



GUNFIGHTER GAZETTE

1st Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment Family Readiness Group Newsletter

MARCH 2004



1-1 FRG Leadership

BN FRG Leader

Laura Moore

09819-722-283 (Home)

09802-832-808 (Work)

0160-9835-1530 (Mobile)

davidandlauramoore@t-online.de

BN FRG Advisor

Diane Alpeter

09872-805-385

alpeter@t-online.de

BN FRG Advisor

Heidi Lumley

09872-805574

lumleyh@hotmail.com

BN FRG Newsletter

Frannie Schneider

09875-978-402 (Home)

09802-832-064/883 (Work)

frannie.schneider@us.army.mil

BN FRG Treasurer

Kerri Burton

09802-833-213

kerri_burton@eu.odedodea.edu

HHC FRG Leader/BN Advisor

Laura Rouse

09802-953851

lauchreth@hotmail.com

A Co. FRG Leader

Julie Broam

09825-927-055

Jrbroam@aol.com

B Co. FRG Leader

LaSandra Wise

09827-928-749

Lasandra.wise@hotmail.com

C Co. FRG Leader

Heather Scott

09875-978-649

heather.d.scott@us.army.mil

D Co. FRG Leader

Alison Thompson

09875-978-439

A Message From Gun 6

Gunfighters and Families,

As we finish our training in Kuwait, I'd like to tell you how proud I am with all of our successes across both the Kuwaiti front and the home front. It's quite amazing what our teams have been able to do in the few short weeks since our deployment.

In Kuwait, the Gunfighters have been very busy preparing for our move north. So far, we've:

- Fired our weapons from the ground, from vehicles, and from the air;
- Hardened our vehicles and painted them to look uniform (still green, although the sand has changed their colors slightly);
- Driven our convoys through and flown our aircraft over the desert terrain;
- Rehearsed our air and ground movements;
- Maintained our aircraft, vehicles, and equipment;
- Outfitted and climatized our soldiers for the desert;.
- And most importantly, kept our morale high and our wingmen safe.

. . . And all that really stands between us and our move are last-minute checks and inspections.

Because of all the preparation we did in Germany and in Kuwait, I can sense the increased confidence in our soldiers' attitudes, and I can see it in their eyes. All of us are looking forward to leaving Udairi and heading northbound. We're ready! Even so, we still respect the difficult mission ahead of us and will be ever vigilant.

Let me close my last note from Kuwait by reminding the Task Force Gunfighter team, the Family Readiness Group, and all our families how much we appreciate the superb support you have given us so far. And even in the middle of the busiest day, we think about you and remind ourselves of how blessed we are to have you supporting us.

More to follow from Iraq. . . Gunfighter 6, over.

LTC David R. Moore

Commander, 1-1 AVN Regiment, 4th BDE, 11D

Rear-Detachment Numbers

Staff Duty Office (24 hours)

09802-832-815

Commander

CPT Josh Burton

09802-832-815/783/545 (Work)

09802-833-213 (Home)

0171-337-4147 (Cell)

josh.burton@cmtymail.98asg.army.mil

NCOIC

SFC Ernest Blakemore

Ernest.blakemore@cmtymail.98asg

army.mil

Family Readiness Liaison

SGT Ronald Harding

09802-832-815 (Work)

0175-662-7398 (Cell)

Ronald.harding@cmtymail.98asg.army.mil

Chaplain

CH (CPT) Frantisak Halka

09802-832-785

1-1 Web Site

<http://www.1-1avnbn.ansbach.army.mil/default.htm>

A Message From Gun 7

Greetings to all from Kuwait!

The Gunfighters have been very busy both day and night in preparation for the movement north into Iraq. Contrary to some opinions, the soldiers are in high spirits. Each soldier is staying highly motivated, while performing tasks and conducting high-speed training. Everyone greatly anticipates movement into Iraq and beginning phase I of the deployment.

The days at Camp Udairi were long, but looking back it seems like a short few weeks. I am confident that we used every opportunity to prepare our soldiers and maintain a battle focus. It is good to see that all of the hard training and attention to detail have paid off, while watching the professionalism and motivation of the battalion here in Kuwait. These standards also paid off in the deployment, rebuilding, and modification of our equipment from Germany to the Middle East.

Even so, we have still more training and preparation ahead for future operations. And with God's help, we will continue to be successful during our movement and continued operations in Iraq.

Finally, I would like to give a shout out to all the Gunfighter families in Katterbach. DUTY FIRST! OUT FRONT AND ON POINT!

CSM James Martin
1-1 AVN Regiment, 4th BDE, 1 ID

Notes from the Front: Company Updates

Taz Devil Update

Contributed by CPT John Broam, Taz 6

Hello from Udairi, Kuwait! We sure do miss all of you! We have been on the ground here for two weeks now, and the weather is nothing like Germany—sand, sunshine, and no snow! The first week was a lot of sitting around and waiting in lines. We were able to get some much-needed aviation classes accomplished, though.

This past week we started receiving all of our equipment (aircraft, vehicles, and shipping containers). Our aircraft were in rough shape when we got them, but you know our crew chiefs; they gave the aircraft some love, and they were ready for flight. We have begun our gunnery and environmental training. The vehicles are being prepared for the three-day trip into Iraq. They are putting in extra material to strengthen them and make sure all of the radio equipment is ready.

We have been working very hard to prepare for our move out of Udairi. I know all of us are ready to go, though, and get to Tikrit and into our mission set. I won't bore you with the details of our present living conditions,

as you have already been told I am sure. They call it Camp Wait-A-Lot for a reason.

We would like to congratulate **SPC Bill Arnold** on his recent lateral appointment to corporal in light of his leadership abilities. I'm sure it won't be long until he is promoted to sergeant. We are looking forward to many promotions over the next year from within the Taz family.

The Taz Devil family would like to wish a very happy birthday to **Melissa Lee** on March 2, **John Broam II** on March 2, **Laura King** on March 7, **Joe Broam** on March 7, **SPC Cory Karsten** on March 27, **Doris Hood** on March 29, and **CPL Bill Arnold** on March 31.

I would like to thank all of you for your continued support of the Taz Devils. With your support we truly can accomplish anything.

We will begin posting pictures on our company Web site and the battalion Web site, so look for your favorite Taz Devil soon. Please keep Julie informed, and let us know if you need anything. Duty first!



1-1 AVN Pins

Show your support for your soldier with a 1-1 AVN pin! All soldiers received two pins prior to deploying, but additional pins are available for \$5 each. Please contact your company FRG leader if you are interested in purchasing more pins. Watch the April newsletter for information on new 1-1 OIF 2 T-shirts!



Wolfpack Update

Contributed by CPT Malcolm Wise, Wolf 6

Greetings to all! It seems as if it was just yesterday when we were all home with our families and friends enjoying the Christmas holiday season. All members of Bravo Company returned safely from block leave to find ourselves on a one-way train full-steam ahead with our next stop of Camp Udairi, Kuwait. Where did the time go? Our past few weeks turned into days, and our days into hours. Then we marched out one by one answering the call of freedom. The Wolfpack departed from home to do our part in the fight on the Global War on Terrorism.

I am proud of our soldiers and extremely proud of our families and those who provide us the strength to do our duty. If it weren't for you, we would not be able to endure the many months ahead. We dedicate this newsletter to you!



Ghostrider Update

Contributed by CPT Lee Fennema, Ghost 6

Ghostrider families: Greetings from Camp Udairi, Kuwait. Every Charlie Company soldier arrived safely, on-time, and with no lost luggage. We traveled on a World Airways jet out of Nuremberg, watched the Russell Crowe film, *Master and Commander*, and ate a delicious meal. The only thing missing was the free drinks you get on international flights. We finally arrived at Kuwait International at 6:30 p.m. After a grueling four-hour bus drive, CPT Thom Jones, who arrived five days earlier, was here to welcome us to our new home—a 60-man camel tent. Time was 4 a.m.

Here at Camp Udairi, we have access to an Internet café, AT&T phones, and an MWR tent that contains free Internet access and telephones. The only problem is that we are sharing these limited commodities with

"Ghostrider Update" is continued on the next page.

Hammer Update

Contributed by CPT Levi Dunton, Hammer 6

0700. The sounds of ruck straps being cinched down and air mattresses deflating whisper through the eerie sand-filtered desert morning light. Soon we will roll out of the compound once more to practice our convoy and marksmanship skills in the unforgiving Kuwaiti desert.

While the reindeer games continue on a daily basis here in beautiful Kuwait, your spouses and loved ones continue to rise above all the minor annoyances of living in temporary housing that could double as a wind tunnel and sharing bathroom facilities with thousands of fellow service members as we prepare for the move north. Yes, as tempting as it is to remain here in this Bedouin's paradise and continue to breath dust by the great heaping lung-full, we must move on to greener pastures (figuratively speaking—green is definitely not the word for this part of the world!) in the coming days to start our great adventure in cultural diversity and international good will.

Make no mistake—this is good news, for a number of reasons. First, we're looking forward to having our own hooches and not having to sleep packed like sardines while living out of our rucksacks. We also are more than ready to give up the long lines for chow and cold showers. We all know that the sooner we get our mission officially started, the sooner we can start counting the days until returning home. The communications set up at our next location should be much better, so we're all looking forward to being able to call and e-mail without the inconvenient wait that we have here. Despite the inevitable stresses of living close and waiting to get the mission going in full swing, it has been totally gratifying to see the way everyone is coming together to make sure we're ready for what's ahead.

Until then, we continue to fill our days with training for living, shooting, and driving in the desert environment. Our bags are packed, our vehicles are hardened with enough plate steel and sand bags to make them look like Mad Max extras, and our spirits are high. Thanks for keeping us in your thoughts and keeping the home fires burning.



Ghostrider Update

Continued from the previous page.

twenty thousand other soldiers and Marines. Please be patient if your spouse doesn't call or write for a few days as lines are extremely long, and communication systems often go down.

Now that all of our equipment, vehicles, and aircraft have arrived, everyone is staying very busy. I can certainly tell that your husbands are no longer bored.

Early next week, I will be attempting to send Heather Scott some digital photos for the company e-mail distribution. Please be aware that it may be difficult for me to get these photos sent due to limited Internet access. I will continue to send updates as often as I can. Take care, and please know that we are all doing fine.



Letters from 1-1 Kids

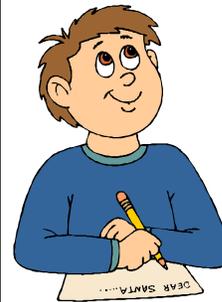
In the February newsletter, we invited kids to write letters to their deployed parent to be published in the newsletter. If you would like to include a letter to a deployed parents in the April newsletter, please send it to Frannie Schneider at frannie.schneider@us.army.mil or CMR 454 Box 3542, APO AE 09250.

To CW2 Brent Cole

Dear Daddy,

Hi! How are you? I wanted to tell you how much I love my new preschool. We do a lot of fun things there. My school has the biggest playground, and I love going outside. We have a big gym that we play ball in, too. Me and my friends pretend like we're Power Rangers; it's real cool. I got my first kiss by a girl. She came up to me and kissed me on the cheek. My friends said "yuck," but I didn't mind. Come home soon, Daddy. I really miss you. I want us to wrestle because Mommy doesn't like to wrestle. I love you.

—Carson Cole, Age 4



To CPT Scott Thompson:

Hi Daddy,

I love you and miss you! Are you riding the camels? I know that you are working really hard and will come home as soon as you can. We can play race cars and build castles. I love you Daddy!

—Jack Thompson, Age 3

Viking Update

Contributed by CPT Scott Thompson, Viking 6

The pace is fast and furious here at Camp Udairi. The scenery is fairly constant: sand, sand, and more sand; however, the food is a nice surprise. Burger King and Subway have set up shop just down the road from our tents, thus supplementing the daily mess-hall routine. The weather is quite mild for the desert, which has been an added bonus. As a result, moral is high as we anxiously await our departure north.

After a short delay at the port due to high winds on the Gulf, Delta Company has been working nonstop to get our aircraft ready. Our port team did an amazing job reassembling and troubleshooting the aircraft, which had been banged around at sea for three weeks. The rest of Delta Company is working twenty-four-hour operations to ensure the aircraft and their weapon systems are at peak performance. This hard work will enable our



pilots to get some valuable environmental training, as well as completing aerial gunnery, before heading north into Iraq. This is a tough task, as we are still adjusting to our new environment and working conditions. Nevertheless, Delta Company has persevered and is doing an excellent job.

Aside from fixing aircraft, which Delta Company does best, we have also been to the range to qualify on our individual- and crew-served weapons. We have been working hard to add extra armor to all of our vehicles for the convoy north to Tikrit. This work will culminate in a three-day convoy live-fire exercise to ensure that everyone is well prepared.

In closing, we in Delta Company would like to send our thoughts and prayers to all of our friends and families back home. Your continual support is pivotal to our success. Go Vikings!

Gunfighter Happenings on the Home Front

Don't Forget!

What: 1-1 AVN Skate Night

Who: 1-1 Spouses and Kids

When: March 13, 1800-2000

Where: AMHS Gym



Walk This Way

1-1 AVN is sponsoring a Volksmarch in Burk for 4th Brigade. All 1-1 family members are invited to attend. Please join us for this fun and relaxing event!

Please wear comfortable walking shoes and clothes. The event will go on rain or shine! You will be able to choose between 5 and 10 km walking distances. We want you to have fun, but for safety purposes a parent must be present to supervise his or her own children and their friends. Bring euros for food and drinks after the walk, or pack a sack lunch. The prize for the Volksmarch is a toy tractor trailer.

Please let your FRG leader know if you are planning to attend and if you will be bringing a stroller. We need to know numbers, so buses can be reserved. Contact CPT Josh Burton at 09802-832-815 or Laura Moore at 0981-172-2283 with questions.



When: Saturday, April 24, from 0900-1400

Where: Meet at the Katterbach Gymnasium at 0845. Bus transportation will be provided at no cost, or you can follow in your car. Burk is 21 km from Ansbach.

Dear Family Members and Soldiers of 1-1 AVN,

Your communication with one another has been terrific! Keep it up. Soldiers, please continue to seek opportunities to call or e-mail your spouse. We always want to hear from you. Spouses, you are doing a great job of keeping your FRG Leader and our Task Force Gunfighter (rear detachment) updated with good phone numbers and addresses as you go places. Please continue to make this a priority. Go Gunfighters! Hooah!

Very respectfully,

Laura Moore

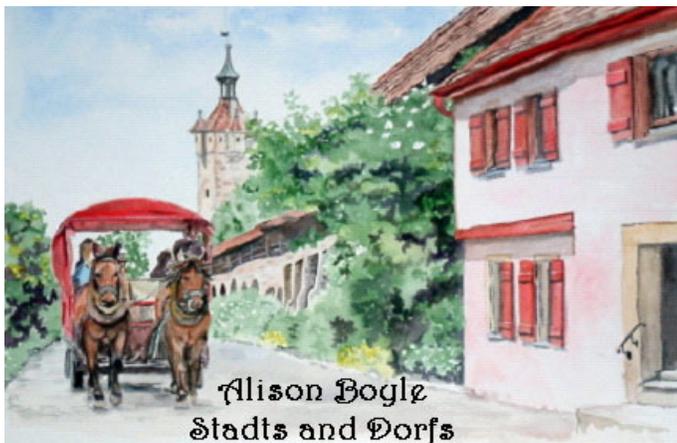
1-1 AVN BN FRG Leader

Company FRG Updates

HHC: Attention HHC family members! On Saturday, March 27, the HHC Family Readiness Group will be holding a dinner at Colmberg Castle. If you are interested in attending, please e-mail Jessica Stolle at jess5052002@yahoo.de with the number of people in your party by March 13.

Charlie Company: Greetings from Charlie Company FRG! We will hold our next company coffee at Brittany Sellers' home on Friday, March 26 at 1830. Please contact Heather Scott at 09875-978-679 or your POC for directions and more information.

Delta Company: The Delta Company FRG will be holding a meeting on Tuesday, March 9 at 1800 at the Yellow Ribbon Room (next to the Commissary). We'll discuss potential activities for the deployment, as well as ways we can support each other. Please contact Ali Thompson at 09875-978-439 with questions.



Alison Bogle
Stadts and Dorfs

You are cordially invited to Alison Fennema's exhibition of paintings of local towns and villages.

1600-1900 Thursday, April 1

Gotische Halle (Ansbach Tourist Information Center)

Refreshments will be served.

The artwork will be displayed the entire month of April.

Alison will also be at the Illesheim Bazaar (2-4 April) with her helicopter paintings and prints.

Please contact Alison at 09827-928-350 or 0170-547-1354 with questions.

Around the Community

Are you looking for ways to fill your time now that your spouse is deployed? The good news is that there's a lot going on within the Ansbach community. Besides that activities that will be sponsored by the FRG throughout the deployment, the 235th BSB is increasing the number of programs available for spouses and family members. In each newsletter, we'll highlight just a few of the community activities targeted toward family members. For more information on any of the programs listed here, contact Heidi Lumley or your company FRG leader.



It's March Madness at MWR! **One-day getaway** offerings this month include the following: On March 11, we'll shop 'til we drop at Ikea in Nuremberg. The bus will depart Illesheim ACS at 0800, Bleidorn Library at 0830, and Ansbach High School at 0900. Return time is approximately 1430. On March 14, join us for the Wuerzburg Spring Bazaar. The bus will depart from Outdoor Recreation on Katterbach at 0900 and return at approximately 1400. Finally, on March 25, we'll head to the Pillips Furniture Store in Ansbach. The bus will depart Illesheim ACS at 0900, Bleidorn Library at 0930, and Ansbach High School at 0945. Return time is approximately 1230. Contact Outdoor Recreation at 09802-833-225 for more information and to sign up for all or any of these one-day getaways.

If you'd like to get in touch with your dramatic side, the **Terrace Playhouse** has a host of offerings for you! On March 5-6 and 11-13 at 1930 and on March 7 and 14 at 1400, the Terrace Playhouse will present the musical *Gypsy*. Contact the Terrace Playhouse at 0981-183-636 to reserve your tickets. On March 9-10, the theater will hold auditions for its next production, *Noises Off*. Whether you're interested in acting or playing a role behind the scenes, call the Terrace Playhouse for more information.



Spring into fitness this month at the **Katterbach Fitness Center**. On March 13 from 0900 to 1200 there will be a family 5K fun run, and on March 20 there will be an aerobics day from 0930 to 1300. Call 09802-832-810 for more information.

The March **town hall meeting** will be held March 9 at 1800. Join POCs from community agencies and the 4th Brigade rear-detachment element at this monthly event. Share your concerns and comments with community leaders. 4th Brigade rear detachment will also provide photos of soldiers downrange and film messages from family members to send to deployed soldiers.



Don't just talk about environmental protection, do something about it! The City of Ansbach **spring clean up** (Aktion Saubauer) is scheduled for Saturday, March 20. All interested military personnel, family members, and organizations are invited to participate. The event will be held from 0830 to 1400; lunch will be sponsored by the City of Ansbach. Call the Environmental Office at 09802-832-158 for more information and to register.

This year's **Ansbach Volunteer Recognition Ceremony** will be held Wednesday, March 31. Dinner for awardees will begin at 1630, and the ceremony will begin at 1800. The awards for Outstanding Community, Agency, Family, and Youth volunteers will be presented. Everyone from the community is invited to attend. For more information, contact Christine Duer, Installation Volunteer Coordinator, at ACS at 09802-832-883/846.



USAREUR **fishing classes** will be conducted this month. Registration will be held March 12 from 1730 to 1830. Classes are scheduled from March 15-19 from 1800 to 2000, as well as from March 22-26 from 1800 to 2000. Final testing will be held on March 28 from 0900 to 1100. Registration is \$30 by check or money order and \$5 cash or check. Call 09802-1635 for more information.

Join the Terrace Playhouse for an afternoon of classical chamber music. **Coffee, Cakes, and Classics** will be held March 28 at 1500. Adult cost is \$5; student cost is \$3. Please reserve your tickets by calling 0981-183-636.



Soldier's Lake House **Sunday brunches** are back! The all-you-can-eat buffet will be held the third Sunday of every month beginning April 18 from 0930 to 1330. Prices are \$5 for adults and \$3.5 for children 4-12. Children under 4 are free.

Need a place to relax while your spouse is deployed? Don't forget about the Yellow Ribbon Room. The YRR is currently staffed from 0900 to 1800 Monday through Friday. Stop by and check it out!



Walk to Iraq and Back

"Walk to Iraq and Back" is a wellness program for the Big Red One family. The program is designed for you and your FRG to accumulate the miles equivalent to walking to Iraq and back, so that you are walking with your spouse or loved one in spirit for the next year. There's the added bonus of great physical activity, stress reduction, and socializing with your Big Red One family. You can log your miles for any physical activity you partake in each day. You will have until March 1, 2005, to walk to Iraq (2,000 miles) and/or back (4,000 miles). Here is more information to get you on your way!

- You will need to sign up with your company FRG leader or SGT Ron Harding (1-1 FRL) to participate in the individual or FRG portion of the program.
- You can start recording any activity that can be tracked in terms of miles (bike, swim, walk, run, cardio-machines, etc.)
- Attend a fitness assessment in your community. This is optional but will help you track your progress to fitness. You will also be able to sign up for the bonus miles program.
- Bonus miles! Plan a year-long wellness goal as an individual. Meet your goal, and you'll receive 200 individual bonus miles. Participating with your FRG? Complete your wellness goal, and add 300 bonus miles to the group!
- Double miles are awarded for participation in community fitness activities, Volksmarches, and other military marches.
- There are a limited number of pedometers available through the 235th BSB. You must attend the civilian fitness assessment on March 15 to qualify for one. 10,000 steps equals six miles.
- Turn your mileage into your company FRG leader or SGT Ron Harding each month.
- Once the individual and/or FRG reach Iraq (in miles), they will receive a certificate from the 1st ID. At the end of the year, there will be a ceremony recognizing all participants that have walked to Iraq and back. All completing participants will receive a T-shirt.
- More questions? Contact SGT Ron Harding.

What to Expect: The 5 Stages of Deployment



Throughout 1-1 AVN's Operation Iraqi Freedom rotation, we'll explain the stages of deployment in the newsletter as we experience

Stage 3: Sustainment

them. Although this information may seem irrelevant, knowing what to expect during each stage of the deployment can go a long way toward normalizing your experiences and situation.

In last month's newsletter, we highlighted stage two of the deployment cycle (deployment). The second month of the deployment marks the beginning of stage three, sustainment. This stage lasts from month two through the last month of the deployment.

Sustainment is a time of establishing new sources of support and new routines. Many rely on the FRG, which serves as a close network that meets on a regular basis to handle problems and disseminate the latest information. Others are more comfortable with family,

friends, church, or other religious groups as their main means of emotional support. As challenges come up, most spouses learn that they are able to cope with crises and make important decisions on their own. They report feeling more confident and in control. During the sustainment stage, it is common to hear military spouses say, "I can do this!"

One challenge during this stage is the rapid speed of information provided by widespread phone and e-mail access. In the near future, one can even expect that individual soldiers will have the ability to call home with personal cell phones. Over long distances and without face-to-face contact, communications between husband and wife are much more vulnerable to distortion or misperception. Given this limitation, discussing "hot topics" in a marriage can be problematic and are probably best left on hold until after the deployment when they can be resolved more fully. Obvious exceptions to this rule include a family emergency (a critical illness

of a loved one) or a joyful event (birth of a child). In these situations, the ideal route of communication is through the Red Cross, so that the soldier's command is able to coordinate the emergency leave if required.

On a related note, many spouses report significant frustration because phone contact is unidirectional and must be initiated by the soldier. Some even report feeling "trapped" at home for fear that they will miss a call. Likewise, a soldier may feel forgotten if he or she calls—especially after waiting in line for a long time to get to a phone—and no one is home. This can lead to anger and resentment, especially if an expectation regarding the frequency of calls is unmet. Now that Internet and e-mail are widely available, spouses report feeling much more in control as they can initiate communication and do not have to stay waiting by the phone. Another advantage of e-mail, for both soldier

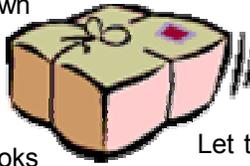
"Stages of Deployment" is continued on page 9.

Bridging the Miles

In this month's "Bridging the Miles," we're focusing on care packages. Even though your soldier may have regular access to phone and e-mail, he or she will still appreciate the old-fashioned type of mail—and nothing makes a soldier feel more loved than a brown box filled with his or her favorite goodies from home. We've included lots of items that you can combine to create your own personal care packages, and we've also included some tips from soldiers who have already been deployed. If you have creative care package ideas that you would like to share with other family members, e-mail them to frannie.schneider@us.army.mil.

52 Ways to Fill the Big Brown Box

1. Koozies to keep water bottles and cans cool 2. Chips Ahoy cookies (individual packages work best because big bags will fill with dust if not eaten right away) 3. spices 4. squeeze butter 5. Pringles chips (the hard cans prevent the chips from getting crushed in the mail) 6. individually wrapped licorice 7. DVDs 8. batteries 9. newspapers and magazines 10. air fresheners and Febreze 11. microwave popcorn 12. ramen noodles 13. address book with names and addresses of the soldier's loved ones 14. canned air to blow dust out of electronics 15. stress-relief squeeze balls 16. brown T-shirts, socks, and underwear 17. sewing kits 18. vitamins 19. cereal bars 20. poker chips 21. paperback books 22. microwaveable plates and bowls 23. foot powder 24. inflatable seat cushions 25. ink pens 26. word puzzle books 27. instant coffee 28. powdered Gatorade and other drink mixes 29. tea bags 30. Slim Jims 31. crackers and easy cheese 32. single servings of potato chips 33. gum 34. salsa in plastic containers 35. individual boxes of dry cereal 36. Ragu Express or microwaveable pasta that does not need to be refrigerated 37. a big fluffy towel 38. eye drops 39. yo-yo 40. squirt guns 41. Frisbees 42. hackie sacks 43. electronic hand-held games 44. post cards from your home state or recent travels 45. handmade items 46. dart boards 47. mini fans 48. comic books 49. birthday decorations 50. travel board games 51. miniature scrapbook that you put together 52. foam footballs and basketballs (the miniature size)



Kids Care Packages

- Have the kids draw a picture or write a story every day. Put them all in a big envelope and send them with a care package.
- Take a video of the kids playing at the park, at any school activity, or just sitting down and relaying a personal message.
- Buy a roll of magnetic material, and let the kids make their own magnets with construction paper or card stock. The soldier can stick the magnet on his or her metal cot or desk at work.
- Let the kids do their very own care package. Let them put in whatever they want, even if it makes no sense!
- Use a casting kit to create a miniature "sculpture" of a new baby's foot or hand for a new daddy.
- Have your child create a book of coupons that dad can redeem when he comes home. Some of the coupons could be redeemed while the soldier is away, such as "I will send you the candy bar of your choice."
- Buy a large piece of paper or cloth. Trace the child's arms and hands and cut them out. Send it to the parent as a portable hug.

Take Care With Your Care Packages

An article printed in the February 2 edition of the *Army Times* reported that "items are being pilfered from some boxes being mailed to service members in Iraq." There's no evidence as to how widespread the problem is, but some troops have reported problems with packages arriving in one piece. To ensure that packages to your soldier arrive as you intended, follow these simple guidelines, as printed in the *Army Times*:

- Wrap parcels securely to make tampering or theft more difficult. For example, tape the opening of your box and reinforce all seams with two-inch wide clear or brown packaging tape, reinforced packing tape, or pa-

per tape. Tips on wrapping parcels can be found at www.usps.com.



- Attach the top portion of the U. S. Customs Form 2976A to the outside of the parcel, but put the portion listing the contents inside the parcel. Most senders are unaware they can do this.

- Insurance is encouraged, especially if a high-value item is shipped. To file a claim for suspected theft, contact the U. S. Postal Service. The Military Postal Service Agency customer hotline number is (800) 810-6098; e-mail is mpsawebcontas@hqda.army.mil.

Stages of Deployment

Continued from page 7.

and spouse, is the ability to be more thoughtful about what is said and to "filter out" intense emotions that may be unnecessarily disturbing. This is not to say that military couples should lie to protect each other, but rather it helps to recognize the direct support available from one's mate is limited during the deployment.

Furthermore, rapid communication can lead to unanticipated rumors, which then circulate unchecked within the FRG. The most damaging rumor involves an allegation of infidelity that is difficult to prove true or false. Other troubling rumors may include: handling the deployment poorly, accidents or injuries, changes in the date of return, disciplinary actions, or even who calls home the most. Needless to say, such rumors can be very hurtful to soldiers, spouses, and the FRG. At its worst, unit cohesion and even mission success can suffer. Limiting the negative impact of such rumors is a constant challenge for unit leaders and chaplains. It is extremely important to keep soldiers and family members fully informed and to dispel rumors quickly. In fact, rumors lose their destructive powers once the "secret" is revealed:

There was a rumor that a commander's wife reported that a deployed soldier was having an affair. Members of the FRG, who were very upset, related details to their deployed soldiers. Senior unit leaders decided not to tell the commander because the allegations were deemed too inflammatory. Unfortunately, unit morale and cohesion began to suffer greatly as the rumor spread throughout the ranks. A month later, the commander finally learned of this destructive rumor, which had been undermining his authority to lead. He immediately confronted his wife, senior leaders, and the soldier about whom the allegation had been made. Evidence about the validity of these allegations or how the rumor had started in the first place could not be found. In response, the commander issued a firm policy regarding exposing all rumors—whether they be true or false. Unit morale and cohesion, although badly bruised, began to recover.

Despite the obstacles of this stage, the vast majority of spouses successfully negotiate the sustainment stage and begin to look forward to their loved ones coming home.

In April's newsletter, we'll talk about how the sustainment stage affects children of all ages.

If you would like more information on the emotional stages of deployment, please refer to www.hooah4health.com.

Wesheim Spouses and Civilians Club
Country Fair and Bazaar

April 2 from 1600-2000, April 3 from 1100-1900, and
April 4 from 1100-1600 in the 2-6 CAV Hangar

Deployment Q & A

Do you have a deployment-related question that you would like answered? E-mail your questions to Frannie Schneider, and we will find the answer for you! These questions and answers are taken from www.aflo.org.

► *Income taxes are coming due, and I don't know how to file them. Can someone help me?*

Soldiers, and family members filing jointly, have an automatic extension granted by the IRS if they are deployed under certain circumstances. If you don't know whether you qualify, or if you wish to file anyway, Army Legal Assistance offices worldwide will help Army taxpayers file their 2003 federal and state tax returns. Contact the Tax Assistance Office on Katterbach Kaserne at CIV 09802-832-323 to set up an appointment.

► *My soldier's mother is very sick. How can I get my soldier back?*

Contact the rear-detachment commander and the Red Cross office at the hospital treating your mother-in-law. If there is no Red Cross office at the hospital, call the local Red Cross in the community. The number will be listed in the phone book. The Red Cross will contact your mother-in-law's doctor, and depending on his or her recommendation, they will then contact the unit and request that the soldier be sent back. However, it is the unit commander's decision if the soldier is sent home. It is also a good idea for you to contact the rear-detachment commander and explain the situation and that the Red Cross has begun the procedure.

► *First my soldier didn't know when he was leaving, and now he doesn't know when he'll be home. When will the Army tell me what's going on?*

Your soldier's unit is going through the normal phases of deployment. For many reasons outside the unit's control, departure and return dates change. The rear-detachment commander and FRG will be your best sources of information. But things change, and no one can predict how the mission will go. Your soldier's unit will give out the best information it can.

Poison Control Numbers

The number to the English-speaking poison control center has changed. The correct numbers are:

Toll free: 0130-110-439
Toll call: 06371-867-070



Please keep these numbers in an easy-to-reach location in your home!

Operations Security

Contributed by Brian C. Olson, 235th Base Support Battalion Security Officer

The goal of OPSEC (Operations Security) is to deny or mitigate an adversary's ability to compromise or interrupt the Army's mission. The information that is gathered is usually generally unclassified in nature and can be obtained in numerous ways that you may not have thought possible.

Information can be obtained through simple communication between people, from the trash you throw out, and also from open-source media such as newspapers, television, and especially over the Internet.

To protect information, view collection attempts from an adversary's perspective. Small pieces of information that seem harmless can be put together in a fashion that could reveal classified information.

Protecting small pieces of information is extremely important to our community during this period of additional stress. Information that is being transmitted via telephone or e-mail from loved ones located in other

parts of the world could reveal valuable bits of information on unit locations and troop strength.

It is this type of information that may seem harmless when talking with others that could be most valuable to our adversaries. Talking with a friend in a public place about this information could put the mission and the soldier at risk. If you multiply the number of people discussing these small pieces of information and put them together, you may have just revealed information that was not intended for public disclosure.

Please remember to think twice about what you say, where you say it, and whom you say it to.

These small tips will contribute to all of the troops returning safely after successfully completing their mission.

If you have questions about Operations Security, contact CPT Josh Burton, 1-1 AVN rear-detachment commander, at 09802-832-815 or your company FRG leader.

**Think twice about
what you say,
where you say it,
and whom you
say it to.**

Frannie Schneider
CMR 454 Box 3542
APO AE 09250

MPS



GUNFIGHTER GAZETTE