



August 2003

Warrior News

<http://www.usarc.army.mil/95thdiv/2bde/3-378th/newsletter.html>



3rd/378th

Upcoming Drill Dates

August 9

September 13-14

October 18-19

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Family Readiness



What is a Family Readiness Group? What can it do for you?

An excerpt from The Army Family Readiness Handbook

Last month, this column asked “Are You Ready?” I wrote briefly about what can happen and the “What If’s” of deployment or mobilization. Now, I shall discuss FRG and what it can do for you.

Many different types of support groups exist within the Army community. For the purpose of this handbook, an FRG is a unit – or battalion-affiliated organization of officers, enlisted soldiers and family members that use volunteers to provide social and emotional support, outreach services, and information to family members prior to, during, and in the immediate aftermath of family separations (deployments, mobilizations, extended tours of duty, and field-training exercises).

The purpose of an FRG is to ease the strain and possible traumatic stress associated with military separation for both the family and the soldier. The FRG’s main objective is to enable a unit’s family members to establish and operate a system through which they can effectively gather information, solve problems, and maintain a system of mutual support. FRGs are key to improving a unit’s readiness.

FRGs include volunteers and program participants. FRG volunteers are appointed representatives or committee members who are responsible for a variety of FRG projects and activities. A volunteer may be a family member or an active duty soldiers; many are spouses of married soldiers. Program participants are recipients of FRG services who, for example, attend the classes, seminars, and social events that may be sponsored by volunteers.

Note: I know that many are thinking, “My soldier will be coming home, so why do I need to be involved.” Next Month: Value of the FRG to the Family and to the Soldier.

Lorna L. Fairchild
Family Program Coordinator
95th Division (IT)

The Family Readiness Group would like to extend a big Hooah Welcome to the new Battalion Commander MAJ Crabtree, his wife Cindy, their daughters Tiffany Camille and Emily Dawn.

Welcome to the 378th Sir!

Featured Website

SmartForce

Welcome to E-Learning!

<https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/elearning/smartforce/>

SmartForce delivers a superior interactive, self-paced training solution that the US Army sees as a critical component of an overall training plan. The acquisition of the enterprise License allows anyone in the Army open access to as much training as they can take from work or home. Benefits include:

- Learning at your own pace
- Access to more training than was ever possible previously
- Training which prepares you for certification exams.
- Updating your skill set now for future job growth
- Applying course completions towards college credit
- Training is available to you at NO COST

The US Army wants to have the best-trained work force on the planet and has invested in providing you with the best tools in the industry. Don't let this opportunity go by - empower yourself by learning the latest technologies.

Registration has been automated with the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS). Not only does ATRRS verify your eligibility for the program, it will also post successfully completed courses to the user's official ATRRS training record. The program continues at no cost to the individual or their organization. All active duty soldiers, members of the National Guard or Reserve as well as all Department of the Army civilian employees are authorized to access over 1,500 Information Technology, Business Skills, and Interpersonal Skills courses from any location, around the clock (24/7).

All you have to do to use SmartForce is get an Army Knowledge Online account and complete your registration through ATRRS (to get a SmartForce username and password). Be sure to browse the SmartForce Course Catalog to see the courses available to you.

Army Humor

As a group of soldiers stood in formation at an Army Base, the Drill Sergeant said, "All right! All you idiots fall out." As the rest of the squad wandered away, one soldier remained at attention. The Drill Sergeant walked over until he was eye-to-eye with him, and then raised a single eyebrow. The soldier smiled and said, "Sure was a lot of 'em, huh, sir?"

Company News

Alpha Company

Hello soldiers and families of the Warrior Battalion. Det 1, 3/378 has been at Fort Sill since 1 March executing range support for an IRR/CRC mission assigned to Fort Sill. We have ran through reservist, national guardsmen, and active duty personnel for weapons qualification training as they deploy to combat in IRAQ. We qualify them on regular day qualification, NBC fire, and night qualification.

As of 28 May, we were filled with 237 privates from all over starting our on order mission of Basic Combat Training at the Field Artillery Training Center. Since then, we have only lost two of them due to medical reasons. This shows the outstanding job our Drill Sergeants are doing in training and mentoring these soon to be new soldiers of our United States Army. We will graduate our first cycle of soldiers July 31.

Not all that was activated is here at Fort Sill. My Executive Officer, LT Sheaffer, was activated on individual status as a Chemical Recon Platoon Leader. His assignment was changed for a state-side mission. I know he is doing an outstanding job as well.

Until the next time, continue to train.

Warriors!

- CPT Kenneth D. Pitre

myPay News

New ePIN Feature Goes Live for Army myPay Users

ARLINGTON, Va. (June 23) - Army personnel can now obtain their myPay personal identification numbers (PINs) by using a new online feature called ePIN. myPay is an online system operated by Defense Finance and Accounting Service. ePIN is available to active, reserve, guard, civilians and military retirees with Army Knowledge Online accounts.

"We are constantly looking for ways to make myPay even more user friendly," said Pat Shine, director of DFAS Military and Civilian Pay Services. "ePIN will make this valuable pay management tool more accessible to our Army customers."

ePIN greatly simplifies the process of gaining access to myPay. Personnel can visit the myPay Web site, and click on the "New PIN" button. The system will verify the identity of the user through their Social Security Number. The user can elect delivery of the PIN by email or regular mail. Email delivery takes place within 48 hours.

- View, print and save leave and earning statements
- Select electronic leave and earning statement
- View and print retiree account statement
- View and print tax statements
- Change federal and state tax withholdings
- Update bank account and electronic funds transfer information
- Manage allotments (civilian/retiree)
- Edit address information
- Manage Savings Bonds (civilian/retiree)
- Control Thrift Savings Plan enrollment (military only)
- View and print travel vouchers (civilian/military)

myPay is simple and secure Available nearly 24/7, myPay means no waiting in lines or on the phone.

Continued on next page...

Easy to use menus and clear confirmation messages give customers confidence that changes they request are made quickly and correctly.

Strong encryption and secure sockets layer technologies combined with user-unique access make myPay safe to use and protect personal information from unauthorized access.

To find a link to the myPay site you may visit the Soldier Resources page at the battalion website:
www.usarc.army.mil/95thdiv/2bde/3-378th/soldierresources.html

Family Assistance Hotline

Army activates army family assistance hotline

Alexandria, Va. -- The U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center, in conjunction with the Army Family Liaison Office, has established a toll-free Family Assistance Hotline. The number is (800) 833-6622.

"The mission of our Family Assistance Hotline is to provide Army families caring support in the form of accurate information, useful resources, and helpful referrals related to family issues," said Brig. Gen. Robert L. Decker, commander of the USACFSC, the Army agency responsible for Morale, Welfare, and Recreation. This Family Assistance Hotline is a 'safety net' for those who have exhausted all other resources," said Decker. "We will do everything we can to help each and every caller."

The hotline is intended for use only by family members of soldiers on active duty as well as those in the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve called to active duty.

After hearing a short, recorded message, callers will be able to speak to hotline staff members who have access to extensive reference materials. Staff will be unable to answer questions about casualties or soldiers wounded or missing in action. Because of the sensitivity of this information, the Army's Casualty Assistance Office will first contact the

Freedom Isn't Free

I watched the flag pass by one day, it fluttered in the breeze.

A young Marine saluted it, and then he stood at ease.

I looked at him in uniform so young, so tall, so proud,
With hair cut square and eyes alert, he'd stand out in any crowd.

I thought how many men like him had fallen through the years.
How many died on foreign soil, how many mothers' tears?

How many pilots' planes shot down?
How many died at sea
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves?
No, freedom isn't free.

I heard the sound of Taps one night, when everything was still,
I listened to the bugler play and felt a sudden chill.

I wondered just how many times that Taps had meant "Amen,"

When a flag had draped a coffin.
Of a brother or a friend.

I thought of all the children, of the mothers and the wives,
Of fathers, sons and husbands with interrupted lives.

I thought about a graveyard
At the bottom of the sea

Of unmarked graves in Arlington.
No, freedom isn't free.

soldier's immediate family. Once the Army is certain that the soldier's next of kin have been notified, information about soldiers' deaths will then be released to the public through news releases and other means such as the media and Department of Defense Web sites. Due to operational security and force protection concerns, CFSC hotline staff cannot provide locator services (addresses) for soldiers or units, or information about operational matters.

The hotline is toll free when called from the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands. Hotline staff will answer calls from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily Eastern Standard Time to answer family support-related questions. Emergency assistance will be provided between the hours of 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. EST.

"Our staff will assist all callers by listening, explaining, and directing them to the most helpful resources we can," said Gail Lovisone, manager of CFSC's Family Assistance Hotline call center. Lovisone emphasized that the first place families of active duty soldiers should contact is Army Community Service or the unit rear detachment at the installation from which the soldiers deployed.

The Army National Guard and the Army Reserve state and regional support commands also operate assistance lines, though they may not always be toll free. Information is also available at www.guardfamily.org and www.army.mil/usar.

"We may often refer callers to the installation because installation ACS staff have local resource telephone numbers, and more detailed information," explained Lovisone.

In addition to local and Army level assistance via telephone, family members can find answers to many routine questions about family readiness, Army Community Service, and deployment support resources online at the ACS Web site, www.goacs.org, and at the Army Family Liaison Office website, www.aflo.org.

"We anticipate a high volume of calls, so we strongly urge people to use those Web sites as a first stop," noted Lovisone. Recognizing that not all households have Internet connectivity, Lovisone suggested families use computers at installation ACS centers or at on-post or local civilian libraries.

Birthdays - August

- Christopher Mackey – August 2
- Meleana Nolin – August 6
- Indy Luther - August 9
- Wener Perez – August 9
- Ryan Williams - August 29

No More Heroes?

Submitted by SSG James Williams

On 20 March 2001 I was attending a funeral of a dear co-worker whom I lost her battle with cancer and departed for the other side. The service was at the local cemetery in Blanchard, OK. I was feeling pretty sad and had put some distance between myself and the family and those who had come to pay their respects after the service. I had told this dear lady I would come by her house and see her when I was in Norman in March of 2000 to take my Masters' comps. On that day Murphy was on me most of the day and I had to get back to Texas. I did not have a cell phone or her number and did not make it to see her. I never saw her again, for by the time I found out about her situation she was gone. After the service when I went to offer my condolences, her husband said she wondered what became of me, so one can imagine how much of a low-life scumbag I felt.

While walking through one of the rows of grave markers I came across a flat, bronze, military marker that had

a strange looking emblem at the top of it. Upon closer inspection I discovered it that 'strange' emblem was the Congressional Medal of Honor. To the rear of the grave was an additional marble marker with the soldier's name and the awards, Purple Heart, Silver Star, and Medal of Honor (MOH). I had goose bumps all over. Not everyday one bumps into the final resting place of a warrior whom made the ultimate sacrifice, and received our nation's highest military award.

While my friend was gone, I know she went to a life far better than the one she lived here on this earth and maybe it was she that provided me the purpose of finding this grave. I wanted to learn more about SFC Tony K. Burris. I found his citation and please read it at the end of this blurb.

Most of all, what sticks with me is what drove this man to go above and beyond the call of duty that he did. When you read the citation for his MOH, you get what I am talking about. Time and time again, he put himself on the edge until his luck ran out. The values training we discuss each drill, it's all there in the citation, selfless-service, courage-moral and physical, leadership by example. SFC Burris had it all. He never quit; his body just couldn't take any more wounds.

Here is a man that was a tried and true warrior that didn't get to come home and marry his sweetheart, or become a doctor, lawyer, or politician. He gave his life on some hilltop most Americans have no clue about; in a war most have forgotten or have no idea that it occurred. The photo I was given of him, showed youth and so much promise. He was only 21 years old when he died.

Today it is often said there are no more heroes and I strongly disagree with this statement. There certainly is one buried at the Blanchard Cemetery and I encourage each and every one of you to stop by there sometime and pay your respects to the resting place of a leader, and warrior. If I am allowed to enter Valhalla when I cross over, I hope to meet SFC Tony K. Burris, I have a few questions for him.

MEDAL OF HONOR CITATION FOR SERGEANT FIRST CLASS BURRIS, TONY K.

Rank and organization: Sergeant First Class, U.S. Army, Company L, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2d Infantry Division. Place and date: vicinity of Mundung-ni, Korea 8 and 9 October 1951. Entered service at: Blanchard, Okla. Birth: Blanchard, Okla. G.O. No.: 84, 5 September 1952. Citation: SFC Burris, a member of Company L, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and outstanding courage above and beyond the call of duty. On 8 October, when his company encountered intense fire from an entrenched hostile force, Sfc. Burris charged forward alone, throwing grenades into the position and destroying approximately 15 of the enemy. On the following day, spearheading a renewed assault on enemy positions on the next ridge, he was wounded by machine gun fire but continued the assault, reaching the crest of the ridge ahead of his unit and sustaining a second wound. Calling for a 57mm. recoilless rifle team, he deliberately exposed himself to draw hostile fire and reveal the enemy position. The enemy machine gun emplacement was destroyed. The company then moved forward and prepared to assault other positions on the ridge line. SFC Burris, refusing evacuation and submitting only to emergency treatment, joined the unit in its renewed attack but fire from hostile emplacement halted the advance. SFC Burris rose to his feet, charged forward and destroyed the first emplacement with its heavy machine gun and crew of 6 men. Moving out to the next emplacement, and throwing his last grenade, which destroyed this position, he fell mortally wounded by enemy fire. Inspired by his consummate gallantry, his comrades renewed a spirited assault which overran enemy positions and secured Hill 605, a strategic position in the battle for "Heartbreak Ridge," SFC Burris' indomitable fighting spirit, outstanding heroism, and gallant self-sacrifice reflect the highest glory upon himself, the infantry and the U.S. Army.

SSG James E. Williams