



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Echo Battery, 1st Battalion, 79th Field Artillery
434th Field Artillery Brigade
5970 South Boundary Road
Fort Sill, Oklahoma 73503-6204



ATSF-KG-E

01 February 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR Family and Friends of Class #23-23

SUBJECT: Welcome Letter, Class #23-23

Greetings from the Fires Center of Excellence at Fort Sill, Oklahoma!

My name is Captain Devin Chen, the Commander of Echo “*ELITE*” Battery, 1st Battalion, 79th Field Artillery Regiment. Your Soldier arrived safely and has begun Basic Combat Training here in the 434th Field Artillery Brigade.

We are extremely proud your Soldier has volunteered to join a time-honored profession of service to our Nation in the United States Army. Over the next nine weeks your family member will begin the transformation from a civilian to a Soldier in the United States Army. Your Soldier will learn the basic skills required to fight and win on today’s modern battlefield. The training will be strenuous and demanding but will result in your Soldier developing discipline, self-confidence, and mental fortitude which will lead them to success in the future.

Your Soldier will conduct physical training daily to build physical strength and conditioning while instilling teamwork, pride, and enthusiasm in themselves and their unit. Your Soldier will learn military customs, courtesies, and traditions as well as policies and procedures on how Soldiers conduct themselves as members of a military team. Additionally, they will learn how to engage the enemy with a weapon, care for their buddy using first aid, navigate with a map and a compass, all while immersed in an environment stressing the seven Army Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage; it is these values that shape who we are as Soldiers in the profession of arms.

The Drill Sergeants and Cadre training your Soldier are a very dedicated group of professionals, genuinely concerned about the health, welfare, and training of each Soldier. We are proud to be entrusted with our Nation’s greatest treasure: America’s sons and daughters. Phone privileges will be afforded during Basic Combat Training. Throughout the course, your Soldier will have the opportunity to use the phone once a week, primarily on Sunday afternoons. I do encourage you to write to your Soldier. A little bit of encouragement from home goes a long way in keeping your Soldier engaged and motivated.

While packages are allowed, **PLEASE DO NOT SEND** medication of any kind, food items, magazines, weapons, knives, clothing, or other “contraband” items: electronics, tobacco products, and/or candy. All boxes are opened by the addressee and screened for these items.

Send mail to:

PVT/PFC/SPC (your Soldier’s last, first name)
5970 South Boundary Road
1-79th FA BN, Echo BTRY, (1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th) PLT
Fort Sill, OK 73503-6204

We will send out a detailed graduation information letter as we near the date of graduation. The best information is available on our Battery Facebook Page, just search for **“Echo Battery 1-79 Basic Combat Training”**. Updates, information, and photos will be uploaded.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Battery with any critical concerns regarding your Soldier. Just understand that we cannot give you specific information on your Soldier as we are unable confirm your identity over the phone. You can ask for me, CPT Devin Chen or the Battery First Sergeant, 1SG Timothy Blair. Our telephone number is (580) 442-1317(CQ Desk)/1377(Battery Commander Office)/1318(1SG Office). **If a true emergency arises at home, i.e. serious injury, illness, or worse, of an immediate family member (spouse, parent, in-law, sibling, or child) please call the American Red Cross (877) 272-7337 in order to quickly get the message to the unit and the Soldier.**

Once again, thank you for entrusting our organization with the care of your Soldier. We look forward to meeting all of you and hope you are able to attend your Soldier’s graduation.

SEEK, STRIKE, DESTROY!
PEACE THROUGH VICTORY!
VICTORY THROUGH EXCELLENCE!



Devin L. Chen
CPT, FA
Commanding

Frequently Asked Questions/Concerns

-I have not heard from my Soldier in a few days.

All trainees are afforded the opportunity to use cell phones on Sundays. The trainee is allowed to use their cell phone to communicate with whomever they wish at their discretion.

-I have sent mail to my Soldier which they have not received/my Soldier has sent mail that has not arrived.

The mail system for Basic training runs slower than the typical civilian mail system because the mail must be sorted and delivered to many trainees that are spread throughout the installation. After arriving at the Post Office on Ft. Sill, mail will be picked up and delivered to our higher headquarters then it is picked up by the Battery. This typically adds 2-3 days to the delivery time.

-My Soldier has not received their pay.

All finance issues can be resolved by the Soldier and his/her Drill Sergeants. Following the first pay period the Drill Sergeants will identify issues with Soldiers' pay. Soldiers must bring up issues so it can be resolved efficiently. Keep in mind that it can take up to 45 days for Soldiers to get into the pay system.

-How do I get tickets to Graduation/how many people can come to my Soldier's Graduation?

The Graduation ceremony is currently scheduled for the Polo Field Fort Sill. There are no assigned seats, so no tickets are needed. Also, there is a limit on space available, everyone is welcome to attend, but space is limited.

-I plan on coming to Graduation; can I get a list of hotels in the area and directions to Graduation?

As mentioned above I will be sending out a second letter as we get closer to Graduation with pertinent information about the event. **We do not make reservations for you.** Using online travel search engines is also a great way to find local hotels and rental car agencies.

-When will I be able to see my Soldier at Graduation time?

There will be two opportunities to spend time with your Soldier. The day prior to Graduation is our Family Day. Soldiers must remain in the Lawton Fort Sill area and return to the Battery by 7:00 pm. Again, following the Graduation ceremony Soldiers will be given another day pass with the same restrictions as the Family Day pass and dependent on their ship time.

-It's the first time my Soldier has been away and I just wanted to see how they are doing/make sure everything is okay.

We train over 200 Soldiers each Basic Training class. The schedule is very demanding for both the trainees and the cadre training them. We truly do not have the resources or time available to provide individual updates on Soldiers. If there is an emergency or a Soldier is hospitalized we will contact their family.

-What if I am having trouble with the Fort Sill Visitor Control Center website?

Please contact the Visitor Control Center for all questions relating to them. The number is (580) 442-9602/9603/9604. Keep in mind that they are very busy especially on Wed, Thurs, and Fri.