policy regarding families traveling to the demobilization stations. Questions about this have been brought to my attention from nearly every Family Readiness Group, and understandably so.

"We cannot direct families what to do in regards to visiting the demobilization station. Some demobilization stations have a policy letter asking that families stay away during the demobilization process. Senior leaders and personnel from the State Family Program that are familiar with the numerous requirements for our soldiers as they return agree with this policy. There have been numerous problems when soldiers have not been where they are supposed to be, because they were off somewhere with their family or friends. This has caused whole units to be delayed because certain portions of the process will not proceed if all soldiers are not present and accounted for. UCMJ action is being contemplated against some soldiers from units that have already returned for this type of occurrence. The soldiers were supposed to be at a specific location for processing, and made a conscious decision to disregard the requirement and go with families instead. This caused the other ninety soldiers that wanted to get home to their families to be delayed by an extra day.

"We want to try to get all soldiers back home to their families and friends as expeditiously as possible. Expeditious does not mean short-cut the process. It is in the best interest of every soldier to complete every portion of the process while at the demobilization station. This is the final opportunity to make sure their records are correct, any health issues that resulted from the mobilization are documented, and so forth. Soldiers may have a medical issue that is undetected, and should not assume that because they feel okay there is nothing wrong.

"I am truly grateful for everything the soldiers have accomplished and all of the sacrifices the soldiers and their families have made so that they could answer our great nation's call. They have performed in an outstanding manner, and I could not be prouder of their incredible effort. I was amazed by the resolve of our soldiers and by the support of the families and friends during the mobilization process, and that amazement has grown with each passing day. I will do everything within my power to get the soldiers through the process and back home to the communities that anxiously await the opportunity to welcome back their heroes in fantastic celebrations!!!

"For your part, I ask that you resist traveling to the demobilization site and that you discourage other family members from traveling to the demobilizationsite. I know this will be difficult and I understand your desire to see your soldiers as soon as possible. Please do not let distractions for some of the soldiers delay the process for all.

"For my part, I will work through the 67th Troop Command and the State Mobilization Officer to push for an efficient and expeditious processing schedule once we know when the unit will be arriving at the demobilization station. I am determined to get the soldiers and families together as soon as I can.

"Let me know what questions you have, or what else we can do to minimize the impact of implementing the guidance we received. Again, thanks for all that you do to support our soldiers. I am forever grateful."

LTC Meyer

Birthday Wishes

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

MATOS, MILTON WHITE, FRANK MAGANA, RAUL KEMPF, MARTIN FLORES, LUIS ANGEL GONZALEZ, MARCOS MCCARTH, Y MATTHEW WARNER, TYRONE STEPHEN LARA, JANET HOWARD, LEONARD HARROLD, RONALD KEITH TANOVIC, SEID HAMMOCK, ANTONISE FLORES, MANUEL HERROD, ORLANDO PARKS, MELVIN LYNN ANTWINE MARILYN FREDERICK, DONALD MARI, LUIS ANAYA, RYAN RAE DOWNS, MICHAEL BROWN, GREGORY HUGHES, AARON

Coming Events

FRG Council Meetings Every third Wednesday, 7PM at the Armory, Open to all, next meeting **March 23 rd.**

Mar 12th, 7 PM. Friday, March 12th Pizza Night will be held at the Omega Restaurant in Warrenville. Get together to share experiences during the current deployment. Pizza \$3 for adults & \$1 under 10

Apr 2nd, 7 PM Pizza Night at the Armory. Get together to share experiences during the current deployment. Pizza \$3 for adults & \$1 under 10

Apr 23rd, 7 PM Pizza Night at the Armory. Get together to share experiences during the current deployment. Pizza \$3 for adults & \$1 under 10

FRG Sesiones del Consejo cada tercer miércoles, los 7PM en el arsenal, abierto a todos, marzo siguiente 23 rd de la reunión.

Marzo 12th, 7 P.M. noche Viernes, noche de marcha de la 12 será llevado a cabo en el restaurante de Omega en Warrenville \$3 para los adultos y \$1 debajo de 10

Abril 2nd, 7 P.M. noche de la pizza en el arsenal. Reunirse para compartir experiencias durante el despliegue actual. Pizza \$3 para los adultos y \$1 debajo de 10

Abril 23rd, 7 P.M. noche de la pizza en el arsenal. Reunirse para compartir experiencias durante el despliegue actual. Pizza \$3 para los adultos y \$1 debajo de 10

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>



Pizza Night Change

Friday, March 12th Pizza Night will be held at the Omega Restaurant in Warrenville. The Omega is located on Route 59 just a little over one block north of I-88. From the Chicago drive west on the Eisenhower to I-88 and continue west to RT 59 exit north (right) the restaurant is just past the first traffic light.

As usual we will charge \$3 per adult, however we will not be having pizza this evening. We have arranged for snacks (hors d'oeuvres) and soft drinks for everyone. We are expecting a representative from the 733rd QM BN to join us with answers to our questions. (Last Pizza Night they had the wrong date.)

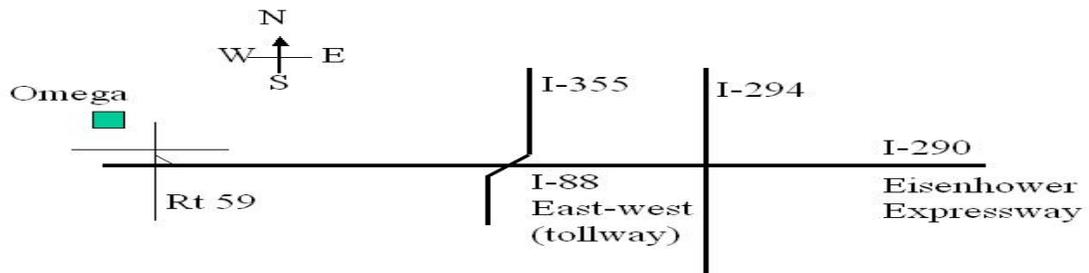
If you have any questions, please call Bob Brown 630-393-1413.

Cambio De la Noche De la Pizza

Viernes, noche de la pizza de marcha de la 12 será llevado a cabo en el restaurante de Omega en Warrenville. La Omega está situada en la ruta 59 apenas un pequeño sobre un norte del bloque de I-88. De la impulsión de Chicago del oeste en el Eisenhower a I-88 y continuar al oeste a la salida del RT 59 al norte (derecho) que el restaurante es pasado justo el primer semáforo.

Como de costumbre cargaremos \$3 por adulto, no obstante no comeremos pizza esta tarde. Hemos arreglado para los bocados (d'oeuvres de los hors) y las bebidas suaves para cada uno. Estamos esperando que un representante del 736 BN de QM nos ensamblara con respuestas a nuestras preguntas. (la noche pasada de la pizza tenían la fecha incorrecta.)

Si usted tiene cualesquiera preguntas, llamar por favor el marrón 630-393-1413 de Bob.



Homecoming Reception

Your FRG Council has begun planning a Homecoming Reception for our soldiers. Details are not available, but we will be using our phone tree, email and whatever means available to get you the details before the reception. We intend to have as many families and friends possible at the Armory when the soldiers return by bus from Ft McCoy. This will occur sometime in April and the date and time are not known. We are arranging for refreshments and possibly speakers if required to meet "political" needs.

The FRG Council and Committee Chairs;

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

See us at:

We're on the Web!

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1244th Transportation Company

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