

# Post opens to families of deployed Guard members

*Thomas Zimmerman, Army War College Public Affairs Office*

## Post open arms to families of deployed Guard members



*A Stryker vehicle from the 56th SBCT, Pa. National Guard moves out to conduct joint operations during JRTC rotation 09-02 at Fort Polk, La. Local families have found help from Carlisle Barracks services. Courtesy photo.*

The 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, is the Army's only reserve-component Stryker Brigade. The team was mobilized in September 2008 to conduct full-spectrum operations in Iraq. Before deployment,

the unit trained at multiple sites across the country, including Camp Shelby, Miss., and the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La.

Many of the 4,000 Soldiers are already in Camp Buehring, Kuwait, preparing to move into Iraq. They will be stationed near Taji, an area about 60 miles north of Baghdad, according to Lt. Col. Chris Cleaver, Pa. National Guard spokesman. Pennsylvania has the National Guard's only Stryker unit. All the brigades using the armored fighting vehicle are part of the regular Army. The PANG deployment to Iraq is the largest since World War II.

During the deployment their family members can receive support from Carlisle Barracks.

"Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation is a dedicated group of men and women who provide support and leisure activities to all of our Soldiers -- active duty, Reserve and Guard -- their Families, military retirees and the civilian employees," said Barbara George, FMWR director.

"FMWR provides an array of services and programs at every installation -- family, child and youth programs, recreational, sports, fitness, entertainment, travel and leisure type activities."

Also available for the families is the Carlisle Barracks Army Community Services.

“ACS can assist families on matters dealing with financial planning, assisting spouses to research for jobs, managing deployment and the day to day stresses associated with military life,” said George.

Youth programs are available for the youngest members of the family as well.

“Our Child and Youth School Services provide outstanding child and youth programs, and are made available to the 56th SBCT,” said George.

The goal of the post MWR is to help Soldiers and their families, according to George.

“The many programs available to our Guard units are a great resource and I strongly encourage the Family members of the 56th SBCT to visit all of our activities,” she said. “We want to be their first choice for recreational, leisure and family activities.”

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