



The Sentinel



1st Recruiting Brigade Family Readiness Group Newsletter

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4550 Llewellyn Avenue
Fort George G. Meade, Maryland
20755-5380



Commander's Corner

As the new commander of 1st Recruiting Brigade, I am glad for this opportunity to address families throughout the brigade. Many of you may not know, but I am BIG on families. I even have six kids to prove it. And boy do I love them all. I am sure you can imagine how proud I am of them, as you are, no doubt, of your family members. I am also very proud of the entire 1st Recruiting Brigade family that extends beyond the soldiers and civilian workforce to the spouses, children, and friends of the brigade. Now that's a big family!

Family readiness is not foreign to me having been a commander four times and having been a division G1 and a community commander. I know firsthand how family readiness can be a force multiplier. Family readiness groups can have a phenomenal impact on mission accomplishment. With the families strongly in support and actively engaged in well-being efforts, soldiers can accomplish any feat.

I saw the most dramatic example of this when I was a community commander. The Brigade Combat Team (BCT) deployed to Kosovo leaving few soldiers behind in the community. The spouses stepped forward and through FRGs, spouses councils, and volunteer services they kept the community going stronger than it had ever run before. We empowered spouses and families with a lot of responsibility and they proved they were up to it. Indiscipline problems in schools dropped, testing results soared, our theater ran only family films, our clubs served meals kids wanted, etc. This was accomplished with grass root support from family readiness groups. The impact was felt outside the community as well. The commander of the forward deployed forces in Kosovo frequently remarked how the morale of his soldiers was so high because his soldiers knew that their spouses and families were so happy and involved back at home station.

In recruiting our circumstances are somewhat different. Yet, I bet there are many spouses who sometimes feel that their sponsors are deployed with the long hours they keep in recruiting duty. The remedy for their situation is likely the same as it was for the spouses and families I described above. Involvement is key. Having active FRGs doing meaningful things is important. Spouses must also be empowered to make things happen. Also important are spouses supporting each other to become independent and self-reliant. I found that I

could give spouses groups and FRGs specific missions and tasks with incredible results – the same can happen with the spouses/FRGs within 1st Recruiting Brigade.

Consequently, as commander I plan to empower our senior spouses and take FRGs to a new level – beyond the occasional party to a real force multiplier for the brigade. I want to see spouses and FRGs engaged in working well-being issues. I want to see spouses and FRGs contributing to our mission success beyond being sideline observers/supporters. They can teach AFTB to DEPs and their family members. They can sponsor the spouses of DEPs and help them prepare for military life. Many of our female spouses, especially those with prior service experience, can talk to and reassure our female DEPs. Our senior spouses can prepare the spouses of new recruiters to understand and deal with the rigors of recruiting life. Many of our spouses are the most effective dealing with TRICARE issues and can help other spouses less familiar or less confident. My mind just swells with the possibilities of what can be done.

In the next few months we will begin the process of transforming family readiness within the 1st Recruiting Brigade. I hope to capture for 1st brigade the same kind of spirit that existed in the community I commanded previously. It was incredible and most exhilarating to see the accomplishments and sense of satisfaction that prevailed. It was all accomplished by fabulous, motivated, and focused spouses and family readiness groups. The possibility is real. The outcome is certain. As the BIG 1st Recruiting Brigade family, we can and will make it happen here!

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A note from the Family Readiness Group Leader

Greetings 1st Recruiting Brigade family,

First of all, I want to thank everyone who makes a contribution to family readiness and well-being in the brigade. You are the ones who care most about people and the brigade's families. You are the ones who give selflessly and consistently. I look forward to working with you over the course of the next two years.

Just to tell you a little about myself -- I love to volunteer. I have served in many community, church, and unit volunteer capacities over the course of my life. I enjoy the challenge and especially the cherished associations and friends I have made through the years.

I will tell you that there is always something that needs to be done in volunteer work. That especially holds true with family readiness groups. There is always a project to complete, an activity to support, and someone who needs a listening ear and sound advice.

Over the course of the next two years we will have conferences and training opportunities together. I also hope to have teleconferences with senior spouses where we can share ideas, and discuss issues and solutions together. I also hope to get out and meet spouses and family readiness groups in your own battalion areas. I will learn so much from you and look forward to us making a difference in the lives of families everywhere within the brigade. It will be great to meet you.

Senior spouses and FRG leaders, please feel free to contact me any time. Perhaps I can help in some way. I have lots of ideas and tons of experience. Perhaps something I offer may work for you. You can contact me via email at Karen.Comish@yahoo.com



This is an unofficial publication of the 1st Recruiting Brigade Family Readiness Group. The contents are not necessarily the views of or endorsed by USAREC, the US Army or Department of Defense.

Commander.....	Col. James H. Comish
FRG Leader.....	Mrs. Karen Comish
Family Assistance Program Manager.....	Mr. Bill Morrison
Editor.....	Capt. Diedre Windsor



Chicken Soup for the Military Wife's Soul is now accepting stories for an upcoming book celebrating life as a military wife.

This book will share the pride, emotion and triumphs achieved by past and present military spouses everywhere. It will acknowledge, inspire and entertain current and veteran military wives.

To contribute a story for our publication is to join an impressive group of past contributors who are some of the most outstanding personages of our time. Chicken Soup for the Soul® titles have sold more than 80 million copies, literally transforming the lives of readers from all walks of life. If your original story is published, you will be paid \$300 upon publication of the story.

Chicken Soup for the Military Wife's Soul will focus on the often overlooked "other" half of our military team. In light of the ongoing world situation it is more important than ever to recognize these "other" heroines by compiling their stories for all to read and enjoy.

To submit your story, first visit: www.militarysoul.org for guidelines and chapter titles. Digital submission is preferred. If you don't have Internet access, send a SASE for guidelines and chapter titles to: Militarysoul Stories, P O Box 1501, Solana Beach, CA 92075.

New York City Recruiting Battalion ramps up for AFAP 2003



The New York City Recruiting Battalion's Commander hosted the battalion level Family Symposium at Fort Hamilton's

Army Community Service on February 11th from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Representatives from each company were present and served as delegates. Tricare, Housing, Time Off, and sponsorship dominated the delegates' agenda. Mr. Jemmeie Riley of the Education Center spoke to the delegates about educational opportunities available on Fort Hamilton.

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AFAP 2003 is set!

1st Recruiting Brigade will conduct the 12th Annual Family Symposium 18-21 March, 2003. Delegates representing all levels of our command will come together, at the Radisson Fort Magruder Hotel & Conference Center, 6945 Pocahontas Trail, in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The Purpose. The purpose of this year's symposium is to enrich the quality of life in 1st Recruiting Brigade by providing a process for the discussion and resolution of issues of concern to recruiting as well as America's Army family.

About the Symposium. This year's symposium focuses on providing soldiers and families a mechanism to alert leadership to quality of life concerns and will administer a formal process to work toward resolving those concerns. To recruit and retain a quality force, it is necessary that the Army maintains high quality of life standards and communicates that commitment to soldiers and their family members. The symposium is part of the Army's mechanism that accomplishes this requirement. Quality of life issues of concern will be discussed and formalized at the symposium. Issues that can be resolved at brigade level will be sent to the brigade commander for consideration. Issues that cannot be resolved at brigade level will be forwarded to USAREC for consideration and resolution. Eventually some issues may be forwarded to the Secretary, Department of the Army for consideration and resolution, and may even go on to direct actions that improve family programs, benefits, and entitlements for America's Army family. Many legislative changes, policy or regulatory changes, and improvements, which affect the recruiting family, have evolved from this all-important process.

POC. Mr. William Morrison, Brigade Soldier & Family Assistance Program Manager, COM (301) 677-2571.



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Our Country, Our Children: Protecting Them Both

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.

It is the Army's duty to protect and defend our Constitution, our country and its citizens. As soldiers, when we protect our children, we protect our Nation's future.

The month of April is when we officially celebrate the well-being of all children in our Army family. It is both the "Month of the Military Child" and "Child Abuse Prevention Month." This year, our campaign slogan is "Our Country, Our Children: Protecting Them Both."

Any form of child abuse is contrary to Army values and undermines our mission. Each of us has the responsibility of keeping children safe. If you see or suspect child abuse, report it.

We must take action to keep our children safe, to reach out to other families and children, and to stay informed and connected. In doing so, we instill confidence in our children so they can count on us as trustworthy adults.

During April 2003 and throughout the year, join us in protecting our future by protecting our children.

This is Leader Business!


Michael D. Rochelle
Major General, US Army
Commanding



Families are our business!

"All About Families"

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For your information.....

2003 NMFA Very Important Patriot (VIP) Program

The Very Important Patriot (VIP) Program recognizes exceptional volunteers worldwide whose outstanding service contributes to improving the quality of life in their military and/or local civilian communities. The National Military Family Association administers this program. This year's sponsors are Kellogg Company, The Minute Maid Company, Clorox Company, Keebler Company, H.J. Heinz Company, Tyson Foods, and Coca-Cola Products of Atlanta.

Active duty, guard and reserve, and retired members of the seven uniformed services and their family members are eligible to receive the award.

Deadline for submission is Thursday, April 24, 2003. Nominations will only be accepted through this web site. The online nomination process will be available online no later than Friday, March 7, 2003.

New EAP Service Available to Soldiers and Family Members at NO COST

USAREC soldiers and family members have new "problem solving" service available to them. U.S. Army Accessions Command (USAAC) has contracted with Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Consultants, Inc. to provide the program at no cost to the soldier or family member.

The service provides online information, telephonic consultation, and 'face to face' counseling to assist soldiers and family members with day-to-day issues and problems. 'Face to face' counseling appointments are scheduled with a professional counselor in your local area. You receive up to four counseling sessions for each separate issue or problem. Contact your Soldier & Family Assistance Program Manager for the web site password and the toll-free phone number to access the service.

Discount Childcare Program

USAAC contracted with Caliber Associates to provide a directory of childcare providers who offer discounts to military families within the U.S. Army Cadet Command and USAREC. USAAC has used this service for several years for ROTC cadre.

An updated directory will soon be available. Caliber Associates has a list of more than 2,000 ZIP codes to add to the updated directory. Dial 1-800-790-0963, ext. 14, if you need more information on the current listing.

Pentagon Gives Tips on Sending Mail to Troops By Harry Levins, Post-Dispatch

The Pentagon is encouraging Americans to support military people in the Middle East through collective programs, not individually.

A Pentagon statement says: "Please do not flood the military mail system with letters, cards and gifts. Due to security concerns and transportation constraints, the department cannot accept items to be mailed to 'Any Service Member'."

"Some people have tried to avoid the prohibition by sending large numbers of packages to an individual service member's address."

The Pentagon says that although such a tactic may be well-intentioned, it "clogs the mail and causes unnecessary delays."

A Pentagon web site www.defendamerica.mil/support_troops.html offers information on collective efforts to boost military morale. Among them is "Operation USO Care Package." The United Services Organization (USO) runs this program, which lets Americans pay for a "care package" of personal items. The package - and a personal message from the donor - will then be delivered to service members overseas.

One care package costs \$25. Checks may be made out to "Operation USO Care Package" and sent to:

USO-Operation USO Care Package
c/o Pentagon Federal Credit Union
P.O. Box 19221
Alexandria, Va. 22320-9998



The USO will include in the package any personal note that the donor includes with the check or money order.

More details are available on the Internet at www.usometrodc.org/care.html.

The Pentagon statement also notes that Americans may: Donate a phone calling card to a service member through Operation Uplink, sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Details are available at www.operationuplink.org.

Send an e-mail greeting through www.operationdearabby.net. Sign a virtual thank-you card through www.defend-america.mil/nmam.html.



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Family Members and Force Protection: What you need to know

You're a vital player in our success

As a family member of the Army community, you are a vital player in our success, and we couldn't do our job without your support. You also play a crucial role in protecting your loved ones just by what you know of the Army's day-to-day operations. You can protect your loved ones by participating in Force Protection.

What can you do?

Be Alert

Foreign governments can collect useful information by using spies. A foreign agent may use a variety of approaches to befriend someone and get sensitive information. This can be critical to the success of a terrorist.

Be Careful

It's very important to conceal certain information such as training schedules, TDY locations, and post activities, just to name a few. Something as simple as discussing over the phone where your spouse is going TDY or deploying to can be very useful to a potential adversary.

Be Vigilant

- Strange people or unattended parcels around your work, quarters, or recreation areas
- Illegally parked vehicles
- Occupied parked vehicles
- Vehicles that move with you
- Vehicles that pass, then park
- Slowly maneuvering vehicles
- Vehicles signaling but not turning
- Flashing lights between vehicles

Notify MPs of unusual occurrences.

Protective measures

Family Security

Make a home security plan and train the family in what to do in an emergency.

- Keep emergency numbers handy
- Tell children to be alert and play in close, safe areas
- Answer phone with a simple "hello"
- Avoid use of rank or title
- Tell family not to offer information such as you're not home

Travel Security

- Inform supervisor/friends of itinerary and arrange check-in times
- Ensure vehicle is in good condition and try to keep at least one half tank of fuel
- Search vehicle if it has been unattended
- Be aware of surroundings, cars, people
- Never pick up hitchhikers
- Know location of police, fire and military authorities.
- If followed, don't go home. Go to a safe area
 - Police station
 - Hospital
 - Shopping Mall
 - Any area with a lot of people
- Don't panic and don't confront suspicious persons

Postal Security

Suspicious Parcels

- No return address
- Oily stains, discoloration or crystallization on wrapper
- Strange odor, excessive tape or string, protruding wires
- Lopsided or uneven
- Marked personal or confidential
- Wrong title with name



-Don't open, move, smell or taste.

-Call 911.

-Evacuate immediately.

-Remain in vicinity.

-In cases of biochemical threat isolate contaminated personnel and keep them in the area for HAZMAT evaluation.

Protecting sensitive information

Even though some information may not be secret, it's what we call "sensitive information." Sensitive information must be protected to ensure an adversary doesn't gain a significant advantage. It deals with specific facts about our intentions, capabilities, operations or activities. If an adversary knew this detailed information, our mission accomplishment and personnel safety could be jeopardized. By being a military family member, you may know some bits of information. Do not discuss them outside of your immediate family and especially over the telephone.

If anyone, especially a foreign national, approaches you and persistently seeks information, notify your sponsor or the MPs immediately.





Chaplain's Corner

Do you believe in Easter?

Edith Burns was a wonderful Christian who lived in San Antonio, Texas. She was the patient of a fine Christian doctor by the name of Will Phillips. Dr. Phillips was a gentle doctor who saw patients as people. Edith Burns was his favorite patient. One morning he went to his office with a heavy heart and it was because of Edith. When he walked into that waiting room, there sat Edith with her big black Bible in her lap. She was earnestly talking to a young mother sitting beside her. Phillips knew why Edith was there and what she was doing. You see, Edith had a habit of introducing herself in this way: "Hello, my name is Edith Burns. Do you believe in Easter?" Then she would explain the meaning of Easter, and many times people would be saved.

Phillips walked into that office and there he saw the head nurse Beverly. Beverly met Edith while taking her blood pressure. Edith began by saying, "My name is Edith Burns. Do you believe in Easter?" Beverly said, "Why yes I do." Edith said, "Well, what do you believe about Easter?" Beverly said, "Well, it's all about egg hunts, going to church, and dressing up." Well, Edith kept pressing her about the real meaning of Easter, and finally led her to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Phillips said, "Beverly, don't call Edith into the office quite yet. I believe there is another delivery taking place in the waiting room."

After being called back in the doctor's office, Edith sat down and when she took a look at the doctor she said, "Dr. Will, why are you so sad? Are you reading your Bible and praying?" Phillips said, "Now Edith, I'm the doctor and you're the patient." With a heavy heart he said, "Your lab report came back and it says you have cancer and you're not going to live very long." Edith said, "Why Will Phillips, shame on you. Why are you so sad? Do you think God makes mistakes? You have just told me I'm going to see my precious Lord Jesus, my husband, and my friends. You have just told me that I am going to celebrate Easter forever, and here you are having difficulty giving me my ticket!" Phillips thought to himself, "What a magnificent woman this Edith is!"

Edith continued coming to Phillips every day. Christmas came and the office was closed through January 3rd. On the day the office opened, Edith did not show up. Later that afternoon, Edith called Phillips and said she would have to be moving her story to the hospital and said, "Will, I'm very near home, so would you make sure that they put women in here next to me in my room who need to know about Easter." Well, they did just that and women began to come in and share that room with Edith. Many women were gloriously saved. Everybody on that floor from staff to patients was so excited about Edith, that they started calling her Edith Easter; everyone except Phyllis Cross, the head nurse. She made it plain that she wanted nothing to do with Edith because

she was a "religious nut". She had been a nurse in an Army hospital. She had seen it all and heard it all. She had been married three times, she was hard, cold, and did everything by the book.

Well, one morning the two nurses who were to attend to Edith were sick. Edith had the flu and Phyllis Cross had to go in and give her a shot. When she walked in, Edith had a big smile on her face and said, "Phyllis, God loves you and I love you, and I have been praying for you." Phyllis Cross said, "Well, you can quit praying for me, you religious nut, it won't work. I'm not interested." Edith said, "Well, I will pray and I have asked God not to let me go home until you come into the family." Phyllis said, "Then you will never die because that will never happen." She walked out of the room. Every day Phyllis would walk into that room and Edith would say, "God loves you Phyllis and I love you, and I'm praying for you." One day Phyllis said she was literally drawn to Edith's room like a magnet would draw iron. She sat down on the bed and Edith said, "I'm so glad you have come, because God told me that today is your special day." Phyllis said, "Edith, you have asked everybody here the question, 'Do you believe in Easter?' but you have never asked me." Edith said, "Phyllis, I wanted to many times, but God told me to wait until you asked, and now that you have..." Edith took her Bible and shared with Phyllis the Easter Story of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Edith said, "Phyllis, do you believe in Easter? Do you believe that Jesus Christ is alive and that He wants to live in your heart?" Phyllis said, "Oh I want to believe that with all of my heart, and I do want Jesus in my life." Right there, Phyllis prayed and invited Jesus Christ into her heart. For the first time Phyllis did not walk out of a hospital room, she was carried out on the wings of angels. Two days later, Phyllis came in and Edith said, "Do you know what day it is?" Phyllis said, "Why Edith, it's Good Friday." Edith said, "Oh, no, for you every day is Easter. Happy Easter, Phyllis!"

Two days later, on Easter Sunday, Phyllis came into work. She went down to the flower shop and got some Easter lilies. She wanted to go up to see Edith and wish her a Happy Easter. When she walked into Edith's room, Edith was in bed. That big black Bible was on her lap. There was a sweet smile on her face. When Phyllis went to pick up Edith's hand, she realized Edith was dead. Her left hand was on John 14: "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." Her right hand was on Revelation 21:4, "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Phyllis took one look at that dead body, and then lifted her face toward heaven, and with tears streaming down her cheeks, said, "Happy Easter, Edith - Happy Easter!" Phyllis left Edith's body, walked out of the room and over to a table where two student nurses were sitting. She said, "My name is Phyllis Cross. Do you believe in Easter?"

Author unknown

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The TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy (TMOP)

Starting March 1, 2003, the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy (TMOP) program replaced the National Mail Order Pharmacy (NMOP) program as the prescription mail order pharmacy benefit for Department of Defense (DoD) Military Health System beneficiaries.

If you take prescription medications for long-term, ongoing conditions, the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy (TMOP) and Express Scripts can help you save both time and money. With TMOP, you can order up to a 90-day supply of your medication for the same co-payment as a 30-day supply at a retail pharmacy. That's a 66% saving for you. TMOP also includes convenient online services. You can order refills online, print forms to fill new prescriptions, check your order's status, and much more. To use these services, register to use the Express-Scripts.com website. TMOP has chosen Express Scripts to provide your mail order prescriptions. As one of the nation's leading prescription benefit managers, Express Scripts processes more than 400 million prescriptions annually and serves the needs of one out of every six people in the United States.

Saving on Prescriptions

When you are outside of your TRICARE region, the following guidelines apply:

- Bring along enough of your prescription Medications to last for your entire trip.
- You will have to pay the entire amount of the prescription if you fill the prescription outside the region and then seek reimbursement from TRICARE when you return home.
- If you are enrolled in Prime, you may be assessed a point of service charge unless you call the health care finder at 1-888-333-4522 and obtain an authorization.
- When traveling within your region, pay only the co-payment by using a network pharmacy.

New TRICARE Toll-Free Customer Assistance Numbers and Web Sites:

TRICARE Prime Remote for active duty and their family members program

1-888-DOD-CARE (1-888-363-2273)

<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/remote/>

TRICARE For Life program

1-888-DOD-LIFE (1-888-363-5433)

<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tfl/>

Ask a Lawyer...



**Don't forget...15 April is
the deadline to file your 2003 taxes!**



Free tax assistance saves Army families millions (Source: AFLO)

Don't spend a lot of money on commercial tax preparation fees before you check out the FREE services on your installation.

Army Legal Assistance Offices worldwide will help Army taxpayers file their 2002 federal and state income tax returns starting in early February. Electronic filing of federal and state income tax returns continues to increase. By filing electronically you will probably have a refund check-in-hand within 10 days.

For more information about free tax assistance, contact your local Army Legal Assistance office or Army Community Service center. For more information go to your family Well-being Web site: www.aflo.org.

For your Health



Healthy Living

The personal life and self-care choices you make greatly influence your health. Eating well, being active, feeling good about yourself three key elements work together to help you achieve a healthier, more active lifestyle. Physical activity reduces stress, strengthens the heart and lungs, increases energy levels, helps you maintain and achieve a healthy body weight - and it improves your outlook on life.

It is important to integrate physical activity into daily life. - at home, at work, within your community.

Walk off unwanted pounds....

To lose weight and to keep it off, you need to get moving. Walking at a moderate pace for 30-60 minutes burns stored fat and can build muscle to speed up your metabolism. Walking an hour a day is also associated with cutting your risk of heart disease, breast cancer, colon cancer, diabetes and stroke. Time to incorporate one hour walks into your busy lifestyle.

We hope you enjoyed the newsletter. Please contact us at 301-677-3413 if you have comments or suggestions.

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