



Washington National Guard Family Programs

Weekly Update

Family Assistance Coordinators

Camp Murray

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Longview/Vancouver

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Deborah (253) 945-1869

Moses Lake

Doug (509) 630-0701

Olympia/Centralia

Jacqueline (360) 628-7195

Pasco/Walla Walla

Betsy (509) 546-4384

Port Orchard

Ron (360) 356-2407

Spokane

Buzz (509) 532-2775

Yakima

John (509) 469-4638

Wing Family Program Coordinators

141st ARW - Spokane

Mary (509) 247-7009

194th RSW - Camp Murray

Angela (253) 512-3397

Come Welcome Home the 81st BCT!



The <http://81st.washingtonarmyguard.org/> website will be updated with the ceremony location and the Battalions arriving home for the next day. Due to privacy concerns the names of the individual Soldiers on the flight will not be available online. To receive information for a specific soldier on the next days flight call Toll Free 1-877-827-6640, or 253-512-8506 or 509-532-2746.

For flights arriving at Fairchild Air Force Base the ceremony will be conducted at the 141st ARW hanger. To view a the map of the Fairchild Air Force Base please see website.

For flights arriving at McChord Air Force Base the ceremony will be conducted at Wilson Gym on North Fort Lewis. To view a map of North Fort Lewis please see website.

For flights arriving at Fairchild the Graham Rd (Hospital) Gate will open 2 hours prior to the expected arrival of a flight. Families should arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to the flight arrival time.

For flights arriving at McChord, families should plan to be at Wilson Gym on North Fort Lewis 1 hour prior to the time of the ceremony.

All families and friends are welcome to attend the Welcome Home Ceremony. Due to parking constraints we do ask that you car pool when possible but please come. If your vehicle has a valid DOD sticker access to the military installations should not be an issue.

If your vehicle does not have a DOD sticker you will need to:

A. At Fairchild you will need to provide the name of the soldier you are greeting to the gate guards at Graham Rd Gate to be verified.

B. At Fort Lewis you will need to obtain a pass from the Main Gate at the Fort Lewis Visitor Center. Please ensure your have a valid driver's license, registration and proof of insurance and all adults have a photo ID. There will be a special table for 81st BDE families. After obtaining the pass, vehicles will need to turn around and pass back under I-5 to enter North Fort Lewis.

Returning Soldiers and Families have stories of struggle to share

By Gale Fiege
Herald Writer

EVERETT - Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Craig Darby arrived home last week from Iraq with his second Bronze Star medal.

This one, he says, belongs to his wife, Kari.

"She deserves it more than I do," Darby said. "I don't have a clue what all she went through."

Darby was among the first wave of the 3,000-member Washington National Guard 81st Brigade Combat Team to return home. About 200 people on the team are from Snohomish County, and more are scheduled to return today.

It was a long year for the Darby family.

Craig Darby, 38, was mobilized in July 2008 with the 81st Brigade. After training stints in Yakima and Fort McCoy, Wis., Darby and the rest of the 81st were flown to Iraq in October.

Kari Darby, 35, was pregnant when he left.

With the due date just after Christmas, Kari was supposed to take it easy. Instead she shoveled snow so she could get out of their Everett driveway during the big Christmas storms. Kari missed Craig when their daughter Sophia was born. He had been there to help when their other three girls were born.

In February, their oldest daughter, Megan, 9, got a case of the flu that forced Kari to load up all four children in the van in the middle of the night and head for the emergency room.

"Emotionally, it was really hard," she said. "Craig does so much for us."

Though the guardsmen in the 81st range in age from 19 to 60, the experience of the Darby family is fairly typical, said Maj. Anne Marie Peacock, director of family programs for the Washington National Guard.

"Serving overseas is stressful, but life there is very uncomplicated," Peacock said. "You don't have to shop, fix dinner, get the car tuned up or pick up the kids at school."

John Anderson, a chaplain with the 81st at Camp Murray, spent a lot of time during this past deployment meeting with families of those serving in the National Guard.

"What people really need is a chance to talk, to tell their stories and sometimes to vent," Anderson said.

Returning National Guard troops and their families have a lot of stories to share.

Groups of more than 150 from the 81st Brigade are coming home every few days, with the arrivals in Tacoma continuing for about two more weeks. A group of soldiers comes home today and a homecoming ceremony is set for 4 p.m. at the Wilson Gym on the Fort Lewis campus. Among them are Snohomish County soldiers based at the armories in Everett, Bellingham and Seattle.

Soldiers Carissa Simeon Gillis, 22, and her husband, Michael Gillis, 25, returned from Iraq on Saturday. Their families met the couple in Tacoma.

"Then we went to our folks' place in Snohomish and had a big barbecue," her brother Brandon Simeon said. "Being back isn't quite real for them yet."

Cont. Returning Soldiers and Families have stories of struggle to share

Michael Gillis, who works for a medical insurance company, and Carissa, who is employed at a horse supply business, plan to take a little time off before returning to work.

Sgt. Andrew Sunagel also flew home with the group on Saturday.

His wife, Kelly, and their kids, Brendan, 12, and Lexi, 9, of Snohomish had been talking about a family vacation when his year in Iraq came to an end.

"I left it up to him, hoping he would say something beautiful like Hawaii or Mexico," Kelly Sunagel said. "But the only place in this entire world he wants to go to is Pittsburgh to see Heinz Field where the Steelers football team plays. He is a huge Steelers fan, so we are heading out there to see the team at training camp."

At the Darby home, it's been a week of holidays. First came Christmas, then they celebrated Father's Day. Valentine's Day and a birthday party for the whole family are up next.

A hardworking logistics and supply sergeant, Craig Darby joined the Army right out of high school. He served in the Desert Storm conflict, and was based in Germany, Korea and stateside before he decided to try civilian life and join the National Guard.

He earned his first Bronze Star for meritorious service in Iraq in 2003 and took on a full-time position with the Washington National Guard.

Hannah, 7, and Klara, 3, missed their daddy while he was gone this past year, but their older sister Megan was able to put it in words.

"I hope you come back alive," she wrote in an e-mail to her father.

On the way home, members of the 81st made another stop at Fort McCoy.

The Washington National Guard debriefing process, the first of its kind in the nation, includes lots of help to those who have served, Peacock said.

Many are returning with medical problems and emotional issues. Others don't have jobs to come home to. Veterans programs are set up to address any problems service men and women may have, Peacock said.

"Our motto is let's take care of problems while people are still on duty," she said. "It just makes sense."

Darby praised the debriefing process, especially in its care for people.

"I love my country and my job, but we need think about how much we spend overseas and try to take care of our people at home, too," he said.

With his two Bronze Stars, Darby has a promotion when he returns to work Sept. 1.

Until then, he can rough house with the older girls and get to know baby Sophia.

"I gotta make up for lost time," he said.

Gale Fiege: 425-339-3427; gfiege@heraldnet.com.

<http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20090805/NEWS01/708059728>

Army Guard to inform members of data loss

ARLINGTON, Va., (8/4/09) – Members of the Army National Guard who could be affected by the theft of a laptop containing their personal data, will be notified through an official letter, Guard officials said here today.

About 131,000 former and current Army Guard members could be affected by the data loss, which occurred July 27 when a personal laptop owned by an Army Guard contractor was stolen, said Randy Noller, a spokesman for the National Guard Bureau.

The stolen laptop contained personal information on Soldiers enrolled in the Army National Guard Bonus and Incentives Program. The type of data includes names, Social Security Numbers, incentive payment amounts and payment dates.

The Army Guard will inform those Guard members who are determined to be impacted by this incident by mailing a letter to them, Noller said.

He added that notification of all individuals should be completed by next week.

The National Guard Bureau has set up a special Web page at <http://www.ng.mil>, and the Army Guard will have a toll-free call center available from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday beginning Aug. 5. The number is 877-481-4957. Each features up-to-date news and information on the data compromise.

The Web site provides steps on how to check credit reports, how to guard against identity theft and who to call if a Guard member believes any fraudulent activity occurs with his or her personal information.

NORTHWEST REGIONAL HIRING EVENT AUGUST 20TH, 2009 SEATTLE, WA

MilitaryStars Northwest Regional Hiring Event Thursday, August 20th, 2009 noon - 4pm

Seattle Airport Marriott
3201 South 176th Street
Seattle, WA 98188

Attendance, registration, and parking are all free; this event is open to all current and prior US military. Employers will be available to speak with you all day - any time you can make it is fine. Positions are available throughout the SeaTac metro area, the state of Washington, the Northwest Region, nationwide, and overseas!

Attending employers include:

Lockheed Martin
Raytheon
Sears Holdings Corporation
Blackwater USA
Amazon
many more!



Register today at: http://www.militarystars.com/career_expos_seattle.htm

Aircraft Mechanic Airframe Apprenticeship Program

The Aircraft Mechanic Airframe Apprenticeship Program has 8 to 10 openings for members of the National Guard & Veterans. They are looking for intern level (someone with NO background) to fill these positions. There are also apprentice level opportunities for someone who has hands on experience and is working towards obtaining their A&P License.

The Apprenticeship program begins September 14th at ATS (Aviation Technical Services) in Everett. Put your GI bill to use now and earn while you learn in the aero-space industry, be on target to get your Airframe Mechanic Certification in 18 months!

Interviews are schedule for the second week in September the start date will be September 14th. Interns will be co-enrolled in Everett Community College to take the classroom portions for this program.

For more information contact:
Morgan Zantua, M.A.
Employment Transition Consultant
morgan.zantua@us.army.mil
DSN: 323-8540

6,000 of Financial Assistance for Military Spouses for Degrees, Licenses and Credentials

DoD's expanded Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MyCAA) program will provide up to \$6,000 in Financial Assistance for Military Spouses who are pursuing degree programs, licenses or credentials leading to employment in portable career fields.

Financial Assistance pays expenses such as education and training programs, tuition, licensing and credentialing fees for degree programs (associates, bachelors, masters, doctoral and post doctoral), continuing education classes (including those offered through professional associations), Bar, CPA and other similar exams, state certifications for teachers, medical professionals and other licensed professionals.

Who Is Eligible: Spouses of Active Duty members of the Department of Defense and activated members of the National Guard and Reserve Components are eligible. The period of eligibility for spouses of Guard and Reserve members is from the date of the Alert or Warning Order for Military Recall or Mobilization, through activation and deployment until 180 days following De-Mobilization. Spouses of the severely injured, ill, wounded or killed in action are also eligible. Military spouses who are legally separated by state law or court order are ineligible. Spouses who are active duty members or activated Guard or Reserve members themselves are ineligible.

To Receive this Assistance, the Military Spouse only needs to complete a MyCAA Career and Training Plan and then apply for MyCAA Financial Assistance. Eligible spouses can establish a MyCAA Account by visiting the MyCAA website: <https://aiportal.acc.af.mil/mycaa>.

NEW FRG Boot Camp...Register Today!!

Join Family Programs Staff for an all new FRG Boot Camp. This training will focus on Building and Re-Energizing your FRG. You will learn the skills needed to keep your FRG going successfully. Activities will include outdoor teambuilding exercising and we will even have enough time for a camp fire and lots of fun!!

Grab your sleeping bag, hiking boots, and FRG ideas in time for this exciting event. We hope to see you there!

SPACE IS LIMITED SO REGISTER TODAY on www.guardfamily.org

Questions regarding this event contact: Veronica (253) 512-7753



Upcoming Events



FRG After Deployment Workshop September 11-13

The unit has returned from a deployment...now what?

This workshop will focus on the role of the FRG when the unit returns from a deployment. Many are under the impression that there is no need for an FRG when the unit is here, when in fact the FRG is always needed. Register today for this one-of a kind workshop!!

Basic FRG Training

Date: August 15th **Time:** 9am - 5pm **Location:** Kent

This training will give you an understanding of what a Family Readiness Group is and how it functions. We will focus on the foundation that you model your program from and will give you the knowledge to run an efficient Family Readiness Group with confidence that you are operating within the rules and regulations.

FRG Phone Tree POC Training

Date: August 16th **Time:** 9am - 11am **Location:** Kent

This course will teach you how to handle all types of calls to and from Family Members. We will also teach you how to use the phone tree and utilize resources around you.

FRG Treasurer Training

Date: August 16th **Time:** 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm **Location:** Kent

This course will teach you how to establish and maintain an FRG fund while operating within the regulations and will provide you with guidance on fundraising procedures.

To Register for any event listed on this page:

1. LOG ONTO www.guardfamily.org
2. Click EVENTS (must have a profile on the website to view WA Events)

If you have problems registering or have questions contact: Veronica, State Family Readiness Assistant
(253) 512-7753

FRG

B.O.O.T. CAMP



BUILDING your FRG

OUTLOOK & OUTREACH

TEAMBUILDING



AUGUST 21-23

BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON

This boot camp is designed for WA National Guard volunteers interested in establishing or re-energizing the unit Family Readiness Group (FRG).

This will be a truly unique FRG Training experience...

★ Camp Fires ★ Outdoor Team Building Exercises ★



Are you thinking about becoming a FRG Volunteer?

Are you a volunteer for a FRG that needs to be re-energized?

Does your unit need to establish a FRG?

The NEW FRG Boot Camp is for you!! This training will focus on Building your FRG from square one, re-energizing your team, and tips on how to strengthen your FRG to maintain consistency before, during, and after deployment.

By attending FRG Boot Camp, you will learn the skills to keep your FRG going successfully.

Activities will include: Outdoor Team Building, Outlook & Outreach, Brainstorming, and time for a camp fire and lots of fun.

Grab your sleeping bag, hiking boots, and FRG ideas in time for this exciting event. We hope to see there!

REGISTER NO LATER THAN AUGUST 17TH

Log onto www.guardfamily.org (you must have a profile on the website to register)

or call Veronica, State Family Readiness Assistant at (253) 512-7753



Space is Limited!





Family Programs Contact Information

Administrative Staff

Building 33, Camp Murray
Tacoma, WA 98430

State Family Programs Director

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Family Programs Specialist

CPT Marianne Hegg (253) 512-8712

Administrative Assistant

SPC Andrea Walker (253) 512-7881

State Family Readiness Assistant

Veronica (253) 512-7753

State Youth Coordinator

Robbin (253) 512-7985

Computer Assistant

SGT Freda (253) 512-8903

81st Brigade

Family Readiness Support Assistant

Korina (253) 512-8506

Chaplains

CH Brewer (253) 512-8534

FR. Anderson (253) 377-2508

FR. Pratt (253) 377-9278

Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC)

Child & Youth MFLC - Kim Larkey (253) 355-9939

Adult MFLC - Lisa Tice (253) 682-7792

Websites

State Web-site

familyprograms.washingtonguard.org

National Web-site

www.guardfamily.org

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Tia (253) 512-7755

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