



FRG FAMILY READINESS GROUP

Newsletter Date
MAY



Special Interest Articles:

- Comments from LT. Petersen Page 1,2

Individual Highlights:

Extension

Information

Page 2,3

AWARDED COINS

Army One Source

The Kane County

Cougars

Page 4

Birthday Wishes

Coming Events

Chaplain

Hotline

Page 5

Build-A-Bear

1244th Night at

Joliet Jack

Hammers

Page 6

FRG COUNCIL

AND COMMITTEE

Page 7

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

Family, friends, and loved ones,

Hope this finds you healthy and in good spirits. We have just completed our Boots on the Ground (BOG) here in theater. We did receive word, as you know, of a 120 day extension. Our Group Commander, COL Cory Youmans, Battalion Commander, LTC Glenn Kolin presented this information to our troops on 15 April. We are in the process of completing the task of transporting logistics for the theater. This is our mission and the soldiers of the unit are performing exceptionally well. Our unit has been designated as one of the best and we intend on keeping up this standard. You should all be proud of their remarkable achievements.

Remarkable events

-SSG Ricardo Antunez was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his superior achievements in Maintenance and receipt of the NCO of the Year for the 733rd Quartermaster Battalion

-SGT Luis Aguayo Marquez was promoted to Staff Sergeant (SSG)

-SGT Benjamin Watkins was promoted to Staff Sergeant (SSG)

-SGT David White was promoted to Staff Sergeant (SSG)

-SPC Yelivette Santiago was promoted to Sergeant

-SPC Ivory Hart was promoted to Sergeant

-SPC Aaron Hughes was promoted to Sergeant

-SPC Adam Smith was promoted to Sergeant

-SPC Eric Voirin was promoted to Sergeant

-CPL Donald May was promoted to Sergeant

-SPC Sebastian Gawron was promoted to Sergeant

-SPC Andrew Lang was promoted to Sergeant

-SGT Carissa Ryback and SGT Gary King were awarded the Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM) for superior achievement in Maintenance

-SPC Cory Porter was awarded the ARCOM for superior achievements in Maintenance

-SGT Andrew Lang, SGT Gary King, SGT Scott Drabek were awarded the Korean Service Medal for their previous service to that theater during Active Duty

-LTC Christopher Hall as the new 733rd Quartermaster Battalion Commander

God Speed and Good Health to the following:

-SPC Wesley Perkins' father during his recent illness

-SPC Kishauna Hampton's father during his recent illness

-CPL Matthew McCarthy's wife and children during their recent illnesses

-1SG Roberto Ruiz's family for the recent passing of his uncle

Many thanks to our recent contributors:

-Veteran's of Foreign Wars of LaCrosse, WI and Lindenhurst, IL for their recent care packages

-Yellow Ribbon Campaign of Southern Illinois for their recent care packages and newsletters

-Indian Princess Organization of Des Plaines for their recent gift basket

-Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn and her staff for their present of 2 Illinois State flags

-NGB (Camp Arifjan) for their donation of presents from the State of Illinois & the President of the United States



Thank you again to all of our loved ones. We will complete our mission soon and will return safely to you all. We would also like to take this opportunity to nip some rumors in the bud. We do not have a return date at this time. I will provide this information to your soldier and the chain of command as soon as it becomes available. I do not keep this type of information hidden as most of your soldiers can attest to. Unless it comes directly from my office, I would not trust anything that is “reported” through the media or word of mouth (unless you see me or your soldier standing directly in front of a camera). LTC Hall is aware of our mission as we (he and I) communicate 2-3 times per week. I am keeping this line of communication open so that families can receive the support they need from our peacetime command. Some families have had issues with TriCare. Your soldier should go to the following website to ensure enrollment is correct: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tricare-servicecenters/default/cfm>. Soldiers are eligible for TriCare coverage for 180 days after their completion of Active Duty (excluding the terminal leave period). Also, the Additional Incentive Pay (AIP) has been approved for up to \$1000 per month for each additional month served in a combat environment (for most soldiers, this took effect 18 Apr 04). Partial months are included, in other words, the soldier only had to go over 1 day of their BOG. To be eligible, your soldier had to serve 12 consecutive months in a combat theater (Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan) OR 12 months in the last 15 months to qualify. The period that soldiers left for R&R leave is not counted against them. This should be reflected on the May 15th, or at the latest, 1 Jun 04 LES. Back pay is authorized for those soldiers that qualify.

Have a good month and we hope to see you soon,
1LT Rhonda L. Petersen

Extension Information

The following is an excerpt from an Army Reserve information packet that was provided last month when the Pentagon announced the extension of the soldiers including the 1244th. This was an 11 page document of which I have only included portions. I hope this information answers some of your questions.

“The Secretary of Defense has approved the delay of redeployment for selected units in the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Attached, as addendum, is the current list of affected units. The purpose of the delay is to provide the combatant commander with the forces required to defeat those elements threatening the security of Iraq. The delay of redeployment extends selected formations beyond their current deployment departure date. These units will redeploy to their home stations up to 120 days later than expected.

Commander, US Central Command is authorized to extend the deployment duration of selected combat, combat support and combat service support formations as required. The extension of a unit past 12 months in the CENTCOM area of responsibility in support of OIF is done on a case-by-case basis and is approved by the Secretary of Defense.

We are committed to maintaining the 12-month rotation policy; however, simultaneously the combatant commander must maintain forces necessary to ensure mission success. As we stated in September, when we established the 12-month policy, the combatant commander will ultimately determine the appropriate tour length based on mission requirements. We have extended and shortened tours based on the combatant commander’s needs. The Department of Defense and Army Leadership is committed to supporting the combatant commander and his critical mission requirements in support of the Nation, while also balancing the need to take care of Soldiers, their families, the reserve component employers, and military communities.

The American Soldier sacrifices each day by contributing to the Nation’s efforts and will continue to provide critical support to our Nation’s successes with the highest priority of securing the safety of the American people.”

Near term security needs in Iraq require the extension of approximately 20,000 forces for 90 days in Iraq and up to 120 days before returning home.

This extension plan meets the Combatant Commands needs, while minimizing the impact on current and future force rotation requirements and the strain on our service members, their families and their employers. This plan is capability based – when a unit's capabilities are not required the Combatant Commander will release those units. Iraqi military, civil defense forces, and Iraqi police are taking more responsibility for their security situation with each passing day. The 1st Armored Division and the 2d Cavalry Regiment (Light) make up

the bulk of combat forces being extended in Iraq supported by Army National Guard and reserve combat support and combat service support personnel.

Q: This is the second time you've had to extend troops beyond the 1 year in theater. Will this continue?

A: The vast majority of forces have met the 12 months in theater rotation policy. The few exceptions have generally been in specialized units or fields. In this case, we have a unique situation with the June 30th deadline approaching and the need for a larger presence is required.

Q: What will you do if General Abizaid requests additional troops once this extension is complete?

A: The Secretary of Defense has been consistent on this point. The combatant commander will have the forces he needs to accomplish his mission. I don't want to speculate on any future scenarios, but the combatant commander believes these additional troops are needed at this time to meet a short-term security challenge. If he still requires additional forces at that time, we are committed to providing the capabilities he requires.

Q: Explain the financial compensation for Soldiers involuntarily extended beyond twelve months?

A: Military members who are deployed in Iraq and are required to remain beyond the unit's normal 12-month rotation date will receive \$1000 per month for any month or partial month served in Iraq beyond the date the unit was due to rotate.

To qualify for these incentives a military member currently serving in a specified unit in Iraq must have been deployed to Iraq (to include staging time in Kuwait) and/or Afghanistan for a combined deployed time of twelve consecutive months, or twelve months within a fifteen-month period (365 out of 450 days).

A military member who qualifies for this incentive package will be paid a flat \$200 in extra HDP for any month or any portion of a month served in Iraq beyond the date the member's unit was due to rotate out of Iraq, as long as the member's total monthly rate for HDP does not exceed \$300. Additionally,

the member will be offered: a flat \$800 per month in AIP to be paid for any month in which the member performs service in Iraq beyond the member's scheduled 12-month rotation date.

Q: How long can you keep a mobilized Reserve/Guard service member on active duty?

A: By law (Title 10, Section 12302), up to one million service members of the Ready Reserve may be mobilized under a Partial Mobilization for up to 24 consecutive months. By DoD policy, those mobilized will be up to 24 months of cumulative service



AWARDED COINS

AT our last FRG pizza night on April 23rd, two of our FRG Council Member were Awarded Coins for their work.

Awarded to Bob Brown for his work as FRG Leader was:

Col. Robert Morrow presented the 65th TCB coin
LTC Chris Hall presented the 733rd QM BN coin
CSM Ed Nicklaus presented 733rd QM BN Sergeant Major's coin

Awarded to Bartolo Nava for his work as editor in chief of monthly newsletter:

LTC Chris Hall presented the 733rd QM BN coin

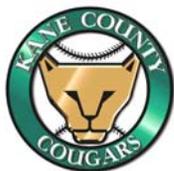
Congratulations to both Bob and Bart for their ongoing hard work.

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".



The Kane County Cougars have again joined forces with Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn's office to support Illinois military service men and women and their families this Memorial Day Weekend. The Cougars are hosting a Military Appreciation Weekend, Friday, May 28 through Monday, May 31, when the Cougars battle the South Bend Silver Hawks in a four-game stint.

Festivities begin May 28, as the Kane County Cougars will donate \$1 of every walk-up and individual ticket sold Friday evening to the Relief fund. The Cougars will also be collecting items to be placed into care packages that Operation Home Front will deliver to military members currently deployed across the globe. Through Monday, fans making donations to the care packages will enter into a raffle that will be held each evening and will feature a team signed patriotic baseball cap along with other Cougars souvenirs.

As a special tribute, all troops and family members showing proper military identification will receive a complimentary ticket to watch the Cougars take on the Silver Hawks throughout the four-game series. Fireworks shows set to patriotic music will follow the Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening contests.

For information, contact the Cougars box office at 630/232-8811 or visit online at kccougars.com.

Birthday Wishes

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

CARMONA, MARK MELENDEZ, RADAME PALM, MATTHEW PEARSON, TEELA GRIGSBY, MARC MCKINNEY, KIMBERLY LANG, ANDREW LISTWAN STEVEN HART, IVORY PEGUES, JORDAN MASTERS, BRIAN HAMPTON, KISHAUNA GOMEZ, MICHAEL

Coming Events

FRG Council Meetings Every third Wednesday, 7PM at the Armory, Open to all, next meeting **May 24th**.

May 14th, 7 PM Pizza Night at the Armory. Get together to share experiences during the current deployment. 733rd QM Battalion representatives are scheduled to answer questions.
Pizza \$3 for adults & \$1 under 10

May 15th, 10 AM, USO Build-A-Bear, Navy Peir.

May 28th-31st, Kane County Cougar Baseball game, Geneva. Free admission with a Military ID.

June 4th, 7 PM Pizza Night at the Armory. Get together to share experiences during the current deployment. 733rd QM Battalion representatives are scheduled to answer questions.
Pizza \$3 for adults & \$1 under 10

June 21st, 7:05PM 1244th Night at Joliet Jack Hammer Baseball Game, Joliet.

FRG Sesiones del Consejo Cada tercer miércoles, los 7PM en el arsenal, se abren en todos, reunión siguiente de mayo el 24.

Mayo 14th 7 del P.M. Noche de la pizza , en el arsenal. Reunirse para compartir experiencias durante el despliegue actual. 733rd Los representantes del batallón de QM programar contestar a preguntas. Pizza \$3 para los adultos y \$1 debajo de 10

Mayo 15 , 10, USO Construir-Uno- Oso , Navy Peir.

Mayo 28th-31st, Juego del béisbol del puma del condado de Kane, Ginebra. Admisión libre con una identificación militar.

Junio 4th, 7 del P.M. Noche de la pizza , en el arsenal. Reunirse para compartir experiencias durante el despliegue actual. 733rd Los representantes del batallón de QM programar contestar a preguntas. Pizza \$3 para los adultos y \$1 debajo de 10

Junio el 21, 1244th noche de los 7:05PM en el juego del béisbol del martillo de Joliet , Joliet.

Chaplain hotline

**Hotline to assist families,
Chaplain hotline number: 1-800-443-2985**



Build-A-Bear

We have received the following invitation from the Chicago Chapter of the USO. The USO has been very generous to the 1244th and this continues with this invitation. All families with children are encouraged to attend. Those without children can attend and help "Build a Bear" to be distributed to other children of soldiers by the USO.

Bob Brown

We want to extend an invitation to the families with children of the 1244th for Operation Stuffed Hugs.

This event will take place at Build A Bear on 15 May 04 at 10 AM at Navy Pier.

That day, citizens are making bears that will be distributed to military children throughout the country.

Your unit has gone through so much, we thought of your families right away and to invite the children to come and make their own bears to take home that day.

There will be media there, so we want to be sure everyone would be comfortable with that.

For your families we would provide a parking voucher so no costs would be involved and lunch as well.

We need names and numbers by ASAP. Please contact either Bob Brown (frg1244tc@yahoo.com 630-393-1413) or Diva Davis (divajdavis@aol.com 708-345-4719)

The parking vouchers will be provided on site, so pull into the West parking garage, pull a ticket and then we will give them a voucher to exit the garage. We will also give you the Navy Pier gift certificates so they can eat lunch in the food court at the vendor of their choice.

Also if anyone wanted to stay longer, we can also provide the families with free IMAX theatre tickets. I will check and see what the shows and times will be that day.

We would love for you to be apart of the day!!!

USO of Chicago

1244th Night at Joliet Jack Hammers

The Council has arranged a 1244th Night in Joliet with the Joliet Jack Hammers Baseball Team. Sunday, June 21st The Jack Hammers have offered us ½ price on box seat tickets (\$5 for a \$9 ticket). Additional benefits maybe arranged as we work with the Jack Hammer management to complete our package. The Team is quite interested in putting a good package together for our families. Additional information will be available later. Please contact Carol May (630-637-1946 or clmay@wowway.com) to indicate your interest in this fun event.

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://yahogroups.com>

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

The FRG Council and Committee Chairs;

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

See us at:

We're on the Web!

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