

WELCOME HOME BOBCATS

OIF 1-5 INF



PAW PRINTS

The Family Readiness Group Command Information Letter is provided to all spouses of soldiers within 1-51N with the sole purpose of providing for the well being of family member of 1-51N, as authorized by DA PAM 608-7 and verified by my signature.
Todd B. McCaffrey

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2005

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 26 - September 2

Team Lewis Appreciation Week

September 2

2005 U.S. Army Soldier Show - Tacoma Dome, 6:30 p.m.

September 10

Hawk's Prairie Rotary Military Family Support March—Lacey Wal-Mart Parking Lot, 8:00 a.m.

September 15

Reintegration Classes for Bobcat Battalion

September 19

Grand Opening of Raindrops & Rainbows Parent & Child Play Center

September 12-30

THE BOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

CSM Corner	2
Get To Know Us The Jones Family	3
Recipe: Grilled Chicken Caesar Club	3
Rear Detachment	4
A thank you from CSM Mercado	4
Return & Reunion	5
Redeployment Tips	6
FRG Letters	7
Fallen Heroes & Heroes of the Week	8

COMMANDER'S CORNER

I am pleased to tell you that this should be my last contribution to Paw Prints while we're deployed. The past 11 months have brought us the widest range of emotions- we've experienced triumph and tragedy, joy and sorrow, loneliness and brotherhood. Your soldiers have proven themselves warriors in the truest sense of the word.

They've served with bravery, compassion, and resolve under demanding conditions, fighting a determined foe who does not possess any of the morality our soldiers show every day. These men are clearly America's Next Greatest Generation. They, and I, look forward to returning to all of you very soon.

The battalion is preparing to complete its mission within weeks. Our replacement unit, the 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment from Alaska has begun to arrive and we're well into our outload tasks of packing containers, preparing equipment, and attending pre-redeployment briefings. By the time this edition reaches you, I expect us to be very close to Transferring Authority to the Tomahawk Battalion and getting ready for flights home.

The battalion will return in at least two large groups. The bulk of the unit (approximately 75%) will redeploy directly from FOB Marez, stop briefly in Kuwait (1-2 days), and then fly to McChord Air Force Base near Fort Lewis. The other 25% of the battalion will spend about a week in Kuwait preparing vehicles for ship movement to the US. Those soldiers will return approximately one week following the first group. Commander's and First Sergeants are creating redeployment manifests now and your soldier should know whether he will return directly from FOB Marez to Fort Lewis or if he will stay the extra week in Kuwait assisting with the ship loading process. The Rear Detachment

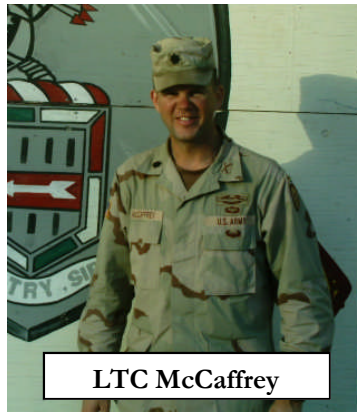
Commander will notify the Family Readiness Group of detailed timelines as they finalize. Please understand that flights and specific redeployment dates are subject to change based on air flow, operational delays, or other reasons beyond our control. As we get confirmed information we will release it to you. Please stay in touch with your FRG leader- she will have the most up to date information as we have it from here.

The Battalion Family Readiness Group have been the unsung heroes of this deployment. Your support, caring for one another, and constant love for soldiers is truly inspirational and places us in your debt. We recognize that sacrifice in this conflict is not borne solely by soldiers. Families pay a huge price as well. We look forward to recognizing your efforts as we return home.

The upcoming months will be transitional for the battalion. The Battalion Welcome Home Ball is scheduled for 21 October. The Rear Detachment Commander and the FRG have done a great job in preparing a super party for all of us. Please contact the Rear-D commander if you want to attend.

The brigade will host a Memorial and Redeployment Ceremony on 27 October. This event will recognize the many soldiers of this brigade who paid the ultimate price here. We will also recognize those brave heroes who were severely wounded- most of whom, fortunately, are now back at Fort Lewis. The battalion change of command will occur on 31 October as Lisa and I depart and the unit welcomes LTC Dan Barnett and his wife Brenda. They arrive to Fort Lewis from a recent assignment in Washington DC.

Finally, once again, please accept my most sincere thanks for your patience, your love, and your support to your soldier during this long and challenging deployment. Our soldiers continue (Cont'd on Page 2)



LTC McCaffrey





Cont'd from Page 1

to humble me and, as I've said before, I am honored to serve at their side and call myself a member of their ranks. American soldiers are the most noble the world has ever known. There is little glory in war, however, your soldiers have shown that war, while violent and horrific, can bring out the best qualities in men- I've seen that in the faces and at the hands of your soldiers. Their service and sacrifice have brought honor to this Regiment, our Army, and most importantly to their families. God Bless all of you as you welcome home your personal hero.
Very Respectfully-
Todd McCaffrey

CSM CORNER

Greetings to all,

One more month to go and our job here in Iraq will be complete. Your loved ones can not wait to be home with you, but they also understand the war is not over yet. We continue to stay focused on our mission and alert at all times because the enemy is still out there. This is the only way we know how to do business here because this evil enemy can strike at any time in a big way. The phrase that we have lived by is "Complacency will get a Bobcat killed". The enemy is always watching our every move. Please continue to pray for our safe return home.

Many things have happened since my last letter. The battalion continues to set the pace for other units to follow. Leaders and soldiers are doing an outstanding job despite the 100 plus degree weather we have been enduring each and everyday. Temperatures have risen to 130 degrees on some days. Your loved ones have not slowed down not even once. They are committed and motivated to take this fight to the end. We owe this to you all and to our fallen warriors. I'm very proud of our leadership and soldiers. You should be too.

The word is out. Our Stryker Brigade will move to Germany some time next June. Also, the Brigade will change colors to 2nd Cavalry Regiment. The future of our battalion colors is still unknown. Many soldiers are re-enlisting to stay and deploy to Germany with the Brigade and Battalion. In my opinion, they are making the right choice and at the same time they are receiving a healthy bonus. The location that our Brigade will be stationed at Velseck. I have not heard anything bad of Velseck or Germany in general. I spent two tours in this great and beautiful country. If Robin and I had to go overseas again, Germany would be our number one choice. Feel free to ask us anything about Germany. We would be more than happy to share our experiences with you all. For more information about Velseck, Germany please visit the following website:

http://benefits.military.com/misc/installations/Base_Content.js?pid=1960.

The months ahead are going to be very challenging for all of us as we reunite with our loved ones. Many of our soldiers have seen more disasters and tragedies than some people see in a lifetime. We are going to need your patience and understanding as your loved ones reintegrate into the same rhythm and schedule as before deploying to war. Our schedule for reception and integration is one that will allow us the time to ease into a normal schedule and spend plenty of time with our families. This plan is the best one that I have seen in my 20 plus years in the military.

The month of October is filled with great events. The 21st is our Bobcat Ball. Your loved ones and I are looking forward to this night out with our favorite lady. It's going to be a great PARTY! The Brigade Welcome Ceremony and the Fallen Warriors Memorial Stone Dedication Ceremony are scheduled for the 27th. In the morning we will have the unveiling of our Memorial Stone dedicated to all of the Brigades Fallen Warriors. In the afternoon, the Welcome Ceremony will be held. To close out the month on the 31st, my outstanding boss will relinquish his command. I have been the luckiest CSM in the universe because I had the opportunity to serve with the next General in the Army. LTC McCaffrey is a leader of leaders and soldiers. He really understands tactics and human needs. I could not have asked for a



CSM Mercado and an Oreo break.

better friend and working partner. I know for a fact that I and the Bobcats are going to miss his outstanding leadership in combat and peace time. Also, we are going to miss Lisa and the kids, Michael, Sarah and Andrew. They are a true example of what a military family should be. They have always been there for our Bobcat families during good times and bad. Robin and I personally are going to miss them and their friendship. The bond we have developed is a bond that we will cherish forever. I know we will stay in touch and see each other yearly at

the 1-5 Infantry Reunions.

I want to take this time to give my warm hearted thanks to all of our sponsors and Family Readiness Groups at all levels for all the support during these hard times of war. Without your support this war against terrorism would have been much worse. Your care packages and emails were the key to our success in this country filled with poverty. You all brought life and hope into the faces of many Iraqis (Young and Old) and Bobcats soldiers. All of you answered the call of duty. We will never forget this as long as we live.

This probably will be my last Paw Print Article from Iraq because next time I will be home with my family. It has been a year full of emotions. My brothers in arms and I have created a bond that will last for many years. Robin and I are truly happy to have been part of this amazing Bobcat family. If I had to go to war again, I would want to do it with the Bobcats. Please take care and stay safe. Soon we will all be home again.

God Bless you all!
CSM Victor Mercado





GET TO KNOW US—THE JONES FAMILY

Names:

Omar and Tracey Jones

Place of Birth:

Both born in Maryland

Kids:

Three boys, Sam (9), Ben (7), Will (2)

Education:

We both graduated from Glenelg High School in Glenelg, Maryland. Omar graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1992 and earned a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University in 2001. Tracey graduated from the University of Maryland in 1992 and will one day complete the Masters in Social Work that she has begun.

Current Occupations:

Omar is the Operations Officer (S3) for the battalion, and Tracey stays home with their three boys, volunteering in cub scouts, the PTO, and the FRG.

Favorite Things to do Together:

Watch movies, explore whatever area we are living in, see plays, go to the beach, be outside, enjoy our kids.



The Jones Family

Things most people don't know about us:

Omar loves South Park and Jelly Bellys, and Tracey is addicted to People magazine and thinks everyone should be required to see "A Christmas Story".

Any other birthdays, anniversaries or special dates coming up for you.

We began dating in high school at the age of 15, and have now been together for 20 years!!

The Jones Family's favorite Recipe Marinated Flank Steak

(Great to put on the grill on these beautiful summer days!)

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ lb. Flank steak
- 1T. sugar
- 2T. dry sherry
- 2T. soy sauce
- 1T. honey
- 1t. salt



Garlic powder

What to do:

Pierce flank steak, sprinkle with garlic powder, marinate 24 hours in mixture of all other ingredients (will not be a lot of liquid). Turn ½ through. Grill about 10 minutes each side. Enjoy!

GO BOBCATS!

GRILLED CHICKEN CAESAR CLUB



Ingredients:

- 5 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, pounded to about 1/4-inch thickness*
- 1 can (20 oz.) Dole Pineapple Slices, well drained
- 3/4 cup fat free or low fat Caesar salad dressing, divided
- 15 whole wheat or whole grain bread slices, toasted
- 10 DOLE Green Leaf Lettuce leaves
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 10 low fat turkey bacon slices, cooked and drained

What to do:

Place chicken and pineapple on grill or broiler pan. Brush with 2 tablespoons dressing.

Grill or broil chicken and pineapple, 5 minutes. Turn chicken and pineapple over;

Spread remaining 1/2 cup dressing evenly over bread slices. For each sandwich, layer one bread slice with lettuce leaf, chicken breast, red onions, bread slice, 2 pineapple slices, 2 bacon strips, lettuce leaf and bread slice. Repeat with remaining sandwiches.

Cut sandwiches into half. Insert toothpick into each half.

*TIP To pound chicken, place chicken between two pieces of wax paper or plastic wrap. Using a meat mallet or rolling pin, pound meat to about 1/4-inch thickness.

Makes 5 servings



2005 U.S. ARMY SOLDIER SHOW

Fort Lewis announces the return of the U.S. Army Soldier Show to the Tacoma Dome on Sept. 2 at 6:30 p.m. Doors open at 5:00 p.m., and admission is free. This year's Soldier Show focuses on deployed Soldiers and the importance of recognizing what they are doing for our country. The show is high-energy MTV-style, 90-minute, live musical review, showcasing the talents of active-duty Soldiers, who are selected by audition from throughout the Army. There is limited parking at the dome for vehicles with DoD stickers.

Shuttle service will leave from Waller Hall and Wilson Gym about every 15 minutes between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. The shuttle buses will return to Fort Lewis at the conclusion of the show.

For [more information](#), call 967-4294.



REAR DETACHMENT CORNER

Dear Family and Friends,

As we draw nearer to redeployment, and the much anticipated return of our soldiers, I want to express my gratitude to the Bobcat families and FRG. Having been deployed, I saw the great things you've done for the soldiers in Iraq by sending care packages, notes of encouragement, and more mail than you could imagine! We could never say thanks enough for your love and support you have given. But I can admit, we get a misperception about how much easier it is at home. As rear detachment commander, I have seen a new and equally difficult side to deployments. I respect the strength, courage, and devotion the families and wives have to endure dealing with the hardships, fear, and loneliness of their loved ones being deployed. You truly are heroes!

It has been amazing to see the unity of the battalion FRG. I've been in the battalion for over three years, and I've never seen an FRG as close and strong as ours. Our FRG has risen to the challenge of raising money for our homecoming events, and has been so successful at it! We have raised almost \$20,000,



and still counting! The volunteer work of the FRG is unbelievable, especially when you take a look at the countless other tasks they have to get done on a daily basis!

This next month will be incredibly busy for rear detachment and I'm sure for you. The battalion rear detachment and torch soldiers who redeployed last week have been working hard to get ready to receive the battalion in late September. We should have all the battalion buildings back in our possession right after the Labor Day weekend, and should be able to start letting the FRG's in to help decorate near the middle of September.

I would be remiss if I did not mention our FRG leaders who have helped support me, the battalion, and their respective companies. Thank you ladies for your dedication! I am so proud of your strength and leadership! Let's bring our boys home! I'll see you at the homecoming and the ball! God Speed and God bless,

Sincerely,
CPT Mickey Traugott

A THANK YOU FROM CSM MERCADO

All,

I'm sad to inform you that my long and proud tour with the Bobcats is coming to an end for me and my family. The Army has decided to assign me to a brigade level position. I will be the next ROTC Western Region Command Sergeant Major. My three plus years as the Bobcat Command Sergeant Major have been the best years of my military career. My boss and I have done what many other command teams only dream of. We started the Stryker concept with Bobcats and finished with a combat tour. I can truly say that this is the only way to go to war. The only down side of my tour as CSM is the loss of my battle buddies. The hurt of losing a friend in war is one that I do not wish on anyone. As long as I'm living, we will keep in touch with their families. Please keep their families in your daily thoughts and prayers. These are truly remarkable people that have paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

The ride has not always been easy for us and our families. Without the support of my wife and kids I could not have been as successful. They really have been there for me in every step of the way. I am going to miss being called Bobcat 7 and I know that Robin is going to miss serving the Bobcats family.

The friendships that we have made with the Bobcats, both past and present, are going to last a lifetime. Robin and I want to thank our veterans for always being there for us and all the Bobcat families. You truly know the meaning of duty and commitment.

I would also like to thank Robin's family for supporting me and my career choice, especially my father-in-law Kenny, who is in heaven looking down on us. You have always been my number one supporter and have always believed in me. Thank you for protecting and taking care of our soldiers, both in Iraq and in

Heaven. I have always felt your presence and know you are with me. I love you MAN! Thanks you to my parents for instilling in me the morals that I have today. Your guidance has taught me to be loyal, honest and respectful of others. To all my friends and family that I have served and continue to stay in touch with, thank you for your continued support and strength to succeed.

My report date to my new job is the first week in November. My replacement has not been identified as of yet. The plan is to do a Change of Responsibility on November 2. I will keep you all posted. I cannot wait to bring the boys home. Take care and stay safe.

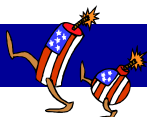
Sincerely, Victor "Bobcat 7"
"Once a Bobcat, always a Bobcat"

COUNTDOWN

30 Days left

Or 5 weeks

Until September 30



RETURN AND REUNION—TIPS TO SUCCESS



The first week

Husbands and wives often report feeling like strangers to each other in the first hours and days of return, especially after long deployments. Couples sometimes have problems, too, with different expectations about how they'll spend these first few days. A service member looking forward to an escape from the rigid routine of deployment, for example, might not react well to a spouse's tightly scheduled plans for the first few days after return. After an exciting or dangerous deployment, a service member may want quiet time at home. After a dull deployment, the service member may want to get out and do all the activities he or she has been missing.

Both partners may have trouble with expectations about how quickly the returning service member will take on household tasks. Some service members may want to be included in family decisions right away, while others may want to get involved again more gradually, allowing their partners to make decisions for them for the first few days. The partner at home may be eager or reluctant to give up some of these decision-making roles.



What the returning service member can do

- *Make time for your family.* Hold off on visits to relatives and limit time with friends until you've settled into a comfortable routine at home.
- *Take time to talk with your spouse or partner.* After a long absence, you need to get to know each other again. You've both had new experiences that may have changed your priorities and your ideas about roles in the marriage and the family. Talking now can help you lay the foundation for a newly strengthened relationship.
- *Expect that intimacy and sexual relations may be awkward at first.* Go slowly. Your time apart really has made you strangers to each other in many ways. Make an effort to be patient and charming, much as you did when you were first dating.
- *Take time to understand how the family has changed while you've been gone.* Don't charge in with your own way of getting things done. Notice how your spouse is dealing with your children's discipline, for example, and restrain yourself from taking over with a tougher or looser approach.
- *Ease back into the relationship and your family.* Understand that your spouse may have grown accustomed to managing more of the household responsibilities, and may not be eager to turn control of them all back to you right away.
- *Spend time alone with each member of your family.* Think of things to do with your children that you each enjoy and that will give you time to talk and have fun together in a relaxed way.

- *Watch your spending.* It can be tempting to celebrate your return with dinners out or special gifts. Be careful not to get into debt trouble that could take you months or even years to repay. Time together and attention to each other's needs is far more valuable than anything you can buy -- and you won't have to face the credit card bill next month.

What the spouse or partner at home can do

- *Don't over-schedule the first days after the return.* The regimentation and strict routine of deployment can leave service members craving unscheduled time and hoping for a relief from constant responsibilities.
- *Don't expect your spouse to jump in and start taking care of household chores and tasks just as before.* The long trip home leaves most service members in need of rest in order to adjust to a change in time zones. Even the change from military food to home-cooked food can be an adjustment. Give it time, talk about what needs to be done, and let your spouse take on household tasks at a pace that's comfortable for both of you.
- *Spend time talking with each other.* You've both been through separate experiences during your spouse's

deployment, and you've both changed in some ways as a result. You've learned how to manage the household on your own and become used to life on your own. Your spouse has faced new experiences, possibly some very intense ones, and has become used to being away from you and the family. Talking can help you get to know each other again, to regain the intimacy you had before, and to rebuild family routines that include you both.

- *Expect your children to test the rules now that both parents are home.* Whenever there's a change in a family, children work to find out whether it might mean any loosening of limits. Talk with your spouse (when the children can't hear you) to explain any new rules you've set, so that you can present a united front. Together, apply rules fairly and consistently.
- *Watch your spending.* You've managed to a budget during your spouse's deployment. Now that you're back together as a family you'll have some added expenses (another adult mouth to feed, for one thing). Don't lose control of the budget celebrating your partner's return.
- *Don't give up activities that you enjoy and that help you relax.* If you've adopted an exercise routine, taken up a hobby you like, or joined a regular book group, don't give it up just because your partner is home. You may need to be flexible to fit these activities into the new family schedule, but do your best to find a way.

Later on

You may have trouble "re-sorting" the way household responsibilities are divided -- who makes which decisions, and who takes care of which household tasks. One of you may want to move





more quickly than the other to get back to the way you had split those roles before the deployment, or to change the way those roles are divided now that you have had a chance to try a different way of splitting them. This re-sorting of responsibilities and any other small changes in routine can make either of you feel unwanted and unappreciated. It is common for people to overreact as they readjust to life as a couple.

Differences and problems can arise over children, too. Returning service members sometimes reassert their role as a parent by spoiling the children or by disciplining them too strictly.

If the deployment has caused financial hardship, you and your partner may react in very different ways now that life is getting back to "normal." Some people overspend in an effort to catch up with everything they have missed out on during the deployment. Others over-control family spending as they try to get the budget back in balance and cover the extra costs of deployment, such as charges for long-distance phone calls.

Talking through these adjustments can be harder if the service member has seen or experienced violent action during deployment. War is often an ugly business, with many innocent victims, and the experience of war may be hard to talk about, even years later. In time, the service member may want to discuss some of these things if others are willing to listen patiently, without judging.

What you both can do together

- *Keep talking.* Talk can help you get back together as a couple and as a family. Talk through your differences about household responsibilities and decision-making.
- *Don't force talk about the experience of war, but be open to it when the time is right.* If the service member is not ready to talk about his or her experiences during deployment, don't push it. It's often a better idea for the service member to talk through any tough experiences first with a chaplain, a family service center counselor, or another trusted adviser or friend. If you do talk about painful experiences as a couple, try hard to listen without judging.
- *Keep watching your spending.* Make sure you don't spend more than you're earning.
- *Be patient with each other and with your children.* It takes time to regroup as a family, and you can't rush a natural process. The service member should make a gradual effort to resume his or her role as an engaged parent -- without buying the children's affection through spoiling or forcing the children's obedience with unnecessarily strict discipline.
- *Seek professional help if you think there is a problem.* Some anger and some tears can be expected after a long or difficult deployment, but excessive anger, mean-spirited fighting, and violence are signs that you need help. Don't feel that you have to solve serious emotional problems on your own.

Written by Dr. D. Bruce Bell and Dr. Walter R. Schumm.

QUICK TIPS FOR REDEPLOYMENT



Homecoming After Deployment: Dealing with Changes and Expectations

With deployment comes change. Knowing what to expect and how to deal with changes can make homecoming more enjoyable and less stressful. Below are some hints you might find helpful.

Expectations for Soldiers:

1. You may miss the excitement of the deployment for a while.
2. Some things may have changed while you were gone.
3. Face-to-face communication may be hard at first.
4. Sexual closeness may also be awkward at first.
5. Children will have grown and may be different in many ways.
6. Roles may have changed to manage basic household chores.
7. Spouses may have become more independent and learned new coping skills.
8. Spouses may have new friends and support systems.
9. You may have changed in your outlook and priorities in life.
10. You may want to talk about what you saw and did. Others may seem not to want to listen. Or you may not want to talk about it when others keep asking.

Expectations for Spouses:

1. Soldiers may have changed.
2. Soldiers are used to the open spaces of the field and may feel closed in.
3. Soldiers also may be overwhelmed by the noise and confusion of home life.
4. Soldiers may be on a different schedule for sleeping and eating (jet lag).
5. Soldiers may wonder if they still fit into the family.
6. Soldiers may want to take back all the responsibilities they had before they left.
7. Soldiers may feel hurt when young children are slow to hug them.

What Children May Feel:

1. Babies less than 1 year old may not know you and may cry when held.
2. Toddlers (1-3 years) may hide from you and be slow to come to you.
3. Preschoolers (3-5 years) may feel guilty over the separation and be scared.
4. School-age children (6-12 years) may want a lot of your time and attention.
5. Teenagers (13-18 years) may be moody and may appear not to care.
6. Any age may feel guilty about not living up to your standards.
7. Some may fear your return. (Wait until mommy/daddy gets home!)
8. Some may feel torn by loyalties to the spouse who remained.

Homecoming After Deployment: Tips For Reunion

Reunion is part of the deployment cycle and is filled with joy and stress. The following tips can help you have the best possible reunion.

Tips for Soldiers for Reunion:

1. Be supportive of good things your family has done.
2. Take time to talk with your spouse and children.
3. Make individual time for each child and your spouse.
4. Go slowly when reestablishing your place in the family.
5. Be prepared to make some adjustments.
6. Romantic conversation can lead to more enjoyable sex.
7. Make your savings last longer.
8. Take time to listen and to talk with loved ones.
9. Go easy on partying.

Tips for Spouses for Reunion:

1. Avoid scheduling too many activities.
2. It is okay if you and your soldier need time apart at first, don't rush things.
3. Remind the soldier that he or she is still needed in the family.





FROM: MRS. MCCAFFREY

When I was asked to write an article about the wives of the Bobcat soldiers for Paw Prints, I automatically said yes. But as I sat down to write the article several times, so that I would have it turned in well before the deadline, I had to keep starting over. How can I accurately describe such an awesome group of ladies who have endured so much over this past year? What I thought would be an easy task is really very difficult. So many feelings come into my heart when I think about YOU that I can't possibly find the words to describe those feelings. I'm sure Webster has them in his dictionary somewhere or they are on a Hallmark card but those words can't possibly express what it truly feels like being amongst all of you. I'll give it a whirl so hold on.



Robin Mercado & Lisa McCaffrey

I know you all have seen the bumper sticker out there that reads: Being an Army Wife -- The Hardest Job in the Army! Well, you have all proved this statement to be false. I think you would all agree with me, that is an understatement because it is the hardest job in the world. I have seen first hand some of the tasks you have performed with such love, grace, ease, and professionalism. You are amazing! Not only do you take on additional tasks such as making phone calls, getting donations,

fundraising, baking cookies or potatoes, watching kids and the list goes on but you are also maintaining your daily routines at home, work, and school. You complete every task with 110% and without complaint. You have stepped up when a need arises without any questions asked. Every day I am thankful for you. On a daily basis I am reminded of your thoughtfulness and generosity. You have been an inspiration to me when I don't want to step up – I quickly recall one of you and the kind act you have performed and then my hand goes up or mouth opens to say 'yes'. So for those times, I thank you.

As my husband has so often said, he is honored to be serving with your husbands; I too am honored to have gotten to know so many of you. I will never forget the times we shared whether selling potatoes, making signs, dancing, at yet another meeting, the hugs, the tears, walking the track, on the phone, eating, talking, etc. – the memories go on and on. Thank you! I would not have gotten through this deployment without each of you. I am honored to call myself a BOBCAT Wife. Being an Army Wife may be the toughest job in the world but you all have accomplished it! So be proud and keep smiling!

-Lisa McCaffrey



FROM: MRS. MERCADO

Through all the changes in our lives this past year since the deployment to Iraq, through all the hard times, good times and even the times when we really thought we had had enough...there was always someone there to pick up the pieces and let you know that they care. Whether it was a meal, a hug or a late night phone call when someone really needed to talk...this someone was there again lending a shoulder or offering information of help.

Any type of deployment is hard on families; however when it is a deployment during war, more stress, crisis and family emergencies seem to arise. Our FRG (Family Readiness Group) Leaders are the core of our battalion and the ones who provide the critical flow of information and support. These great leaders assist in reaching a solution or more importantly, preventing a problem in the first place. I know that I have written about them in a past Paw Print article, and they deserve to be recognized again.

Our FRG Leaders are a group of amazing women who I have had the opportunity to share my life with these past three years. During the deployment this past year our FRG leaders have had to do some tasks that are not in the FRG handbook. They went with their gut instinct and spoke from the heart. Nobody told them that this was an easy job. On the contrary, it is a very thankless job that they have volunteered to

do for their company as well as for the battalion. Our mission as FRG leaders is this: improve the morale among families, help them when needed, pass along information etc...all this so that their soldier can focus on his mission and not worry about his family.

During this past year, we have shared so many joys and pains and we have grown through each and everyone of them. So many of my best memories will be ones that I have spent with the FRG leaders and families of 1-5. Generosity seems to come so naturally to our FRG leaders, as well as our Point of Contact (POC) ladies. These ladies work extremely hard making sure the information they received from the FRG leader, is then passed along to all of our wives. Thank you for volunteering and doing such hard work.

I do not think that I have enough space for my article. As I am sitting here typing, I find myself remembering a meeting, bake sale, fund raiser, Christmas party and so one. I feel so guilty that my husband wanted me to take care of such a great group of ladies in 1-5...it was easy since we have the best FRG Leaders and POCs (not that I am competitive or anything!). I can truly say that I love each and every one of our FRG leaders. I count myself blessed and inspired by all that they do on a daily basis. I can't imagine not having the commitment and dedication of these outstanding FRG leaders during our year long deployment.

Thank you for all you do, but most of all...thanks for being you! — Robin Mercado



HEROES OF THE WEEK - MONTH OF AUGUST



"One person can and does make a difference"

20 August 2005

HHC- SPC JOSHUA L. DISNEY
A CO- SPC JAMES R. STOUFFER
B CO- SPC GREGORY W. COLE
C CO- PFC JOEL L. KOEKKOEK

13 August 2005

HHC - SSG Daniel S. Benson
A Co- SPC James A. Feight
B Co- SGT Levar C. Scott
C Co- SSG John Scriven

6 August 2005

HHC- SSG Adam C. Day
A Co- SPC Juan C. Garcia
B Co- SPC Walter C. Stewart
C Co- SGT Steven M. Holeman



30 July 2005

HHC- SPC Chad M. Acton
A Co- SPC David A. Matthews
B Co- SPC Joshua M. Strauss
C Co- PFC Archie J. Patterson

IN MEMORY:

OUR FALLEN BOBCAT HEROES

SSG JULIAN S. MELO

SGT STEPHEN R. SHERMAN

SSGT IOASA F. TAVAE

1ST LT. WILLIAM A. EDENS

SGT ERIC W. MORRIS

To our fallen Bobcats: We remember you and thank you for your sacrifice. With much love, we honor you.

The Bobcat Family



RAINDROPS & RAINBOWS PARENT & CHILD PLAY CENTER

Raindrops and Rainbows, Parent and Child Play Center, a new Fort Lewis Child and Youth Services program, will open September 19. This is not child care. Parents must stay at the center with their children and participate in activities. Parents with children up to 5 years old may drop in and take advantage of a variety of activities. Learn how to make play dough, work on school readiness skills or just come in to meet new people. Parents need to provide whatever is



necessary for their child. This program runs Monday through Friday with two operating sessions. Session One is from 8:30 a.m. until noon and Session Two will be from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. For more information, please contact 967-2600 or 967-3056.

TEAM LEWIS APPRECIATION WEEK

Team Lewis Appreciation Week, brought to you by Fort Lewis Morale, Welfare and Recreation, is August 26 to September 2. The week kicks off with Team Lewis Night at the Cascade Community Center at 3 p.m. Throughout the week, customers will receive discounts and freebies at a number of MWR facilities, free activities at Bowl Arena and Summit Arena, as well as half-price golf at the Fort Lewis Golf Course on Saturday. Enjoy \$5 off selected specials at the Cascade Community Center from Sunday to Wednesday. Shur-Kleen Car Wash will offer \$3 washes all day Thursday, and every 25th vehicle will receive a prize from MWR. Patrons can enter to win a super door prize that will be awarded at the end of the day. Patrons may also take \$1 off haircuts at Kim's Barber Shop, located in the Cascade Community Center. Team Lewis Appreciation Week concludes with the U.S. Army Soldier Show on September 2 at the Tacoma Dome at 6:30 p.m.

