



**Release #11-04-009**  
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April 11, 2011

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FRG Volunteer makes a difference for Families, Soldiers**

**FORT BRAGG, N.C.** — “God gave us two hands, one to help ourselves and one to help others,” she said. “Kindness is such an easy thing to give.”

Wendy Hanshaw, a three-year veteran of the Family Readiness Group, is currently in her second FRG Co-Leader position, this one with Echo Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment. She’s a seasoned FRG veteran with several positions under her belt including Key Caller, Treasurer, and Steering Team Member.

The 82nd Airborne Division commander, Maj. Gen. Jim Huggins will recognize Hanshaw and other volunteers for their contributions during the annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony on Apr. 15.

“Wendy’s impact allowed Family members to receive timely information and boosted morale,” said Valerie L. Martin, 1-508th PIR Family Readiness Support Assistant. “She not only made sure the married trooper’s Family members were kept in the loop during the deployment but also made sure to keep the parents and other Family members of single troopers in the loop.”

Hanshaw's motivation to serve in the FRG comes from her own experience as a new Army spouse while her husband was a recruiter.

"I remember when I was a young Army wife and recruiting didn't really have an FRG," she said. "I needed guidance and found (Army Family Team Building) and I used that until I knew more. When we moved to Bragg and when he deployed, I learned about the real Army and felt a connection to the other wives; I wanted to help the other wives."

Hanshaw's work in the FRG has earned notice and praise.

"I've seen Wendy get things moving in the right direction when no one could," said Martin. "She knows how to maneuver around the system and that helps when you need something done in a timely manner. Wendy has a strong personality that can influence people."

"Anyone who volunteers is an asset," continued Martin, "but compared to other volunteers, Wendy knows how to speak up and get what she wants and needs for her FRG Family members. Her compassion and motivation meet you at the door."

Hanshaw's work doesn't stop with Soldiers' Families though. While juggling the needs of six kids of her own and working at a local realty firm she finds time to support the single Paratroopers as well through care packages and special events like a barracks Christmas Party.

"For Christmas we decorated the day room and brought in drinks and baked goods," she said. "We wrapped up board games to give them as presents and let them unwrap them and play. While they were deployed we sent them Valentines, gifts, peanut butter and jelly. Every three weeks we sent them packages."

“For single guys, inclusion is important,” continued Hanshaw. “If they don’t like me now, why will their wives like me in the future?”

Hanshaw’s kids get in on the spirit of giving as well.

“My Family always comes first,” Hanshaw explained. “But sometimes they have to come with me. I incorporate the Family and volunteering. The kids play with other kids, do posters, load and unload the car. They’re like another set of hands.”

Hanshaw will be moving units as her husband takes a new position, but insists volunteering will remain a part of her lifestyle, filling whatever role the FRG needs and volunteering for the Red Cross if the FRG slows down.

All photos courtesy of Wendy Hanshaw



Wendy Hanshaw, Echo Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Family Readiness Group Co-Leader, cuts stockings from felt while preparing for a Christmas Party for single Soldiers last winter. Echo company FRG volunteers donated food, drinks and games to single Soldiers in the barracks and hosted a party to cheer company Soldiers over the holidays.



Wendy Hanshaw, Echo Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Family Readiness Group Co-Leader, eagerly awaits the arrival of her husband, Echo Company, 1-508th PIR 1st Sgt. Jerry Hanshaw during a re-deployment celebration at Green Ramp, Pope Army Air Field.



Wendy Hanshaw, Echo Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Family Readiness Group Co-Leader, poses with her husband and three of her sons during a re-deployment celebration on Green Ramp, Pope Army Air Field.

**Editor's Note:**

1. For more information or to attend upcoming training events, contact the 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Office at (910) 432-0661/0662 or (910) 813-3891.