

## FRG NEWSLETTER

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### Commander's Corner

**1LT Anthony Caldwell**

Soldiers and Family Members of Charlie Company,

We are another month and another step closer to our deployment having completed the PHA and SRP during January's drill weekend, and Individual Weapons Qualification (IWQ) at Fort A.P. Hill during February's drill. For the soldiers we realize there were a lot of events occurring in January and a long drill in February. I appreciate your patience and ability to complete the mission. To the family members, I thank you for the support you are providing to your soldier and the understanding and sacrifices you are giving the Maryland Army National Guard.

As you have seen in January, the armory is again full of soldiers ready to deploy in support of the United States Army. Leadership at every level, I appreciated looking out on the drill floor and seeing you interact with and bring the new members into the Charlie Company family. Ensure to continue this integration of new soldiers, account for them and lead them effectively.

We originally planned a family event to occur on the Sunday of February drill. After the Company leadership recovered from the heart attack this created and were able to speak, I realized this was Super Bowl Sunday. In order to give soldiers and family members the opportunity to enjoy the Super Bowl with friends and family, we decided to cancel the event and get the soldiers home upon completing our mission on Sunday. I hope you all enjoyed the game.

In March, Charlie Company will have a Yellow Ribbon event occurring during drill weekend. Families are highly encouraged to attend with their Soldier! (Read further in the newsletter for more information.) In addition, 1-175<sup>th</sup> IN will honor SFC Bowen with a portrait to be hung in the Towson Armory.

As we approach our deployment families continue to support your soldier and soldiers remember the importance of spending quality time with your families.

*1LT Caldwell*

"Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." - **General George Patton**



### KEY POINTS OF CONTACT

**Company Commander**  
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**FRG Leader**  
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renee9802@aol.com

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## Preparing for Deployment

The deployment will soon be upon us, let's make sure we are all prepared! Here is a checklist of things you'll want to make sure are done before your Soldier leaves.

- Have a copy of your Soldier's orders
- Make sure all the Soldier's dependents are enrolled in DEERS. Sometimes after active duty orders are issued, dependents can get kicked out of DEERS so it's important to double check this. Families not in DEERS will not be able to use TRICARE!
- Have a military dependent ID card (including children over the age of 10)
- Have a Power of Attorney—make sure it is notarized and not expired or due to expire during the deployment
- Have information on or have enrolled in TRICARE
- Have access to bank accounts/pay needed for family bills and expenses
- Have a family budget, including spending money for the Soldier since there will be opportunities for sightseeing in Egypt
- Have a list of key phone numbers, such as doctors, plumber and electrician, as well as the FRG and MDNG Family Assistance Center (see front page)
- Have a list of house and vehicle maintenance that needs to be done regularly
- Make sure you are on the FRG email list! As the deployment gets underway, we will be doing more communication via email. If you aren't on the FRG email list, send an email with your name and your Soldier's name to Renee at [renee9802@aol.com](mailto:renee9802@aol.com).

Please note, many of these topics will be covered during the Yellow Ribbon Pre-Mobilization Training in March (see page 3 for details).

### ***Thank you to those who attended the January FRG meeting!***

It was a great time to get to know each other before we get into the deployment!  
We enjoyed a potluck meal while we talked about what the FRG is and what we can make it, as well as the need for volunteers. If you are interested in helping out, contact Renee Delawder.

We also had a travel agent come talk about traveling to Egypt.  
If you would like her contact information, contact Renee.

*(In light of the recent events in Egypt, please make sure you check for any government travel advisories before making travel plans.)*



## YELLOW RIBBON PRE-MOBILIZATION TRAINING

The Yellow Ribbon Pre-Mobilization Training will include all the information families need to know for the upcoming deployment! Topics covered include TRICARE/Dental information, Resiliency, Family and Youth Programs, and Finance. There will also be resource tables showcasing all of the great programs out there to help families cope with deployment.

**When:** Friday and Saturday, March 4-5

Hotel and event registration will be 3:00-7:30 p.m. on Friday.

Information breakouts will be Friday evening and all day Saturday, starting 8:00 a.m.

**Where:** Marriott Baltimore, Hunt Valley Inn  
245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, MD 21031

**Who:** Soldiers are required to attend as it is drill weekend.

Family members are highly encouraged to attend with their Soldier.

**Accommodations:** Soldiers will be provided a room at the event hotel, free of charge for Friday night only. Single Soldiers are authorized an additional room for their parent(s) if their parent(s) will be handling the Soldier's affairs during the deployment. This will be handled on a case by case basis.

**Child Care:** Child care will be available free of charge, during the classes only. Child care is provided on site by an accredited child care agency.

**Registration:** Soldiers need to register all attending Family members with their chain of command. This includes the number and ages of children requiring child care. Soldiers who have not told their chain of command they are bringing family members and/or children must do so ASAP.

## TAX FILING SUPPORT

Don't forget about the Military OneSource Tax Program!! Military families can use the basic H&R Block at Home electronic tax filing product for FREE. Make sure you access the FREE program at [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com).

Do not create an account at the public H&R Block website!

Have a question? Need more information?

Want to get more involved? Contact

Renee at 717-993-5351 (home) or 443-965-8182 (cell).

## Family and Medical Leave Act: Military Family Leave Entitlements

*Excerpts from U.S. Dept. of Labor Fact Sheet #28A\*\**

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (2008 NDAA), Public Law 110-181, amended the FMLA to allow eligible employees to take up to 12 workweeks of job-protected leave in the applicable 12-month period for any “qualifying exigency” arising out of the active duty or call to active duty status of a spouse, son, daughter, or parent.

### EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for FMLA benefits, an employee **must**:

- work for a covered employer;
- have worked for the employer for a total of 12 months;
- have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months; and
- work at a location where at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

### MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

**Qualifying Exigency Leave:** A covered employer must grant an eligible employee up to a total of **12 workweeks of unpaid** leave during the normal 12-month period established by the employer for FMLA leave for qualifying exigencies arising out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty, or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, in support of a contingency operation. Under the terms of the statute, qualifying exigency leave is available to a family member of a military member in the National Guard or Reserves; it does not extend to family members of military members in the Regular Armed Forces.

#### Qualifying exigencies include:

- Military events and related activities, such as official ceremonies, programs, or events sponsored by the military or family support or assistance programs and informational briefings sponsored or promoted by the military, military service organizations, or the American Red Cross that are related to the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member;
- Certain childcare and related activities arising from the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member, such as arranging for alternative childcare, providing childcare on a non-routine, urgent, immediate need basis, enrolling or transferring a child in a new school or day care facility, and attending cer-

tain meetings at a school or a day care facility if they are necessary due to circumstances arising from the active duty or call to active duty of the covered military member;

- Making or updating financial and legal arrangements to address a covered military member’s absence;
- Attending counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider for oneself, the covered military member, or the child of the covered military member, the need for which arises from the active duty or call to active duty status of the covered military member;
- Taking up to **five** days of leave to spend time with a covered military member who is on short-term temporary, rest and recuperation leave during deployment;
- Attending to certain post-deployment activities, including attending arrival ceremonies, reintegration briefings and events, and other official ceremonies or programs sponsored by the military for a period of 90 days following the termination of the covered military member’s active duty status, and addressing issues arising from the death of a covered military member;
- Any other event that the employee and employer agree is a qualifying exigency.

### NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

An employee must provide notice of the need for foreseeable leave due to a qualifying exigency as soon as practicable. When the need for military family leave is not foreseeable, the employee must provide notice to the employer as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Generally, it should be practicable to provide notice for unforeseeable leave within the time prescribed by the employer’s usual and customary notice requirements.

### CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Employers may require that an employee’s request for military family leave be supported by an appropriate certification.

*\*\*Note, this is an excerpt of the key points only. For more details, go to:*

[www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28a.htm](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28a.htm)

## Resources You Should Know About

### OUR MILITARY KIDS

#### Free Grants for Children's Activities or Tutoring

Along with the sacrifice of having a parent away in service for months at a time, many Guard and Reserve families are so financially stretched they cannot afford the fees for sports, fine arts, or tutoring programs so crucial to their children's sense of well-being. Children of Wounded Warriors face similar financial difficulties along with the challenges of learning to adapt to the physical, mental, and emotional changes in a loved one.

Our Military Kids, founded in 2004, steps in to fill these gaps with a simple grant program that pays for children's activities. Eligible families apply for a grant and within days of receiving the application in the Our Military Kids office, a packet is sent to the child thanking them for their service to our country and notifying them of the award, and a check is sent directly to the service provider.

All children age 3 through 12th grade in any family are eligible. Must show proof of deployment, as well as documentation from the child's program. There is a \$500 limit per grant, per child.

For more information or to apply, go to [www.ourmilitarykids.org](http://www.ourmilitarykids.org).

### Websites to Check Out

[www.mfo.org](http://www.mfo.org)

[www.sittercity.com/dod](http://www.sittercity.com/dod)  
(Free service to find child care provider, pet care, elder care)

[www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com)

[www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil)  
(for free SAT/ACT Prep software and other resources)

### Are you on Facebook?

Get info and all the latest offers from the State Family Readiness Program by friending "MDNG FRP".

### MILITARY FAMILY LIFE CONSULTANTS

#### Free Counseling for Soldiers, Families, and Children

Did you know the MDNG has two licensed counselors on their full-time staff? These counselors provide free, confidential, short-term counseling. Issues they can help with include Military Lifestyle (such as deployment stress, coping skills, separation, building resilience) and general Life Skills (such as anger management, communication, relationship issues, conflict resolution, parenting, and decision making skills.)

#### Child & Youth Counselor:

Mrs. Shawna Lindberg

Phone: 410-703-2321

Email: [shawna.m.lindberg@healthnet.com](mailto:shawna.m.lindberg@healthnet.com)

#### Adult Counselor:

Mr. Greg Elliott

Phone: 443-517-7536

Email: [George.x.elliott@healthnet.com](mailto:George.x.elliott@healthnet.com)

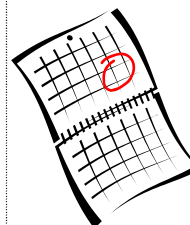
## DATES TO REMEMBER

### March 4-5

#### \*\*YELLOW RIBBON PRE-MOBILIZATION TRAINING\*\*

Check-in starts 3:00 p.m. on Friday. Training is Friday evening and all day Saturday at Marriott Hunt Valley Inn.

Family members are highly encouraged to attend!



### Upcoming Drill Dates

March 4-6

*Have something you think should be included in the newsletter?*  
Contact Rachel Flanders at 443-955-3771 or [brflanders@comcast.net](mailto:brflanders@comcast.net).